

Cabinet

Meeting Venue
**Council Chamber - County Hall,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys**

Meeting date
Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Meeting time
10.30 am

For further information please contact
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County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

21 September 2016

AGENDA

1.	APOLOGIES	C177- 2016
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To receive apologies for absence.

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	C178- 2016
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To receive any declarations of interest from Members relating to items to be considered on the agenda.

3.	LLANBISTER C.P. SCHOOL AND LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P. SCHOOL	C179- 2016
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To consider a report by County Councillor Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education.

(Pages 3 - 562)

4.	SECONDARY SCHOOL REORGANISATION PROGRAMME - BUILTH WELLS AND LLANDRINDOD HIGH SCHOOLS	C180- 2016
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To consider a report by County Councillor Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education.

(Pages 563 - 896)

The following item will not be dealt with before 2.00 p.m.

5.	SECONDARY SCHOOL REORGANISATION PROGRAMME - BRECON AND GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOLS	C181- 2016
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To consider a report by County Councillor Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education.

(Pages 897 - 1488)

C179- 2016

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

27th September 2016

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Arwel Jones
Portfolio Holder for Education

SUBJECT: Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.
School

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary

1. Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 26th January 2016, the authority carried out formal consultation on closure of Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
2. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet members of the responses received to the consultation and to determine whether or not to proceed with the statutory process to close Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
3. The report is supported by the following appendices:

Llanbister C.P. School

Appendix A – Consultation Document – Llanbister C.P. School

Appendix B – Consultation Report – Llanbister C.P. School

Appendix C – Minutes of meetings with School Council, staff, governors and parents / community – Llanbister C.P. School

Appendix D – Impact Assessments – Llanbister C.P. School

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Appendix E – Consultation Document – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Appendix F – Consultation Report – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Appendix G – Minutes of meetings with School Council, staff, governors and parents / community – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Appendix H – Impact Assessments – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

General

Appendix I – Extract from minutes of County Council on 8th September 2016

Background

The Consultation Periods

4. On the 26th January 2016, Cabinet considered reports in relation to Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and approved the commencement of consultation on closure of the two school from the 31st December 2016. The consultation periods commenced on the 11th February 2016, and were due to end on the 24th March 2016. However, the consultation periods were extended, and eventually ended on the 5th May 2016.
5. The consultation documents were available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The documents were also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2013). The consultation documents that were issued are attached as Appendix A (Llanbister) and Appendix E (Llanfihangel Rhydithon).
6. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultations by either completing online consultation forms, filling in paper copies of the forms and returning them to the School Modernisation Team, or by writing to the School Modernisation Team.
7. During the consultation periods, meetings were held with the following at each school:
 - The School Council
 - Staff
 - Governors
 - Parents / community

Consultation Responses – Llanbister C.P. School

8. A total of 194 written responses were received to the consultation. This includes responses received via the online response form, the paper response form, other written responses and responses from pupils received using the questionnaire in the young people's version of the consultation document.
9. All issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in written responses and those raised in the consultation meetings, are listed in the Consultation Report (attached as Appendix B), along with the authority's response to these issues.

10. Concerns were raised relating to the capacity of the named receiving school, namely Crossgates C.P. School. Information was also received which suggests that pupil numbers are likely to increase significantly at Llanbister C.P. school to a point where the school will have more than 50 pupils on roll. Reference was also made to the impact of the additional travel to Crossgates C.P. School or the nearest alternative school on pupil well-being and the possible impact closure of the school would have on the community.

Consultation Responses – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

11. A total of 129 written responses were received to the consultation. This includes responses received via the online response form, the paper response form, other written responses and responses from pupils received using the questionnaire in the young people's version of the consultation document.
12. All issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in written responses and those raised in the consultation meetings, are listed in the Consultation Report (attached as Appendix B), along with the authority's response to these issues.
13. Concerns were raised relating to the capacity of the named receiving school, namely Crossgates C.P. School. Information was also received which suggests that an increase in pupil numbers is likely at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, and reference was made to the impact of additional travel to Crossgates C.P. School or the nearest alternative school on pupil well-being and the possible impact closure of the school would have on the community.

Proposal

14. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines the statutory procedures for school reorganisation proposals. Following consultation, the Code states that the decision-maker (the Cabinet) can consider the following ways forward:
 - To publish the Proposal as consulted on with any appropriate modifications;
 - To abandon the Proposal;
 - To significantly recast the Proposals and re-consult.

Llanbister C.P. School

15. Consideration has been given to the specific circumstances of Llanbister C.P. School and the issues raised during the consultation, and on the 8th September 2016, the Council discussed the following recommendation in respect of the school:

To abandon the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with **draft recommendations** for Llanbister C.P. School in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, by no later than the end of November 2016.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

16. Consideration has been given to the specific circumstances of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the issues raised during the consultation. On the 8th September 2016, the Council discussed the following recommendation in respect of the school:

To approve the publication of a Statutory Notice in respect of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2017.

At the meeting, the Council voted to support an alternative recommendation which would retain educational provision in Dolau.

17. Having taken this into consideration, the recommendation in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School has been revised. The new recommendation is as follows:

To abandon the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with **draft recommendations** for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, by no later than the end of November 2016.

One Powys Plan

18. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan. Within this priority, the Plan states that '*We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.*'

Options considered/available

19. The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) discussed a range of possible options in relation to Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School with the governing bodies before agreeing the draft proposals to close the schools. These were outlined in the papers considered by Cabinet on the 26th January 2016, and were also listed in the Consultation Documents issued in respect of the proposals (Appendix A and E).
20. Following the consultation period and publication of the Consultation Report, the following options are available to Cabinet:

- To publish the Proposal as consulted on with any appropriate modifications;
- To abandon the Proposal;
- To significantly recast the Proposals and re-consult.

Preferred Choice and Reasons

21. The preferred choice is to abandon the current Proposals in respect of Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The reasons for this are:
 - Increase expected in pupil numbers at the two schools
 - The impact of significant additional travel for some of the pupils
22. However, resilience of leadership capacity at both schools is a significant concern. In addition, the Authority remains concerned about the standards of education at Llanbister C.P. School, as the school is currently in Special Measures.
23. It is recommended that a new report is brought to Cabinet with **draft recommendations** for Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, which considers the circumstances of the two schools alongside the Authority's aspiration for primary education, which is to have 'headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.'
24. It is recommended that a new report is brought back to Cabinet with draft recommendations by no later than the end of November 2016.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

25. The Equality Impact Assessments and Community Impact Assessments in respect of the original proposals have been updated following the consultation period, and are included in Appendix D and Appendix H. In addition, Integrated Impact Assessments have been produced in relation to the original proposals, these are also included in Appendix D and Appendix H.

Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

26. The authority's Schools Transformation Programme is intended to improve educational outcomes for children and young people. This aligns with the aspiration to improve safeguarding and well-being for children and young people.

Local Member(s)

Cllr Hywel Lewis: I am delighted at the Portfolio Holder for Education's new recommendation for Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School. I would now ask that the Portfolio Holder and officers enter into a meaningful dialogue with the school and all those concerned with it to ensure the current quality education received by the children of Dolau continues for the future children of the area.

Other Front Line Services

N/A

Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

The Corporate Solicitor comments as follows: Would support the recommendations and can confirm that legal advice will continue to be provided to support the same.

The Finance Business Partner comments as follows: The estimated savings in relation to closure of both schools for the 2016/17 financial year totalled £157k, net of transport costs, and excluding any redundancy costs.

The Schools Service has a savings target in the MTFS for Transformation for the 2017/18 financial year of £120k. The current savings projected to be achieved against the £120k are £96k. This currently leaves a projected shortfall of £24k.

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

N/A

Corporate Communications

Communications Comment: This issue is of significant public interest and Cabinet's decision should be publicised widely by press release and through all the council's social media channels

Statutory Officers

The **Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer)** has commented as follows: I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report.

The **Strategic Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)** notes the comments made by Finance. The projected shortfall of £24k will require further savings to be identified.

Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendations:	Reason for Recommendations:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To receive and consider the Consultation Reports in respect of the Proposals to close Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. Schools <li>2. To abandon the Proposal in respect of Llanbister C.P. School and bring a new report back to Cabinet with draft recommendations for Llanbister C.P. School in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, by no later than the end of November 2016. <li>3. To abandon the Proposal in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and bring a new report back to Cabinet with draft recommendations for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, by no later than the end of November 2016. 	<p>To provide a sustainable model of primary education</p>

Relevant Policy (ies):	School Transformation Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	Cllr John Brunt, Cllr Hywel Lewis
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Marianne Evans
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	End of November 2016

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Sarah Astley	01597 826265	N/A	sarah.astley@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:



POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

**Proposal to close Llanbister Community Primary School
from the 31st December 2016**

Date: 11th February 2016 – 24th March 2016

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As Llanbister Community Primary (C.P.) School is an English medium school and all other schools which may be affected by the proposal are also English medium schools, the consultation documentation is only available in English.

If a Welsh language copy is required, or if you require a copy of the document in a different format, please contact the School Modernisation Team on 01597 826265, or e-mail school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk.

1. THE PROPOSAL

Powys County Council (“the authority”) is proposing to close Llanbister C.P. School, Llanbister, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6TN from the 31st December 2016, with Crossgates C.P. School, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6RE to be named as the receiving school. Free home to school transport will be provided for qualifying¹ pupils.

1.1 Background to the proposal

In November 2014, Powys County Council agreed a new Powys Schools Transformation Policy, which set out the authority’s vision and process for the transformation of primary and secondary schools in the county.

The Policy includes:

- A range of criteria to be used to determine which schools would be reviewed
- The establishment of a School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) to carry out reviews of schools
- The establishment of a School Review Process to be used to review schools

In December 2014, the SORP carried out an Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with the School Review Process, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were also ranked against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy.

Llanbister C.P. School met the following criteria:

- Standards: The school is judged to be a School Causing Concern as classified by ERW²'s implementation of the National Model of School Improvement
- Pupil Numbers: The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years
- Capacity: The percentage of surplus places in the school is higher than 15%
- Building Condition: The overall building condition is categorised as category D or C based on the Welsh Government’s assessment of building condition
- Financial: The cost per pupil is more than 120% of the council’s average for the sector

¹ Primary pupils are entitled to free home to school transport if they live more than 2 miles from the nearest school providing education in the language of their choice.

² ERW – Education through Regional Working – the regional education consortium of which Powys is a member.

As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, the SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of Llanbister C.P. School.

Following the Initial Assessment of Schools carried out in December 2014, Llanbister CP School was inspected by Estyn in January 2015. Estyn's judgement was that Special Measures were required in relation to Llanbister CP School.

A number of meetings have taken place between the SORP and the Governing Body, Headteacher and Local Member for Llanbister C.P. School. In December 2015, the SORP determined that the draft recommendation in respect of Llanbister C.P. School was closure of the school, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school.

At a meeting held on the 26th January 2016, the authority's Cabinet received the SORP's draft recommendation in respect of Llanbister C.P. School and approved the commencement of consultation on closure of the school from the 31st December 2016.

1.2 Reason for the proposal

The authority is proposing to close Llanbister C.P. School for the following reasons:

- The school is currently in Special Measures
- The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years
- There are more than 15% surplus places at the school
- The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average

1.3 Alternative options considered

A range of options were considered in line with the Schools Transformation Policy. These options, and the strengths and weaknesses of each, are outlined below.

i) Status quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers would continue to be below 50 in the short term
Maintains education provision in Llanbister	Cost per pupil would continue to be more than 120% of the Council's average for primary schools in the short term
	Potentially difficult to recruit a

<p>permanent headteacher</p> <p>Would not address the authority's concerns in relation to standards at the school</p> <p>No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools</p>
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ii) Closure of Llanbister CP School and site

Strengths	Weaknesses
Would address the issue of low pupil numbers	Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbister C.P. School is currently the closest school
Would reduce the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools	Loss of education provision from Llanbister
Would address the issue around cost per pupil	
Permanent leadership arrangements currently in place in proposed receiving school	
Would address the authority's concerns in relation to standards at the school	

iii) Closure of Llanbister CP School, but keep the site open as part of Crossgates CP School

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers on the Llanbister site would continue to be below 50 in the short term
Maintains education provision in Llanbister	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Permanent leadership arrangements currently in place in alternative school	Under the current funding

Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	arrangements, current pupil numbers on the Llanbister site would not attract sufficient funding to maintain 2 classes, therefore the site would need to be subsidised by the other school or the authority in the short term
	Llanbister CP School would lose its own identity
	Implications for Crossgates CP School, eg:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significant time requirement for the headteacher due to the fact that Llanbister CP School is currently in Special Measures - governing body would have to take responsibility for an additional building

iv) Federation of Llanbister CP School and another school

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers in Llanbister CP School would continue to be below 50 in the short term
Maintains education provision in Llanbister	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	Cost per pupil would continue to be more than 120% of the Council's average for primary schools
Both schools would retain their own identity	

v) Amalgamation of Llanbister CP School and another school to create a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers on the Llanbister site would continue to be below 50 in the short term
Maintains education provision in Llanbister	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	Under the current funding arrangements, current pupil numbers on the Llanbister site would not attract sufficient funding to maintain 2 classes, therefore the site would need to be subsidised by the other site. If the other site also had less than 50 pupils, this model would be unviable
	Both schools would lose their own identities

Having considered all of these options, and the strengths and weaknesses associated with each, the authority considers that closure of Llanbister C.P. School and site is the most suitable way forward.

1.4 Advantages and disadvantages of the proposal

As outlined above, the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School are listed below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Would address the issue of low pupil numbers	Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbister C.P. School is currently the closest school
Would reduce the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools	Loss of education provision from Llanbister
Would address the issue around cost per pupil	

Permanent leadership arrangements in place in proposed receiving school
Would address the authority's concerns in relation to standards at the school

1.5 Risks associated with the proposal

The following risks are associated with the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School:

Risk	Prob-ability	Impact	Response Strategy
Parents choose for their children to attend schools other than Crossgates C.P. School	Medium	Low	The authority will support the right of parents to apply for a place for their child at any school, and will allocate places where they are available. Transport would only be provided to qualifying pupils where a school is the closest provision to a child's home.
Insufficient capacity at neighbouring schools to accommodate pupils from Llanbister C.P. School	Medium	High	There is currently sufficient capacity at Crossgates C.P. School to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School. Should Llanbister C.P. School close, the authority would continue to monitor the situation in relation to capacity at Crossgates C.P. School, and would identify options in order to extend the school's capacity if / when necessary.

2. IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Impact of the proposal

2.1.1 Impact on the affected schools

i) Impact on the affected schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage

The number of pupils at Llanbister C.P. School is currently small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on the affected schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage to be significant. However, pupil numbers at the school are projected to increase in the next few years, which could potentially mean that the proposal would have a greater impact on the affected schools, in particular Crossgates C.P. School, in the future.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. However the authority's view is that this would not mean that the school would be unable to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage.

ii) Impact on outcomes at the affected schools

The number of pupils at Llanbister C.P. School is currently small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on outcomes at the affected schools to be significant. However, pupil numbers at the school are projected to increase in the next few years, which could potentially mean that the proposal would have a greater impact on the affected schools, in particular Crossgates C.P. School.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. However the authority's view is that this would not have a significant impact on outcomes at the affected schools.

iii) Impact on provision at the affected schools

Should the proposal be implemented, education would no longer be provided in Llanbister. Pupils would be able to access alternative provision at Crossgates C.P. School or other schools in the local area.

The number of pupils at Llanbister C.P. School is currently small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on provision at the affected schools to be significant. However, pupil numbers at the school are projected to increase in the next few years, which could potentially mean that the proposal would have a greater impact on the affected schools, in particular Crossgates C.P. School.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant.

iv) Impact on leadership and management at the affected schools

The number of pupils at Llanbister C.P. School is currently small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on leadership and management at the affected schools to be significant. However, pupil numbers at the school are projected to increase in the next few years, which may mean that the proposal would have a greater impact on the affected schools, in particular Crossgates C.P. School.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. Should a large number of pupils from schools in the local area transfer to Crossgates C.P. School, the leadership and management of Crossgates C.P. School could initially face challenges during this period of transition. However, it is not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on leadership and management at Crossgates C.P. School in the longer term.

2.1.2 Impact on staff

If a decision is made to proceed with the closure of Llanbister C.P. School, a staff redundancy process would be necessary. This would be conducted in line with the School's Redundancy Policies for teaching and support staff.

2.1.3 Impact Assessments

i) Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School. This assessment is provided in Appendix A.

The assessment found that the proposal would impact on a small number of pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups. However, the authority is confident that Crossgates C.P. School and any other school pupils might access can meet the needs of all pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School.

In terms of any pupils from low income families, free home to school transport would be provided to the alternative provision for qualifying pupils. This would ensure that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on pupils from lower income families. However, the authority does accept that might be more difficult for pupils from lower income families for whom Llanbister C.P. School is currently their closest school to access extra-curricular activities offered after school at Crossgates C.P. School or any alternative school due to their reliance on home to school transport.

ii) Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School. This assessment is provided in Appendix B.

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Llanbister has a community hall located on the site of the school. The current proposal in relation to Llanbister C.P. School does not propose any changes to the hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanbister C.P. School and at Crossgates C.P. School. Should Llanbister C.P. School close, it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. However, from the information received from Crossgates C.P. School, the majority of extra-curricular activities take place during the school day.

Closure of Llanbister C.P. School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils for whom this is currently the closest school, particularly given that Llanbister C.P. School already serves a very large catchment area.

2.2 Other implications

i) Financial implications

An assessment of the potential financial savings from the closure of Llanbister C.P. School has been carried out.

The estimated savings following closure of the school are provided below, based on the school's budget for 2015/16. The assessment does not include any possible redundancy costs.

Area of Funding	Full year Saving
Total Delegated Budget not transferring with the pupils to their alternative school	73,305
Additional Projected Savings	
Savings re Headteacher's Post (L12 – UPS3)	15,580
Projected Reduction in Canteen Subsidy	10,000
Total Additional Savings	25,580
Total Estimated Savings	98,885
Less Estimated Additional Transport Costs	(30,400)
Net Estimated Savings	68,485

Any savings to the authority realised as a result of the closure of Llanbister C.P. School will be deployed in line with the Schools Service Medium Term Financial Plan to support other schools' delegated budgets and to support the authority's 21st Century Schools programme through prudential borrowing.

ii) Land, buildings and resources

No capital funding is required in order to achieve the proposal. It is not currently anticipated that any building works would be necessary to ensure that the pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School could be accommodated at Crossgates C.P. School or any other school

which might be affected by this proposal. However, the authority would continue to monitor the position in relation to the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School, and would investigate options in order to increase the school's capacity if / when necessary.

The land and buildings currently occupied by Llanbister C.P. School are owned by the authority. If the school were to close, the authority would follow the agreed asset management disposal process in relation to the land and buildings. Any capital receipts received would be reinvested back into the authority's capital programme.

iii) Transport and travel

In the event of the closure of Llanbister C.P. School, qualifying pupils currently attending the school would receive transport to Crossgates C.P. School if they live two miles or more from the school. It should be noted that this arrangement would only apply to those pupils where Llanbister C.P. School is their nearest or allocated provision. If on closure of Llanbister C.P. School, another Powys school was the closest provision to their home address, pupils would receive transport to that school if they lived more than two miles from the school.

For new pupils from the area of the closed school who would be attending alternative provision, entitlement to free transport would be in accordance with the Council's policy at the time. The current policy is that pupils are eligible for free transport if they meet each of the following criteria:

- They are of primary school age, in accordance with Powys' admissions policy
- They attend their nearest or allocated school, or the school designated by the Council
- They live further away from the school than the statutory walking distance of two miles

It should be noted:

- Distance is measured by the shortest walking route between home and school (from the nearest council maintained road to the property, to the nearest school entrance onto the school site).
- Where contract or public passenger vehicles are used, it is not always possible to arrange the routes of vehicles to pass close to the home of all pupils. Therefore, parents may be required to make their own arrangements for their children to get to and from the nearest 'pick-up' point of the vehicle. Every effort is made to keep this distance to a minimum and it should not exceed 1 mile.

The actual transport arrangements would be known as soon as a contractor was appointed. Parents will be advised accordingly in relation to pick-up points, times etc.

In the event of closure of Llanbister C.P. School, it is unlikely that there would be suitable walking routes to the alternative schools available for pupils currently attending the school.

iv) Admissions

Admissions for both Llanbister C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School are administered by the authority.

In the event of closure of Llanbister C.P. School, parents of pupils currently attending the school would be allocated places at Crossgates C.P. School, or they would need to apply for a place in another chosen school in accordance with the authority's admissions process, which is as follows:

- i) Parents to complete an application form, which will be provided by the authority
- ii) Admissions form to be returned to the authority
- iii) Authority to inform parents whether admission to the chosen school has been granted.

For pupils wishing to transfer to schools located in other authorities, parents would need to follow the same procedure, and would need to apply via their home authority.

The authority's Admissions Team can be contacted by e-mailing admissionsandtransport@powys.gov.uk or by phoning (01597) 826477.

3. DETAILS OF AFFECTED SCHOOLS

The School Organisation Code states that information must be provided during a consultation about any schools affected by the proposal – these include any schools to which it might reasonably be considered that pupils may wish to transfer.

Should Llanbister C.P. School close, there are four alternative schools which would be the closest school for pupils that currently attend Llanbister C.P. School. These are:

- Crossgates C.P. School, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6RE
- Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Dolau, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5TW
- Ladywell Green Nursery and Infants School, Park Lane, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1EG
- Hafren C.P. Junior School, Park Lane, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1EG
- Newcastle Church of England Primary School, Church Road, Newcastle, Shropshire, SY7 8QL

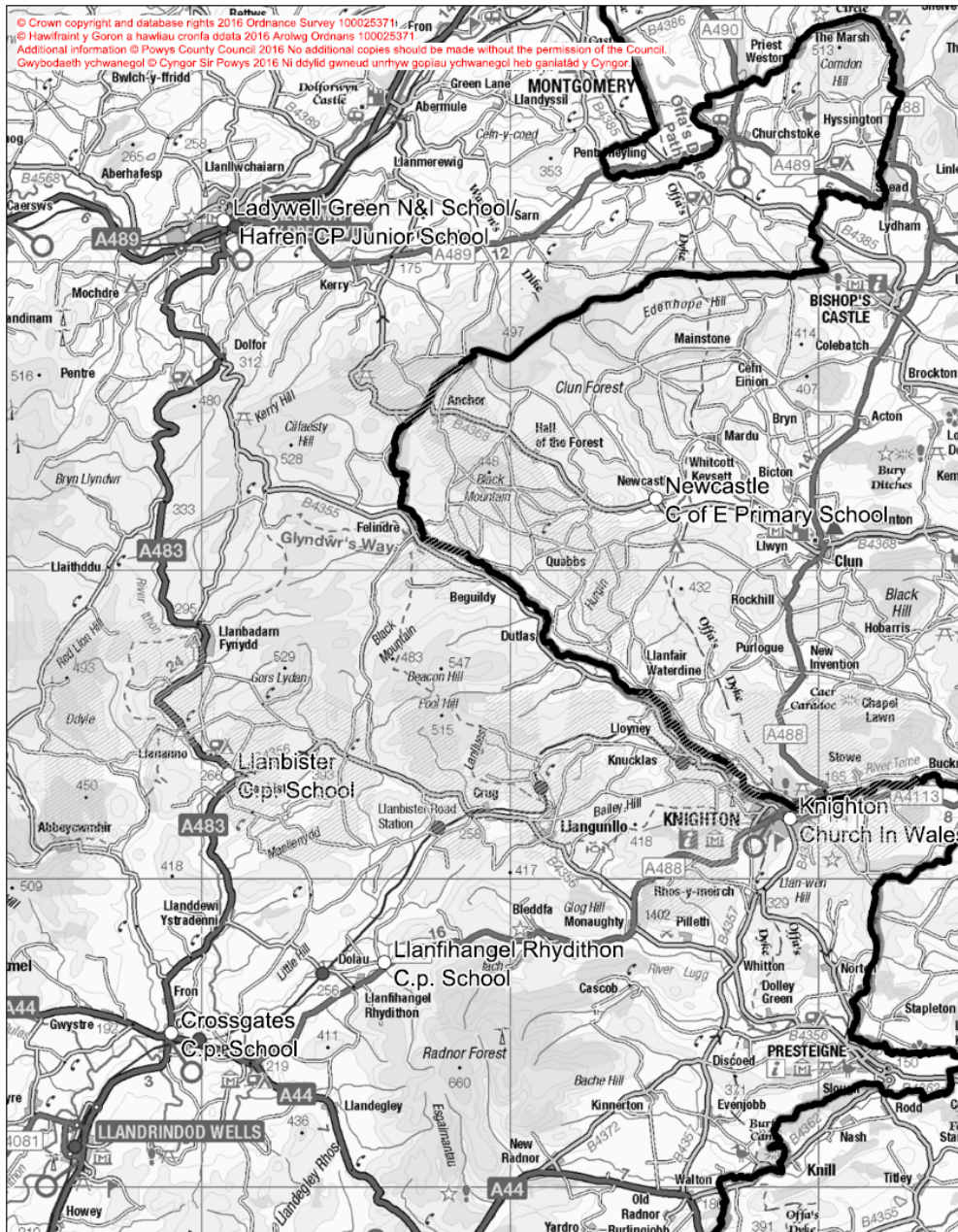
The Council is also carrying out consultation in relation to closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should this school close, there is one additional school which would be the closest for pupils that currently attend Llanbister C.P. School. This is:

- Knighton Church in Wales Controlled School, Knighton, Powys, LD7 1HP

Information about these six schools, as well as Llanbister C.P. School, Llanbister, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6TN are provided below.

3.1 Location map of the affected schools

The following map shows the location of Llanbister C.P. School and the other schools which may be affected by this proposal:



The distance from Llanbister C.P. School by road to the other schools is as follows:

- Crossgates C.P. School – 6.75 miles
- Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School – 7.21 miles
- Ladywell Green N & I School / Hafren C.P. Junior School – 13.21 miles
- Newcastle C. of E. School – 14.60 miles
- Knighton C. in W. School – 12.83 miles

3.2 General school information

School	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Capacity (R – Yr 6)	Nursery Places	Age Range
Llanbister C.P. School	Community Primary	English Medium	6	45	6	4 – 11
Crossgates C.P. School	Community Primary	English medium	30	210	28	4 – 11
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	Community Primary	English Medium	5	36	5	4 – 11
Ladywell Green Nursery & Infant School	Community Primary	English Medium	48	146	45	4 – 7
Hafren C.P. Junior School	Community Primary	English Medium	52	210	0	7 – 11
Newcastle C. of E. School	Voluntary Controlled C. of E.	English Medium	8	56	0	4 – 11
Knighton C. in W. School	Voluntary Controlled C. in W.	English Medium	35	249	35	4 – 11

The above capacity figures are based on the current assessed use of the school buildings. The capacities at Llanbister C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School have additional areas that have been used as teaching spaces in the past, and if demand increased could be used again.

3.3 Pupil numbers

i) Current and historical pupil numbers

Based on PLASC information, the total number of pupils (R – Yr 6) in each of the schools over the last 5 years is as follows:

	January 2015	January 2014	January 2013	January 2012	January 2011
Llanbister C.P. School	32	35	34	40	43
Crossgates C.P. School	142	120	126	138	143
Llanfihangel Rhydithon	29	34	34	38	34

C.P. School					
Ladywell Green Nursery & Infant School	122	134	141	124	103
Hafren C.P. Junior School	142	148	135	143	154
Newcastle C. of E. School	27	36	33	35	35
Knighton C. in W. School	203	194	186	197	194

ii) Projected pupil numbers

The current projected pupil numbers (R – Yr 6) for each of the schools is as follows

School	Jan. 2016³	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021⁴
Llanbister C.P. School	25	31	35	42	54	54
Crossgates C.P. School	140	144	140	145	147	145
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	28	28	34	34	34	34
Ladywell Green Nursery & Infant School	109	100	105	105	105	105
Hafren C.P. Junior School	158	160	160	158	144	137
Newcastle C. of E. School	28	23	24	22	21	N/A
Knighton C. in W. School	198	204	215	220	225	230

3.4 School building condition

³ Actual pupil numbers taken from Teacher Centre on the 29th January 2016, however these are not verified PLASC figures

⁴ Provisional projection based on the number of year 6 pupils that would be leaving the school in 2020.

The Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Survey identified that the quality of accommodation at each of the affected schools is as follows⁵:

	Condition	Suitability	Sustainability
Llanbister C.P. School	C	B	C
Crossgates C.P. School	B	A	B
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	C	B	B
Ladywell Green Nursery & Infant School	C	B/C	C
Hafren C.P. Junior School	C	B	C
Newcastle C. of E. School⁶	N/A	N/A	N/A
Knighton C. in W. School	B	B	C

3.5 Quality of the current provision

i) Estyn

Details of the most recent inspection for Llanbister C.P. School, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Ladywell Green N. & I. School, Hafren C.P. Junior School and Knighton C. in W. School are provided in the following table:

School	Date of Inspection	School's Current Performance	Prospects for Improvement	Follow up activity
Llanbister C.P. School	January 2015	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures
Llan-fihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	May 2012	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring Estyn

⁵ The categories used in the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Survey are defined as follows:

Category A	Good
Category B	Satisfactory
Category C	Poor
Category D	Bad

⁶ Newcastle C. of E. School is located in England therefore was not included in the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Survey. Shropshire Council do not hold comparable information.

				monitoring visit July 2013 – The school was judged to have made good progress, and was removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring
Ladywell Green N. & I. School	February 2011	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring Estyn monitoring visit May 2012 – The school was judged to have made good progress and was removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring
Hafren C.P. Junior School	November 2015	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring
Knighton C. in W. School	June 2014	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring

Crossgates C.P. School was last inspected before 2011, under the previous Estyn inspection arrangements. The grades awarded for each of the key questions are provided in the following table:

Crossgates C.P. School
Date of Inspection: June 2010

KQ 1: How well do learners achieve?	2
KQ 2: How effective are teaching, learning and assessment?	2
KQ 3: How well do learners' experiences meet the needs and interests of the learners and the wider community?	1
KQ 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
KQ 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
KQ 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
KQ 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

Newcastle C.of E. School is located in England, and is therefore inspected by Ofsted. The outcome of the school's most recent inspection is provided below:

Newcastle C. of E. School		
Date of Inspection: March 2014		
	Judgement	Grade
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and Management	Good	2

ii) National School Categorisation System

The National School Categorisation system gives a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve.

The system has been developed collectively between regional education consortia and Welsh Government. Its primary function is to identify, across Wales, the schools that need the most support. The colour category of support allocated to a school will trigger a bespoke, tailored support programme.

The system is based on three steps. It is not purely data-driven and takes into account the quality of leadership, teaching and learning in schools.

- **Step one – Standards group:** A range of information is used to make a judgement about the school's standards, resulting in a standards group
- **Step two – Improvement capacity:** An evaluation of the school's capacity to improve further, taking account of the evidence about the standards and the quality of leadership, teaching and learning, resulting in an improvement capacity

- **Step three – Support category:** Bringing the judgement on the standards group and improvement capacity together to decide on the school’s support category, colour coded either green, yellow, amber or red, with the schools in the green category needing the least support and those in the red category needing the most intensive support.

The affected schools were categorised as follows during 2015/16:

School	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Category
Llanbister C.P. School	3	D	Red
Crossgates C.P. School	2	B	Yellow
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	2	B	Yellow
Ladywell Green N. & I. School	1	A	Green
Hafren C.P. Junior School	2	C	Amber
Newcastle C. of E. School ⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A
Knighton C. in W. School	2	C	Amber

⁷ Newcastle C. of E. School is located in England therefore is not included in the Welsh Government’s National School Categorisation System

4. CONSULTATION DETAILS

4.1 Who will we consult with?

The authority will consult with all those required in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2013, which includes the following:

- The Governing Bodies of Llanbister C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Ladywell Green N. & I. School, Hafren C.P. Junior School, Newcastle C. of E. School, Knighton C. in W. School
- Parents, carers, guardians and staff of Llanbister C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Ladywell Green N. & I. School, Hafren C.P. Junior School, Newcastle C. of E. School, Knighton C. in W. School
- Pupils of Llanbister C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Ladywell Green N. & I. School, Hafren C.P. Junior School, Newcastle C. of E. School, Knighton C. in W. School
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Shropshire County Council
- Local County Councillors
- Town and Community Councils in the local area
- The AM for Brecknock & Radnor and regional AMs for the area
- The MP for Brecknock & Radnor
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- ERW
- The Police & Crime Commissioner
- The Regional Transport Consortium
- Nursery providers in the local area
- The Powys Children and Young People's Partnership

4.2 The consultation period

The consultation period for the current proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School from the 31st December 2016 will commence on the 11th February 2016 and will end on the 24th March 2016.

4.3 The statutory process

Consultation on this proposal will follow the guidelines set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2013). The process is summarised below:

4.3.1 Consultation

Consultation will start on the 11th February 2016 and will end on the 24th March 2016. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and it is anticipated that a report will be presented to the authority's Cabinet during the summer term 2016. The authority's Cabinet will consider the report

and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

4.3.2 Statutory notice

If the Cabinet decides to proceed, a statutory notice will be published, which will give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there are objections, the authority will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority's determination. Only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered in this report. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period will need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period if they are to be considered as objections.

A further report will be presented to the authority's Cabinet, which they will consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

4.3.3 Implementation

If the Cabinet approves the proposal, it will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date.

4.4 How to respond to the consultation

A consultation questionnaire is attached to this document, and is also available on the authority's internet site at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/plans-for-powys-schools/>. Alternatively, you can respond in writing.

Completed questionnaires and other written responses should be sent to the following address:

School Modernisation Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk

Responses must be received by the 24th March 2016.

If you have any further questions about this proposal, you can contact the School Modernisation Team using the above contact details, or on (01597) 826265.



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council's Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

Proposal	To close Llanbister CP School from the 31 st December 2016 with Crossgates CP School to be named as the receiving school	Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Sarah Astley
Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	5 th January 2016 Updated 29 th January 2016		
<p>The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':</p> <p>(a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;</p> <p>(b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;</p> <p>(c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p><i>The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.</i></p> <p>The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.</p>			
1. AIM or PURPOSE			
Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change	This consultation is about whether Powys County Council should commence the statutory process for the following: - Closure of Llanbister CP School from the 31 st December 2016. Crossgates CP School to be named as the receiving		

proposal being assessed.	school.	
2. OBJECTIVES		
Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.	<p>The authority is commencing the statutory process to close Llanbister CP School because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school is currently in Special Measures - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years - There are more than 15% surplus places at the school - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average 	
3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES		
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<p>The benefits of the proposal are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More efficient use of resources - Reduction in surplus places - Improvement in quality of education for pupils 	
4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE		
How does this change proposal relate to the Powys Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	<p>The proposal supports Powys County Council's vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that <i>'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'</i></p>	
5. DATA USED		
5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	
	Wider research reports and findings.	
	Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment	
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Please state the gaps: Qualitative data is not currently provided</p> <p>How will the gaps be addressed going forward?</p> <p>Qualitative data will be gathered during the consultation process, and the EqIA will be updated following the end of the consultation period to reflect the qualitative information received.</p>	
<p>6. DATA ANALYSIS</p>		
<p><u>6.1 Quantitative</u> Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?</p>	<p>Information on pupils who attend Llanbister CP School can be obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census 2015 (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. In relation to the protected characteristic groups, the profile of pupils at the school is provided below:</p> <p><u>Llanbister CP School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 36 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 28 pupils are aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 58% are boys and 42% are girls. - Free school meals: 6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 17% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 17% of pupils have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: No pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% <p>This information shows that the proportion of pupils in the school that belong to the protected characteristic groups is very small. 17% of pupils have additional learning needs and are in a protected characteristic group for disability, and a small percentage of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals. No</p>	

	pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken.	
<p>6.2 Qualitative Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</p> <p>iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</p> <p>iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</p>	<p>Consultation on the closure of Llanbister CP School will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013), and will include a meeting with pupils. This will provide qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and the impact on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Further detail will be added to the EqIA following the conclusion of the consultation period and consideration of the responses received.</p>	
7. EqIA RESULT		
Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please	The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]	
	The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality.	✓

tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.	[Proceed to question 8]	
	The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]	
8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT		
<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) Based on the pupils that were registered at the school on the 2015 PLASC counting date, 17% of pupils are in a protected characteristic group due to having additional learning needs.</p> <p>ii) 6% of pupils are eligible for free schools meals. Should Llanbister CP School close, free home to school transport would be provided to all qualifying pupils currently attending the school, regardless of income. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils from low income families, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the alternative school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p> <p>iii) Llanbister CP School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would have an adverse impact on Welsh speakers.</p>	
9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT		
<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p> <p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or</p>	<p>i) The authority is confident that the proposed receiving school and any other schools in the local area which pupils may prefer to transfer to would be able to meet the need of pupils currently attending Llanbister CP School who belong to the protected characteristic groups. Free home to school transport would be provided to qualifying pupils to the proposed receiving school or to their closest school.</p> <p>ii) At the current time, the proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove the impact, however this EqIA will be reviewed and updated following the formal consultation exercise.</p> <p>iii) At the current time, the proposal should not be considered for removal. However this EqIA will be reviewed and updated following the formal consultation exercise.</p>	

remove this impact? iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?		
9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Date added..... Reference.....	No <input type="checkbox"/> ✓ If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy
10. ONGOING MONITORING		
How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?		Please tick/shade
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	
Monitoring arrangements		
The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing		

change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.

Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.

The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Publication of results of the impact assessment

The results of the impact assessment will be published on the Council's website

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Any actions identified as a result of this impact assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan

APPENDIX B COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. The affected communities

1.1 Llanbister

Llanbister is a village located in mid Powys, on the A483 between Llandrindod Wells and Newtown. The village is located approximately 7 miles north of the village of Crossgates and 10 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells, and approximately 16 miles south of the town of Newtown. According to the 2011 Census, the Llanbister Community Council area had 382 residents⁸.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 14.32% of the population of Llanbister have one or more skills in Welsh. 1.05% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 ranks areas known as Local Super Output Areas (LSOA) in terms of deprivation, where 1 is the most deprived and 1909 is the least deprived. The village of Llanbister is located within the Llangunllo LSOA, which is ranked as follows⁹:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llangunllo	1296

Llanbister CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School, which serves a large rural area encompassing 4 parishes. The school has a co-located community hall.

1.2 Crossgates

Crossgates is a village located in Mid Powys approximately 3 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells. It is situated at the point where the A483 and the A44 meet. According to the 2011 Census, there were 701 residents¹⁰ in the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council, which includes the village of Crossgates.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 17.08% of the population of the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council have one or more skills in Welsh. 0.29% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

⁸ 2011 Census information for the Llanbister Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

⁹ <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

¹⁰ 2011 Census information for the Rhayader Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

Crossgates is located within the Local Super Output Area (LSOA) of Llanbadarn Fawr. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks the Llanbadarn Fawr LSOA as follows, where 1 is the most deprived LSOA and 1909 is the least deprived¹¹:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llanbadarn Fawr	1360

Crossgates CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School.

2. Community Impact Assessment

2.1 Impact on pupil travel

i) Llanbister CP School

The home addresses of the 36 children (N – Yr 6) that were attending Llanbister CP School at the last PLASC counting day in January 2015 were analysed by the council's Research and Information Unit. This analysis showed that Llanbister CP School was the closest school for 32 pupils, which is 88.9% of the pupils attending the school. The closest schools for all of the 36 pupils is summarised in the following table:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Llanbister CP School	32
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	4

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for pupils attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 was 3.76 miles.

If there were no school in Llanbister, the next closest school for the children that were attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 would be as follows:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Crossgates C.P. School	18
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	9
Ladywell Green N & I School / Hafren Junior School, Newtown	8
Newcastle CE Primary School, Shropshire	1

¹¹ <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for the pupils that were attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 to their nearest alternative school would be 7.58 miles.

Should there be no school in Llanbister, there would be an increase in travel for the 32 pupils for whom Llanbister CP School was their closest school. The maximum journey for a pupil to their closest alternative school would be 10.18 miles.

2.2 Extra-curricular activities provided by the schools

i) Llanbister CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours, depending on the season:

- i) Breakfast Club
- ii) Gardening Club
- iii) Netball Club
- iv) Football Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Hockey; Cross country; Orienteering; Athletics; Art project undertaken with local artist; Educational walk with the Country Landowners Association (School was chosen to take part due to its proximity to the moor)

ii) Crossgates CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours:

- i) Crossgates Out of School Club
- ii) Breakfast Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Netball; Ball Skills; Green Club; Games Club; ICT Club

2.3 Community use of the school building

i) Llanbister CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Use of school building and equipment by Cantal YFC and Llanbadarn Fynydd YFC

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Social and fundraising events held by the PTA; Community sports events;
School yard is used for parking for funerals, concerts, meetings and parties

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Privately run Early Years centre based in mobile across the car park

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Regular events held by the school's PTA in the school buildings and on the grounds

2.4 Other links with the community

i) Llanbister CP School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

Involvement with Llanbister Community Sports, which is held annually in May and Llanbadarn Fynydd Community Sports, which is held annually in June. This includes involvement with organising recreational activities on the field and participation in competitions held specifically for Llanbister CP School pupils.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school has links with a number of organisations and individuals within the community, which include the following:

Vicar, Golden Age Club

2.5 Support that could be offered by the receiving school to parents and pupils that currently attend Llanbister CP School

A transition programme would be put in place to support pupils with their transition to Crossgates CP School.

2.6 Conclusion

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Llanbister has a community hall located on the site of the school. The draft recommendation in relation to Llanbister CP School does not propose any changes to this hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanbister CP School and at the proposed receiving school. Should Llanbister CP School close, it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. However, from the information received from Crossgates CP School, the majority of extra-curricular activities take place during the school day.

Closure of Llanbister CP School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils for whom this is currently the closest school, particularly given that Llanbister CP School already serves a very large catchment area.

2. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent, member of staff, governor)

3. Name (optional)

4(a). Would you like to be informed of the publication of the consultation report?

Yes No

4(b). If you answered 'Yes', please provide an e-mail address or postal address:

Completed questionnaires should be sent to the following address, by the **24th March 2016**:

School Modernisation Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk



Consultation on the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School

Consultation Report

August 2016

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Consultation on the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School

1. Overview of the consultation

Powys County Council consulted on a proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School with effect from the 31st December 2016 during the period 11th February 2016 to the 5th May 2016.

1.1 Consultation methods

The consultation documentation was available on the council's website throughout the consultation period, and was distributed to stakeholders, as required by the School Organisation Code (2013). A separate version for young people was also available and distributed to pupils, and was also available on the council's website throughout the consultation period.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing an online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall, or writing to the School Modernisation Team.

Meetings were also held with the following:

- School Council – 8th March 2016
- Staff – 10th March 2016
- Governors – 10th March 2016
- Parents / community – 10th March 2016

1.2 Responses received

A total of 194 written responses were received to the consultation. These included:

- i) 28 responses to the online questionnaire
- ii) 166 other written responses

This included a response from Estyn, which is provided on page 19.

1 written response was received from a current pupil, and in addition, 9 written 'pupil debates' were received.

In addition, copies of two petitions were received. One of these was signed by 603 people and the other was signed by 164 people. Both petitions included written comments.

2 Consultation with pupils

2.1 Written responses from pupils

1 written response was received from a pupil currently attending Llanbister C.P. School. In addition, 9 copies of written debates which had been prepared by pupils on the subject 'Debate to keep Llanbister School open' were provided to the School Transformation Team.

The issues listed in these responses are summarised below:

- Why do you want to close all small schools in Radnorshire?
- We will have nothing left in our community for the younger people
- Concern that pupils will have to change school during the school year and that the teachers in the new school won't know what work they have covered
- It will be hard for pupils to make friends if they are shy, this could cause them to feel sad and ruin their education
- It will affect the community as the hall will shut and no activities will take place
- Crossgates School will be overcrowded
- Children will get new friends and will forget their old friends
- Will there be enough toilets?
- Children will be in a tight space – this might cause more germs to be passed on
- Money will need to be spent to get more classes for Crossgates
- Families will have to spend more money on uniforms
- Crossgates might need a bigger playground
- More money will need to be spent on petrol for the buses and cars
- The community will split if there's no hall in Llanbister
- Concern that they would lose their friends if they have to move school
- There will be no school nearby for newcomers to the area
- Because there are less pupils at Llanbister there is more time for one to one with the teacher which improves children's education
- Teachers will have to find new jobs
- It will cost more to transport pupils to Crossgates
- Concerned about the impact of petrol fumes to children's health when they are playing outside in the playground
- There will be a lot more pupils coming to Llanbister School over the next few years
- Powys only think about money – they don't think about the children and what may happen to their future
- Portacabins are too small and often cramped, and won't have all the equipment you need
- Children in the portacabins will be parted from the rest of the school and would have to walk further to the dining rooms and other facilities
- The council will have to pay for more teachers

- You get more one to one attention in small schools which will increase your levels and you will get better grades
- Children would have to change schools and change teachers
- Pupils may be upset because they wanted to stay with their old teacher
- Children will have to make new friends but they may want to stay with their old friends
- Closing the school will split up best friends
- You don't realise that there isn't enough room in Crossgates
- Concern that it could take 30 minutes to go to the toilet if you are taught in a portacabin and have to go to the main school, which will mean that pupils miss out on the lesson
- It will be harder to make friends because there are already friendships
- Pupils might get bullied for being new

2.2 Meeting with the School Council

Officers from the local authority met with the School Council of Llanbister C.P. School to get their views on the proposal. The issues raised in this meeting are summarised below:

What do you like about Llanbister School?

- There are lots of toys
- The classrooms are nice and colourful
- They learn lots of stuff
- It's a small school so they all know each other
- There isn't many people in the school so they get more attention, more help and more opportunities
- They like the P.E. lessons
- They like the sports they do after school
- They have a big yard so there is more space to play
- The food is nice

What don't you like about Llanbister School?

- Welsh classes
- It is noisy at dinner time

What would be worse if you had to move to a different school?

- They would have further to travel
- Some people will go to different schools so they may be split up from their friends
- They may not be able to see their friends every day
- They will have to get used to different teachers and a new school lay-out
- They will have to move in the middle of the school year
- Crossgates C.P. School will be overcrowded
- They may get muddy from the field

Is there anything that would be better if you had to move to a different school?

- Would have more friends
- Might have a better teacher
- There is a field at Crossgates C.P. School but there isn't here
- Because the school is lower down they may have less snow

What do you think the impact of closure of the school would be on pupils that have additional needs?

- It might be more difficult for them to travel
- The school may not have the right teachers to help them
- It might be harder for them to move around if they are in a wheelchair and the school is busy
- They might get made fun of

Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following issues were asked:

- How would the transport work?

Pupil debates

The pupils had taken part in a debate about the closure of Llanbister C.P. School as part of a P.S.E. lesson. Two pupils read out their statements against the closure of the school. These statements included the following points:

- Pupils will have to change schools half way through the school year which will affect their education and the teachers in the new school won't know what they have covered
- It will be hard to make new friends if they are shy which could make them feel sad and could ruin their education
- It will affect the community because the hall will shut and then the activities will not carry on
- Crossgates C.P. School will be overcrowded
- They will get new friends and may forget their old friends
- Being compact into tight spaces will increase the chance of germs being passed on
- Money will be spent on building more classrooms
- Parents will have to spend more money on new uniforms
- A new playground might be needed for Crossgates C.P. School
- There will be more transport on the roads and more fumes damaging the environment
- The children get a better education because there is more time to have one to one support
- It will cost more money to transport pupils to Crossgates C.P. School

- The impact of the petrol station being close to the school on the children's health
- The number of pupils attending Llanbister C.P. School is due to rise
- The portable cabins are too small and will be far away from the school

3 Consultation meetings

Consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents / the community were held during the consultation period. The issues raised at these meetings are listed below:

3.1 Meeting with staff

- Why are you closing all the small schools in Radnorshire? There are schools in Montgomeryshire with fewer pupils which have not been closed. There are only 3 councillors on the Cabinet who are not from Montgomeryshire
- It is probably a closed case anyway
- The school is projected to have a very good intake of pupils in the next few years – where will they go?
- Crossgates School will be overcrowded
- Pupils will be in larger class sizes – that is not good for the children
- Children will find it hard going to a bigger school – many younger children will not cope well as they would get 'lost in the system'. Some children do not cope well in larger classes
- Concern about impact on families who already have one sibling in school – the child who is already in Llanbister is guaranteed a place at Crossgates but if Crossgates is not their closest school then this would not be the case for siblings, so parents could have children in different schools
- What if the classes were full to capacity and a family already has one child in Crossgates and the sibling cannot get a place in the school?
- Parents need a guarantee that siblings can get a place in the school if the older child is in Crossgates School
- Parents will be disadvantaged if they have children in two different schools
- If Crossgates is projected to be near capacity, would it not be sensible to keep this school open so siblings can attend the same school?
- The school already works closely with Crossgates, there are 3 members of staff at this school who have already worked at Crossgates, couldn't the site be kept open as part of Crossgates?
- The number of pupils at Crossgates is going to grow very quickly – are there any plans to increase capacity?
- The mobile classroom at Crossgates is not fit for purpose
- Repairs to the roof of the mobile at Crossgates will not suffice
- You are going to be transferring children from a permanent building to a portacabin
- The biggest year group at Llanbister is the nursery age group, they will be in reception by the time the proposal to change the school admission age is implemented
- Concern about the toilet facilities in the mobile – you can't expect 30 children to use 2 toilets – more toilets will need to be included, this would reduce the capacity of the mobile
- Affordable housing is planned in the area, that will encourage more young families to come to the area so Crossgates will get bigger

- The provision here is perfectly acceptable, the pupils are happy and are learning.
- How can Llanbister School building be rated as C/D? It is either one or the other.
- The toilet area has been refurbished since the building survey was completed.
- There are no leaking roofs at this school.
- We can provide our own school dinners here.
- The condition of the building is better than 'C'.
- Concern that pupils will be tired when they arrive at school if they have to travel to Crossgates
- Concern that pupils will be a long time on school transport and some will have to go on two different lots of transport.
- The Authority is saying the school transport will be provided to Crossgates School should Llanbister close, would the authority provide transport for Felindre children to Knighton School?
- Concern that closure of the school would impact on the children's friendship groups
- Concern that closure would have a big impact on the community
- Extra-curricular activities and community groups take place in the school buildings
- Parents of pupils at this school and at Crossgates School will not want their children taught in a mobile classroom
- Safety issues at Crossgates School in relation to car parking.
- If a decision is made to close the school, will there be a separate meeting for staff?
- If a decision is made to close the school and staff were given notice, would they be invited to put their names on the redeployment register?
- Concern about the Redeployment Policy – should have been revised years ago
- School closures are impacting on the lives of many school staff
- Concern about heads being told they have to interview redeployees – they are not going to take kindly to that.
- Request for an explanation of the redeployment process
- The staff at this school are dedicated to the pupils
- What happens to staff on fixed term contracts? Would they be dismissed if their contract finishes?
- If the school closed and pupils transferred to Crossgates and there was a need for additional Teaching Assistants at Crossgates, would the governing body need to give priority to staff from this school?
- If we were made redundant and have worked in different schools, would we get redundancy pay based on the entire period?
- Is it because the school is under threat of closure that we have only been given temporary contracts until August?
- Concern about staff being expected to travel 20 miles for posts following redeployment.

3.2 Meeting with governors

- The community is united in support of the school
- Reference to a photograph of all children in the school and playgroup – 69 children, which included current and potential pupils
- Concerns around standards of education at the school were over leadership, not the children's educational standards
- School was placed in Special Measures due to leadership and management of the school being graded unsatisfactory
- School has continued to make progress each time Estyn have returned to monitor the school
- Local authority report after a monitoring visit on the 3/2/16 gave Llanbister Amber for its progress in all areas of the action Plan – no red judgements from the Local Authority, so they should be no longer concerned about standards at the school when they have reported that the school is making progress
- An action plan for Special Measures is in place for a minimum of 18 months to 2 years, therefore it will be at least this time next year before we can remove the label of 'Special Measures'
- The present staff of Llanbister are not the staff responsible for Special Measures.
- 2015 results – 100% of Llanbister pupils in Yr 2 and Yr 6 achieved the expected levels at the end of the year, placing the school in quartile 1 for all areas of the tested subjects, which means Llanbister is in the top 25% of results in Wales.
- School given an ERW categorisation of 3 for standards, as it is based on the average of the last 3 years
- This year, pupils are again projected to achieve the expected levels, so again 100%, so would expect to improve in the ERW categorisation
- ERW make a second judgement on leadership, which was deemed to be unsatisfactory, giving an overall categorisation of red.
- Estyn still have concerns that the Local Authority are holding back on providing stability at the school as all staff contracts are due to end on the 31/8/16 – not even lasting until 31/12/16 when the authority proposes to close the school.
- Page 3 of the consultation document state building condition 'D' or 'C' – why is this?
- Building condition was assessed in 2009, since then, boys and girls cloakrooms were extensively refurbished
- Agreed that a detailed breakdown would be provided of how the building has been categorised – still have not received this.
- Visual survey been carried out by a Structural Engineer based in Llandrindod, based on this, governors believe the building should be category 'B'.
- Concern about capacity at Crossgates – will be over capacity based on projected numbers

- There are no plans for new build or a new mobile classroom / refurbishment of the existing mobile classroom – if there were, costings would have been provided in the Consultation document as a comparison to the maintenance of the status quo as laid out in section 1.5 of the School Organisation Code.
- By 2019 a second mobile would be required – there are no costings provided for this.
- We have to ask whether a breach of the School Organisation exists – Section 1.4 which states accommodation of at least equivalent quality for existing and projected pupil numbers
- SORP meeting 15 December 2015 – ‘Officers agreed that it would not be aspirational to have pupils taught in mobile classrooms on a permanent basis’
- Becoming a site of Crossgates would alleviate the need for children to be taught in lower standard accommodation having already completed an additional 7 mile bus journey
- We would make every effort to make merger with Crossgates a success
- Projected figures show that pupil numbers will increase over the next few years – by Summer of 2017 there will only be 4 spare places, will exceed capacity by the Summer of 2018 – these figures are based on real children
- Even if proposed changes to age of admission were passed, numbers are looking good even without nursery pupils
- Why does the School Transformation Policy only examine historical data, why does it not look to the future?
- Cabinet meeting on 26th January – mis-representation of pupil numbers and capacity available at Crossgates, pupil numbers quoted only included Reception to Year 6 pupils, didn’t include Nursery pupils.
- Request for confirmation of an accurate figure for the number on roll at Crossgates on 4th April 2016 and September 2016.
- Crossgates presently has 22% surplus places, which means that the school meets the School Transformation criteria – hope that Llanbister hasn’t been targeted purely to rectify the problem with surplus capacity at Crossgates
- Enlarging class sizes at Crossgates will have a negative impact on educational performance for the children from Llanbister and also the children currently in Crossgates School
- Assumed that education at Crossgates is adequate although they haven’t had an Estyn inspection for 6 years.
- Financial pressures that will be placed on Crossgates by more pupils, reduction in cost per pupil and enlarged class sizes will have a detrimental impact on overall education
- Classroom sizes projected for January 2017 are well above the Welsh average of 25 pupils per class.
- Average size of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes in the future will be unlawful as they will exceed 30 pupils
- Llanbister School has capacity for all of the projected pupils in the catchment area.

- Increase in pupil numbers to over 50 within 2 years and reduction of surplus capacity to 9% in one year from now will disregard 2 of the criteria which places the school under review.
- Figures for Crossgates do not take account of children transferring from Nantmel.
- Capacity figures for Llanbister are based on using one room as a single classroom, this could be divided and used as 2 teaching spaces with a total capacity of 71.
- Many housing developments proposed for the local area.
- Ysgol Trefonnen is full to capacity and pupils are being transported to Crossgates
- Governors believe that there is a misrepresentation of savings from closure quoted in the consultation document
- Governors dispute the cost of additional school transport that would be required – the figures need further investigation
- There will be one-off costs to refurbish the mobile classroom e.g. re-felting the roof, repairing the floor structure, update the heating system, install fire and security alarm system, relocate CCTV system, install ICT facilities and furniture – estimated total costs £50k
- Second mobile would be needed at Crossgates to accommodate increased pupil numbers – estimated total costs £145k
- If the authority were to apply for 21st century schools funding to extend Crossgates School, there would be a cost to the taxpayer and Powys County Council as the Council would have to match fund Welsh Government funding.
- No sound business case for closure because the County Council will need to invest more money in transport
- Merger is the only financial solution – the additional costs listed would be savings under merger and the added cost of transport would not be needed.
- Concern about pupils spending more time on school transport than at home with their families
- Concern that pupils would be losing out on educational resources because more money would need to be spent on school transport
- Pupils would miss out on the opportunity to attend extra-curricular activities because activities at Crossgates do not take place at lunchtime as stated in the consultation document
- Transported pupils will not be able to access daily extra-curricular activities as the current pupils of Crossgates do.
- Governors acknowledge savings need to be made and are not against closure of Llanbister School providing that it can be merged with Crossgates and education remains on the Llanbister site
- Challenge to the reasons against a merger listed in the consultation document.
- There are many sound reasons to merge e.g. forecast of 66 pupils, senior teacher in place who is committed to the school, leadership and management guaranteed by the headteacher and governors of the merged school,

reduction in cost per pupil guaranteed by rising numbers, insufficient capacity at receiving school, saving in transport costs

- Recommendation to close the school has been made in a rush to close the school before it escapes the net

3.3 Meeting with parents / community

- Pupil numbers in the school are projected to increase by 82% in the next 4 years
- Consultation states that pupil numbers would continue below 50 in the short term – can you clarify how long short term is?
- What is the current number of pupils on roll at Crossgates?
- Where are the nursery aged pupils at Crossgates currently taught?
- Why are nursery aged pupils not included in the data on pupil numbers in the consultation document?
- What is the capacity per class in Crossgates and what would be acceptable?
- The consultation document is misleading – there has been no formal change to the age of admission yet, so the nursery needs to be accounted for
- In January 2017, the total number of children in Crossgates will be 231
- You have not factored in children from Nantmel who will transfer to Crossgates
- Some year groups in Llandrindod are full and children are being transported to Crossgates – where will you put these children?
- Should the proposal go ahead, the capacity at Crossgates School would be exceeded
- By keeping the school in Llanbister you would be able to provide education in the community and ensure that capacity at Crossgates is not exceeded
- A mobile should not be an acceptable alternative to a permanent school building
- Consultation document states that the overall condition of the Llanbister building is D or C, however in section 3.4 the building is classified as C, why is this?
- What is sustainability in relation to building condition?
- Despite 3 FOI requests, we are still waiting for information as to how the building has been assessed.
- The school commissioned an independent structural survey of the school buildings, and the surveyor stated that all of the buildings forming the school are structurally sound.
- How has the school building been graded as poor when £120k was spent on it 6 years ago?
- Why are you using reports from 2009 to consider that the building is D rated when £120k has been spent on the building since?
- Can we have clarification that the information reported in the document was based on the classification of the building before investment of £120k?
- It is disgraceful that you published a consultation document based on information on the school building's condition before £120k was spent on it.

- How much will it cost to bring the mobile at Crossgates up to a fit for purpose standard?
- Do you think it will be possible to maintain a suitable temperature in the mobile classroom?
- Are the mobile at Ysgol Carno as old as the one at Crossgates School?
- There is poor ventilation in the mobile and problems with vermin
- Parents are concerned about their children being taught in a mobile
- Concern that the children in the mobile will feel isolated from the main school
- Concern about access to the mobile in bad weather
- Seems a backward step for pupils to go from a good permanent school building to a mobile.
- Have you factored in the costs of bringing the mobile up to standard?
- In 2005, the Council decided to invest substantial money in extending Crossgates School - £2.2m was spent, and now you are proposing to have children taught in mobiles. At that time, the Council decided that mobiles should not be regarded as a permanent solution – what has changed?
- Would you agree that it would be acceptable to put all council officers in mobiles instead of County Hall?
- You mentioned the school at Carno as having mobiles but that is because they are building a new school
- Welsh Government guidelines state that mobiles should only be used for 3 years
- How long have pupils at Ysgol Carno been taught in mobile classrooms?
- We need to hear that there are long term plans – a mobile classroom does not fit the bill
- Concerns about inaccuracies in the method used in the Community Impact Assessment to determine closest schools and computation of distances and travelling times.
- Concern about lack of assessment of cognitive damage which will have an impact on the children
- Community Impact Assessment does not consider the significance of the increase in travel time or consider a weighting
- The document is based on January 2015 figures and will be two years out of date at the time of the proposed closure of the school – a valid assessment can only be based on school attendance figures at the time of proposed closure.
- You have calculated the next nearest school based on the nearest but not the most practicable route e.g. the B4355 is repeatedly closed because of snow and the roads to Newcastle are dangerous in the winter
- Consultation document does not take into account that parents may opt for Welsh-medium education
- We do not want children separated and placed in separate schools because of the transport policy – we want assurance that all children in Llanbister School will be entitled to free transport to Crossgates
- We need assurance that siblings would be entitled to transport even if Crossgates is not their nearest school

- We need assurance that all children will be accommodated in Crossgates so that they can maintain their friendships
- What about the children who are not yet on the roll of Llanbister School?
- What would happen if Crossgates School was full?
- Concern that the Council cannot guarantee that there will be places for future children at Crossgates – you are splitting the community and you will be splitting families
- Consultation does not assess the impact of closing Dolau and Nantmel
- Reference to Newcastle school, however that school is in England – pupils are entitled to be educated in Wales
- Figures quoted for distances to nearest alternative school are inaccurate. Do not take account of the fact that some of the roads will be closed due to the construction of the Newtown bypass.
- All pupils will experience a 50% increase in distances to be travelled to school
- The maximum shortest journey to Crossgates is just over 16 miles
- What is the recommended travelling time for children to travel to school?
- There are pupils in Llanbister School who travel from Felindre and who have a journey time of 50 minutes already – why are some children travelling more than the recommended journey time and why are you recommending a proposal which will mean children will be travelling longer than the recommended journey time?
- Reference to the work of John Bowlby which suggests that there is a high probability that pupils will be emotionally impacted by long journeys
- Concern about separation anxiety for children of 4 years of age
- Concern that a long journey particularly if there is shared transport with older children is likely to have an effect on pupils
- Longer journey times may mean that parents may not be immediately available to attend if their child is taken ill at school and longer journey times can have a detrimental effect on children's ability and willingness to learn
- Closure of Llanbister school would mean extra costs for families
- Consultation document is based on out of date data in relation to extra-curricular provision
- We understand that savings have to be made and the school community is willing to work with you.
- Concern that attendance would drop if pupils were attending Crossgates School if there was bad weather and transport didn't run
- Consultation document doesn't give a full picture of the financial costs of closing the school
- The Council has deliberately excluded financial information and underestimated the costs of closing the school
- Transport costs estimated as just over £68k, we estimate the costs to be £142k to Crossgates – would question whether this is cost effective
- Received a verbal quote of £39k for a bus from Llaithddu to Crossgates
- Transport costs could double due to projected increase in pupils
- Do the estimated transport costs include children who currently live in the Llanbister catchment but travel to Crossgates?

- School transport costs are annual costs, not one off payments – additional costs would have an impact on overall savings, which would decrease significantly
- The data in the consultation document is not correct and does not explain the full impact closure of the school would have on the community or the financial impact
- There would be financial discrepancy if the proposal to close Llanbister School were to go ahead.
- You have implied that high school and primary school children could travel together on school transport
- Concern about the wellbeing of young children sharing school transport with secondary school aged children
- Would there be another adult on school transport with the children other than the driver?
- Concern about impact on Ti a Fi playgroup – would lead to parents being isolated if the playgroup were to close
- Playgroup provides regular opportunities for parents of children in the playgroup to meet and talk to teachers in the school, which assists the children with transition to school.
- Request for clarification in relation to the transition process that would be put in place to aid pupils with their transfer to Crossgates.
- What provision is there for the playgroup? The setting on the Crossgates site is for 2 and 3 year olds, it is not a mother and babies group
- How has Welsh Language provision been factored in?
- Concern about the impact on Cantal and Llanbadarn YFC – should the school close, children would travel to other schools and use youth services in other areas
- Concern about impact on The Lion Hotel – events at the school mean that the pub is busy, school playground is used by the pub when there are weddings and funerals, many parents of pupils call in to buy papers and provisions from the pub.
- The village has already lost the shop, no more must be lost
- Would the community be able to use car parking on the school site if the school were to close?
- How will Powys County Council help businesses and the community to survive if the school is closed?
- The community is in favour of retaining the school site, this is more important than retaining the school name.
- Concern about impact on the Community Hall – school currently pays the Hall Committee approximately £3k a year for use of the hall during the day, also receives additional funding for school concerts and events held by the school – if the school were to close, these income streams would be under threat
- What will the Council do to help our hall survive if the primary school closes? An estimated 50% of funding for the hall comes from the school.
- Concern that children may be educated in different shires e.g. Llandrindod High School and Ladywell Green / Hafren.

- There will be two teachers out of contract at the end of August – what steps has the local authority taken to ensure that there will be teachers to run the school from September?
- Concern that local community councils have not been informed of the consultation
- The consultation document is not reliable or fit for purpose
- Reference to concern about benzene at Crossgates School – parents are alarmed that it is proposed to send children to Crossgates, which is within 100m of a petrol station.
- Only basic tests in relation to benzene have been undertaken at Crossgates.
- Take offence at the statement that no children who attend Llanbister School were directly affected by closure of Beguildy School – children attended the playgroup in Beguildy and were familiar with the surroundings, although they were too young to attend the school.
- Closure of Beguildy had a devastating effect on the community – children are growing up as strangers and attend 7 different schools in Wales and England. Community events have reduced.
- How does this fit in with the Council’s slogan ‘strong communities in the green heart of Wales’?
- Pupil numbers at the school will double and surplus places will not be an issue
- Education standards have never been a cause for concern and leadership issues will be resolved
- The school buildings are not a problem
- Merging with Crossgates would achieve the aims identified and would achieve savings
- Has to be accepted that Crossgates School does not have sufficient capacity in the long term to accommodate all pupils – parents will not accept education in a substandard accommodation
- If 21st Century Schools funding is needed when would it be available?
- Will the Cabinet report be publicly available, and will the Cabinet meeting be public?
- Concern that the Council will be up to 98% capacity in schools in North Radnorshire by 2020 – will fail to have surplus capacity of 10%
- Did you consult with the Regional Transport Consortium?
- Page 26 of Code says that you should put forward descriptions of the benefits of each option – closure, merger or amalgamation. In your documentation you have only talked about closure not about merger.
- Page 27 of Code – you are expected to discuss standards or quality of education
- Why did you not state in the proposal that you were intending to use a mobile classroom? – we had to work out that you were talking about a portacabin
- Why have you not removed the portacabin – are you in breach of your own building regulations?
- How are the estimated additional transport costs in the Nantmel document the same as the Llanbister document?

- Powys County Council will face criticism that it is the prosecutor, judge and jury – under Appendix E of the Code there is a process where you could appoint an independent body to look at your proposal – why did you not follow appendix E?

4 ESTYN

Estyn's response to the consultation is provided below:

Estyn response to the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School County Primary School

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is by Powys County Council.

The proposal is to close Llanbister C.P. School, Llanbister, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6TN from the 31st December 2016, with Crossgates C.P. School, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6RE to be named as the receiving school.

Summary/Conclusion

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to improve the educational outcomes and provision for pupils in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal that includes addressing the issue of surplus places. The proposer clearly sets out its vision for a new Powys Schools Transformation Policy and refers to its primary and secondary school transformation programme, which aims to have the right number of schools in the right places and to remove surplus places.

The proposer clearly defines the reasons why the school should close.

The school is currently in Special Measures and is judged to be a school causing concern as classified by ERW's implementation of the National Model of School Improvement. The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the

three previous years and the percentage of surplus places in the school is higher than 15%. The overall building condition is categorised as category D or C based on the Welsh Government's assessment of building condition. The cost per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average for the sector.

The proposer has set out the pupil projections year on year until January 2020. These are very low, but are set to increase in the next few years. The proposer states that there is enough capacity within the cluster to accommodate pupils from Llanbister C.P. School should it close.

The proposer has included a clearly defined list of options and risks associated with the proposal if the school was to remain open or be closed. These appear to be reasonable and focus on recruitment to leadership positions, variable standards achieved by learners, costs of running the school and the number of surplus places across the authority.

The proposer has clearly set out admission arrangements, and suggests that there are four other schools where pupils may wish to transfer. It states that the anticipated proposal will have little or no effect on the pupils on roll in the local area. The proposer has set out and stands by its commitment to providing free home to school transport and the impact on pupil travel arrangements is minimal. The proposer does not appear to have undertaken a Welsh language impact assessment. However, the proposer has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment that includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh. It has concluded that these proposals would not adversely affect any particular group.

Educational aspects of the proposal

Llanbister C.P. School has been categorised by the regional school improvement consortium (the EAS) as a school causing concern needing the most intensive support. Estyn in its most recent inspection of the school in January 2015 identified the school as requiring special measures.

The proposer has included information about the performance of schools identified as potential recipients for Llanbister pupils should there be a decision to close the school. This information includes their inspection outcomes and their national category. The information demonstrates that these schools (Crossgates C.P. and Ladywell N. & I) are effective or highly effective and that their inspection outcomes are at least adequate. The information suggests that should the proposal be implemented, it is likely that outcomes and provision for pupils in the area would improve.

5 ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD

The following tables list the issues raised during the consultation period, including issues raised in writing by pupils and all other consultees, and issues raised in the consultation meetings held with the School Council, staff, governors and parents / the community.

REF	ISSUE	LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE
1 IMPACT ON PUPILS		
1.1 Pupil well-being		
1.1.1	The stress on young children will be unacceptable	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.2	Closure of the school would be detrimental to pupil well-being	The authority is committed to ensuring the well-being of all pupils, and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.3	Concern about the impact of additional travel time on pupil well-being	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the</p>

		<p>transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
1.1.4	Concern about emotional damage to pupils as a result of moving schools	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
1.1.5	The children's health and well-being should be a priority, a happy healthy child achieves their full potential	<p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. <p>The authority is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of all children, and the One Powys Plan sets out the authority's aim to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>

1.1.6	Based on advice received from educational psychologists, there is a high probability that smaller children would be significantly affected by such lengthy journey times	The authority notes this comment.
1.1.7	Concern about separation anxiety for 4 year olds due to lengthy journeys to school – if they are not reassured and supported by a parent, this could lead to school refusal later in life	The authority notes this comment.
1.1.8	Concern that lengthy journeys for 5 year old pupils will create emotional problems which will have long lasting effects	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school, although this issue has been raised during the consultation.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
1.1.9	Concern that additional stress will	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of

	<p>have an impact on the development of young children and on their ability to learn</p> <p>uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
<p>1.1.10 Additional travel time and distance will cause stress for the affected children</p>	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school, although this issue has been raised during the consultation.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
<p>1.1.11 Concern that additional travel will place psychological and physical pressure on pupils</p>	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving</p>

	<p>school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
<p>1.1.12 Due to the additional travel required, pupils will be at increased risk of illness, will miss out on school activities such as swimming lessons, will have less time to do homework, will have less family time and less time to unwind after a busy day at school</p>	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school, although this issue has been raised during the consultation.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
<p>1.1.13 The proposal goes against the best interests of the pupils</p>	<p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her</p>

	<p>Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)’. <p>As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority is committed to ensuring that ‘all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential’. In order to achieve this, the Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.</p> <p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
<p>1.1.14 The proposal fails to take into consideration the many negative effects this could have on our children</p>	<p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code, which states that</p> <p>‘Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)’ <p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of</p>

		<p>uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
1.1.15	Not enough consideration has been given to the effect it would have on the children	<p>A consultation process is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their view about a Proposal and to draw attention to specific concerns – during this consultation, many respondents have stated that they are concerned about the effect of the proposal on the children.</p> <p>The proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code, which states that ‘Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)’. <p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
1.1.16	The proposal is equal to child cruelty	<p>The proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code, which states that ‘Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing);

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority is committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. In order to achieve this, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'. The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.17	Children will suffer psychological and physiological abuse if this ridiculous plan passes	The authority notes this comment, and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.18	The children are sick with worry	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.19	It is unfair that children are being put through this situation again	Based on the authority's records, none of the pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School were pupils at another school at the time of closure.
1.1.20	When you're talking about our children's education and emotional and psychological well-being, cost should not be the main driving factor	The proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. The Code also states that those bringing forward proposals should also consider the need for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School places and the impact on accessibility; and the • Resourcing of Education and other Financial Implications
1.1.21	Closure of the school will create lasting, long-term problems for future generations	The authority notes this comment. However, the proposal is aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education system.
1.2 Separation from friends		
1.2.1	Some children will be attending schools in Newtown as this will be closer, however this will cause friendship groups to break down	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.2	Concern about pupils starting their education on their own in a different county	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.3	Admission and transport should be provided for all children and siblings to the school of parents' choice if there is a good reason, as there is here	Transport will be available to qualifying pupils to the named receiving school in Crossgates or the closest school to their home if this is the choice of their parents.

1.2.4	Concern that closure of the school would have an impact on the children's friendship groups	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.5	We need assurance that all children will be accommodated in Crossgates so that they can maintain their friendships	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, the authority is required to provide places to all existing pupils in the named receiving school. Younger siblings of children living in the enlarged catchment area for Crossgates would be prioritised for places in the school in accordance with the authority's admission criteria.
1.2.6	Pupils are concerned that some pupils would go to different schools so they would be split up.	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.7	Pupils are concerned that they wouldn't be able to see their friends every day if they went to different schools	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.8	It will be hard for pupils who are shy to make new friends, which could make them feel sad and could ruin their education	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.9	Pupils might get new friends and forget their old friends	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.10	It might be harder for pupils to make new friends because there are already friendship groups in the new school	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.

1.3 Disruption to pupils		
1.3.1	It would be detrimental for children to be taken from their own environment	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.2	Unfair to move children in their last year of school	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.3	Unfair for pupils who have already been through the process once	Based on the authority's records, none of the pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School were pupils at another school at the time of closure.
1.3.4	Some of the children affected may have already moved schools as a result of previous closures and a further change will cause more and repeated disruption to the education of these pupils in particular	Based on the authority's records, none of the pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School were pupils at another school at the time of closure.
1.3.5	The proposal will take children out of their comfort zone, which will be most traumatic for young pupils	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.6	Concern that children will have to get to know a new school in a new place	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.7	Moving the children would disrupt their roots	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their

		transition.
1.3.8	Pupils would have to get used to different teachers and a new schools layout	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.9	Concern that teachers in the new school won't know what work pupils have already covered	Teachers will be responsible for assessing the ability and stage of development of the pupils and will differentiate accordingly to avoid repetition and to ensure that learning builds on previous experiences.
1.3.10	Children might be upset because they want to stay with their own teacher	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.4 Impact on quality of education provided to pupils		
1.4.1	Joining Crossgates will take away the quality of education the pupils receive and their ability to build bonds with their teachers	The authority has no concerns about the quality of education pupils receive at Crossgates C.P. School. Relationships between staff and pupils at Crossgates C.P. School are good.
1.4.2	Closure of the school would be detrimental to pupils' learning	The authority is satisfied that the quality of education that would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school would improve the quality of education currently provided at Llanbister C.P. School.
1.4.3	Concern about educational impact to pupils of having to move schools during their last year at school	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.4.4	How can you be sure the proposal will not damage pupils educationally?	The authority always makes every effort to ensure that the transfer of pupils to any new school is as seamless and effective as possible. There is no evidence from previous transformation projects to suggest that this is a concern.

1.4.5	Concern that pupils' academic studies will be hindered by changing schools half way through a school year	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, in order to ensure continuity and progression in achievement and attainment.
1.4.6	Concern that all pupils will miss a proportion of the set syllabus if this has already been covered at the other school, which will disadvantage pupils when they move to high school	Teachers will be responsible for assessing the ability and stage of development of the pupils and will differentiate accordingly to avoid repetition and to ensure that learning builds on previous experiences.
1.4.7	Powys policy states that 'Powys is committed to ensuring that all children and young people have an equal opportunity to receive the best possible education' – given the lengthy journeys that will be involved, which mean that children are likely to miss extra days of school during bad weather, do not accept that closure of schools on the scale proposed will fill this commitment	The authority notes this comment.
1.5 Lack of equal opportunity		
1.5.1	Pupils from Llanbister will be at a disadvantage in terms of access to extra-curricular activities as they will be reliant on school transport	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
1.5.2	In this day and age of equality and human rights, it is sad that a local authority is considering placing	The authority notes this comment.

	primary school children on a daily bus journey on these roads	
1.6 Impact of moving to a larger school		
1.6.1	Pupils may be educated in large unwieldy classes	<p>The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would be educated in larger classes, although these would be single-age classes which is not the case currently in Llanbister – pupils will be taught with pupils of the same age and similar abilities. This is likely to improve a teacher’s ability to better meet the needs of all learners. The authority recognises that the current class sizes at Llanbister C.P. School are small, however, the authority is confident that pupils achieve well in larger class as well as in smaller classes.</p> <p>The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.</p>
1.6.2	Transferring the pupils to a larger school would destroy the culture and individuality of these pupils	The authority notes this comment. However, current pupil numbers at Llanbister C.P. School are small, and as stated in the One Powys Plan, ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
1.6.3	Children will find it hard going to a bigger school – many younger children will not cope well	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.6.4	Concern that children would get ‘lost in the system’ in a bigger school.	The authority does not agree that children will get ‘lost in the system’ in a bigger school. In the Maesydderwen catchment, the authority closed 10 primary schools and established four new larger primary schools. This has resulted in improved outcomes and standards of wellbeing, which is evidenced in the recent Estyn inspections of all four schools.
1.6.5	Concern that some children do not cope well in larger classes	The authority acknowledges that some pupils might be happier in a small class situation, however all schools are expected to ensure that pupils are happy in their learning environment, and should Llanbister C.P. School close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would be expected to provide full support to pupils

		<p>to aid their transition.</p> <p>The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would be educated in larger classes, although these would be single-age classes which is not the case currently in Llanbister – pupils will be taught with pupils of the same age and similar abilities. This is likely to improve a teacher’s ability to better meet the needs of all learners. The authority recognises that the current class sizes at Llanbister C.P. School are small, however, the authority is confident that pupils achieve well in larger class as well as in smaller classes.</p> <p>The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.</p>
1.7 Separation from the community		
1.7.1	Concern that pupils living in Radnorshire will be attending schools in Montgomeryshire	The authority notes this concern. However, Powys is one county and the authority is committed to providing the best possible opportunities for all pupils, regardless of where in Powys they live or attend school.
1.7.2	Concern that pupils will not be educated in their home area	The authority notes this concern. However, Powys is one county and the authority is committed to providing the best possible opportunities for all pupils, regardless of where in Powys they live or attend school.
1.7.3	The school ensures that a real sense of belonging to the community is established in the children from an early age	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.4	Pupils show an interest in their community and a great community spirit, this would end	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.5	Children will lose their identity by removing them from their communities	The authority notes this comment.

1.7.6	Families will socialise in the area that their children attend school	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.7	Children would travel in different directions which would divide the community	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.8	Pupils will lose their strong links with the community	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.9	Children educated in an urban area will have no desire to return to their rural background	The authority notes this comment. However, the named receiving school in respect of this proposal is Crossgates C.P. School, which is not located in an urban area. Should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is possible that some pupils would choose to transfer to alternative schools which are located in an urban area, however as Powys is a rural county, it is likely that these schools would include a mixture of pupils from urban and rural backgrounds.
1.7.10	The children are supported by all generations in the community as they currently see them so often in their daily, weekly and annual activities	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.11	Children need the security of knowing their roots	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.12	The whole family community from birth to grave is important for stability. Taking it away for the sake of money is not the way to go	The authority notes this comment.
1.7.13	Llanbister is a community with a wide range of activities which reflect the firm foundation given to young people from an education received in	The authority notes this comment.

Llanbister School		
1.7.14	Concern that the council cannot guarantee places for future children at Crossgates School – the council will be splitting the community and splitting families	If Llanbister C.P. School were to close the authority would include the Llanbister catchment area in that of Crossgates. Pupil places for future intakes would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria, which prioritises those children living in the school's allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
1.8 Other		
1.8.1	The closure would affect 35 children immediately – 25 of these are aged 6 or under	The authority notes this comment.
1.8.2	Concern that the children will lose the personal touch they are used to	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aim is to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. Whilst it is accepted that it is likely that pupils would have to attend a larger school and would be in larger classes should Llanbister C.P. School close, there is no reason to believe that this would mean that they would no longer be treated as individuals.
1.8.3	The children should be your first priority	<p>The proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. <p>As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aim is to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. However, the Plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure</p>

		affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
1.8.4	It’s important for children to be able to mix with children from similar families and lifestyles	The authority notes this comment. As Powys is a rural county, the majority of schools include a mixture of pupils from urban and rural backgrounds, therefore should Llanbister C.P. School, it is likely that pupils would continue to mix with pupils from similar backgrounds.
1.8.5	Children from Llanbister are fighting to show how much they want to keep the school open	The authority notes this comment. The issues raised by pupils are listed separately in this report, and will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when they determine how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
1.8.6	Pupil attendance would drop if pupils were attending Crossgates School if there was bad weather and transport didn’t run	The additional mileage between Llanbister and Crossgates is on a priority route for winter maintenance and therefore the likelihood of additional closure days for pupils attending Crossgates would be reduced. However the authority recognises the rural nature of the enlarged catchment of Crossgates C.P. School may have a marginal impact on the pupils’ attendance levels.
2 IMPACT ON PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS / VULNERABLE PUPILS		
2.1 Pupils with Additional Needs		
2.1.1	Concern about impact on dyslexic pupils – when the school budget was cut and the school could no longer afford a special needs teacher, the class teacher was able to ensure that pupils kept up with the class	Identification of special educational need such as dyslexia is dependent on good quality teaching and assessment together with effective SENCo practice and expertise. All Powys schools have access to advisory support, and there is no reason why a pupil with a specific learning difficulty will not have those needs recognise and responded to in the alternative schools.
2.1.2	It might be more difficult for pupils with additional needs to travel	The authority would undertake a needs assessment in respect of any pupils with additional needs that required home to school transport.
2.1.3	The other school might not have the right teachers to help pupils with additional needs	The proposal’s impact on pupils with additional needs was considered in the Equality Impact Assessment in respect of this proposal, where the authority concluded that it was ‘confident that the proposed receiving school and any other schools in the local area which pupils may prefer to transfer to would be able to meet the needs of pupils currently

		attending Llanbister C.P. School who belong to the protected characteristic groups.' The Equality Impact Assessment will be updated to reflect comments made during the consultation period, and a revised Equality Impact Assessment will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
2.1.4	It might be harder for any pupils that are in a wheelchair to move around if the school is busy	The authority notes this comment.
2.1.5	Pupils with additional needs might get made fun of	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, which would ensuring that any pupils with additional needs were comfortable and settled in their new school.
2.2 Vulnerable Pupils		
2.2.1	Adverse impact on pupils from less well-off families as they will have reduced access to after school activities unless parents have the means and time to provide transport themselves	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day, and that this may have a greater impact on pupils from less well-off families. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
2.2.2	25 of the 32 pupils who would be transferring from Llanbister would be under the age of 6, the most vulnerable age. Is this acceptable?	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, and a transition process would be put in place in the term prior to closure.</p> <p>Experience from other school closures in the authority has shown that the young children adapt to the new school very quickly especially when supported by their parents, the schools and the authority.</p>
3 TRAVEL IMPLICATIONS		

3.1 Additional travel time / distance for pupils		
3.1.1	Young children could be away from home longer than working parents	The additional transport time per week is estimated at between 1.5 and 2 hours per week per pupil. Those children whose travel times to and from school is at or above 45 minutes will be away from school for between 8 and 8.5 hours per day.
3.1.2	Additional travel time will inevitably impact on pupils' well-being	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.3	Concern that longer journeys will cause separation anxiety for 4 year old pupils	The authority notes this comment.
3.1.4	Concern that lengthy journeys for 5 year old pupils will create emotional problems which will have long lasting effects	Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.

	<p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
<p>3.1.5 Concern that extra travel time and distance to Crossgates will cause stress for pupils</p>	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>

3.1.6	Pupils will be putting in more hours than most of their teachers	The additional transport time per week is estimated at between 1.5 and 2 hours per week per pupil. Those children whose travel times to and from school is at or above 45 minutes will be away from school for between 8 and 8.5 hours per day.
3.1.7	Concern that some pupils would have to travel up to 15 miles each way	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.8	Concern about long journey times for 5 year olds, especially in winter	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of</p>

		<p>the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.9	Concern that some children would have to leave home at 8am	The additional transport time per week is estimated at between 1.5 and 2 hours per week per pupil. Those children whose travel times to and from school is at or above 45 minutes will be away from school for between 8 and 8.5 hours per day.
3.1.10	Concern about the hours of travel for four year olds	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.11	Additional travel would be detrimental to the health of young children	Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would

add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.

The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.

All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.

3.1.12 Concern that children will be tired as a result of the additional travel and will be unable to learn well

Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.

The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.

All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school.

		The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.
3.1.13	Concern that children who have had long and tiring journeys will not be able to concentrate in order to do well at primary level, which will harm their ability to learn and their performance at secondary school and beyond	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.14	Unfair to expect children to travel from 7.30am until 4.30pm	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about</p>

		<p>any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p> <p>It is unlikely that children will have to commence their journey as early as 7.30 but the authority recognises that these children living the furthest distance from the named receiving school may have to commence their travel around 8am.</p>
3.1.15	Travel time of up to an hour will impact on the child's concentration and subsequently on their learning	There is no evidence to suggest that this might be the case.
3.1.16	Concern that very young children will be travelling 45 minutes to reach the proposed receiving school	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>

3.1.17	Concern that children will have to travel further in poor weather conditions	The authority, schools and transport contractors are experienced in dealing with travel arrangements during periods of adverse weather, the additional travel time per journey is estimated at between 10 and 15 minutes per journey.
3.1.18	The Council states the average distance a child will have to travel to school is 7.7 miles, Llanbister children will be travelling up to 14 miles	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.19	Pupils that would have attended Beguildy School already have to travel 35 minutes, and are facing a further 15 miles travel time if Llanbister closes	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the</p>

		<p>transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.20	The travel time would be outside the recommended maximum travel time	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.21	The travel time would exceed Welsh Government guidelines	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p>

The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.

All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.

3.1.22 A journey of 45 minutes each way is a very long time for 4 year olds

Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.

The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.

All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.

3.1.23	The distance from Llanbister to Crossgates is too far	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.24	Some 4 year olds will have their journey time extended to an hour and a half each way	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p>

		All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.
3.1.25	Concern that other schools are too far away to travel to	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.26	Pupils will have to travel 3 times the distance they currently travel	The authority notes this concern and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School would lead to an increase in travel distance for pupils.
3.1.27	Concern that 4 year old children may not be fully aware of their toilet needs	The authority and schools are experienced in dealing with children who experience toileting accidents in the early years. The authority acknowledges that the additional transport times may exacerbate this issue in the first few weeks following any closure of the school.
3.1.28	The extra travel will add instability and disruption to the children's lives	The authority notes this concern.

3.1.29	The Council's role is to mitigate long journeys not exacerbate them	The authority's role is to provide high-quality education for all its pupils, and to provide transport arrangements in accordance with the Council's Home-to-School Transport Policy and Wales Travel Measure.
3.1.30	It will take some children 4 times as long to get to school	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.31	Concern that travel times will exceed the national guidelines	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the</p>

		<p>transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority has not been informed about any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.1.32	Concern that children will get bored travelling	The authority notes this concern.
3.1.33	Additional travel will lead to a poor attendance record	The additional mileage between Llanbister and Crossgates is on a priority route for winter maintenance and therefore the likelihood of additional closure days for pupils attending Crossgates would be reduced. However the authority recognises the rural nature of the enlarged catchment of Crossgates C.P. School may have a marginal impact on the pupils' attendance levels.
3.1.34	Long journey times will have a detrimental effect on children's ability and willingness to learn	There is no evidence to substantiate this claim. Many pupils both in Powys and in other authorities travel similar distances to school and there is no detrimental impact on their academic progress or wellbeing.
3.1.35	All pupils will experience a 50% increase in the distance to be travelled to school	The authority accepts that those children living in or to the north of Llanbister will have an additional 7 miles travel per journey to and from the named receiving school.
3.1.36	Reference to the work of John Bowlby which suggests there is a high probability that pupils will be emotionally impacted by long journeys	The authority notes this comment.
3.2 Cost of additional travel		

3.2.1	Suspicion that stated cost of additional travel is inaccurate	The majority of children who attend Llanbister C.P. School are already conveyed on authority funded home to school transport, with the additional marginal costs being incurred to transport the children the extra miles to the named receiving school. Should the school close the actual transport costs incurred will be dependent on the decisions made by the parents in respect of their chosen schools for their child/ren.
3.2.2	Suspicious that the estimated additional travel cost for Nantmel and Llanbister are the same despite the mileage being different	The majority of children who attend Llanbister C.P. School are already conveyed on authority funded home to school transport, with the additional marginal costs being incurred to transport the children the extra miles to the named receiving school. Should the school close the actual transport costs incurred will be dependent on the decisions made by the parents in respect of their chosen schools for their child/ren.
3.2.3	There is no evidence that the authority has consulted with transport companies in relation to the impact the proposal will have on transport costs	The authority is experienced in contracting home to school transport routes and the estimated costs provided are based on the knowledge and experience of officers in the schools and transport services.
3.2.4	Extra travel costs to the receiving school in Crossgates far outweigh any potential savings that the Council identified in the consultation document	The authority accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.5	Spending considerable sums on transporting children does not meet the policy aim of cost-effectiveness and efficiency	The authority accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.6	Travel costs have not been considered	Estimated additional transport costs were included in the estimated savings in the consultation document.
3.2.7	School transport figures were grossly underestimated	The estimated additional costs of transport is significantly less than the estimated revenue savings that would be achieved through the closure of the school. The overall cost of the provision following the closure of the school would provide a more cost effective and

		efficient education service than currently.
3.2.8	Transport costs are estimated at just over £68k, we estimate the costs to be £142k to Crossgates	The authority notes this comment, but does not agree with the figure quoted. The figure provided in the consultation document is based on the estimated costs of extending the existing transport into Llanbister to Crossgates.
3.2.9	The community has received a verbal quote of £39k for a bus from Llaithddu to Crossgates	The authority notes the comment. If the school closed the authority would consider the options on how it would recommission the required transport and if put to tender this would be undertaken through the e-tendering processes that has been used for all new tenders over the last 18 months.
3.2.10	Transport costs could double due to the projected increase in pupil numbers	The authority notes this comment. The figure provided in the consultation document is based on the estimated costs of extending the existing transport into Llanbister to Crossgates.
3.2.11	Concern that pupils would be losing out on educational resources because more money would need to be spent on school transport	All Schools are funded in line with Powys Fair Funding formula. The funding that would be transferred to the receiving schools to support the pupils has been excluded from the savings calculation included in the consultation document.
3.3 Impact on access to after school activities		
3.3.1	Concern that pupils will miss out on extra-curricular activities	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
3.3.2	Pupils will be at a disadvantage as it will be difficult and expensive for them to attend after school activities	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
3.3.3	Working parents will be unable to use	Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from

	<p>the breakfast club and after school facilities due to the children having to be transported to Crossgates School</p> <p>Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.3.4 Pupils will be unable to attend after school activities due to transport difficulties	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
3.3.5 Children of parents who are unable to drive will be penalised	The authority notes this comment and accepts that it would be more difficult for parents who are unable to drive
3.3.6 Out of school socialising will be difficult for children	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
3.3.7 Pupils will miss out on after school	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could

	clubs as they will have to travel home by bus	have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
3.4 Additional transport requirements for pupils who currently make their own way to school		
3.4.1	Do the estimated additional transport costs include children who currently live in the Llanbister catchment but travel to Crossgates?	Yes, the estimated additional transport costs do include children who currently live in the Llanbister catchment but travel to Crossgates.
3.5 Concerns about the transport that will be provided		
3.5.1	The travel system will be complex and will potentially affect how children learn in the classroom	There is no evidence to suggest that this might be the case.
3.5.2	Sharing school transport with secondary aged pupils is unsuitable and inappropriate	The authority's transport policy provides for joint transport where possible, and a significant number of routes across the authority operate as joint transport for both primary and secondary aged pupils on the same transport. However, as no secondary transport goes to Crossgates, it is unlikely that pupils would be transported with secondary pupils in this case.
3.5.3	Concern about unaccompanied children as young as four travelling alone	The authority notes this concern. The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.4	Having to travel alone will cause additional stress for very young children	The authority notes this concern. The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.5	Concern about safety of buses for the	The authority's policy is that all buses used for home to school transport have to be fitted

	distance travelled as there are no seat belts / booster seats which will endanger pupil safety	with seat belts and that these should be used by the pupils.
3.5.6	Concern that pupils will be unsupervised on the school bus	The authority notes this concern. The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.7	Concern about who will look after young children of 4 years old if they wet themselves on the bus	The authority and schools are experienced in dealing with children who experience toileting accidents in the early years. The authority acknowledges that the additional transport times may exacerbate this issue in the first few weeks following any closure of the school.
3.5.8	Will you be employing staff at a ratio similar to pupil-teacher ratios in schools for the buses?	The provision of Home to School transport does not currently include the provision of an escort. The bus is operated by the driver.
3.5.9	Concern about the well-being of young children sharing school transport with secondary school pupils	The authority's transport policy provides for joint transport where possible, and a significant number of routes across the authority operate as joint transport for both primary and secondary aged pupils on the same transport. However, as no secondary transport goes to Crossgates, it is unlikely that pupils would be transported with secondary pupils in this case.
3.5.10	Concern that some pupils will have to go on two lots of transport	The authority does use link transport in some areas, where pupils are transported to meet a larger bus. In these cases the contractors are required to undertake a risk assessment to ensure the pupils are transferred between the two vehicles safely.
3.6 Environmental impact of additional travel		
3.6.1	Concern about increase in CO2 emissions for all the additional journeys, including the school transport and the increase in parent travel that will be needed	The authority accepts that there will be an environmental impact due to the provision of additional transport, however this will be mitigated to some extent by a reduction in the building footprint of schools and the reduction in parental transport.

3.6.2	Concern that additional transport will create more pollution in Crossgates	The authority notes this comment, all buses used for home to school transport must meet the required standards and are subject to regular checks and tests.
3.6.3	Schools are teaching pupils that we should be using less vehicles in order to protect the environment	The authority has a duty to consider the overall impact on the environment of any proposal and this assessment will be included as part of the single integrated impact assessment.
3.6.4	Additional fumes caused by additional travel have not been considered	The authority accepts that there will be an environmental impact due to the provision of additional transport, however this will be mitigated to some extent by a reduction in the building footprint of schools and the reduction in parental transport.
3.7 Concern about the roads		
3.7.1	The A483 is dangerous	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.2	Concern about bussing children along the ill renowned and dangerous section of the A483, especially in winter	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.3	Concern that the road from Crossgates to Newtown is dangerous	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.4	The catchment area is very hilly, this is the reason children take a long time to get to school, it would take even longer to get to Crossgates	Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school. The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn

		<p>Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
3.7.5	The road to Newcastle-on-Clun is unclassified and is very dangerous in the winter	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.6	The travelling conditions are challenging, particularly in the winter months	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.7	Concern that transport will be needed for 10 pupils on a road which is not suitable for anything other than a car	The authority considers the type and nature of the roads when deciding the size of vehicle that should be used on a particular route.
3.7.8	90% of pupils live on farms that have steep access roads	The authority considers the type and nature of the roads when deciding the size of vehicle that should be used on a particular route.
3.7.9	Bus providers often ring the school to say that for health and safety reasons they won't drive	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.10	Concern about large buses blocking smaller roads	The authority considers the type and nature of the roads when deciding the size of vehicle that should be used on a particular route.

3.7.11	Pupils will have to travel on narrow, steep and rough roads	Pupils already travel to their current school on such roads, the additional mileage from Llanbister to Crossgates is on the A483.
3.7.12	The roads are dramatically affected by bad weather	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules.
3.7.13	Concern about the road to Kerry – invite Cabinet members and the council to come and assess the road themselves	The authority notes this comment, should parents chose to send their child to Kerry as the closest school then the services would make an assessment of the road. All Powys roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the relevant speed limits that apply to the individual road.
3.7.14	The geography is rural and the roads, byroads and farm tracks are particularly hazardous during challenging weather	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.15	The byroads and areas could be considered risky if driving on a regular basis	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.16	Weather conditions can be extremely challenging in the north of Radnorshire – this factor has been completely overlooked	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.17	There would be a risk to children from travelling on the roads daily	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children

		during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.18	Local roads become impassable when there is snow	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.19	The A483 is one of the most accident prone roads in Wales	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.20	In bad weather the Council doesn't clear the minor roads very quickly	All roads are safe subject to the road users using them within the national speed limits for the road. The schools and transport services liaise closely around the inclusion of home to transport routes on the winter maintenance schedules. There is an agreed procedure that travel operators use when deciding if the road conditions are safe to transport children during periods of adverse winter weather.
3.7.21	Many families already travel along hazardous byroads, narrow lanes and dirt tracks to get to Llanbister School	The authority notes this comment.
3.7.22	The B4355 is repeatedly closed in the winter	The B4355 is the road from Knighton to Dolfor and crosses over the hill between the Teme and Severn valleys and the authority recognises that this road is closed in severe weather.
3.8 Reference to large area currently served by Llanbister C.P. School		
3.8.1	Llanbister C.P. School is within 6 communities – Felindre/Beguildy, Llanbadarn Fynydd/Llaithddu, Llanbister, Abbey Cwm Hir	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.2	Llanbister School serves six large	The authority notes this comment.

	rural communities	
3.8.3	Llanbister is a rural area and the school serves a wide catchment area	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.4	The school serves numerous villages/communities	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.5	The community is very close despite being so vast in terms of area	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.6	The catchment area of Llanbister School is massive, with this in mind I fail to see why Powys officials have put this proposal to Cabinet.	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.7	Concern that there would be no school between Crossgates and Newtown	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.8	The school serves so many villages – Llaithddu, Llanbadarn Fynydd, Llananno, Llanbister and Felindre	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.9	Closing Llanbister School would leave an area of 300 square miles without a school	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.10	Llanbister is currently the only school in the north of Radnorshire within a 23 mile radius.	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.11	If Llanbister School closes there will be a distance of 24 miles along the A483 without a school from Newtown	The authority notes this comment.

	to Crossgates	
3.8.12	Llanbister serves a large catchment area of approximately 162 km ² of unique terrain, high altitudes with many poor, unclassified single roads	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.13	Llanbister School covers a large geographical area which is affected by bad weather	The authority notes this comment.
3.8.14	Some of the roads used to calculate travel distances will be closed due to construction of the Newtown bypass	
3.9 Other		
3.9.1	Ask you to look at the routes travelled, the distances, journey duration and road conditions, only then can you make an informed decision about the future of our school	Officers of the transport team are fully aware of the roads that are currently used to transport children to Llanbister C.P. School, the additional mileage will be along the A483 between Llanbister and Crossgates.
3.9.2	Where will pupils be picked up and dropped off?	The pick-up points and drop off points for these children who currently travel on transport to school would be the same as they are now, for those pupils who live in Llanbister or under the qualifying distance the authority and contractor would agree safe pick up points for pupils.
3.9.3	Pupils are entitled to transport from their house to the bus stop which is approximately 3 miles away	The pick-up points would be agreed by the service and contractors and would be in line with the requirements contained in the authority's home to school transport policy.
3.9.4	Parents currently make a special effort to get children to school by	The authority notes this comment.

	using 4 wheeled drive vehicles and tractors, will they continue to do this if the children attend Crossgates?	
3.9.5	The authority is saying that transport will be provided to Crossgates School should Llanbister School close, would the authority provide transport for Felindre children to Knighton School?	Yes, if Knighton C. in W. School was the closest suitable school to the home address or it was agreed by the authority to continue the transport routes to the school down the Teme Valley.
3.9.6	Concern about children having to attend different schools because of the transport policy – want assurance that all children in Llanbister School will be entitled to free transport to Crossgates	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, all children currently attending the school would be entitled to home to school transport to Crossgates C.P. School if they live within the current catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School.
3.9.7	What is the recommended travel time for children to travel to school?	The policy on the public site states: 'The Authority will aim to ensure that, except in exceptional circumstances, a pupil being transported to their nearest allocated mainstream school/centre should not normally have a single journey time of more than 45 minutes for primary schools and 60 minutes for secondary schools.'
4 IMPACT ON STAFF		
4.1	Will more teaching assistants be employed at the receiving school to support staff?	The employment of staff at the receiving school is at the discretion of the governing body in collaboration with senior leaders.
4.2	If a decision is made to close the school, will there be a meeting for staff?	Should a decision be taken to close the school then consultation would be entered into with all of the relevant staff and Trades Unions.
4.3	If a decision is made to close the school and staff were given notice, would they be invited to put their	Should a decision be taken to close the school, staff would be entitled to be placed on the redeployment list and Powys County Council will make every effort to identify suitable alternative positions for them.

	names on the redeployment register?	
4.4	School closures are impacting on the lives of many school staff	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for those affected. The authority is keen to conclude this process as soon as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty.
4.5	Concern that heads won't take kindly to being told that they have to interview redeployees	Whilst Powys County Council cannot force Headteachers or Governing Bodies to consider applications from redeployees, Headteachers recognise that in situations such as school closures it is not the fault of the redeployee that they are in the situation that they are and there is no implied criticism of their abilities or work performance. We are hopeful that Headteachers and Governing Bodies will be sympathetic to the position of redeployees.
4.6	Request for an explanation of the redeployment process	The Redeployment Policy is available to staff on Page 7602 of the Powys County Council Intranet.
4.7	What would happen to staff on fixed term contracts if the school closed? Would they be dismissed if their contract finishes?	It would depend upon how much continuous service the members of staff have. Should a decision to close the school be made then HR would be available to support all staff through the process and to provide more detailed information based on individual circumstances.
4.8	If the school closed and pupils transferred to Crossgates and there was a need for additional Teaching Assistants at Crossgates, would the governing body need to give priority to staff from this school?	Whilst Powys County Council cannot force Headteachers or Governing Bodies to give priority to applications from redeployees, Headteachers recognise that in situations such as school closures it is not the fault of the redeployee that they are in the situation that they are and there is no implied criticism of their abilities or work performance. We are hopeful that Headteachers and Governing Bodies would be sympathetic to the position of redeployees. In the event that a decision is taken to close the school and pupils transfer to Crossgates C.P. School it may be possible to agree with the Governing Body of Crossgates C.P. School to give priority to staff who would otherwise be at risk of compulsory redundancy.
4.9	If we were made redundant and have worked in different schools, would we get redundancy pay based on the entire period of employment or just the employment at this school?	In the event that a redundancy takes place, any compensation payment would be calculated on the basis of continuous Local Government service where an employee has only one position. Where employees have multiple posts then depending upon the circumstances the calculation may be based upon continuous service in that post only. Should a decision to close the School be made then HR would be available to support all

		staff through the process and provide more detailed information based on individual circumstances.
4.10	Is it because the school is under threat of closure that staff at the school have only been given temporary contracts until August?	Any new staff appointed to a school which is being considered for closure by the authority would be unlikely to be given permanent contracts by the governing body due the uncertainty of continuity of employment.
4.11	Concern about staff being expected to travel 20 miles for posts following redeployment	Relocation mileage is not currently paid by Powys County Council. Should a decision to close the school be made then HR would be available to support all staff through the process and discuss what might be considered reasonable depending on individual circumstances.
4.12	Two teachers will be out of contract at the end of August – what steps has the local authority taken to ensure that there will be teachers to run the school from September?	School staff are appointed by the Governing Body, not by the Local Authority. The Local Authority discussed the extension of contracts to 31 December in the first instance during the summer term 2016.
4.13	The redeployment policy should have been revised years ago	The Redeployment Policy is currently being revised as part of the new Schools Handbook. We anticipate that this will be available to be adopted by schools during the Autumn Term 2016-17.
4.14	Concern that teachers will have to find new jobs	Should a decision be made to close the school then staff would be entitled to be placed on the redeployment list and Powys County Council would make every effort to identify suitable alternative positions for them. It is however possible that it will not be possible to identify suitable alternative roles and that staff may be in a position where they are made redundant and have to seek alternative employment.
5 IMPACT ON PARENTS / FAMILIES		
5.1 Removing choice for families		
5.1.1	Choice of our children's future is being taken away by closing the	Whilst the authority has named a receiving school as part of the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School, parents could apply for a place in any other school should

	school	Llanbister C.P. School close, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what school they wished their children to go to.
5.1.2	Without Llanbister School, the choice of parents in relation to how they wish their children to be educated would be taken away	Whilst the authority has named a receiving school as part of the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School, parents could apply for a place in any other school should Llanbister C.P. School close, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what school they wished their children to go to.
5.1.3	Closure of Beguildy School has already removed choice for some families	The authority notes this comment.
5.1.4	The Welsh element makes the choice of alternative schools very limited	The authority notes this comment.
5.2 No choice of rural school		
5.2.1	Parents and children should not have to fight just to get access to education in rural Powys	Should Llanbister C.P. School close the authority would continue to provide access to education to pupils living in the area currently served by the school at alternative schools, and free home to school transport would be provided for qualifying pupils.
5.3 Impact on families		
5.3.1	There will be a financial impact on families who will have to drive their children to school themselves	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, the authority would provide free home to school transport to alternative provision for qualifying pupils, therefore parents would not be expected to drive their children to school themselves. However, it is accepted that there would be an impact on parents due to the need to travel to the alternative school to attend other school activities.
5.3.2	Parents would miss out on communication with the school at drop off / pick up times	Communication between all parents and children is critical to their success at schools. Many pupils are transported to school by home to school transport, which means that their parents are unable to speak to the teachers at the start or end of the school day, however there are many other ways for schools to ensure that contact with parents is maintained, such as home to school books, regular telephone contact, e-mail etc.

5.3.3	Parents will have to take children away from the local community to engage in activities	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is true that children would be travelling to a different location to access education provision, and therefore it is likely that they and their families would also travel to this location to attend other activities related to the school. However, they will continue to live in their present communities, therefore there is no reason why they wouldn't be able to continue to engage in activities within the community where they live.
5.3.4	Adverse impact on after school activities unless parents have the means and time to provide transport themselves – this will have an adverse impact on less well-off families	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day, and that this may have a greater impact on pupils from less well-off families. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
5.3.5	Concern that families may have children in different schools if there is no room for subsequent siblings in Crossgates	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. Pupil places will be allocated for future intakes in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the schools allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
5.3.6	Concern that some families could have children in 3 different schools across 30 miles distance	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. Pupil places will be allocated for future intakes in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the schools allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
5.3.7	The proposals are having an impact on families	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for those affected. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty.
5.3.8	It will be disturbing for parents and children to have to change routine	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for those affected. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty.
5.3.9	The possibility of children having to	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of

	attend schools so far away is placing immense pressure on families	uncertainty for those affected. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty.
5.3.10	Detrimental impact on family life if ability to access breakfast club and after school club are taken away	<p>Based on the timetable used for the high school bus, the additional travel time from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School is 10 minutes per journey, which would add between 1.50 and 2.00 hours of additional travel per week for the children. Of the 37 children expected in the school for the 2016-17 school year 17 (46%) live more than 10 miles from the named receiving school.</p> <p>The additional travel time between Llanbister and Crossgates is estimated to be between 10 and 13 minutes and will extend travel times for those children living north of Llanbadarn Fynydd and in the top of the Teme Valley to just over 45 minutes to the named receiving school in Crossgates. There are several remote areas within the county where the transport times to the closest school would be similar to the estimated times for some of the children from Llanbister if school closed. The authority is not aware of any stress, physical illness or psychological issues affecting any primary aged child being transported this amount of time to primary school.</p> <p>All children who are transported to school are at risk of not being able to access after school clubs etc. and this risk is extended by the distance the home is from the school. The authority will work with the named receiving school to discuss children's ability to access extra-curricular activities at the school.</p>
5.3.11	The proposal will make it difficult for parents to attend assemblies, plays, to hear children reading or to be immediately available if children are sick.	The authority accepts that implementation of the proposal would make it more difficult for parents to get to school during the school day if needed.
5.3.12	Concern that parents will be unable to work if the school moves	The authority does not agree that the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School would mean that parents would be unable to work.
5.3.13	It will be difficult for parents to get children to school on time	The additional travel time is projected to be 10 to 15 minutes and this additional time requirement should not make it difficult for parents.

5.3.14	Concern about siblings being split up and having to attend different schools	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. Pupil places will be allocated for future intakes in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the schools allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
5.3.15	Concern that pupils will have less time to spend with their family due to the additional travel time	The authority notes this concern.
5.3.16	Closure of the school will affect family life as parents use breakfast club to be able to get to work in Newtown on time	It is unlikely that the children using home to school transport will be able to access breakfast club at Crossgates. Should the school close the authority will work with the school and transport contractors around the transport times.
5.3.17	The proposal goes against the wishes of families	The authority notes this comment.
5.3.18	Parents need a guarantee that siblings will be able to get a place at Crossgates School if an older child gets a place there	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, the authority would include the Llanbister catchment area in that of Crossgates. Pupil places will be allocated for future intakes in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the school's allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
5.3.19	Parents will have to spend money on new uniforms	The authority will work with the named receiving school around the provision of school uniforms to new pupils. The authority does not provide any support to parents in respect to funding the costs of new uniforms.
5.4 Other		
5.4.1	The Council hasn't taken into account those who wish for their children to go to a Welsh-medium school	Llanbister C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore should the school close, the authority would expect pupils to transfer to alternative English-medium provision. Parents would be able to apply for a place for their children in Welsh-medium provision if this was their preference.
5.4.2	As working parents, we feel penalised	The authority notes this comment.

	for working	
6 IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY		
6.1 Community hall		
6.1.1	The school's close proximity to the community hall allows children to use the facilities	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.2	The community hall is a vital hub where the community meets for local events, what will happen to the building and the land?	The proposal is around the closure of the school and not the whole site. Should the school close, it is the authority's expectation that the community hall would continue under its current arrangements and that discussions would be undertaken with the management group around any further transfer of land required for car parking etc.
6.1.3	Concern about the financial impact on the Hall as the school provides 50% of the overall income to the hall per year	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.4	The income provided by the school provides stability to keep the hall running year on year.	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.5	Without the school providing income to the hall, and with Powys' funding stream coming to an end in 2017, the hall is at risk of not having enough income to cover the running costs, which puts the hall at a higher risk of closing	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.6	Closure of the school would lead to a significant reduction in use of the hall,	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss

	for example for after school clubs, parties, PE and PTA events, and other groups that are not directly linked to the school such as Young Farmers, sports groups and parent / toddler group	of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.7	The community hall is a village facility although it is used by the school	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.8	The community hall is physically and financially connected with the school	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.9	What consideration has been given to the financial viability of the community hall if it loses essential revenue from the school based lettings?	Concerns raised in relation to the financial viability of the community hall should the school close will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
6.1.10	The school currently pays the Hall committee approximately £3k a year for use of the hall during the day, and receives additional funding for school concerts and events held by the school – if the school were to close, these income streams would be under threat.	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during and outside of the school day.
6.2 Impact on community organisations and activities		
6.2.1	If the school closed, it would have a knock on affect for the churches	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanbister C.P. School on the local churches. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term

	locally	sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.2	Concern that the playgroup would close if the school closed	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanbister C.P. School on the playgroup. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.3	Concern that the local YFCs would close	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanbister C.P. School on the local YFCs. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed. The authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, therefore the YFC could continue to meet in the hall.
6.2.4	Concern about the negative effect on the annual village show	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanbister C.P. School on the annual village show. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.5	Closure of the school would have a huge effect on the local community's amenities and the local activities	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.6	Concern about the annual fair if there is no school in the area	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanbister C.P. School on the annual fair. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.7	The Ti a Fi playgroup will be affected as it will not continue if the school	The authority notes this comment. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

	closes	
6.2.8	Where will the YFC meet if the school closes?	The authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, therefore the YFC could continue to meet in the hall.
6.2.9	Historic and cultural links with the YFC are formed within the schools	The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.10	The school links with the churches, YFC, village shows, sports clubs and more – these will all be lost	The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.2.11	Ti a Fi group fluctuates in numbers from 10-25 parents and children and acts as a natural feeder to Llanbister School	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.12	If the school closes, the Ti a Fi group will close as families will invest their time within the catchment area of the school	The authority notes this concern.
6.2.13	Of the 28 parents that attend Llanbister Ti a Fi, 82% attend no other playgroup. The 18% that do attend another playgroup all attend Felindre, which is now part of the catchment area of Llanbister School since the closure of Beguildy	The authority notes this concern.
6.2.14	There will be no activities for young people	The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational

		issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3 Concern about impact of closing a school on the community / village		
6.3.1	The school is part of local life and to lose it would be a blow to the community	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.2	The school is an important hub for the local community	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.3	The school is at the heart of the community, closing it would have a devastating effect	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.4	The school is dedicated to supporting the local community	The authority notes this comment.
6.3.5	Closure of the school would significantly mar the community spirit in Llanbister	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.6	The school is what holds the community together	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.7	Closure of the school would have a detrimental effect on children and	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and

	parents in the community	social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.8	Closure of the school would mean that the community would lose its focal point	The authority notes this comment. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.9	The school's playground is used for community events and used by the pub for weddings and funerals	The authority notes this comment.
6.3.10	It has been proven that the heart of the community goes when a school is closed	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.11	The detrimental impact closing a school has on the community has already been seen following the closure of Dolfor and Beguildy schools – local shows, young farmers clubs and other social gatherings have been severely affected	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.12	Closure of the school would have a negative impact on future generations	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.13	Closure of the school would change the way the community functions socially	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

6.3.14	The school has strong links with the community which will be torn apart	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.15	Closure of Beguildy has had a devastating effect on the local community – the children now attend 7 different schools in Wales and England	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.16	Since the closure of Beguildy School community events have reduced by 50%	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.17	Not enough consideration has been given to the effect it would have on the community	The authority notes this comment. An initial community impact assessment was published with the consultation document in relation to this proposal. This will be updated following the consultation period to reflect issues raised during the consultation period, and will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in respect of this proposal.
6.3.18	Moving the children would deprive the village of any young community life	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.19	The community needs to keep its primary school, for its community spirit, for its heritage and for the people of Powys as a whole	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

6.3.20	The community members of Llanbister, Llanbadarn Fynydd, Llananno, Felindre, Llaithddu and Beguildy whose nearest school is Llanbister have completed a survey to demonstrate the importance of the school and how it strengthens the communities it serves	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.21	The village has already lost the shop, no more must be lost	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4 Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Llanbister		
6.4.1	It would stop young people from staying in the area and would stop people from moving into the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.2	If there is no school, it will prevent new families moving into the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.3	Without a school it is hard to see a future for the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.4	The mobile phone and broadband	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term

	networks are not good in this area. Without a primary school families will not move to the area, and an increasing proportion of elderly people would remain	sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.5	The social and economic future of this rural area will depend on well-educated and inventive young people wishing to stay and raise their own families here. This will not happen without a good local primary school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.6	Closing the school will destabilize the population balance as families will not want to settle in the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.7	What would attract people to the area if there were no school?	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.8	Closure of the school would cause rural depopulation	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.9	Housing in the local area is not selling due to the threat to the school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.10	There will be no school nearby for newcomers to the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social

		factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.11	If there was no school, the village would become a retirement village.	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5 Impact on the local economy		
6.5.1	Closing the school would have a devastating effect on local businesses	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.2	Closing the school will take away a major stream of income for The Lion which arises from events at the school and outside bars we supply for school fundraising events	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.3	Concern about the impact of closure of the school on The Lion, a struggling rural pub	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.4	Closure of the school would have a detrimental effect on the turnover of The Lion	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.5	Concern about economic and social impact on the community, on existing local business such as the public house and on prospects for any new	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

	business that might serve the community	
6.6 Reference to the One Powys Plant / Powys County Council's Vision – 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'		
6.6.1	Concern that rural areas will die	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.6.2	It feels like the council is destroying our rural communities and way of life, which goes against the council's vision	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.6.3	The Council should live up to its mission statement	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.6.4	The proposal goes against the ethos of the Council to maintain thriving communities in the green heart of Wales	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.6.5	How does shutting schools fit in with the Council's mission statement?	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.6.6	We are currently a strong community	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'.

	and we will continue to be so, but how can this be your mission statement when you are proposing to rip our community apart as you have done with both Dolfor and Beguildy by shutting their schools	However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.7 Issues relating to rural isolation		
6.7.1	The school provides a much needed social aspect to our community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.7.2	The YFC helps combat rural isolation, concern that closure of the school will have a detrimental effect on the YFC	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.7.3	The thriving Ti a Fi group offers vital social networks	The authority notes this comment.
6.7.4	People would feel very isolated if the village hall suffered	The authority notes this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.7.5	In rural areas such as this, opportunities to socialise are often generated by the school. These are ties that will be destroyed if the school is closed	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.7.6	The school provides a much needed social aspect to our community, not	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social

	only for parents and children at the school but for the community as a whole – it is a very rural area and all social gatherings are important	factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.7.7	Closure of the school would only serve to isolate individuals and families more	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.7.8	Closure of the Ti a Fi playgroup would lead to parents being isolated	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.8 Other		
6.8.1	In the last few months construction has started on a wind farm in our area and part of the overall package is that the development company provide a community benefit fund. If the school closure goes ahead there will be no community to benefit	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.8.2	46% of people in the communities served by the school visit the village of Llanbister at least 5 times a week, the reasons for the visits are: taking/collecting children from school, collecting daily papers from the Lion Hotel, weekly clubs, meetings and socialising	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.8.3	The community is very strong and is	The authority notes this comment.

	willing to cooperate with Powys County Council	
6.8.4	There is an emphasis in Wales on preserving the Welsh Language but there will be no history, tradition or community without the school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality Welsh education infrastructure which would be available at the receiving school.
6.8.5	If the school closed, would the community have the opportunity to purchase the site?	Yes, the school would be declared surplus by the schools service and would be subject to disposal through the authority's asset management processes.
6.8.6	Llanbadarn Fynydd will be receiving a long-term annual benefit of in excess of £60k from the owners of the wind farm, reasonable to expect some of this to be given to Llanbister School	The authority notes this comment.
6.8.7	Please don't think about short term fixes, think about the bigger picture – Radnorshire is unique, please keep it that way	The authority notes this comment.
6.8.8	The community is united in support of the school	The authority notes this comment.
7 ISSUES RELATING TO PUPIL NUMBERS / SURPLUS PLACES		
7.1 Expected increase in pupil numbers		
7.1.1	There are 34 pupils in the school now which will rise to 50 plus by 2020	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.2	Projections show that Llanbister School will be nearly full by 2018	The authority notes this comment.

7.1.3	Numbers at Llanbister School will increase by 82% in the next 4 years, that is only including the children we know of	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.4	There is a change in the local population as farmers are diversifying into hens/chickens and holiday lets/lodges, this keeps the young people here as they don't have to work away, this is why pupil numbers are increasing	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.5	Pupil numbers at Llanbister are going up	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.6	Llanbister has a rising intake	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.7	Projected pupil numbers show that the issue of low numbers will resolve itself in a few years	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.8	By 2019 the school will have potentially 80 children accessing the school	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.9	Vacant places at the school will diminish in the next couple of years	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.10	Projected pupil numbers for January 2020 are estimated at 54, this would put the school over capacity	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.11	The local community has produced a	The authority notes this comment.

	list of actual names and dates of birth of all children in the area who will be attending the school in 2020 which comes in at 69 pupils	
7.1.12	As a growing community we believe that a school site in Llanbister is a must	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.13	The school will reach its initial capacity of 45 with 47 pupils by September 2018, the school will have 61 pupils by September 2019	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.14	The population in Llanbister seems likely to increase	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.15	The school has a rising intake of pupils due to sons and daughters taking over family businesses	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.16	The school is well attended and by 2018 with the expected level of increase in pupil numbers the school will need to be extended not closed	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.17	The biggest year group in Llanbister is the nursery age group, these children will be in reception by the time the proposal to change the school admission age is implemented	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.18	Even if the proposed changes to the age of admission are passed, pupil numbers are looking good even	The authority notes this comment.

	without nursery pupils	
7.1.19	Pupil numbers at the school will double	The authority notes this comment.
7.2 Decline in pupil numbers		
7.2.1	Council figures show that there are falling rolls and a high level of vacant places across the county, this is not the case in Llanbister	The authority notes this comment.
7.2.2	The school has been under capacity for the last few years but not as low as the figure given on page 18 of the consultation document	As stated in the consultation document, the figures on page 18 are the actual number of pupils from Reception to Year 6 at Llanbister C.P. School in January 2016, based on information taken from the authority's Teacher Centre database.
7.3 Housing developments in the local area		
7.3.1	There is planning permission for additional housing in Llanbister	The authority has considered the impact on the school from future housing developments in the catchment area. On average in Powys we have 1 primary age child for every 6 houses.
7.3.2	Housing development being built in Llanbadarn Fynydd which will bring new families into the area	The authority has considered the impact on the school from future housing developments in the catchment area. On average in Powys we have 1 primary age child for every 6 houses.
7.3.3	There are plans for a new housing development which will bring more families into the community	The authority has considered the impact on the school from future housing developments in the catchment area. On average in Powys we have 1 primary age child for every 6 houses.
7.4 Other		
7.4.1	Population statistics are difficult to predict	The authority notes this comment.

7.4.2	The refugee crisis could be turned to our advantage if the many well educated, resourceful and motivated people fleeing for their lives could be accommodated here	The authority notes this comment.
7.4.3	The Council are not factoring in the birth rate in this area	The authority has been made fully aware of the number of pre-school children in the catchment area and is using this information to update its pupil number projections for the school.
7.4.4	The Council will be up to 98% capacity in schools in North Radnorshire by 2020 – the council will fail to have surplus capacity of 10% as is required by the School Organisation Code	The School Organisation Code does not require the authority to maintain 10% surplus places in its schools. The Welsh Government has identified that there are costs associated with surplus places and authorities are required to reduce the overall surplus places to under 105 over time, with each school ideally being in the range of running at 85% to 105% of capacity.
8 POSITIVES ABOUT LLANBISTER C.P. SCHOOL		
8.1 Standards / educational provision		
8.1.1	Teaching standards at Llanbister are of the highest quality	In the Estyn inspection in January 2015, the quality of teaching at Llanbister C.P. School was judged as Adequate. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the quality of teaching since this inspection.
8.1.2	Llanbister School is and has been a premier example of rural education	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training. The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.3	Standards at Llanbister School have been brilliant	Standards at Llanbister School are currently Adequate at best. This has been confirmed by Estyn and the National Classification of Schools in Wales in 2016.
8.1.4	The school has a good educational	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special

	record	Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.5	Estyn report stated that 'The school provides a curriculum that satisfies statutory requirements'	This is correct. The school provides a curriculum which meets statutory requirements.
8.1.6	The Estyn report stated that the education is very good	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.7	Pupil currently attending the school is reading above their expected age	The authority notes this comment.
8.1.8	This is not a failing school, it serves the local community well	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.9	The consultation document questions the schools standards. However the educational standards, as in how our children learn, continue to be high and of a good standard	Standards at Llanbister C.P. School are currently Adequate at best. This has been confirmed by Estyn and the National Classification of Schools in Wales in 2016.
8.1.10	Llanbister is in special measures due to leadership, however generally standards at the school are good	Standards at Llanbister School are currently Adequate at best. This has been confirmed by Estyn and the National Classification of Schools in Wales in 2016.
8.1.11	It was not made clear to the Cabinet that Llanbister is in special measures due to leadership and management and not education	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory. The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed

		the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.12	Educational standards at Llanbister are rated exactly the same as Crossgates	This is not the case. The National Categorisation of Schools in 2016 judged standards at Crossgates C.P. School to be 2 and standards at Llanbister C.P. School to be 3.
8.1.13	Over 18 months, the staff, governors and headteacher have addressed all issues within the inspection	Overall, Estyn has judged that satisfactory progress being made at Llanbister C.P. School.
8.1.14	It would be criminal to stop such an output of academic excellence	Llanbister C.P. School in currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.15	The Estyn inspection report recognised the work which had already been done to improve the situation. The school has worked with Estyn and has continued to meet the improvement targets it has been set. It is due to be out of Special Measures by the end of the year	Overall, Estyn has judged that satisfactory progress being made at Llanbister C.P. School.
8.1.16	Educational standards have always been good at Llanbister School	Llanbister C.P. School in currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
8.1.17	Personal experience of Llanbister School is very positive	The authority notes this comment.
8.1.18	Reference to historical Estyn inspections of the school	Llanbister C.P. School was placed in follow-up activity following the Estyn inspections in both 2012 and 2015.

8.1.19	The present staff of Llanbister School are not the staff that are responsible for the school being in Special Measures	The authority accepts that this statement is true. However, since the core inspection in January 2015, Estyn judges that satisfactory progress has been made in 5 recommendations, limited progress has been made in one recommendation and strong progress has been made in one recommendation, therefore the school remains in Special Measures.
8.1.20	The school has continued to make progress each time Estyn has returned to monitor the school	The Estyn report following the monitoring visit in June 2016 states: 'Llanbister C.P. School is judged to have made insufficient progress overall in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in January 2015. As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is maintaining the level of follow-up activity.'
8.1.21	According to 2015 results, 100% of Llanbister pupils in year 2 and year 6 achieved the expected levels at the end of the year, placing the school in quartile 1 for all areas of the tested subjects, which means Llanbister is in the top 25% of results in Wales	Three pupils were assessed at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2015 and it is true that all did achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator. Five pupils were assessed at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015 and it is true that all achieved the Core Subject Indicator. However, this does not place the school in the top 25% of results in Wales. It places the school in the top 25% of similar schools in Wales.
8.1.22	An action plan for Special Measures is in place for a minimum of 18 months to 2 years, therefore it will be at least this time next year before we can remove the label of 'Special Measures'	The authority acknowledges that this is likely to be the case.
3.1.23	The local authority's report after a monitoring visit on the 3/2/16 gave Llanbister amber for progress in all areas of the action plan – there were no red judgments from the Local Authority, so they should no longer be concerned about standards at the school when they have reported that the school is making progress	The local authority document 'Monitoring Powys Schools 2015-2016' issued to all schools clarifies that an amber judgement equates to satisfactory progress. The definition of satisfactory progress is 'Limited impact on standards and/or quality of provision and many aspects addressed but still significant work to do in important areas'. The school remains a school causing concern to the local authority.

8.1.24	The school was given an ERW categorisation of 3 for standards, as it is based on the average of the last 3 years. This year, pupils are again projected to achieve the expected levels, so again 100%, so we would expect to improve in the ERW categorisation. ERW make a second judgement on leadership, which was deemed to be unsatisfactory, giving an overall categorisation of red.	<p>The 3 awarded for standards was a Welsh Government judgement, not an ERW judgement. The National Categorisation of Schools is based on three steps:</p> <p>Step 1: the outcome will be a standards group for each school (1-4) Step 2: the outcome will be a judgement about a school's improvement capacity (A-D) Step 3: this will lead to a support category for each school (green, yellow, amber, red).</p> <p>The improvement capacity of a school requiring special measures should not normally be higher than D and the support category red in the first instance.</p>
3.1.25	Pupils like that they learn lots of things in school	The authority notes this comment.
3.1.26	Pupils like the PE lessons	The authority notes this comment.
8.3 Behaviour and Attendance		
8.3.1	Pupils are polite, courteous and well-mannered which had a special mention in the Estyn Report 2015	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that they would not be polite, courteous and well-mannered if they attended a different school.
8.3.2	Children at the school are friendly, polite and respectful. Don't think you would get the same at a larger school	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that they would not be friendly, polite and respectful if they attended a larger school.
8.4 Buildings and Facilities		
8.4.1	The school has an adequate building and community hall for all the children	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.2	The school is located in a well maintained building with a sports hall	The authority notes this comment.

	next door	
8.4.3	The buildings are sound and durable	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.4	The school is situated off the main road therefore it is safe for the children and there is no polluted air from petrol fumes	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.5	The school has ample parking off the main road – it is a safe environment	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.6	The school is in very good condition	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.7	The school has robust, well modernised, warm and comfortable buildings	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.8	It is a fit for purpose building	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.9	Over 18 months contractors have only been called out once	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.10	The Council has graded the school building incorrectly as £120,000 has been spent on improvements to the building – after spending this much money an up to date survey should have taken place to re-evaluate the structure	The condition and other assessments are based on evaluations undertaken by Welsh Government appointed surveyors a number of years ago. The Cabinet has recently approved a 5 year rolling programme of updating the overall assessments of schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency.
8.4.11	Part of the building is an older structure but about half of the school is a total rebuild or a total refurbishment.	The authority notes this comment.

8.4.12	Approximately £120,000 was spent on the school in the last few years and the building is of sound nature and will provide an excellent educational base for years to come	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.13	The school has the bonus of having a community hall which is annexed to the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.14	The only thing that has had to be repaired in the last few years was the boiler	The school is part of the property plus building maintenance service and has had jobs undertaken in line with the terms and conditions of the scheme in addition to the works carried out to the cloakrooms and toilets.
8.4.15	£120,000 was spent on refurbishing the cloakrooms and toilets	The condition and other assessments are based on evaluations undertaken by Welsh Government appointed surveyors a number of years ago. The Cabinet has recently approved a 5 year rolling programme of updating the overall assessments of schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency.
8.4.16	Llanbister School was built approximately 90 years ago, why are you saying that it is in a poor state of repair?	The condition assessment was undertaken by Welsh Government appointed officers to give a consistent approach to the assessments across Wales. The age and historic spend on repairs and maintenance on the school will determine the current overall condition of the school building.
8.4.17	The school is in good order and has excellent facilities	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.18	If the community hall is included, the facilities are more than fit for purpose	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.19	The school has capacity for all of the projected pupils in the Llanbister catchment area	The authority notes this comment.

8.4.20	Capacity figures for Llanbister are based on using one room as a single classroom, this could be divided and used as 2 teaching spaces, with a total capacity of 71	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.21	There are no leaking roofs here	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.22	School dinners can be provided at the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.23	A visual survey has been carried out by a Structural Engineer based in Llandrindod, based on this, governors believe the buildings should be category B	The authority notes this comment. Cabinet approved a rolling programme of reassessment of school conditions commencing in September 2016.
8.4.24	There are lots of toys in the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.25	The classrooms are nice and colourful	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.26	There is a big yard at the school so there is plenty of space for pupils to play	The authority notes this comment.
8.5 Opportunities for pupils		
8.5.1	Sports tuition provided to pupils at Llanbister School was brilliant	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.2	The school has a record of providing opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of activities, including academic, sporting, artistic and	The authority notes this comment.

	musical	
8.5.3	Estyn report stated that 'pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to all extra-curricular activities'	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.4	A wide range of educational and sporting activities are provided	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.5	The school has won the swimming gala 4 years in a row, beating larger schools	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.6	Pupils like taking part in sports after school	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.7	Pupils get more opportunities because there aren't many pupils in the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.6 Staff		
8.6.1	The teachers and headteacher always offer time to support pupil needs or to provide reassurance	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.2	Estyn report states that staff treat all pupils 'equally, fairly and with respect'.	The authority notes this comment.
8.7 Support provided to the school		
8.7.1	The school has strong support from parents	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.

8.7.2	The school has support from some of Radnorshire's oldest families	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.
8.7.3	Parents and volunteers keep the grounds well maintained	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.
8.7.4	There is a strong community and a fundraising committee which is well supported by parents	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.
8.8 Friendly nature of the school		
8.8.1	There is an open door policy at the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.2	Classrooms are full of happiness	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.3	The school provides a caring and welcoming environment	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.4	Llanbister is a happy, thriving school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.5	Estyn report states that 'the school provides an inclusive, caring and welcoming environment'	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.6	The school's caring and inclusive environment is important for the well-being of the children that attend	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.7	It's a small school so everyone knows each other	The authority notes this comment.
8.9 Success of previous pupils		

8.9.1	Llanbister School produces Llandrindod Wells High School's top athletes	The authority notes this comment.
8.9.2	Children from Llanbister School have been consistent high achievers through the generations	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.3	A high number of pupils went on to higher education due to the superior teaching standards at Llanbister School	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.4	Llanbister School gave pupils a good foundation to their progressive education	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.5	Both children attended Llanbister School and were educated to a high standard with excellent teacher support. They were always happy to go to school and graduated from university	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.10 The school's place in the community		
8.10.1	The school is at the heart of this rural community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
8.10.2	The school has a strong history	The authority notes this comment.
8.10.3	The school has strong community values	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.

8.11 Support provided to pupils		
8.11.1	Pupils are taught on an individual basis	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expect to treat pupils as individuals and to cater for their individual needs, therefore there is no reason to believe that pupils would not be taught on an individual basis should they attend a different school.
8.11.2	Children are currently attending Llanbister School and are doing well	The authority notes this comment.
8.11.3	Children are taught and nurtured based on their ability not just their year group	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expect to teach and nurture pupils based on their ability, therefore there is no reason to believe that this would not be the case should pupils attend a different school.
8.11.4	It is an understanding school for children	The authority notes this comment.
8.11.5	The smaller class sizes at the school mean that there is more one to one time, which has added to pupils' confidence and academic achievements	The authority notes this comment. Should Llanbister C.P. School close, the authority acknowledges that it is likely that pupils would be taught in larger classes. However, the authority's aim is to ensure that all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential, and there is no reason to believe that this would not be the case should pupils attend a different school.
8.11.6	A pupil's confidence and social levels have increased, do not believe this would have happened so soon in a larger school	The authority notes this comment.
8.11.7	As there aren't many people in the school pupils get more attention and more help	The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would transfer to a larger school. However, effective teaching would ensure that all pupils were taught effectively, regardless of how many pupils were in the class, and that pupils get the attention and help they need.
8.11.8	The children have a better education because there is more time to have	The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would transfer to a larger school. However, effective teaching would ensure that all pupils were

	one to one support	taught effectively, regardless of how many pupils were in the class, and that pupils get the attention and help they need.
8.12 Other		
8.12.1	It is a well-run country school	The authority notes this comment.
8.12.2	Pupils feel secure and motivated to learn	The authority notes this comment. However, the authority would expect that pupils in all Powys schools feel secure and motivated to learn.
8.12.3	Llanbister School is and has been a premier example of rural education and it would amount to a criminal act to shut such a successful school	The authority notes this comment.
8.12.4	5 years ago Llanbister was one of the top primary schools in Wales	The authority notes this comment.
8.12.5	Llanbister is a good, thriving school	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training. The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category in January 2016.
9 POSITIVES ABOUT SMALL / RURAL SCHOOLS		
9.1 Benefits of small schools		
9.1.1	There has been an increase in pupils' confidence and social skills since being in the school, this would not have happened in a larger school	The authority notes this comment.
9.1.2	Small schools work well because the staff know each individual child and their needs	The authority notes this comment. However, staff in all schools are expected to cater to the individual needs of each child to ensure that they can achieve their potential.

9.1.3	Smaller schools can provide better education	The authority acknowledges that there are good and bad examples of small schools and larger schools.
9.1.4	You get more one to one attention in small schools which will increase your levels and you will get better grades	Effective teaching would ensure that all pupils were taught effectively, regardless of how many pupils were in the class, and that pupils get the attention and support they need in order to achieve their potential.
9.1.5	Small schools give pupils the best start in life	The authority notes this comment. Staff in all schools are expected to cater to the individual needs of each child to ensure that they can achieve their potential.
9.2 Benefits of small classes		
9.2.1	Provides more one to one time	The authority notes this comment.
9.3 Benefits of rural / village schools		
9.3.1	Country schools are unique	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.2	Know of someone who got a job on the grounds that she went to a rural school	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.3	A rural school is important to many people	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.4	Rural schools are key in a community	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.5	Local schools are important for local children	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.6	We choose to live in a rural area, therefore we want our children to be brought up in their surroundings rather than being forced to a town	The authority notes this comment. The named receiving school in respect of this proposal is located in the village of Crossgates and serves a predominantly rural catchment area, therefore should the proposal be implemented, the authority would not be forcing children to attend a town school.

school		
9.4 Concern about bigger schools / classes		
9.4.1	Are large classes good for learning?	<p>Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes. There is no evidence that pupils do not make good progress in larger classes. The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would be educated in larger classes, although these would be single-age classes which is not the case currently in Llanbister – pupils will be taught with pupils of the same age and similar abilities. This is likely to improve a teacher’s ability to better meet the needs of all learners. The authority recognises that the current class sizes at Llanbister C.P. School are small, however, the authority is confident that pupils achieve well in larger class as well as in smaller classes.</p> <p>The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.</p>
9.4.2	Larger schools would not give children the same opportunities to develop their skills	<p>Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes. There is no evidence that pupils do not make good progress in larger schools. This is evidenced in Estyn inspections.</p>
9.4.3	Concern that larger classes mean less one to one time between the teacher and the child	<p>Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes. There is no evidence that pupils do not make good progress in larger classes. The authority accepts that should Llanbister C.P. School close, it is likely that pupils would be educated in larger classes, although these would be single-age classes which is not the case currently in Llanbister – pupils will be taught with pupils of the same age and similar abilities. This is likely to improve a teacher’s ability to better meet the needs of all learners. The authority recognises that the current class sizes at Llanbister C.P. School are small, however, the authority is confident that pupils achieve well in larger class as well as in smaller classes.</p> <p>The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.</p>
9.4.4	Pupils will not have the same level of education in a larger school	<p>The authority disputes this comment. However, pupils achieve well in larger schools as well as in smaller schools. There is no reason to believe that pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School would not receive education at least of the same level in the named</p>

		receiving school.
9.4.5	Pupils will become just another number in a larger school and won't receive the help and encouragement that's needed	The authority does not agree with this comment. All schools are expected to ensure that all pupils receive the help and encouragement they need to achieve their potential, regardless of the school's size.
9.5 Other		
9.5.1	Changing to larger schools and new buildings does not give a better education	The authority notes this comment. The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.
9.5.2	Finland supports the concept that bigger is not always better	The authority notes this comment. The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.
10 ISSUES RELATING TO THE NAMED RECEIVING SCHOOL		
10.1 Capacity		
10.1.1	The capacity at Crossgates School needs to be thoroughly investigated	Crossgates School has 7 permanent class bases and a mobile classroom which gives the school a total capacity of 238 pupils. (7 x 30 plus 1 x 28)
10.1.2	If Crossgates was full to capacity would you then propose to take the children even further? Into Llandrindod?	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. Pupil places will be allocated for future intakes in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the schools allocation area and in particular those with siblings already in the school.
10.1.3	Crossgates will exceed its capacity if all the planned closures go ahead	The authority is fully aware of the potential numbers of pupils that could transfer to Crossgates if all proposed closures proceed and all parents wished their children to attend Crossgates C.P. School. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.

10.1.4	Where will our children be taught if Crossgates School exceeds its capacity?	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school. If places were not available in Crossgates C.P. School then the authority would have a duty to offer places in another local school.
10.1.5	Crossgates School does not have capacity for all the children from Llanbister, Dolau and potentially Nantmel	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school.
10.1.6	The school does not have the capacity to absorb three more schools as well as the overflow from the English-medium stream at Trefonnen	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school.
10.1.7	You have not considered the capacity of Crossgates	Information about the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School was provided in the consultation document in respect of this proposal.
10.1.8	Numbers at Llanbister are projected to increase, can Crossgates cope with this?	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school.
10.1.9	What happens when the school becomes overcrowded because of all the new pupils?	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school. If places were not available in Crossgates C.P. School then the authority would have a duty to offer places in another local school.

10.1.10	Llandrindod Wells is close or at capacity, with some pupils already being transferred to Crossgates	If the school were to close the authority would include the catchment area of Llanbister C.P. School within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. The available places in Crossgates would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria which prioritises those children living in the catchment area and in particular those with older siblings in the school.
10.1.11	Many Nantmel pupils may go to Crossgates early, which will push pupil numbers above the school's capacity	The authority is fully aware of the potential numbers of pupils that could transfer to Crossgates if all proposed closures proceed and all parents wished their children to attend Crossgates C.P. School. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
10.1.12	Pupil numbers at Crossgates are going up	The authority is fully aware of the potential numbers of pupils that could transfer to Crossgates if all proposed closures proceed and all parents wished their children to attend Crossgates C.P. School. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
10.1.13	The changes being proposed at Crossgates will require considerable capital investment, on a site which has no or little room for expansion	Apart from some minor refurbishment of the Mobile Classroom, there are no plans to spend any capital money on the school at Crossgates.
10.1.14	There will be capacity problems in Crossgates by January 2017 if Llanbister School is closed	The authority is fully aware of the potential numbers of pupils that could transfer to Crossgates if all proposed closures proceed and all parents wished their children to attend Crossgates C.P. School. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
10.1.15	Would like some clarity as to the exact number of children Crossgates can accept?	Crossgates School has 7 permanent class bases and a mobile classroom which has a total capacity of 238 pupils (7 x 30 plus 1 x 28).
10.1.16	The new school will be overcrowded which will affect the quality of education	Crossgates School has 7 permanent class bases and a mobile classroom which has a total capacity of 238 pupils (7 x 30 plus 1 x 28). The authority is aware of the potential pupil number pressure on Crossgates C.P. School if all parents in the three school requested places at the school. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when

		determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
10.1.17	Crossgates cannot accommodate the projected pupil numbers	Crossgates School has 7 permanent class bases and a mobile classroom which has a total capacity of 238 pupils (7 x 30 plus 1 x 28). The authority is aware of the potential pupil number pressure on Crossgates C.P. School if all parents in the three school requested places at the school. This will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
10.1.18	If the authority were to apply for 21 st century schools funding to extend Crossgates School, there would be a cost to the taxpayer and Powys County Council as the Council would have to match fund Welsh Government funding	The authority notes this comment. There are currently no plans to apply for funding from the 21 st Century Schools programme for improvements to Crossgates C.P. School
10.2 Concern about use of mobile classroom		
10.2.1	Current portacabin used for after school club is not a fit or healthy environment to be taught in	The school does not have a portacabin, but a mobile classroom. The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.2	Do not want current Crossgates pupils taught in the current portacabin	The authority notes this comment.
10.2.3	Pupils will be leaving well equipped schools to be 'herded into inadequate sheds'	The mobile classroom on the Crossgates site is not a "shed", the authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.4	Concern about use of portacabins at Crossgates School	The authority notes this concern. The school does not have a portacabin, but a mobile classroom. The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).

10.2.5	The receiving school can only cope with the additional children if they use a mobile classroom that has been on site since 2003 and does not pass current building regulations	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B). The school has 7 permanent class bases plus the mobile classroom and has a total capacity of 238 pupils.
10.2.6	The mobile classroom hasn't been used since 2009 and was deemed not fit for purpose	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.7	A substandard portacabin is not an improvement for Llanbister pupils	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B). If utilised the mobile classroom would be one of 8 single age classes.
10.2.8	Unacceptable for pupils to be taught in portable huts	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.9	Would be taking pupils into temporary portable accommodation of unknown / unstated condition, which goes against the Council's own policy	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.10	Concern about pupils attending a damp portacabin	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.11	Existing mobile classroom does not pass building regulations and is unsafe	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.12	Welsh Government and the Council's education policies state that mobile classrooms are a thing of the past	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the need for and use of mobile classrooms, however this is expected to be at least a 20 years strategy.

	and are not to be used on a regular basis	
10.2.13	Concern about pupils being moved from their school building to temporary buildings	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.14	There are no plans for a new build or a new mobile classroom, or refurbishment of the existing mobile classroom – if there were, costings would have been provided in the Consultation Document	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.15	The portacabin has no fire or security alarms fitted therefore they cannot be used as an option to increase capacity	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B). The work will include the provision of appropriate alarms etc.
10.2.16	The portacabin is rated below an A or B which it should be according to the school transformation policy.	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.17	Portacabin has holes in the roof, is invested with vermin, has damage to the walls and is not fit for purpose	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.18	Money will have to be spent on the mobile classroom at Crossgates	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.19	Portable classroom will accommodate 28 children, this will not provide adequate space	The mobile classroom does have a capacity of 28 pupils which will be factored into the capacity calculation for the school, giving a total classroom capacity of 238 places and an annual admission number of 29.

10.2.20	Why leave bricks and mortar for a tin cabin?	The authority notes this comment. The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.21	It will cost £6000 to repair the portacabin, as a parent I want to know exactly what needs to be done and the exact amount	The updated estimated costs for the works on the mobile classroom is between £10k and £15k.
10.2.22	The Council quoted £6000 to refurbish the portacabin, £50,000 would be a more realistic figure	The updated estimated costs for the works on the mobile classroom is between £10k and £15k.
10.2.23	As the portacabin does not meet the required standards it cannot be included to increase capacity	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.24	If no refurbishment takes place Powys will be in breach of the School Organisation Code	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.25	Unacceptable for the Council to justify children being taught in a mobile classroom	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the mobile classroom at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B). If utilised the mobile classroom would be one of 8 single age classes.
10.2.26	The authority is unsure whether the portacabin meets the required standards	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the portacabin at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.27	By 2019 a second mobile classroom will probably be required however no costings are provided	The authority is not planning any additional capital expenditure at Crossgates C.P. School for the provision of a second mobile classroom base.
10.2.28	Concern about toilet facilities in the mobile – you can't expect 30 children	The required ratio for toilets for children aged 5 to 11 is 1:20 under building bulletin 99.

	to use 2 toilets. More toilets will need to be included, which will reduce the capacity of the mobile	
10.2.29	Concern that children taught in the mobile will feel isolated from the main school and will have to walk further to the dining room and other facilities	If the school does use the mobile as a teaching base it is expected that a pupil would be in the mobile for a period of 1 year as the school would be structured with single aged classes.
10.2.30	Concern about access to the mobile in bad weather	The authority will work with the school to ensure that the impact of bad weather on pupils accessing the mobile is minimised.
10.2.31	At the SORP meeting on the 15 th December 2015, 'Officers agreed that it would not be aspirational to have pupils taught in mobile classrooms on a permanent basis'	The authority's long term goal is to reduce the use of mobile classrooms over the next 10 - 20 years. The change to the age of admission will reduce the number of children in the school from September 2017 and will reduce the school's need to utilise the mobile as a full time teaching base.
10.2.32	Welsh Government guidelines state that mobiles should only be used for 3 years	The authority's long term goal is to reduce the use of mobile classrooms over the next 10 - 20 year, with the long term aim of only using mobile classrooms to address a short term pupil pressure.
10.2.33	Are you in breach of your own building regulations due to the fact that you haven't removed the portacabin?	The authority is to review the planning permission around the mobile to ensure that the appropriate permission is in place.
10.2.34	Portacabins are too small and are often cramped, and they won't have all the equipment needed	The capacity of classroom whether it is a permanent or mobile classroom is based on the physical measurement of the teaching space. The mobile has been assessed as having a capacity of 28 pupils, with the 7 classes in the school having a capacity of 30.
10.2.35	It might take 30 minutes for pupils to go to the toilet if they are taught in a portacabin and have to go the main school, so pupils will miss out on the	The mobile classroom has 2 pupil toilets integrated into the building and there would not be a need for the children to access toilets in the main school building.

lessons		
10.3 Class sizes and the impact on classes		
10.3.1	Crossgates' classrooms have already been split due to large classrooms	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.2	Welsh Government guidelines has 30 to a classroom and the receiving school already exceeds this	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.3	Concern about class sizes at Crossgates	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.4	The class sizes will be too big in Crossgates and children's education will suffer	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p>

		Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.
10.3.5	How can a teacher realistically provide quality education with such large groups of children with various capabilities and learning styles and needs?	Effective teaching and learning provides the opportunity for all pupils to make good progress.
10.3.6	Classroom sizes have huge impacts and would jeopardise the quality of education and understanding of how children learn on an individual basis	Effective teaching and learning provides the opportunity for all pupils to make good progress.
10.3.7	Concern that class sizes will be well over 30	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.8	Enlarging class size at Crossgates will have a negative impact on educational performance for the children from Llanbister and also the children currently in Crossgates School	There is no evidence that teaching is less effective in larger classes. In the Maesydderwen Catchment, the authority closed 10 primary schools and established four new larger primary schools. This has resulted in improved outcomes and standards of wellbeing, which is evidenced in the recent Estyn inspections of all four schools. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.
10.3.9	The class sizes projected for January 2017 are well above the Welsh	The authority notes this comment. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class

	average of 25 pupils per class	sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.
10.3.10	The average size of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes in the future will be unlawful as they will exceed 30 pupils	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.11	What is the capacity per class in Crossgates and what would be acceptable?	Crossgates C.P. School has 7 permanent class bases and a mobile classroom which has a total capacity of 238 pupils (7 x 30 plus 1 x 28). The authority's class size policy states that all early years and infant classes should be maintained at under 30 pupils with Juniors having 33 pupils or less.
10.3.12	Being compacted into tight spaces will increase the chances of germs being spread.	There is no evidence that pupils who are in larger classes have a worse sickness absence rate.
10.4 Access and car parking		
10.4.1	Parking is unsafe at Crossgates School, parents have to park in the Texaco garage	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>

10.4.2	How do you plan to accommodate extra buses and numerous cars that will be bringing their children from Llanbister, Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Nantmel in a car park that is unable to cope with the current pressure that is placed on it?	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.3	Concern about safety at Crossgates School following the increase in pupils	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.4	Concern about safety at Crossgates due to the junction of 4 roads, there is little safe area to drop off and pick up children	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p>

		There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.
10.4.5	The car park is full to capacity now, what will happen when 3 other schools move to Crossgates?	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.6	There is chaos in Crossgates car park at pick up and drop off time	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.7	More parents will have to park in the Texaco petrol station and walk their child across	The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.

		<p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.8	Problems with increased traffic and parking at Crossgates	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidents in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.9	I would expect a full risk assessment of all collection and drop off points to be carried out before any decisions are made	<p>The authority's home to school transport arrangements places a duty on each appointed contractor to provide a risk assessment on all pickup points in respect to authority run home to school transport.</p>
10.5 Building and facilities		
10.5.1	Pupils will get lost in overcrowded halls	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. This would include transition days in Crossgates C.P. School, to ensure that the children are made aware and become used to the larger physical accommodation at the school.</p>

10.5.2	The Council would not be able to apply for capital funding to extend Crossgates until 2021	The authority has no plans to apply for capital expenditure under the 21st Century School funding programme in relation to Crossgates C.P. School. In addition to this programme, the authority has a major improvement capital budget which is planned to increase from £1m per annum to £2m per annum from the start of the 2017-18 financial year.
10.5.3	Building condition of B is misleading as it was only the school building that was assessed	The overall condition of Crossgates C.P. School was assessed as a condition B building which is the higher than the assessment given to Llanbister (C). Following some minor works to its roof and other fabric areas, the mobile classroom at Crossgates will be assessed as condition B.
10.5.4	The School Transformation Policy states that when a school is closed children should be relocated to a school where building condition is rated the same or higher	The condition of Llanbister C.P. School was assessed by Welsh Government appointed surveyors as condition C. There have been some works undertaken at the school in the interim period that may improve the rating to, at best, a B which is the same rating as given to Crossgates. 87.5% of the available teaching space at Crossgates has either been refurbished or newly constructed in the last 10 years. The only building on the site that was not part of those works is the remaining mobile classroom, and the authority is undertaking some minor works during the summer holiday period.
10.5.5	If no refurbishment of the existing accommodation takes place, will there be a breach of the School Organisation Code? Section 1.4 states that accommodation of at least the same quality should be provided for existing and projected pupil numbers	The condition of Llanbister C.P. School was assessed by Welsh Government appointed surveyors as condition C. There have been some works undertaken at the school in the interim period that may improve the rating to, at best, a B which is the same rating as given to Crossgates. 87.5% of the available teaching space at Crossgates has either been refurbished or newly constructed in the last 10 years. The only building on the site that was not part of those works is the remaining mobile classroom, and the authority is undertaking some minor works during the summer holiday period.
10.5.6	Will there be enough toilets at Crossgates?	The school has 14 pupil toilets in the main building and 2 in the mobile classroom and meets the required ratios for a school of 240 pupils.
10.5.7	Crossgates might need a bigger playground	The authority under its asset management plan is undertaking assessments of available external space as measured against the relevant building bulletins. Those schools with insufficient hard or soft grounds area will be identified and included in the major improvement budget plans and scored accordingly.

10.6 Quality of education and standards		
10.6.1	Crossgates School has not been inspected since 2010 – as schools must be inspected every 6 years this process should be starting now	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority.
10.6.2	Inspection of Crossgates School should be completed before any decisions are made as Llanbister pupils could potentially be sent to a school with worse educational standards	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority. However, in January 2016, the Welsh Government judged standards at Crossgates C.P. School as 2 and standards at Llanbister C.P. School as 3.
10.6.3	Children may be going to a school with lower standards – Crossgates school hasn't had an inspection for 6 years	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority. However, in January 2016, the Welsh Government judged standards at Crossgates C.P. School as 2 and standards at Llanbister C.P. School as 3.
10.7 Opportunities for pupils		
10.7.1	Pupils will miss out on opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities	The authority notes this comment.
10.7.2	Concern that pupils won't be able to take part in the same amount of activities due to Crossgates being a larger school	The authority acknowledges that as there are more pupils at Crossgates C.P. School it is possible that not all pupils will be able to take part in all activities. However all schools are expected to offer a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, and to ensure that all pupils are able to take part.
10.7.3	After school activities will be a thing of the past for Llanbister pupils	The authority notes this comment.
10.7.4	Pupils will miss out as parents can't	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could

	commit to picking children up from after-school activities due to the distance	have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
10.7.5	There is evidence to show that there are after-school activities at Crossgates C.P. School on 4 days of the week, therefore current pupils of Llanbister School would miss out	The authority notes this comment and accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
10.8 Impact on staff		
10.8.1	Concerns for the teachers in Crossgates C.P. School as they will have to cope with a huge change from 20 pupils to 30+ pupils	The authority notes this comment.
10.8.2	Concern that there will be a high turnover of teachers at Crossgates C.P. School due to stress	The authority notes this comment.
10.9 Proximity to the petrol station		
10.9.1	What has been done about the health implications of sending our children to Crossgates C.P. School?	Testing has been undertaken at the school.
10.9.2	What tests have been carried out?	Using a Photoionization Detector, officers tested six spot locations for hydrocarbons (this is an industry recognised method for testing for leakage from fuel storage areas, and as such would detect petrol vapour), the result in all locations was negative for the presence of hydrocarbons.
10.9.3	Who has carried out any tests that have been carried out and what	This function was undertaken by a member of the Environmental Health Team who are qualified to undertake the duties of their office.

	qualifications do they have?	
10.9.4	What equipment has been used to carry out any tests?	The tests were carried out using a Photoionization Detector.
10.9.5	Over what time period have tests been carried out?	The tests were carried out on one day.
10.9.6	Tests should be carried out over a 12 month period in all weather conditions to get a true reading of what the health implications are	<p>The Local Air Quality Management process requires Local Authorities to screen for various scenarios which are likely to give rise to exceedance of the objective level. In respect of petrol stations TG09 requires Local Authorities to identify petrol stations which have:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a throughput of 2 million litres of petrol per annum; and - are located on a road with an annual average daily traffic movement of 30,000 - are located within 10m of a receptor <p>The petrol station at Crossgates does not meet any of the above criteria and therefore the guidance does not advise that further assessment is required as it is very unlikely that the objective level is being exceeded.</p>
10.9.7	Fumes from the petrol station and traffic on the crossroad is unacceptable for children	There have been no reports of fumes from the school.
10.9.8	Even though the petrol station holds a Part B Environmental Permit, parents are concerned that the school is within 100m of the petrol station when international guidance advises against this	The petrol station operates under the environmental legislation for the UK and as such is judged to be of the lowest risk category.
10.9.9	A serious Public Health Concern – chronic low dose exposure to benzene leads to fatal diseases	The authority does not disagree that benzene is a hazardous substance.

	particularly in the young	
10.9.10	Children could be at risk of chronic low dose exposure to Benzene. This raises their risk of Acute myeloid leukaemia, which for under 15 year olds has a 66% survival rate at 5 years, so 1/3 of young children do not survive 5 years	The authority does not disagree that benzene is a hazardous substance.
10.9.11	Risk is also raised for other types of leukaemia and aplastic anaemia, all of which have high fatality rates	The authority does not disagree that benzene is a hazardous substance.
10.9.12	Concern that you haven't addressed the issue over the petrol station – don't want children moving into a dangerous and life threatening environment	<p>The Local Air Quality Management process requires Local Authorities to screen for various scenarios which are likely to give rise to exceedance of the objective level. In respect of petrol stations TG09 requires Local Authorities to identify petrol stations which have:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a throughput of 2 million litres of petrol per annum; and - are located on a road with an annual average daily traffic movement of 30,000 - are located within 10m of a receptor <p>The petrol station at Crossgates does not meet any of the above criteria and therefore the guidance does not advise that further assessment is required as it is very unlikely that the objective level is being exceeded.</p>
10.9.13	An independent expert agency should be involved over a period of time if it is to be deemed to be a safe environment	<p>The Local Air Quality Management process requires Local Authorities to screen for various scenarios which are likely to give rise to exceedance of the objective level. In respect of petrol stations TG09 requires Local Authorities to identify petrol stations which have:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a throughput of 2 million litres of petrol per annum; and - are located on a road with an annual average daily traffic movement of 30,000 - are located within 10m of a receptor

		The petrol station at Crossgates does not meet any of the above criteria and therefore the guidance does not advise that further assessment is required as it is very unlikely that the objective level is being exceeded.
10.9.14	WHO recommends to reduce the exposure of Benzene to children as they are particularly susceptible to the carcinogenic effects as they develop	The authority does not disagree that benzene is a hazardous substance.
10.9.15	A statement was read out at the public meeting which was misleading and falsely reassuring to parents – it implied that Public Health Wales are more involved than they have been	Public Health Wales have stated that as long as the petrol station is operating in accordance with the relevant technical guidance and shown to comply, then there is no public health concern.
10.9.16	I have grave concerns about the proximity of the school to the petrol station and no satisfactory evidence has been provided by Powys County Council to allay the parents' concerns	The petrol station operates under the environmental legislation for the UK and as such is judged to be of the lowest risk category. In addition, monitoring was undertaken which showed no hydrocarbons were present.
10.9.17	How can you brush the WHO evidence with regard to the petrol station under the carpet?	The petrol station operates under the environmental legislation for the UK and as such is judged to be of the lowest risk category.
10.9.18	Concern about the risks of schooling so close to the petrol station	The petrol station operates under the environmental legislation for the UK and as such is judged to be of the lowest risk category.
10.9.19	Request for appropriate evidence to be supplied and for the risk to be assessed properly	The Local Air Quality Management process requires Local Authorities to screen for various scenarios which are likely to give rise to exceedance of the objective level. In respect of petrol stations TG09 requires Local Authorities to identify petrol stations which have:- - a throughput of 2 million litres of petrol per annum; and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are located on a road with an annual average daily traffic movement of 30,000 - are located within 10m of a receptor <p>The petrol station at Crossgates does not meet any of the above criteria and therefore the guidance does not advise that further assessment is required as it is very unlikely that the objective level is being exceeded.</p>
10.9.20	An expert consultant in Public Health feels underqualified so how can Council members be bold enough to tell us that there is no concern when we are not presented with any data or results of appropriate tests?	Public Health Wales have stated that as long as the petrol station is operating in accordance with the relevant technical guidance and shown to comply, then there is no public health concern.
10.10 Other		
10.10.1	The receiving school is not fully prepared to serve the extra and additional needs of more students	The authority has no reason to believe that the receiving school would not be able to meet the needs of any pupils that transfer to the school.
10.10.2	Financial pressure will be based on Crossgates due to the additional pupils, the reduction in cost per pupil and the enlarged class size will have a detrimental impact on overall education	If the school were to close Crossgates' budget would be increased to take account of the additional pupils. The areas of the formula affected will be those that are funded based on pupil numbers, this will have the impact on reducing the overall funding per pupil but does not impact on the funding per pupil in respect of class related expenditure.
10.10.3	Where are the nursery aged pupils at Crossgates currently taught?	The pupils admitted to the school on a full time basis are taught within the school building with the pre-school children being taught in the stand alone building on the school site.
10.10.4	What provision is there for the playgroup? The setting on the Crossgates site is for 2 and 3 year olds, it is not a mother and babies group	The setting at the school is a newly established setting and it is the authority's understanding that the setting is looking to extend this provision to the younger children.

10.10.5	Pupils might get bullied for being new	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, which would include ensuring that all pupils were comfortable and settled in their new school.</p> <p>Bullying occurs to some extent in all schools and the important issue is how the school responds to bullying, when it occurs, addressing the needs of both the young person who has experienced the bullying and the young person who has carried out the bullying. The named receiving school has an effective anti-bullying policy, which is regularly reviewed, and this is part of the Safeguarding arrangements within the school.</p>
11 CONCERNS ABOUT OTHER SCHOOLS PUPILS MIGHT WISH TO TRANSFER TO		
11.1	Want children to have a Welsh education and learn the language and culture of where they live	Under the authority's home to school transport policy all pupils living in Powys have the right to attend a school in Powys, even if their closest school is in England. In addition, transport for qualifying pupils is provided to attend the closest or allocated school delivering the curriculum through the language of choice (English or Welsh).
11.2	Want children to study the Welsh curriculum	Under the authority's home to school transport policy all pupils living in Powys have the right to attend a school in Powys, even if their closest school is in England. In addition, transport for qualifying pupils is provided to attend the closest or allocated school delivering the curriculum through the language of choice (English or Welsh).
11.3	Newcastle School is in England – pupils are entitled to be educated in Wales	Under the authority's home to school transport policy all pupils living in Powys have the right to attend a school in Powys, even if their closest school is in England. In addition, transport for qualifying pupils is provided to attend the closest or allocated school delivering the curriculum through the language of choice (English or Welsh).
12 ISSUES RELATING TO OTHER PROPOSALS / SCHOOLS		
12.1	Concern about possible closure of Llandrindod High School and new site	This consultation is about the future of Llanbister C.P. School. Possible changes to secondary provision are being considered as part of a separate exercise, however the

	planned in Builth Wells – this would mean that pupils from Llanddewi to the north of Radnorshire would be directed to Newtown High School. If pupils went to Crossgates C.P. School, they would be separated once more from their peer group in order to access secondary education	current proposal for the reorganisation of secondary schools includes retaining the provision on the Llandrindod High School site.
12.2	When Beguildy School closed we were told that the money saved would go to help Knighton School, as far as I'm aware this didn't happen	Following the closure of Beguildy School a large number of parents chose to send their children to a school in Shropshire or other Powys schools, with only a few pupils being sent to Knighton. Knighton and the other Powys schools received the relevant in year funding adjustment as well as the increase in pupil numbers for the next and subsequent financial years in accordance to the authority's scheme for financing schools.
12.3	Ysgol Carno has mobiles, but that is because they are building a new school	Ysgol Carno has functioned through a number of mobile classrooms for the last 20+ years. There is a local group that is exploring the possibility of funding the development of a new school building.
12.4	Are the mobiles at Carno as old as the one at Crossgates School?	Yes, the mobiles at Carno area as old as the ones at Crossgates C.P. School.
12.5	How long have pupils at Ysgol Carno been taught in mobile classrooms?	Pupils at Ysgol Carno have been taught in mobile classrooms for 20+ years.
13 ISSUES RELATING TO FINANCE		
13.1 Average cost per pupil / funding per pupil		
13.1.1	As the school is currently undersubscribed, obviously the cost per pupil is going to be higher, but this is only a short term problem.	The authority notes this comment.
13.1.2	Pupil numbers at the school are	The authority notes this comment.

	expected to increase, so the cost per pupil will go down	
13.2 Queries about estimated savings		
13.2.1	Has the cost been carefully calculated? Suspicious that no actual assessment of the cost has occurred	The breakdown of estimated savings and additional costs are provided in the consultation document.
13.2.2	There is reasonable suspicion that the financial figures are not reliable	The breakdown of estimated savings and additional costs are provided in the consultation document.
13.2.3	£63,000 is the proposed figure you will save by closing Llanbister School. How much will it cost in additional transport to convoy our children 44 minutes each way?	The estimated additional transport costs of £30.4k are included in the consultation document and have been included in the net savings
13.2.4	How much will the additional buildings and teachers at Crossgates cost?	There are no plans to extend the current building at Crossgates and therefore there would be no additional building cost. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the current fair funding formula, and if the school were to close Crossgates would receive an element of per pupil funding to support additional pupils.
13.2.5	The saving calculations are wrong because they don't include the cost of refurbishment of the mobile classroom	The cost of the refurbishment of the mobile classroom is approximately £15k and is being funded from the major improvement capital budget, the projected savings provided in the consultation document relate to the revenue impact only.
13.2.6	The estimated additional transport cost is £30,400 but you have the exact same cost for Nantmel, how is that possible given the difference in distances	The majority of the pupils in Llanbister C.P. School are already transported to the school under the authority's home to school transport policy. This isn't the case at Nantmel C. in W. School. The actual net additional cost of transport would be dependent on whether parents chose to send their children to the named receiving school or to an alternative school if this was the closest school to their home address. The estimated costs provided in the consultation report are based on children being allocated places in the named receiving school.

13.2.7	The calculations given to you at the meeting on the 10 th March show that the transport costs would be significantly higher than you have budgeted for	The figures are based on estimates at the time of consultation. The cost of providing transport is largely based on number of vehicles required, with the number and location of pupils only having a marginal impact.
13.2.8	How robust are the identified figures for projected savings, especially when increased transport costs are factored in, including medium and longer term requirements as pupil numbers rise?	The savings has been calculated based on the 2015/16 formula in place and current transport routes operating. These have been updated to take account of the 2016/17 formula and updated estimates and amount to an estimated £66k.
13.2.9	Costings need to be set out unambiguously, taking into account revenue savings, additional costs such as transport and indicating any capital expenditure required to implement the recommended proposal	The breakdown of savings and additional costs are provided in the consultation document. These are for the revenue savings only.
13.2.10	The decision is largely financial, as such the financial figures should be detailed and correct, and should include comparisons between keeping the school open and the cost of portacabins, construction and maintenance	As included in the consultation document the authority is proposing to close Llanbister C.P. School for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school is currently in Special Measures - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average - There are more than 15% surplus places at the school
13.2.11	There are no figures to show the cost of accommodating Llanbister School children at Crossgates School	The net savings exclude the funding that would transfer with pupils to their receiving school. £66k of the formula received by Llanbister C.P. School for the 16/17 financial year will transfer to the receiving school.
13.2.12	Cannot see how money will be saved by closing Llanbister and transporting	The breakdown of savings and additional transport costs are provided in the consultation document.

	pupils to Crossgates	
13.2.13	The cost of extra transport will outweigh the savings	The additional transport costs are provided in the consultation document and have been included in the net savings.
13.2.14	Financially it doesn't make sense to close the school	The estimated revenue savings for the 2016/17 financial year are £66k. The decision is based on financial and non-financial criteria, as included in the consultation document.
13.2.15	The Council cannot apply for further capital funding until 2021, if money from another pot is used this will outweigh the potential savings they are hoping to make	In addition to its 21 st century schools capital programme, the authority has a major improvement budget for schools which is planned to increase from £1m to £2m per year for the remaining 2 years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
13.2.16	Using FOIs we have provided a more accurate estimate of additional transport costs, doubling it to £71,501.40, totalling an estimated spend of £139,525.20	The authority notes this comment. The figures are based on estimates at the time of consultation, but it needs to be noted that the cost of providing transport is largely based on number of vehicles required, with the number and location of pupils only having a marginal impact.
13.2.17	The figure for transport costs only includes the children that were on roll at the time, which will increase to over 60 by 2019, therefore the transport costs will rocket	The figures are based on estimates at the time of consultation, but it needs to be noted that the cost of providing transport is largely based on number of vehicles required, with the number and location of pupils only having a marginal impact.
13.2.18	£68,000 is already spent on transport for Llanbister, why increase these costs by almost double to transport the children to Crossgates?	The net additional transport costs have been factored within the net estimated saving the proposal would bring.
13.2.19	You have not factored in the cost of upgrading the portacabin to make it fit for purpose	The cost of the refurbishment of the mobile classroom is approximately £15k and is being funded from the major improvement capital budget, the projected savings provided in the consultation document are revenue impact only.

13.2.20	Why does the savings calculation not include redundancy costs?	The redundancy costs for all schools are funded by the Authority, regardless of whether a school is under review. Redundancy costs are a one-off cost.
13.2.21	This proposal is being sold as being accountancy driven, it is a dubious cost cutting exercise	As included in the consultation document the authority is proposing to close Llanbister C.P. School for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school is currently in Special Measures - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average - There are more than 15% surplus places at the school
13.2.22	The Council quoted £6000 to refurbish the portacabin, a more realistic figure would be £50,000	The cost of the refurbishment of the mobile classroom is approximately £15k and is being funded from the major improvement capital budget, the projected savings provided in the consultation document are revenue impact only.
13.3 Issues relating to the Council's financial strategy		
13.3.1	The Council is trying to use an urban accounting model to manage school provision within large rural areas	The authority notes this comment. The fair funding formula and any changes to it are consulted upon each year and agreed by Cabinet
13.3.2	The Council should be working up proposals that will attract the wealth-creating sectors of the future e.g. energy generation and other environmental technologies as well as more sustainable agriculture	The authority notes this comment.
13.3.3	It's common sense to use the money available to fund and support education, not to pay for pupils to be sat on a bus	The authority notes this comment. The One Powys Plan states the council's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential.' In order to achieve this, the plan states that 'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.' The authority acknowledges that implementation of this proposal would lead to an increase in school transport costs, and these were included in the estimated savings provided in the consultation document.

13.3.4	Children's education should be at the top of the list, you shouldn't be wasting money on things that are not needed	The authority notes this comment. The One Powys Plan states the council's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential.' In order to achieve this, the plan states that 'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
13.4 Issues relating to funding received from Welsh Government		
13.4.1	The Council should be working up proposals that will attract the wealth-creating sectors of the future and lobbying Welsh and Westminster governments for financial support	The authority notes this comment. Officers and member actively seek to influence funding levels for Powys whenever possible. This action successfully gained an additional £1.9m for the 16/17 financial year, of which £1.2m was directed to schools.
13.4.2	Rural schools in England are having extra payments made to the education departments, why can't the Council put more pressure on the Welsh Assembly?	Schools received an additional £1.2m during the 2016/17 financial year
13.5 Other		
13.5.1	Should the school close there would be an increasing proportion of elderly residents. The Council would have a statutory duty to provide care and support for them at considerable cost, far more in the long run than the modest cost of keeping Llanbister and other small rural schools open	The authority notes this comment
13.5.2	Aware that cuts have to be made but the education and well-being of our children should be the priority	The authority notes this comment. The One Powys Plan states the council's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential.' In order to achieve this, the plan states that 'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'

13.5.3	There seems to be a lot of money available for new schools or for enlarging schools	All schools delegated funding is based on the funding formula consulted and agreed by Cabinet each year.
13.5.4	The Welsh children get all of the money, English speaking children are second class citizens	The primary formula has 2 allowances which are directly linked to Welsh-medium learners. Key Stage 2 Teaching Assistant support (£56 per Welsh-medium pupil 16/17) and Welsh Resources Allowance (£2500 lump sum & £30 per Welsh-medium pupil) for the sourcing of Welsh-medium resources and/or translation of English-medium resources.
14 ISSUES RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AT LLANBISTER C.P. SCHOOL		
14.1	There was a weakness in leadership at the school, this has now been fully addressed	In summer 2016, Estyn judged progress against stabilising leadership at the school as Limited. From September 2016, a new seconded acting headteacher will take up post and as a result, leadership at the school remains unstable.
14.2	The consultation report states that Llanbister is closing because of its standards, in fact it was due to leadership and management, which has now been rectified with a new headteacher.	Llanbister C.P. School is currently in the statutory category of a school requiring Special Measures by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training (Estyn). The National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the red category in January 2016. Standards at the school are Adequate.
14.3	Llanbister's previous headteacher was off sick for a long period of time. During this time, no support was received from Powys County Council	The authority notes this comment. However, the authority refutes the statement that no support was provided to the school.
14.4	When the previous head retired, the Council would not employ a permanent headteacher – this is what went against us in the Estyn report	The authority notes this comment. However, whether or not to appoint a Headteacher is a decision for the Governing Body. Circumstances necessitated the governing body working with the Local Authority to secure an urgent solution to the instability of leadership
14.5	If Powys County Council secure Mrs Rogers' role as headteacher, the	A new seconded acting headteacher will take up post at Llanbister C.P. from 1/9/16. The fact that the school is in Special Measures is not only due to instability in leadership. The

	special measures will be removed	school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory. In January 2016, the National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category.
14.6	The acting headteacher has stabilised leadership within the school	The authority notes this comment. However, in summer 2016, Estyn judged progress against stabilising leadership at the school as Limited. From September 2016, a new seconded acting headteacher will take up post and as a result, leadership at the school remains unstable.
14.7	The lack of leadership did not affect the educational credibility of the school	The fact that the school is in Special Measures is not only due to instability in leadership. The school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory. In January 2016, the National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category.
14.8	The concerns raised in the Estyn report in relation to leadership have now been resolved	The fact that the school is in Special Measures is not only due to instability in leadership. The school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory. In January 2016, the National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red category.
14.9	The school is in the red zone due to lack of leadership, if Powys won't let Llanbister employ a headteacher we will stay in the red zone	The fact that the school is in Special Measures and categorised as a Red support school is not only due to instability in leadership. The school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory.
14.10	In the past the headteacher was the problem	The authority notes this comment.
14.11	There was a catalogue of historic issues around the previous Headteacher who was unable to cope with a range of issues	The authority notes this comment.
14.12	The school had to manage without an active headteacher for the best part of 12 months	The authority notes this comment.

14.13	There is a new headteacher who is making improvements	In summer 2016, Estyn judged progress against stabilising leadership at the school as Limited. From September 2016, a new seconded acting headteacher will take up post and as a result, leadership at the school remains unstable.
14.14	It is leadership and management that is a cause for concern at Llanbister C.P. School not educational standards, and leadership and management fall under the remit of Powys County Council	The school's current performance was judged as Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were judged as Unsatisfactory. In January 2016, the National Categorisation of Schools in Wales placed the school in the Red support category.
14.15	The consultation document states that a weakness of keeping the school open is a difficulty to recruit a permanent Headteacher, however there is one, but Powys refuse to extend the contract	The authority notes this comment.
15 CRITICISM OF THE AUTHORITY		
15.1 General criticism of the council		
15.1.1	Business and farming communities are currently being held back by poor infrastructure	The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
15.1.2	The council have taken the result of the Estyn inspection and have manipulated it to their advantage	This comment is untrue. Llanbister C.P. School was identified for review as part of the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel) process as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) based on meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the Policy.
15.1.3	It feels like the benefits of attending a rural school are being dismissed by Powys County Council	The named receiving school in respect of this proposal is located in the village of Crossgates and serves a rural catchment area. Whilst it is accepted that this school is significantly larger than Llanbister C.P. School, it remains a rural school. Current pupil

		numbers at Llanbister C.P. School are small, and as stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.1.4	The information provided by the Council on closure of Llanbister C.P. School is very misleading	The information provided in the consultation document contains factual information based on the latest verified data that was available.
15.1.5	This proposal doesn't reflect very well on the quality of the Council, 200 years ago you could afford to buy the land, build the school and run them, today you cannot afford to keep them open when they are free	The Council provides services for the 21 st Century, and is facing a challenging financial climate.
15.1.6	Have lost respect for the Council, finds the Council appalling and disgraceful due to the false figures, personal objectives, callous lack of thought for the children involved	The authority has put forward this Proposal for consultation, to hear the views of all stakeholders. Officers have ensured that children have had the opportunity to be part of this consultation.
15.1.7	The Council should bear the responsibility for the school being in Special Measures as this is due to Leadership and Management and this responsibility should not be borne by Llanbister School	The fact that Llanbister C.P. School is in Special Measures is not only due to Leadership and Management. In January 2015, the following judgements were made on the provision at Llanbister C.P. School: Standards: Adequate Pupil Well-being: Adequate Learning Experiences: Unsatisfactory Teaching: Adequate Care, Support and Guidance: Adequate Learning environment: Adequate Leadership: Unsatisfactory Improving Quality: Unsatisfactory Partnership working: Good Resource management: Adequate.

15.1.8	If the Council have changed information and supplied false evidence what else have they done to suit their own agenda?	It is not true that the Council have changed information and supplied false evidence. The information provided in the consultation document contains factual information based on the latest verified data that was available.
15.1.9	The Council is only attacking Radnorshire, there are schools in Montgomeryshire that are in a worse position due to lack of numbers and not meeting standards	The authority notes this comment. The schools in Radnorshire currently being reviewed were identified for review as part of the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel) process as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) based on meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the Policy. The authority is also currently reviewing primary provision in Welshpool, where there is a proposal to close 4 schools and open 2 new primary schools.
15.1.10	This proposal is badly planned and short sighted	The authority notes this comment.
15.1.11	This feels like a rushed job to ensure you get the funding from Welsh Government before the scheme deadline	There is no capital funding from Welsh Government linked to this proposal.
15.2 Criticism of the Cabinet / county councillors		
15.2.1	Misleading information was given at the Cabinet meeting, which insinuated that Llanbister was under special measures due to educational standards, when in fact the school is in special measures due to leadership and management issues	<p>The fact that Llanbister C.P. School is in Special Measures is not only due to Leadership and Management. In January 2015, the following judgements were made on the provision at Llanbister C.P. School:</p> <p>Standards: Adequate Pupil Well-being: Adequate Learning Experiences: Unsatisfactory Teaching: Adequate Care, Support and Guidance: Adequate Learning environment: Adequate Leadership: Unsatisfactory Improving Quality: Unsatisfactory</p>

		Partnership working: Good Resource management: Adequate.
15.2.2	How can the decision be considered democratic when 8 councillors from Montgomeryshire, 2 from Radnorshire and 1 from Breconshire decide the fate of this school?	The authority notes this comment. The make-up of the Cabinet has changed since this comment was made. The Cabinet now consists of 5 councillors from Montgomeryshire, 2 from Radnorshire and 2 from Brecknockshire.
15.2.3	County councillors have a duty to protect and serve all constituents and need to take responsibility to provide this, your decisions to close the school should not be wholly based on financial benefits	The authority notes this comment. As stated in the One Powys Plan, the Council's aim is to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. However in order to achieve this, the Plan states that 'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.' The consultation document in respect of this proposal lists four reasons why closure of Llanbister C.P. School is being proposed, only one of these relates to finance.
15.3 Criticism of officers		
15.3.1	The facts that have been presented by officers did not reflect the reality of the situation	The data provided in the consultation document and by officers is the latest verified data that was available.
15.3.2	The numbers provided by officers were incorrect	The data provided in the consultation document is the latest verified data that was available.
15.3.3	Officials have quoted that education standards were bad in Llanbister, this is definitely not the case	In January 2015, Estyn judged standards at Llanbister C.P. School as Adequate and standards of pupil wellbeing were also judged as Adequate.
15.3.4	Cabinet have not been advised of the huge progress made at Llanbister School	Overall, Llanbister C.P. School is making satisfactory progress. In summer 2016, Estyn judged the school's progress as follows: Recommendation 1 – Satisfactory

		<p>Recommendation 2 – Satisfactory Recommendation 3 – Satisfactory Recommendation 4 – Satisfactory Recommendation 5 – Limited Recommendation 6 – Satisfactory Recommendation 7 – Strong</p>
15.3.5	The Cabinet was misled to think the school was in special measures due to standards of education – this has never been the case	<p>In January 2015, the following judgements were made on the provision at Llanbister C.P. School:</p> <p>Standards: Adequate Pupil Well-being: Adequate Learning Experiences: Unsatisfactory Teaching: Adequate Care, Support and Guidance: Adequate Learning environment: Adequate Leadership: Unsatisfactory Improving Quality: Unsatisfactory Partnership working: Good Resource management: Adequate.</p>
15.3.6	It is a sad reflection on the quality of the council's accountants when money is more important than the welfare of little children	The authority is committed to ensuring the welfare of all children and young people in Powys, and as stated in the One Powys Plan, the council aims to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. However, the Plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.3.7	At the cabinet meeting when Llanbister was discussed with a view to closing it, officers were asked whether there were any children from Beguildy that came to Llanbister and they answered no, however I had received my daughter's acceptance letter into Beguildy School	The authority notes this comment. However, it remains true that none of the current pupils at Llanbister C.P. School were attending Beguildy School at the time of closure.

15.3.8	At the SORP meeting in September 2015, officers agreed to provide a detailed breakdown of how the building has been categorised. 6 months later this still hasn't been received	The authority notes this comment.
15.3.9	Took great offence at the statement that 'no children who attend Llanbister School were directly affected by the closure of Beguildy School'	The authority notes this comment. However, it remains true that none of the current pupils at Llanbister C.P. School were attending Beguildy School at the time of closure.
15.3.10	The Estyn report was used to mislead Cabinet members into thinking the education standards were the reason for the school being in the red, however it was the leadership and management of the school, which has now been addressed	Cabinet members were provided with factual information that Llanbister C.P. School is in Special Measures following the outcome of the Estyn inspection carried out in 2015. Leadership at the school remains unstable.
15.3.11	Estyn still have concerns that the Local Authority are holding back on providing stability at the school as all staff contracts are due to end on the 31 st August 2016 – not even lasting until the 31 st December when the authority is proposing to close the school	School staff are appointed by the Governing Body, not by the Local Authority. The Local Authority discussed the extension of contracts to 31 December in the first instance during the summer term 2016.
15.3.12	Despite 3 FOI requests, we are still waiting for information as to how the building has been assessed	The authority notes this comment.
15.4 Criticism of Council's money saving plans		

15.4.1	More money could be saved by paying less councillors	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.2	The Council could save money by turning the heating down	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.3	The Council could save money by stopping buying carpets just because people don't like the colour	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.4	The Council could save money by not sending a man in a lorry around just to pick up 2 signs, 1 for each end. It's not good seeing him sleeping	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.5	The Council could save money by stopping cutting the grass in Winter	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.6	The Council could save money by stopping planting trees so close to the road that you have to cut them down	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.7	The Council could save money by letting roadmen clean out gutters when they are waiting for tarmac	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.8	The Council could save money by stopping sending people out to change a lightbulb	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.9	All council officers should be put in mobiles instead of County Hall	The authority notes this comment.
15.5 Criticism of Council policy		

15.5.1	Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the council should be taking full notice of the impact decisions will have on our future generations, in terms of actual educational provision and also community cohesion and long term sustainability of our rural way of life	The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was introduced in April 2016, therefore the act was not in force when the consultation document was produced. However a Single Integrated Impact Assessment, which takes account of the requirements of this Act, will be produced in respect of this proposal, and will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
15.5.2	Concerns over how Powys County Council is dealing with education in Powys, particularly in South Powys. The Council should stand up to the Welsh Assembly and keep our schools open	The authority notes this comment
15.5.3	The proposal to close Llanbister School contravenes Powys' own published policies in some areas	The authority notes this comment. The authority's work is led by the One Powys Plan, which states the council's aim to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and which also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.5.4	Closing Llanbister School goes against the spirit of the Council's regeneration priorities	The authority notes this comment. The closure of Llanbister C.P. School was proposed as a result of a review of the school by the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel), based on the school meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). The need to review educational provision within Powys is supported by the One Powys Plan, which states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.5.5	The education policy is in direct conflict with the Authority's development policies	The authority notes this comment. The closure of Llanbister C.P. School was proposed as a result of a review of the school by the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel), based on the school meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). The need to review educational provision within Powys is

		supported by the One Powys Plan, which states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
15.5.6	The Council’s plans to modernise are desperate and short-sighted	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.7	The authority is expected to assess the viability of all its schools on a regular basis, but any closure should be based on robust evidence	The authority notes this comment. The closure of Llanbister C.P. School was proposed as a result of a review of the school by the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel), based on the school meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). The need to review educational provision within Powys is supported by the One Powys Plan, which states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
15.5.8	Don’t believe there is a plan to reform education, just a plan to cut costs	The authority notes this comment. The closure of Llanbister C.P. School was proposed as a result of a review of the school by the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel), based on the school meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). The need to review educational provision within Powys is supported by the One Powys Plan, which states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
15.5.9	The Council needs to work on a long term plan to attract families with children	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.10	Is the education of Powys children really the priority for the local authority, or is it financial gain?	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority’s aim is to ensure that ‘All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential’. However the plan also states that in order to achieve this, ‘We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
15.5.11	Welsh Government policy states that schools should not be closed for financial reasons – there is no	The consultation document in respect of this proposal listed four reasons why the authority is proposing closure of Llanbister C.P. School. Only one of these reasons is financial. Llanbister C.P. School is currently in Special Measures following the outcome of the most

	educational basis for Powys to close these schools	recent inspection of the school in 2015, therefore the authority's view is that there is an educational basis to close the school.
15.5.12	If all parents refused to accept the additional mileage what would be the cost incurred by the Council in the discharge of their statutory duty to provide transport?	The authority has not undertaken the calculation of the cost that would be incurred to transport all pupils in Llanbister to their closest school.
15.6 Criticism of the Council's treatment of rural communities		
15.6.1	Powys is a rural county and cannot be run to a streamlined ideal without causing irreparable damage to people and communities	The authority notes this comment. The issues raised during the consultation period in respect of the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
15.6.2	The Council should be trying to maintain rural communities and rural economies – having a local school or a school within easy reach is a key consideration for young families	The authority notes this comment. The issues raised during the consultation period in respect of the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
15.6.3	Inexcusable to consider closing a school and destroying a community simply to fix some short term problems	The authority notes this comment. The issues raised during the consultation period in respect of the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
15.6.4	The Council should be standing up for us, the local community	The authority notes this comment. The issues raised during the consultation period in respect of the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
15.6.5	There are small village schools in local rural communities all over Wales, why is Powys so different?	The authority is aware that many other authorities are also taking forward discussions and / or proposals to ensure the sustainability of education in small rural communities.

15.6.6	The community has no street lighting, no road gritting, it takes 40 minutes for an ambulance to get here and we don't complain about this, however we expect to be able to get our children educated within a reasonable distance of the home	The authority notes this comment.
15.6.7	The Council is trying to destroy rural Radnorshire	The schools in Radnorshire currently being reviewed were identified for review as part of the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel) process as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) based on meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the Policy. The issues raised during the consultation period in respect of the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
16 QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE PROCESS		
16.1 Consultation meetings		
16.1.1	At the meeting on the 10 th March, Powys County Council staff could not answer the questions asked	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.2	Why were 7 members of staff stood around the hall doing nothing during the consultation meeting?	This statement is untrue. Apart from the officers who were on the panel and taking minutes, there were 4 other members of Council staff in attendance. As the Council was expecting a large number of attendees at the meeting, these staff were asked to attend as stewards in order to ensure the health and safety of all those in attendance. The Council's view is that this was an appropriate number of staff for the number of people that were expected to attend and taking into account the requirements of the building.
16.1.3	Powys County Council's panel made a poor effort at answering questions from the public at the meeting on the 10 th March	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.

16.1.4	At the consultation meeting Powys County Council quoted the wrong statistics, they stated that there were 140 pupils at Crossgates School, however there are also 17 nursery pupils	As stated in the consultation document, there were 140 pupils aged from Reception to Year 6 at Crossgates C.P. School. The authority uses the reception to year 6 pupil numbers as these are the age groups that relate to the statutory age range for primary schools and are the age ranges that is used to report pupil numbers to Welsh Government under the census collection process in January of each year.
16.1.5	You pointed out at the meeting that the consultation document is full of omissions and incorrect data, so why do you continue with the process?	The data provided in the consultation document is the most up-to-date, verified data that was available to the Council when the consultation document was being produced. At the meeting, it was acknowledged that additional information had been provided by the community, particularly in relation to projected pupil numbers and travel distances / costs, however the authority is satisfied that the information that was provided in the consultation document is accurate.
16.2 SORP process		
16.2.1	The evidence based process used by the Council in all this appears to be flawed	The data considered throughout the process has been the most up-to-date, verified data that has been available to the Council. During the consultation period, additional information had been provided by the community, particularly in relation to projected pupil numbers and travel distances / costs, however the authority is satisfied that the data that was used during the review process was accurate. This data was checked and agreed with the governing body of Llanbister C.P. School during the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel) process.
16.2.2	Understand that cuts need to be made but the procedure should be reviewed	The authority notes this comment.
16.2.3	Crossgates presently has 22% surplus places, which means that the school meets the School Transformation criteria – hope that Llanbister hasn't been targeted purely to rectify the problem with surplus capacity at Crossgates	Llanbister C.P. School has not been targeted in order to fill the surplus capacity at Crossgates C.P. School. All schools were ranked based on the criteria identified in the School Transformation Policy (2014), however Crossgates C.P. School only met one of the criteria. Llanbister C.P. School was identified for review as it met a number of the criteria outlined in the Policy.

16.2.4	Why does the School Transformation Policy / SORP process only examine historical data, why does it not look to the future?	Whilst the School Transformation Policy 2014 only refers to historical pupil numbers in the 'Criteria for Review', information on Projected Pupil Numbers was also considered during the SORP's discussions with the Governing Body of Llanbister C.P. School.
16.2.5	Why do you want to close all small schools in Radnorshire?	Llanbister C.P. School and the other schools in Radnorshire which are currently being reviewed were identified for review as part of the SORP (School Organisation Review Panel) process as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) based on meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the Policy.
16.3 View that a final decision has already been made		
16.3.1	Urge the Council to recognise the strength of local feeling and reconsider the proposed closure	No decision has been made on the future of Llanbister C.P. School. All issues raised during the consultation period, and the authority's response to these issues, will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed with this proposal.
16.3.2	I think that my views and those of every other person that has taken the time to write to you and share their opinions will make no difference	No decision has been made on the future of Llanbister C.P. School. All issues raised during the consultation period, and the authority's response to these issues, will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed with this proposal.
16.4 Queries about process going forward		
16.4.1	There has been a high level of interest and support for keeping Llanbister School open, how will the representations be presented to Cabinet members?	The issues raised during the consultation period will be presented to Cabinet members in this consultation report. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment will be updated to reflect information received during the consultation period. The minutes of the consultation meetings held in relation to this proposal will also be considered.
16.4.2	Urge the Council to complete risk assessments before continuing with the process	The authority will complete impact assessments on equality, community and a single integrated impact assessment. These will highlight any areas of risk and the authority's plans to mitigate these risks. Risks were identified in the consultation document.
16.4.3	What will happen to the school	If the school were to close the Schools Service would declare the school surplus to its

	building if the school closes?	requirements and the authority would commence its asset management disposal processes, which would include discussions with the local community around transferring part or all of the site to the community hall or other interested body. Ultimately in line with other school closures the authority would look to sell the site and reinvest any capital receipts received in other capital projects within the authority.
16.4.4	What is the agreed asset management disposal process in relation to the land and buildings of the school?	If the school were to close the Schools Service would declare the school surplus to its requirements and the authority would commence its asset management disposal processes, which would include discussions with the local community around transferring part or all of the site to the community hall or other interested body. Ultimately in line with other school closures the authority would look to sell the site and reinvest any capital receipts received in other capital projects within the authority.
16.4.5	Will an updated Cabinet report be drafted and will this also be subject to consultation prior to any final decision being made regarding the future of the school?	A new Cabinet report will be drafted which will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. This will include this consultation report, an updated Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment. There will be no consultation on this report. Should Cabinet decide to proceed with the current proposal, the authority will publish a Statutory Notice proposing closure of Llanbister C.P. School, and there would be a period of 28 days when people could submit written objections to the proposal to the Council.
16.4.6	If 21 st century schools funding is needed, when would it be available?	Band A of the 21 st Century Schools funding runs from 2014 – 2019 and is fully allocated to the current projects in Band A. Band B funding is expected to be available from 2019, subject to confirmation from Welsh Government.
16.5 Other		
16.4.8	Did you consult with the Regional Transport Consortium?	The consultation documentation was sent to the Regional Transport Consortium.
16.4.9	At the Cabinet meeting on the 26 th January there was a mis-representation of pupil numbers and the capacity at Crossgates, the pupil numbers only included Reception to	As stated in the consultation document, there were 140 pupils aged from Reception to Year 6 at Crossgates C.P. School. The authority uses the reception to year 6 pupil numbers as these are the age groups that relate to the statutory age range for primary schools and are the age ranges that is used to report pupil numbers to Welsh Government under the census collection process in January of each year.

	year 6 pupils, it didn't include Nursery pupils	
16.4.10	Concern that local community councils have not been informed of this consultation	At the consultation meeting held on the 10 th March it became apparent that the consultation documentation had not been sent to all of the community councils in the local are. The consultation documentation was subsequently sent to all community councils, and the consultation period to enable them to have 42 days to respond to the consultation.
16.4.11	The Council will face criticism that it is the prosecutor, judge and jury – under Appendix E of the Code there is a process where you could appoint an independent body to look at your proposal – why did you not follow Appendix E?	When the School Organisation Code was introduced, it was agreed that the Cabinet would be the decision making body for school reorganisation proposals. On June 14 th 2016, Full Council debated whether this was the appropriate decision making format, and agreed that it was. Appendix E of the School Organisation Code is an example put forward by Welsh Government of one possible decision making committee.
16.4.12	Section 1.4 of the Code states that accommodation of at least equivalent quality must be provided for existing and projected pupil numbers – have you breached this?	The school at Crossgates is at least the same condition as Llanbister C.P. School.
16.4.13	Parents at Crossgates C.P. School haven't had a say in what is going to happen	Whilst no meeting was held with parents at Crossgates C.P. School, a letter advising them of the consultation was sent to the school for distribution. The consultation documentation was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period, and anyone could respond to the consultation.
17 QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION		
17.1 Aspects which aren't included in the documentation		
17.1.1	Concern that the Equality Act 2010 is not being considered	An Equality Impact Assessment was included in the consultation document, which considers the proposal's impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups, as stated in the Equality Act 2010. This Impact Assessment will be updated to take account of issues raised during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet

		when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.2	The consultation document does not address the impact of long travelling times on children's health and well-being	During this consultation process, the issue of the impact on children's health and well-being due to the increase in travel has been raised frequently and will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.3	Proper weighting and significance has not been applied to the special circumstances and difficulties of living in a rural community	No weighting has been applied to any of the issues listed in the consultation document. All issues raised during the consultation period will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal, however no specific weighting will be applied to any of these issues.
17.1.4	The figures don't include nursery children, these children are entitled to school transport and use the same building and even have their own teacher so they should be counted	<p>As stated in the consultation document, there were 140 pupils aged from Reception to Year 6 at Crossgates C.P. School. The authority uses the reception to year 6 pupil numbers as these are the age groups that relate to the statutory age range for primary schools and are the age ranges used to report pupil numbers to Welsh Government as part of the annual census collection process in January of each year.</p> <p>Those children aged 4 or over on the 31st March in each year are included in the school funding allocation and are provided free home to school transport.</p> <p>Since the consultation on the closure of Llanbister C.P. School the authority has completed and approved the change of age of admission into schools from the start of the 2017-18 school year. From September 2017 there will be no nursery aged children in full time education in schools in Powys and transport will not be provided to the 3+ pre-school education provision.</p>
17.1.5	Not all schools that may be affected are identified	The authority has identified those schools which are closest to the home addresses of those pupils that were attending Llanbister C.P. School in January 2015. Should the school close, it is possible that parents would choose for children to attend other schools, however the number of pupils would very small and therefore it is not anticipated that this would have affect the school. Should this be the case, places would be allocated in accordance with the authority's admissions criteria.
17.1.6	The consultation document does not	During this consultation process, the issue of the impact on children's health and well-

	make reference to the potential for emotional and cognitive damage to the children	being due to the increase in travel has been raised frequently and will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.7	Page 26 of the Code states that you should put forward descriptions of the benefits of each option – closure, merger or amalgamation. In your documentation you have only talked about closure, not about merger	The consultation document provides the strengths and weaknesses of merger / amalgamation with Crossgates on page 5, ‘Closure of Llanbister C.P. School, but keep the site open as part of Crossgates C.P. School’ and with another school on page 7, ‘Amalgamation of Llanbister C.P. School and another school to create a new school on two sites’.
17.1.8	Page 27 of the Code states that you are expected to discuss standards or quality of education	Information about the quality of the current provision is provided on pages 19-22. The impact of the proposal on the quality of education is provided on pages 9-10.
17.1.9	Why did you not state in the proposal that you were intending to use a mobile classroom? We had to work out that you were talking about a portacabin	The mobile classroom would be 1 of 8 class spaces with the other 7 being in the main school building. At no time has the authority hidden the fact that the one building is a mobile classroom which following some minor works will have a condition assessment of a category B.
17.1.10	The figures for Crossgates do not take account of children transferring from Nantmel	The named receiving school in respect of the proposal to close Nantmel C. in W. School is Rhayader C. in W. School. During the consultation on closure of Nantmel C. in W. School, it became apparent that should Nantmel C. in W. School close, a number of pupils would choose to transfer to Crossgates C.P. School instead of Rhayader C. in W. School. No final decision has yet been made on the proposal to close Nantmel C. in W. School, the impact of any pupils from Nantmel C. in W. School that might transfer to Crossgates C.P. School will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.2 Request for clarification of aspects of the documentation		
17.2.1	The consultation document has led people to believe that there was an issue with standards at Llanbister, but	In January 2015, the following judgements were made on the provision at Llanbister C.P. School:

	it was down to leadership issues, which have now been addressed	Standards: Adequate Pupil Well-being: Adequate Learning Experiences: Unsatisfactory Teaching: Adequate Care, Support and Guidance: Adequate Learning environment: Adequate Leadership: Unsatisfactory Improving Quality: Unsatisfactory Partnership working: Good Resource management: Adequate.
17.2.2	The pupil projection figures in the consultation document are incorrect	The pupil projection figures that are provided in the consultation document are based on the authority's own projections for R – Year 6 pupils which are based on a statistical analysis actual pupils on roll and of live birth data of pupils living in the higher post code areas (LD1 for example), these provide a good estimate for a group of Primary schools but can show variation when analysed at an individual school level. The school and governors have provided the authority with some updated expected pupil numbers.
17.2.3	Consultation document states that there are 25 children in Llanbister School, this is incorrect there are 32 children. By the end of the school year the total will be 37. The school capacity is 45.	The authority notes this comment. As stated in the document, the figure of 25 children referred to the number of pupils of statutory school age, from Reception to Year 6.
17.2.4	Anomalies with the costings in the consultation document	The estimated savings at the time of consultation are included in the consultation document.
17.2.5	The consultation document states for Nantmel, Dolau and Llanbister the estimated canteen savings are £10,000, however there is no additional information on why those savings will occur. All three savings match, isn't that unusual?	Canteen Savings have been updated following the finalisation of the 2015/16 accounts and are broken down as follows: Cashiers: £2,312 Cooks: £12,571 Provisions/General Costs: £1,826

Total: £16,709		
17.2.6	The Council states that the average cost per pupil is higher than the county average, however Llanbister is on track for much larger numbers which within a short time will reduce the costs per pupil to average, negating the Council's average in this respect	The Authority has used the information available currently.
17.2.7	The information in the consultation document is out of date and inaccurate	The information in the consultation is the latest verified information that was available to the authority.
17.2.8	Information relating to distances and times for children to travel are inaccurate	The information relating to travel distances was calculated by the authority's research unit using GIS systems. No information was provided related to travel times.
17.2.9	Please look closely at the figures provided to you by the community and your own figures	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.10	Figures of Crossgates pupils were incorrect – you stated that there were 140 pupils but there are actually 157 pupils	As stated in the consultation document, the figure of 140 pupils referred to pupils from Reception to Year 6.
17.2.11	The building condition information is based on an out of date survey	The condition and other assessments are based on evaluations undertaken by Welsh Government appointed surveyors a number of years ago. The Cabinet has recently approved a 5 year rolling programme of updating the overall assessments of schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency.
17.2.12	The transport figures are misleading and inaccurate, our school action	The authority notes this comment. The figures are based on estimates at the time of consultation, but it needs to be noted that the cost of providing transport is largely based

	group has provided evidence that the additional transport costs will far outweigh any savings	on the number of vehicles required, with the number and location of pupils only having a marginal impact.
17.2.13	Page 19 of document states that Llanbister School building is categorised as C poor. Page 3 states building condition as D bad or C poor – why is this?	The description on page 3 of the consultation document relates to the criteria that would trigger a review of a school, as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). Page 3 of the consultation document does not state that the condition of Llanbister C.P. School building is D bad or C poor.
17.2.14	Within the document, the risk impact to children if the school was to close but parents choose for their child to attend schools other than Crossgates was described as low – how can any professional worker class a school move as low?	The consultation document refers to the risk to the authority, not the risk to the pupils. Whilst the authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved, it does not consider a requirement for pupils to move schools to be a risk in this case.
17.2.15	The document states that no pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken – this is a false statement, I am a Welsh speaker and speak Welsh to the children at home	This information was based on the school's PLASC return from January 2015, which states that no pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken.
17.2.16	The consultation document states that the majority of extra-curricular activities at Crossgates happen during school hours, however having read recent newsletters from the school it is evident that there are extra-curricular activities after school on four out of five nights	The authority notes this comment. Information about extra-curricular activities at Crossgates C.P. School was received from the school itself. The authority accepts that closure of Llanbister C.P. School could have an impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular activities that take place outside of the school day. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.
17.2.17	Consultation document makes reference to projected pupil numbers	Pupil numbers at the school are projected to remain below 50 in the short term, however the authority accepts that numbers are projected to increase to above 50 in the longer

	remaining below 50 in the short term, this is incorrect	term, and this is acknowledged in the consultation document.
17.2.18	Information in the document is inaccurate as it doesn't take into account all the other schools who feed into Crossgates, such as Llandrindod, Nantmel and Llanfihangel Rhydithon	Llandrindod Wells, Nantmel and Dolau are not currently within the catchment area of Crossgates C.P. School. No final decisions have been made in respect of the proposals relating to Nantmel C. in W. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
17.2.19	The consultation document hints that the state of the building is of concern, however the building has not been assessed since the capital investment made by Powys	The condition and other assessments are based on evaluations undertaken by Welsh Government appointed surveyors a number of years ago. Cabinet has recently approved a 5 year rolling programme of updating the overall assessments of schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency.
17.2.20	How does building condition impact on the quality of education?	Pupils' learning environment has an impact on pupil well-being and on the standards pupils achieve and attain.
17.2.21	What improvements have been made to the building condition since the survey carried out in 2009 and how do they affect the overall rating?	The condition and other assessments are based on evaluations undertaken by Welsh Government appointed surveyors a number of years ago. Cabinet has recently approved a 5 year rolling programme of updating the overall assessments of schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency.
17.2.22	Queries in relation to the school being in Special Measures – to what extent is this based on the lack of a permanent headteacher? What evidence is there that the school is on target to emerge from Special Measures? What evidence has been provided by the Governing Body to indicate improvement? What are the targets and predictions for the end of Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2	<p>The school was placed in Special Measures for a number of reasons, one of which was Unsatisfactory Leadership. The school is currently making Satisfactory progress overall. This means that although progress has been made in many aspects, there is still significant work to do in important areas.</p> <p>The governing body provides reports at governing body meetings and at half-termly improvement board meetings with local authority officers about the progress the school is making. As a result, governors are becoming more aware of the impact that the progress of the school's post inspection action plan is having on the quality of its provision and pupils' standards.</p>

	pupil outcomes in 2016?	Provisional data in 2016 indicates that in the Foundation Phase, 100% of pupils will achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator and 100% will achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2.
17.2.23	The consultation document states that the total number of children in Llanbister will rise to 54 by January 2020 – this is incorrect. By summer 2020, there will be 69 children at the school.	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.24	The consultation document states that there are 25 children attending Llanbister, there were 32 at the time and now there are 38, which only leaves 7 surplus places	The authority notes this comment. As stated in the document, the figure of 25 children was the number of pupils of statutory school age, from Reception to Year 6, who were attending the school on the PLASC counting day in January 2015.
17.2.25	The pupil numbers forecast in the consultation document show Crossgates with a capacity of 210, it will have 203 pupils by January 2017 rising to 235 by January 2020. This is without nursery children	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.26	Challenge the reasons against a merger listed in the consultation document	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.27	The consultation document is misleading - there has been no formal change to the age of admission yet, so the nursery needs to be accounted for	The consultation document clearly stated that the information provided related to pupils aged from Reception to Year 6. The authority uses the Reception to Year 6 pupil numbers as these are the age groups that relate to the statutory age range for primary schools and are the age ranges used to report pupil numbers to Welsh Government as part of the annual census collection process in January of each year. Those children aged 4 or over on the 31st March in each year are included in the school

		<p>funding allocation and are provided free home to school transport.</p> <p>Since the consultation on the closure of Llanbister C.P. School the authority has completed and approved the change of age of admission into schools from the start of the 2017-18 school year. From September 2017 there will be no nursery aged children in full time education in schools in Powys and transport will not be provided to the 3+ pre-school education provision.</p>
17.2.28	What is sustainability in relation to building condition?	Sustainability relates to the environmental issues surrounding the building, for example if the school has single glazing, it would have a lower score than a school that has double glazing.
17.2.29	Can we have clarification that the information reported in the documentation was based on the classification of the building before the investment of £120k	The information reported in the documentation was based on the survey undertaken by Welsh Government in 2009.
17.2.30	Concerns about inaccuracies in the method used in the Community Impact Assessment to determine closest schools and to calculate distances and travelling times	The travel distances by the authority using a GIS system based on the pupils that were attending the school at the time. The community impact assessment does not refer to travel time.
17.2.31	The community impact assessment does not consider the significance of the increase in travel time or consider a weighting	The authority notes this comment. The community impact assessment was produced in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. The assessment will be updated to reflect the comments received during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.2.32	The document is based on January 2015 figures and will be two years out of date at the time of the proposed closure – a valid assessment can only be based on school attendance figures at the time of the proposed	The authority notes this comment. The document used the January 2015 PLASC figures as these were the latest verified figures which were available when the consultation document was published. Updated January 2016 PLASC figures will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

closure of the school		
17.2.33	The consultation document does not assess the impact of closing Dolau and Nantmel	<p>The consultation document does provide information about the authority's proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, and refers to this proposal on pages 9-10 and page 15. No decision has yet been made on how to proceed in relation to this proposal, however this will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.</p> <p>The named receiving school in respect of the proposal to close Nantmel C. in W. School is Rhayader C. in W. School. During the consultation on closure of Nantmel C. in W. School, it became apparent that should Nantmel C. in W. School close, a number of pupils would choose to transfer to Crossgates C.P. School instead of Rhayader C. in W. School. No final decision has yet been made on the proposal to close Nantmel C. in W. School, the impact of any pupils from Nantmel C. in W. School that might transfer to Crossgates C.P. School will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.</p>
17.2.34	The consultation document is based on out of date data in relation to extra-curricular provision	The authority notes this comment. This information was provided by the respective schools.
17.2.35	The consultation document doesn't give a full picture of the financial costs of closing the school	The consultation document provides an estimate of the revenue savings expected.
17.2.36	The data in the consultation document is not correct and does not explain the full impact closure would have on the community or the financial impact	The consultation document is based on the most up to date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was published.
17.2.37	How has Welsh language provision been factored in?	Llanbister C.P. School is an English-medium school and all pupils are educated through the medium of English, therefore there is no requirement for the authority to consider the impact on Welsh-medium provision. Should Llanbister C.P. School close, parents would be able to apply for a place for their children in Welsh-medium provision if this was their

		preference. All English-medium schools are required to teach Welsh as a second language.
17.2.38	Request for confirmation of an accurate figure for the number on roll at Crossgates School on the 4 th April 2016 and September 2016	<p>There were 144 Reception to Year 6 pupils at Crossgates C.P. School in April 2016. In addition, there were 17 Nursery pupils at the school.</p> <p>Based on the information currently held by the authority, it is expected that there will be 155 Reception to Year 6 pupils at Crossgates C.P. School in September 2016. In addition, it is expected that there will be 9 Nursery pupils at the school.</p>
17.3 General criticism of the consultation document		
17.3.1	The evidence in the consultation document showed significant inadequacies which doesn't make us feel confident in the full appraisal	The authority notes this comment.
17.3.2	The case for retaining the school in terms of projected numbers, potential class sizes and the quality of education has been very well put by the parents/school side and contrasts sharply with the figures put forward in the council's consultation paper	The authority notes this comment.
17.3.3	Powys has presented an inaccurate, inadequate and superficial report which puts our small children at risk from stress by extended travel times	The authority notes this comment.
17.3.4	There are no legitimate grounds on which to close the school	The authority notes this comment. The reasons why the authority is proposing closure of Llanbister C.P. School are outlined in the consultation document. All issues raised during the consultation period will be taken into account by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.

17.3.5	The document is inadequate, superficial and an insult to the community	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.
17.3.6	Key information on factors such as rising pupil numbers were buried in the appendices	This is untrue, details of projected pupil numbers, which show that pupil numbers at Llanbister C.P. School are expected to increase, are provided on page 18 in the main body of the consultation document.
17.3.7	The consultation document lacked compassion and factual evidence	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.
17.3.8	The consultation document is based on out of date data, lack of local context and is full of material omissions. It lacks transparency in its evaluation of statements, therefore is misleading	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.
17.3.9	How can you consider proceeding with this consultation when there are so many inaccuracies in the document?	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.
17.3.10	The arguments are either incorrect, uninformed guesswork based on estimates rather than actual facts and figures, or based on data that is many years out of date	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.
17.3.11	Without having the current figures how can the local authority plan for the future by ensuring that places are available for children at nearby schools	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.

17.3.12	Accurate figures need to be made public, if this is difficult an appendix could be added to the consultation document	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document was produced in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains the latest verified data that was available to the Council at the time.
18 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS		
18.1 Federation / Split Site School		
18.1.1	With pupil numbers growing in the next 4 years at Llanbister it is only logical to either keep the school open or open it as part of a new and improved Crossgates campus	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open or keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However these were not considered to be suitable solutions at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.2	Consider merging with Crossgates School whilst retaining the Llanbister site	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.3	The Council has just spent £120,000 on Llanbister School, it seems logical for Llanbister School to operate as an annex to Crossgates	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.4	Leave the school where it is and	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the

	merge with Crossgates, this will give the benefits of a larger school but will let us stay in our own accommodation	<p>school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.5	Keeping the location open as part of another school would have a much better outcome than the large transport costs and the impact on 'family time' for young children	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.6	We disagree that Llanbister children's identity would be lost if we, as a school, merged with Crossgates. This would enhance links with Crossgates and would keep education in the community where it belongs	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.7	The proposal to become a second site to Crossgates would alleviate the need for children to be schooled in a lower standard accommodation having already completed an additional 7 mile bus journey	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.8	Suggest keeping school provision in Llanbister as part of a Federation, especially considering the projected increase in the school roll	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of a Federation with Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p>

		All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.
18.1.9	Llanbister School should remain open by federating or merging with another school	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the options of merging or federating the school with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However these was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.10	Keeping Llanbister site open and merging with Crossgates would provide the 'surplus' of children an alternative	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.11	We are not averse to change, and would be willing to merge with Crossgates	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.12	There would be many advantages to a merger, such as the bonus of sharing facilities, a wider pool of talent amongst staff, a Headteacher to manage both sites, no ridiculous increase in transport costs, keeping the community links and support	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>

18.1.13	Keeping Llanbister open as part of a merger would provide additional space for the future and would also mean that children and peer groups would not be separated	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.
18.1.14	Leadership issues at Llanbister would be overcome by establishing a 'One School, Two Sites' model by merging with Crossgates School	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.
18.1.15	The school already works closely with Crossgates and there are 3 members of staff at the school who have already worked at Crossgates, couldn't the site be kept open as part of Crossgates?	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.
18.1.16	Becoming a site of Crossgates would alleviate the need for children to be taught in lower standard accommodation having already completed an additional 7 mile bus journey	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.
18.1.17	The governing body of Llanbister School would make every effort to	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft

	make merger with Crossgates a success	<p>recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.18	Merger is the only financial solution – the additional costs listed would be savings under merger and the added cost of transport would not be needed	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.19	Governors acknowledge that financial savings need to be made and are not against closure of Llanbister School providing that it can be merged with Crossgates and education remains on the Llanbister site	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of keeping the school open as part of Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.1.20	The community is in favour of retaining the school site, this is more important than retaining the school name	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of retaining the school site through either Federation or Merger with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.2 Status Quo		
18.2.1	Retaining Llanbister School is the way forward, to send our children to a school that cannot cope with the	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of retaining the status quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable

	projected numbers and means the use of an ancient mobile classroom is not acceptable	<p>solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.2.2	With pupil numbers growing in the next 4 years at Llanbister it is only logical to either keep the school open or open it as part of a new and improved Crossgates campus	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of retaining the status quo or retaining the school site through a merger with Crossgates C.P. School when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanbister C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>
18.3 Shared Headship		
18.3.1	The Council should pursue shared headteacher arrangements	The authority notes this comment. Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.
18.3.2	The school could work with Crossgates in terms of resources (sports equipment etc.) and a shared headteacher in order to reduce costs.	The authority notes this comment. Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.
18.4 Collaboration		
18.4.1	Appreciate that there are issues in relation to collaboration between county primary and church schools, but there is no evidence to suggest that, thus far, the Council has made	The authority notes this comment, however neither Llanbister C.P. School nor Crossgates C.P. School are church schools, therefore this issue does not affect this proposal.

any effort to deal with these		
19 OTHER QUESTIONS / COMMENTS		
19.1	Concern about lack of public transportation – one bus 7 times a day which is not ideal if not at the right time to get to local events	The authority notes this comment.
19.2	All parts of Wales should be treated equally, there are growing concerns that this is not the case and Mid and North Wales are becoming forgotten parts of Wales	The authority notes this comment.
20 COMMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSAL		
21.1	The proposal is likely to improve the educational outcomes and provision for pupils in the area	The authority notes this comment.
21.2	Fully support the whole school modernisation / organisation agenda, especially if it means better quality and range of education	The authority notes this comment.
21.3	Shropshire County Council has reviewed the potential consequential effect on pupil numbers and capacity at Newcastle CE Primary School, and considered that there are unlikely to be any detrimental issues affecting the school in the event of a decision to close Llanbister C.P. School	The authority notes this comment.

21.4	Pupils would have more friends at Crossgates C.P. School as there are more pupils	The authority notes this comment.
21.5	It is a positive move to close Llanbister School	The authority notes this comment.
21.6	Children currently attending Llanbister School will thrive in Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
21.7	Llanbister is too small a school, it lacks in resources and is underperforming	The authority notes this comment.
21.8	I would rather pupils travelled the extra distance to Crossgates School	The authority notes this comment.

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Appendix C – Minutes of meetings with School Council, Staff, Governors and Parents / Community – Llanbister

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**Report on meeting with the School Council of
Llanbister C.P. School**

8th March 2016

Meeting with the School Council of Llanbister C.P. School

Officers in attendance:

Marianne Evans, Senior Manager School Transformation
Sarah Astley, Project Manager, School Transformation Team
Jade Clay, Schools Transformation Programme Support Officer

School representative:

Erena Kolano Rogers, Acting Headteacher, Llanbister C.P. School

A meeting with the School Council of Llanbister School was held on the 8th March 2016.

Sarah Astley, Project Manager explained the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School. Pupils were then asked a number of questions. Their responses are summarised below:

1. What do you like about Llanbister C.P. School?

- There are lots of toys
- The classrooms are nice and colourful
- They learn lots of stuff
- It's a small school so they all know each other
- There isn't many people in the school so they get more attention, more help and more opportunities
- They like the P.E. lessons
- They like the sports they do after school
- They have a big yard so there is more space to play
- The food is nice

2. What don't you like about Llanbister C.P. School?

- Welsh classes
- It is noisy at dinner time

3. What would be worse if you had to move to a different school?

- They would have further to travel
- Some people will go to different schools so they may be split up from their friends
- They may not be able to see their friends every day
- They will have to get used to different teachers and a new school lay-out
- They will have to move in the middle of the school year
- Crossgates C.P. School will be overcrowded
- They may get muddy from the field

4. Is there anything that would be better if you had to move schools?

- Would have more friends
- Might have a better teacher
- There is a field at Crossgates C.P. School but there isn't here
- Because the school is lower down there may have less snow

5. What do you think the impact of closure of the school would be on pupils that have additional needs?

- It might be more difficult for them to travel
- The school may not have the right teachers to help them
- It might be harder for them to move around if they are in a wheelchair and the school is busy
- They might get made fun of

6. Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following questions were raised?

- How would the transport work?

Pupil debates

The pupils had taken part in a debate about the closure of Llanbister C.P. School as part of a P.S.E. lesson. Two pupils read out their statements against the closure of the school. These statements included the following points:

- Pupils will have to change schools half way through the school year which will affect their education and the teachers in the new school won't know what they have covered
- It will be hard to make new friends if they are shy which could make them feel sad and could ruin their education
- It will affect the community because the hall will shut and then the activities will not carry on
- Crossgates CP School will be overcrowded
- They will get new friends and may forget their old friends
- Being compact into tight spaces will increase the chance of germs being passed on
- Money will be spent on building more classrooms
- Parents will have to spend more money on new uniforms
- A new playground might be needed for Crossgates C.P. School
- There will be more transport on the roads and more fumes damaging the environment
- The children get a better education because there is more time to have one to one support
- It will cost more money to transport pupils to Crossgates C.P. School

- The impact of the petrol station being close to the school on the children's health
- The number of pupils attending Llanbister C.P. School is due to rise
- The portable cabins are too small and will be far away from the school

Minutes of a meeting with staff of Llanbister C P School, held at Llanbister School on 10th March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation
Catherine Cottle, Human Resources Business Partner

E Kolano-Rogers, Acting Headteacher
Kay Hughes, member of staff
Liz Brown, member of staff
Sarah Hammond, member of staff
Lyn Davies, member of staff
Sara Wilson, member of staff
Paula Kemp, member of staff

Members of staff and officers introduced themselves.

Gareth Jones explained the purpose of the meeting was to receive the views of members of staff and to answer any questions they may have on the proposal to close Llanbister CP School from 31st December, 2016. Staff members were informed that if they were governors or members of the community they would be welcome to attend the consultation meetings with governors and parents/community members to be held later that evening.

Gareth Jones informed staff members about the reasons for the proposal. It was noted that, in line with the Schools Transformation Policy, 2014, the School Organisation Review Panel, chaired by Cllr Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education, had identified criteria by which to measure and identify schools for review. The criteria relate to standards, pupil numbers (number of pupils on roll less than 50 over 3 previous years), capacity (where surplus capacity is over 15%), building condition (building condition C/D) and cost per pupil (cost per pupil more than 120% of county average). Members of the School Organisation Review Panel had met with governors of the school on several occasions between February and December, 2015, in order to discuss data in respect of the school. Following consideration of a report in January, 2016, the Council's Cabinet took a decision to proceed with formal consultation on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016, with Crossgates CP School being named as the receiving school.

Members of staff were informed that a written record would be made of the meeting and this would be shared with the headteacher.

Gareth Jones invited members of staff to comment and ask questions in relation to the proposal.

1. Question

Why are you closing all the small schools in Radnorshire? There are schools in Montgomeryshire with fewer pupils which have not been closed. There are only 3 councillors on the Cabinet who are not from Montgomeryshire.

Response

There are a number of key criteria against which all Powys schools were measured as part of the review process. It was the view of officers and Councillor Arwel Jones that a number of schools

should be reviewed. The majority of those schools are in the Brecon and Radnor area. You are correct in what you say about the make-up of the Cabinet. A number of primary schools in Montgomeryshire have been closed - Aberhafesp C W School, Dolfor C P School, Llangurig Church in Wales School and Ysgol Efrnwy in Llanwyddyn. 10 primary schools were closed in the Ystradgynlais area. Gwernyfed catchment area is still going through the modernisation process. Tonight's meeting will be attended by the Cabinet Leader and the Portfolio Holder for schools so you can put the question directly to the Cabinet members if you wish to do that.

Response

No decisions have been taken to close any of the 3 schools under review. The Cabinet has only taken a decision to consult on the proposal to close the school. All issues raised during the consultation period will be analysed and included in a report for the Council Cabinet. The Cabinet members have a duty to consider all the issues raised during the consultation and have to take a decision based on the issues raised and the Authority's response to them.

2. Comment

It is probably a closed case anyway.

Response

In the past, proposals have been changed following consultation. The impact of rural school reorganisation on the community is acknowledged. The Cabinet will have a copy of the Community Impact Assessment. Cabinet had draft version of the Community Impact Assessment in January. All the views heard in relation to the impact on the community will be included in the Community Impact Assessment and the Cabinet will have to take these into account.

3. Comment

This school is projected to have a very good intake of pupils in the next few years. Where are we going to put these pupils? Crossgates School will be overcrowded and the pupils will be in bigger class sizes. That is not good for the children. We could have up to 60 children in next 3 or 4 years. Bigger classes are not good for children. You have got to think of the future. There are a lot of children in this community.

4. Comment

I used to work in Newbridge on Wye School. When Howey Church in Wales School closed the pupils transferred to Newbridge and parents had to go to appeal for places at the school.

Response

As part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan pupil numbers over the next 15 years need to be projected. Consideration is given to the Local Development Plan and the number of houses planned for the Llandrindod area in order to assess what impact that will have and to ensure that there are sufficient pupil places in the receiving school. Class sizes will be 25+. Schools are currently funded for 1 teacher per 26 or 27 pupils.

5. Comment

Children will find it hard going to a bigger school. Many of the younger children will not cope well as they would get "lost in the system". Some children do not cope well in larger classes.

Response

That point has been noted.

6. Comment

There will be an impact on families who already have one sibling in school. For those families the child who is already in Llanbister School is guaranteed a place at Crossgates School but if they have a sibling and Crossgates is not their closest school then some parents could have children in different schools.

Response

The School Transport Policy states qualifying pupils will have free school transport to the closest or allocated school. Consideration could be given to including the whole of Llanbister catchment into a single school catchment area.

7. Question

What if the class size is full to capacity and a family already has one child in Crossgates School and the sibling cannot get a place in the school?

Response

We need to ensure that there are places available for children who live in the catchment area of the school. If parents are applying for a school place at the right time, it is unlikely that a place would be refused.

8. Question

What do parents do if they can't get siblings into that school? Parents need a guarantee that siblings can get a place in the school if the older child is in Crossgates School.

Response

If a school is oversubscribed there is no guarantee that a place would be available for a sibling of a child already in the school but school places are allocated according to criteria set out in the Schools Admission Policy.

9. Comment

Parents will be disadvantaged if they have children in two different schools.

Response

Priority for school places is given to looked after children, then children who live in the catchment area of the school and then to children who already have a sibling in the school.

10. Question

If Crossgates School is projected to be near capacity would it not be sensible to keep this school open so siblings can attend the same school?

Response

That would be something for the Cabinet to consider.

Comment

This school already works closely with Crossgates School and there are 3 members of staff at this school, who have already worked at Crossgates. Couldn't this site be kept open as part of Crossgates School?

Response

If Crossgates School was made a dual-sited school with the Llanbister site the funding arrangement works out as 1 teacher for 25 pupils so the second site would need at least 50 children before it became self-sustaining and that is not projected to happen over next few years.

11. Comment

The number of pupils at Crossgates School is going to grow very quickly. Are there any plans to increase capacity at Crossgates?

Response

Crossgates School currently has a capacity of 210. The school's capacity can be increased by use of the mobile. The roof of the mobile needs re-felting but that work has already been planned.

12. Comment

The mobile classroom is not fit for purpose. A roof job is not going to suffice. You are going to be transferring the children from a permanent building to a portacabin.

Response

The mobile classroom is currently being used for a breakfast and after school club.

13. Comment

A lot of work needs to be done to bring the mobile up to standard.

Response

The Authority has just completed consultation around a proposal to change the age of primary school admission and, if that proposal is approved, it may change the admission number and capacity of Crossgates School.

14. Comment

The biggest year group at Llanbister School is the nursery age group and they will be in reception by the time the proposal to change the school admission age is implemented.

Response

They would be in Year 1.

15. Question

What about the toilet facilities in the mobile? You can't expect 30 children to use 2 toilets. More toilets will need to be included in the mobile.

Response

The mobile has capacity for 28 children. For infants the recommended ratio for the number of toilets per child is 1 toilet for 10 children.

16. Comment

If there was a need to increase the number of toilets, that would reduce the capacity of the mobile classroom.

17. Comment

You will need capacity for ICT too.

Question

In your opinion what do you think the Authority should do?

18. Comment

It is not my decision but I think you need to keep provision here. Crossgates School is going to get bigger. Affordable housing is planned and that is going to encourage more young families to come to the area. The provision here is perfectly acceptable. The pupils are happy and learning.

Comment

In relation to building condition, colleagues in Property have informed us that if the roof of the mobile classroom at Crossgates School is re-felted the mobile would be condition "B".

19. Question

How can Llanbister School building be rated as C/D? It is either one or the other.

Response

Llanbister School building has been rated as "C" for condition, "B" for suitability and "C" for sustainability.

20. Comment

The toilet area has been refurbished since the survey was completed. There are no leaking roofs at this school.

21. Comment

And we can provide our own school dinners here.

Response

I think a revised survey of the Llanbister School building needs to be completed. The aspiration is to get all our schools to condition "A" or "B".

22. Comment

I think the condition of the building is better than "C"

Response

Another property survey needs to be completed. One aspect is DDA compliance. That is measurable based on individual children coming into the school.

23. Comment

If children have to travel to Crossgates School they are going to be tired when they arrive at school. They are going to be a long time on the transport. It is dreadful to put little children on school transport to Crossgates. Some of our pupils are already travelling from Felindre. Those children will have to go on two different lots of transport.

Will Powys change the goalposts? Currently, the Authority is saying the school transport will be provided to Crossgates School should Llanbister School close but would the Authority provide transport for the Felindre children to Knighton School?

Response

The policy is that school transport would be provided for qualifying pupils to the named receiving school or to the closest school to the child's home address.

If the closest school to the children's home address is currently Llanbister School then the Authority has a duty to transport those children to the named, receiving school. The proposal is that the named receiving school will be Crossgates C P School and the Authority has a duty to ensure that there are places available in the named, receiving school but parents may choose to send children to alternative schools.

Comment

To summarise the points you have made:

- If there was no school in Llanbister that would have a big impact on the community.
- Pupil numbers at Llanbister School are projected to grow.
- There is concern about the impact on pupils of transferring them from a small to larger classes.
- There are concerns about splitting children from their siblings if they need to attend different schools if the receiving school is full.
- There are concerns about pupils being transferred from a permanent school building to a mobile classroom.

24. Comment

I am concerned about the impact longer school journey times may have on the children.

25. Comment

Closing Llanbister School will also impact on the children's friendship groups.

26. Comment

Closure of the school would impact on the community. Extra-curricular activities and community groups take place in the school buildings. There is an art club, sports club, football club, netball club, breakfast and after school club, gardening club and other extra-curricular activities throughout the day. The playgroup meets every Friday morning and the Young Farmers Club.

Response Question

Are those extra-curricular activities currently accessed by pupils from across the catchment?

Response

Yes

27. Question

Why waste money on refurbishing the mobile when there is a good building here?

28. Comment

Parents of pupils at this school and at Crossgates School will not want their children taught in a mobile classroom.

29. Comment

There are safety issues at Crossgates School in relation to car parking. There is also parking allocated for the “Little Acorns” pre-school setting.

30. Question

If a decision is taken to close the school will there be a separate meeting for staff?

Response

No decision has been taken to close the school but I can answer questions in relation to staff matters if you wish me to do so.

Response

The consultation closes on 24.3.2016. Following closure of the consultation period a report, including all the issues raised during the consultation and the Authority’s response to them, will be prepared for the Council’s Cabinet. The Cabinet has a duty to take into account all issues raised during the consultation and will then take a decision on the next steps. The report will not be considered by the Cabinet until after the Welsh Assembly elections. This will probably be in May or June. If Cabinet decides, following consideration of the outcome of consultation, to proceed with the proposal, a statutory notice of closure will be published for a period of 28 days of which 15 days must be in the school term. Any objections to the proposal submitted during the consultation period would need to be resubmitted during the objection period in order to be considered as an objection. At the end of the objection period another report, including an analysis of the responses received during the objection period, will be considered by the Cabinet and members will take the final decision on the proposal to close the school. If the final decision is to close the school then the formal statutory process with staff can begin. It is anticipated that if a decision is taken to close the school the HR process would begin in the autumn term. It is expected that all staff would remain in post until the end of December. There would be discussion with the governing body in relation to which staff would need to be retained to deal with the formal closure process.

31. Question

If a decision was taken to close the school and staff were given notice would they be invited to put their names on the redeployment register?

32. Question

Where are you with the Redeployment Policy? It was not good when I was given notice when St Joseph’s School closed.

Response

It is recognised that the Redeployment Policy needs to be reviewed.

33. Comment

The Redeployment Policy should have been revised years ago. School closures are impacting on the lives of many school staff.

Response

There have been examples when staff have been redeployed following school closures.

34. Comment

If heads are told they have to interview redeployees they are not going to take kindly to that. They feel they have been forced into that interview process. Preparing for interviews involves a lot of work but do redeployees have chance of employment? There can be a perception that if staff have been made redundant that there may be an issue

with their performance. I now have a contract but I am concerned about other staff who may be affected by future school closures.

Response

The view of headteachers is now changing. Headteachers now understand now that staff are not on the redeployment list through any fault of their own. I understand what you mean that heads may feel they are interviewing redeployees because they have to but there is so much change headteachers now understand that.

35. Question

Could you explain the redeployment process?

Response

The governing body would have to sign off a business case to say what they were going to consult with staff on. At the end of the consultation process with staff, staff would be put at risk of redundancy and given notice. Staff would be in a redeployment position until the end of their notice. During this time staff would be supported by the Authority to identify suitable alternative employment but it would be up to staff to look for alternative posts too.

Response

If the redeployment process works properly we should be asking schools to interview staff at risk of redundancy prior to the end of their notice period.

36. Comment

The redeployment policy is not working properly.

Response

There is a need to bring schools in line with rest of authority in terms of the redeployment process. The issue is that although Powys is the employer there is the middle role of the governing body. There is likely to be significant management of change around the age of admission and something which needs to be considered is to open up a voluntary redundancy scheme for all school staff.

37. Comment

How long is that going to take? I know a teacher who was made redundant 3 years ago who is still finding it difficult to find a job. The process needs to move faster.

38. Question

My contract ceases at the end of August. What happens to me after Christmas?

39. Comment

The staff at this school are dedicated. You could have members of staff at some schools who would want to look for alternative jobs as soon as they were aware the school was at risk of closure but the staff at this school are dedicated to the pupils.

Response

The position for staff with fixed term contracts is complex but, by law, staff on fixed term contracts cannot be treated less favourably than staff who are on permanent contracts.

40. Question

Would I be dismissed because, technically, my contract finishes in August?

Response

The governing body would have to have a fair reason for not renewing your contract. You cannot be treated any less favourably because you are on a fixed term contract due to the Fixed Term Worker Regulations and, if you have 2 years continuous service with the Local Authority you would be entitled to redundancy pay.

41. Question

If a decision is taken to close the school, pupils transfer to Crossgates CP School, and there is a need for additional Teaching Assistants at Crossgates School would the governing body of that school need to give staff from this school priority?

Response

I would hope so because children would benefit from the continuity but there is no guarantee.

42. Question

If we were made redundant and have worked in different schools would we get redundancy pay based on the 8 years we have worked?

Response

If you hold multiple posts the situation is complex. If you are only made redundant from one post then the redundancy payment would be based on your length of service in that one post. If you have multiple posts and were made redundant from them all then redundancy would be based on your length of service in all those posts.

Response

If you were redeployed to a post with fewer hours or less pay you may be entitled to a compensatory payment but that would be treated differently to redundancy pay for tax purposes. A compensatory payment would be liable for tax whereas redundancy pay up to £30K is not.

Response

If a decision is taken to close the school we will collate information on staff service details.

43. Question

Is it because the school is under threat of closure that we have only been given temporary contracts to August?

Response

Although your contract is with Powys County Council, the decision regarding the length of the contract is up to the governing body of the school.

Response

If a decision is taken to close the school any issues relating to individual circumstances can be raised in 1:1 meetings during the staff employment process.

44. Question

I have been employed as a cleaner at this school for 25 years. What hope do I have of finding another cleaning job in Crossgates? Crossgates School will already employ cleaners.

Response

That is the problem with the school closures. Most of the staff in those schools will be looking for redeployment in other schools. There may be jobs in other council buildings.

45. Comment

I would not be prepared to travel a round trip of 20 miles for a cleaning job.

Response

When considering redeployment, individual circumstances would be taken into consideration.

46. Comment

There is a good family atmosphere at this school and staff work well as a team.

Gareth Jones reminded staff how to respond to the consultation. It was noted that minutes of the meeting would be typed up and sent to the Headteacher.

GJ thanked staff for the questions raised and requested updated data in relation to projected pupil numbers.

Minutes of a meeting with governors of Llanbister C P School, held at Llanbister School on 10th March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Service
Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation

Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services
Kelly Lock, Opinion Research Services

E Howells, Governor
E Kolano-Rogers, Headteacher
Peter Thomas, Chair of Governors
Cllr John Brunt, Governor
Gareth Evans, Governor
Sue Meeke, Governor
Mandy Gerrard, Vice Chair of Governors
Julie Rees, Governor
Kay Hughes, Governor

Apologies – Jennifer Lewis, Governor

Ian Roberts welcomed governors to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He informed them that the meeting was part of a formal consultation on a proposal to close Llanbister School from 31.12.16. He explained the purpose of the meeting was for governors to present their views on the proposal. Governors were informed that minutes would be taken of the meeting and every issue raised would be contained in a report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet members would consider the report and decide on the next steps.

Copies of an agenda for the meeting prepared by governors were circulated. (attached below)



Agenda for
Governors Consulta

1. Welcome

Peter Thomas extended a welcome, on behalf of the governing body, to officers from Powys County Council and said he hoped officers would leave the meeting with a clear understanding of a better way forward than closure of the school.

2. Children or Statistics?

Governors presented a short video clip made by local people in the Llanbister to illustrate the value of the school to its pupils and to the community as a whole.

It was noted that the community is united in its support of the school.

Governors pointed out that in a photograph of all the children in the school and playgroup, included within the video clip there were 69 children. (current and potential pupils)

3. Standards

Sue Meeke presented the attached paper on standards on behalf of governors.



Governors
presentation standa

4. Condition of Building

Peter Thomas presented the attached paper on the condition of the Llanbister School building.



Llanbister School
building condition p

Governors were informed that officers from the Authority's Property Service had been asked to carry out a high level survey in order to update the data on the condition of the Llanbister School building.

5. Pupil Numbers and Capacity

Julie Rees and Mandy Gerrard gave a presentation on pupil numbers and capacity (attached below)



Governors
presentation pupil r

Governors were informed that the points raised and the Authority's response to them would be included in the Cabinet report. The Cabinet would take the final decision as to whether to proceed with, amend or reject the proposal.

In response to the presentation on pupil numbers and capacity governors were informed that class sizes of 30 are a guide but not unlawful. Schools cannot plan for Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes over 30.

Ian Roberts thanked governors for clarifying data on projected pupil numbers for Llanbister CP School. In response to a question, governors were informed that the Authority would not support class sizes of 50 and it was noted that the Authority provides class size support funding where schools cannot structure an infant class for below 30 or a junior class below 33.

The following additional comments were received and responses given.

Comment

The capacity figures you have quoted are based on using this room as a single classroom and there is a divide. If used as 2 teaching spaces the total capacity would be 71.

Response

I think it is 66.

Comment

Governors have concerns about the future capacity of Crossgates School to accommodate the projected pupil numbers in January 2017. Your figures do not take into account the children transferring from Nantmel School. Pupil numbers will greatly increase in the next few years which could result in Crossgates School being required to accommodate up to 250 pupils in next 4 years if the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals for Llanbister, Nantmel and Llanfihangel Rhydithon Schools. Llandewi, Llanbadarn, Crossgates and Llandrindod Wells all have projected housing development. Ysgol Trefonnen is full to capacity and children are being transported to Crossgates School. If Llanbister School was to close it would mean that that Crossgates School could not be earmarked for surplus capacity for pupils from Llandrindod. How would you deal with a projected 50 over capacity? The mobile will only accommodate 28 pupils. The mobile will not provide sufficient capacity for the projected number of pupils in 3 years' time. You need Llanbister School in January, 2017 to ensure that additional capacity is available when the 4 primary schools in Llandrindod Wells area are at capacity.

6. Finance

Sue Meeke presented a Powerpoint presentation in support of governors view that merger with Crossgates CP School would be a more viable option than closure of the Llanbister School site. (Copy of presentation attached)



Comment

Governors consider that there has been misrepresentation of savings from closure of Llanbister School quoted in the consultation document. Governors dispute the costs of additional school transport required if Llanbister School is closed. Some children may require transport to Knighton or Newtown. The figures need further investigation. If Llanbister School closes it is going to cost £21,333 to transport the pupils from the Llanbister site to Crossgates. There will be one-off costs to refurbish the mobile classroom in the first year of £6K. The roof of the mobile will need to be re-felted and the floor structure will need to be repaired. In addition, there will be a need to update the heating system in the mobile classroom and to install a fire and security alarm system. The CCTV system would need to be relocated. There will be a need to install ICT facilities and furniture. (estimated total costs £50K). Governors consider that with future increased pupil numbers in Crossgates School a second mobile would be needed at the cost of £120K. To relocate a mobile will mean crane lifting is required at a cost of £15K per mobile. Fitting out a second mobile would cost an additional £10K. It may be possible for the Authority to apply for 21st Century Schools Funding to extend Crossgates School but this would be at a cost to the taxpayer and Powys County Council would have to match fund Welsh Government funding. There is no sound financial business case for closure because the County Council will need to invest more money in transport. Merger is the only financial solution. All the above costs would be savings under merger and the added cost of transport would not be needed.

Governors expressed concern about impact of closure on the school on the pupils:

- pupils would spend more time on school transport than at home with their families
- Pupils would be losing out on educational resources because more money would need to be spent on school transport.
- Pupils would miss out on the opportunity to attend extra-curricular activities because extra-curricular activities at Crossgates School do not take place during lunchtimes as is stated in the consultation document. Transported pupils will not be able to access daily extra-curricular activities as the current pupils of Crossgates School do.

7. Summary

Cllr J Brunt summarised the key message on behalf of governors. It was noted that governors acknowledge savings need to be made and are not against closure of Llanbister School providing that it can be merged with Crossgates CP School and education remains on the Llanbister School site.

Cllr Brunt presented points in favour of merger in response to the Schools Organisation Review Panel's reasons for discounting the merger option (summary attached).



Governors
summary.pdf

IR thanked Cllr Brunt for his summary and thanked governors for the time and effort they had taken in presenting their case for merger in a sequenced way.

In response to the financial information presented by governors, Jane Thomas informed them that the cost per pupil calculation in the not method used for calculating the cost for schools. When pupils transfer to another school there are elements of funding such as building costs which do not transfer with the pupil. She agreed to provide governors with a breakdown of the figures.

Minutes of a meeting with parents and community of Llanbister C P School, held at Llanbister Community Hall on 10th March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Barry Thomas, Leader of Powys County Council
Cllr A Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education
Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, School Transformation
Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance
Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services

Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services
Kelly Lock, Opinion Research Services

137 parents/members of the Llanbister Community attended the meeting

Cllr Arwel Jones welcomed parents and members of the community to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He explained that the meeting was part of the formal consultation process on the proposal to close Llanbister CP School from 31st December, 2016.

Darren Ivey of Opinion Research Services welcomed all to the meeting and explained his role as an independent facilitator and the proposed format and structure of the meeting. Attendees were informed that the Cabinet had only taken a decision to carry out consultation on the proposal to close the school and that no decision had been taken to close the school. It was explained that the purpose of consultation is to inform the Cabinet decision. Parents and community members were invited to use the meeting as an opportunity to present their views and to ask questions in a constructive manner. It was noted that a written record would be made of the all issues raised during the meeting and that these would be included in the report presented to the Council's Cabinet.

Marianne Evans explained the background leading up to the proposal. It was noted that the council had published a new School Transformation Policy in 2014, which set out a range of criteria against which all Powys schools were evaluated. Following this process a decision was taken to review Llanbister CP School. A number of meetings with the governing body had taken place during 2015 to discuss options. In January, 2016, the Cabinet had considered a report including a recommendation to close Llanbister CP School from 31st December, 2016, with Crossgates CP School being named as the receiving school. The Cabinet had taken as decision to formally consult on closure of the school.

Marianne Evans advised that the reasons for the proposal to close Llanbister CP School were as follows:

- The school is currently in Special Measures
- The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years
- There are more than 15% surplus places at the school
- The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average

Parents and community members were informed that every issue raised during the consultation would be included in the report for the Council's Cabinet which has a duty to consider all the issues before considering the next steps. Following consideration of the report, Cabinet members could decide to amend or reject the proposal or to take it forward.

The following comments, questions were received from parents and community members:

1. Comment/Question

We are all here tonight for our sons, daughters and grandchildren, the current and future children of our school. I have names and dates of birth of prospective pupils. In the next 4 years, pupil numbers in the school are projected to increase by 82%. This year there will be 11 children starting in Llanbister Primary. Next year there will 9 new pupils, the year after that there will be 10 and the following year, 15 new pupils. Llanbister CP School has a future. In the consultation document on page 4-7 it states that a weakness is that numbers would continue below 50 in the short term. Could you clarify how long short term is?

Response

According to our pupil projections the number of pupils in the school is projected to increase to 42 in 2019. However, we have heard at today's meetings that the number of projected pupils is significantly more than this.

Response

If anyone does have any additional evidence in terms of projected pupil numbers, I would encourage you to submit this as part of the consultation process.

The figures for the projected number of pupils for 2020 included in the consultation document is 54. I would suggest short term is up to 2020.

Response

The figures quoted in documentation are based on the number of projected pupils in Reception to year 6.

2. Comment

Our figures are too.

3. Comment/Question

I have one child who is already in Llanbister School and my daughter will be starting at the school in September. *The questioner held up a picture of the prospective pupils of Llanbister School.* This picture shows the bumps and babies (future pupils of the school) the hub of our community.

Could you tell me what is current number of pupils on roll at Crossgates CP School?

Response

On P 18 of the consultation document it states the number of pupils from Reception to Year 6 in Crossgates CP School in January, 2016, was 140. There are also 17 children in the nursery class.

4. Question

You have confirmed there are 17 children in the nursery age class. Where are these children currently taught?

Response

In the main school.

5. Question

Why are those children not included in the data on pupil numbers within the consultation document?

Response

The data included in the consultation document is based on the PLASC return. For that return Welsh Government requests data on the number of pupils from Reception to Year 6, which relates to the statutory age groups. The authority has recently completed consultation on changing the age of admission to primary schools. If that proposal goes ahead, children would start school in Reception.

6. Question

The capacity of Crossgates is currently 210. What is the capacity per class in Crossgates and what would be acceptable?

Response

210 divided by 7 is 30 per class. The capacity calculation is based on 2.3 square metres of space per nursery age pupil and 1.86 square meters of space per pupil for those pupils between Reception and Year 6. In terms of class sizes, Welsh Government states that numbers in nursery and reception age classes should not normally be over 30, the exception is if children are admitted to school outside the normal admission round. This also excludes pupils that spend part of their education in a special unit. There are no statutory guidelines for junior classes but the Authority ensures that all junior classes are kept below 33 by providing additional funding.

7. Comment

These are the children who will be attending Llanbister C P School in the next 5 years. *The list of prospective pupils was passed to a member of the Panel.*

8. Comment/Question

The consultation document is misleading. There has been no formal change to the age of admission yet. The Nursery needs to be account for. In January, 2017, when you are proposing to close Dolau and Llanbister Schools the total number of children in Crossgates CP School will be 231. You have not factored in some children from Nantmel Church in Wales School who will transfer to Crossgates School - around 20. Some year groups in Llandrindod Church in Wales School are full and children are being transported to Crossgates. Where do you plan to put all these children?

Response

There is a mobile classroom on site which I have been informed is condition standard B and, in terms of the County Council's aspirations for all school buildings these should be A or B. There are some issues with the condition of the roof but that work has already been factored into the Council's programme and once the work has been completed it is considered that the condition of the mobile will be condition standard B. If the mobile is included that will bring the capacity of Crossgates School to 238. If the change to school admission age goes forward the admission number for Crossgates School would be 34.

9. Comment

Page 5 section 2 of the consultation document states one of the strengths of closure of Llanbister school would be that it would reduce the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools, but at the same time, it states that one of the weaknesses of merger would be that there would be no reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools. The capacity at Crossgates CP School will be exceeded. By keeping the school in Llanbister you would be able to provide education in the community and ensure that capacity at Crossgates is not exceeded. A mobile should not be an acceptable alternative to a permanent school building for Powys County Council.

10. Question

I am a parent of 3 children with one in Llanbister School and one keen to join.

Page 3 of the consultation document states that the overall condition of the Llanbister CP School building is categorised as D or C. Cllr Arwel Jones could you explain how you have assessed /categorised this property and how you have reached this conclusion?

Response

A high level assessment of the school buildings was completed by Welsh Government 6 years ago. The building was then categorised as "B" for suitability and "C" for condition and sustainability. The Authority will arrange for that survey to be updated so that the updated information can be included within the Cabinet report.

11. Comment

On page 19 Section 3.4 you have classified the school building as "C". There is no mention of "D" on page 3.

Response

The information from the Welsh Government survey of the school buildings will be checked and I will feed that information back to the school. On information presented in the consultation document on page 19, the school building is condition "C" but that information will be clarified. The Welsh Government assessment would have been done on each of the blocks but the details in relation to the condition of the school building will be clarified.

Response

Page 3 of the consultation document outlines the criteria included in the School Transformation Policy which was used to identify schools for review. As stated in the document, the criteria in the Policy is 'The overall building condition is categorised as category D or C based on the Welsh Government's assessment of building condition.' Any school that was condition C or D met the criteria – the condition D doesn't refer to Llanbister.

12. Question

What is sustainability?

Response

Sustainability relates to environmental condition – for instance whether windows are single or double glazed.

13. Comment/Question

The consultation document refers to the Welsh Government 21st Schools survey. Despite 3 different FOI requests we are still waiting for information as to how the building has been assessed. Would you consider this building to be in a bad condition?

Response

I can give you assurance that a building survey will be completed before the report is considered by Cabinet.

14. Comment/Question

The school governors commissioned an independent structural survey of the school buildings and that the surveyor stated that all the buildings forming the school are structurally sound and there is no evidence to suggest subsidence or any structural problems with the building. How has the school building graded as poor when £120K was spent on the school buildings 6 years ago?

Response

The condition survey was undertaken by Welsh Government 6 years ago and that survey has not been updated but it is something that is planned. We have also had a commitment from the governing body that they will share their survey with us. We will be instigating a rolling programme of school surveys as part of a review of the Schools Service's Asset Management Plan to ensure that information is kept up to date.

15. Comment/Question

You have said the school buildings were categorised as "B" and 2 "Cs" 6 years ago. How can you now rate the school buildings overall as C/D?

Response

It has been explained that the reference to category C/D was a reference to the criteria that triggered a review. In terms of overall assessment, the emphasis is on the condition of a building. We have already clarified that Llanbister School was not classified as condition D.

16. Question

Why is the school building C/D?

Response

The condition of the school building was assessed as being "C". Of our 100 schools we have one or two which are condition "D" and 50 that are condition "C".

17. Question

Are you seriously using 2009 reports, having spent £120K since, to consider that this is a D rated building? Why has £120K been spent on the building? That should have been included in the report as to why £120K was spent in the first place.

Response

The condition assessment was a condition "C" and not condition "D". We recognise that if there has been money spent, you would expect that element of the condition survey to improve to an A or a B.

18. Comment

It is important that an updated survey is in place before decisions are taken.

19. Question

Can we have clarification that the information reported in the document was based on the classification of the building before investment of £120K?

Response

Yes

20. Comment

So you published a consultation document based on information on the school building's condition before £120K was spent on it. I think that was disgraceful!

21. Question

I am a former pupil of Llanbister School, parent of a future pupil and Vice Chair of the Community Council. The numbers at Crossgates School will go up if you make all the closures you are proposing. You mention that the capacity of Crossgates CP School can be increased by using a mobile classroom. Is using a mobile a viable option and how much will it cost to bring the mobile up to a fit for purpose standard?

Response

The figure quoted in relation to work needed to the roof is between £6.5K and £7.5K.

22. Question

Do you think it will be possible to maintain a suitable temperature in the mobile classroom?

Response

Obviously there are heating temperatures that schools need to maintain. Powys has many schools with mobile classrooms. Ysgol Carno is made up of mobile classrooms.

23. Question

Are they as old as the one at Crossgates School?

Response

We have been informed that the roof of the mobile at Crossgates School is re-felted it will be up to condition "B".

24. Comment/Question

There is poor ventilation in the mobile classroom and there are problems with vermin. Parents are concerned that their children are going to be taught in a mobile. The children in the mobile will feel isolated from the main school. Access in bad weather is an issue for small children. Is this acceptable after children being in a good permanent school building? It seems to be a backward step for pupils to go from a good permanent school building to a mobile.

Response

Most of Crossgates School building is condition "A". If a mobile was used, this would be one classroom within the school. If Llanbister School was to close, we would need to ensure that suitable accommodation would be available.

25. Question

Do you think it would be backward move for pupils to go from a good building here to a mobile?

Response

There are 3 mobile classrooms in my local school. I give you my assurance that the mobile at Crossgates School will be fit for purpose.

26. Question

Have you factored in the costs of bringing the mobile up to standard?

Response

The savings quoted are the revenue savings. The costs quoted do not include the cost of refurbishing the mobile classroom.

Response

It is important that the report that goes back to Cabinet contains all these details. Officers will be expected to provide accurate costs for refurbishing the mobile in addition to arranging for an up to date survey of the school building to be completed before the Cabinet meeting.

27. Question

In 2005, the elected body of the County Council decided to invest substantial money in extending the school in Crossgates. £2.2m was spent on that school at that point and now you are proposing to have children taught in mobiles. At that time, the Board decided that mobiles should not be regarded as a permanent solution. If they decided then that mobiles should not be used as a permanent feature, what has changed? Would you agree that it would be acceptable to put all council officers in mobiles instead of County Hall?

Response

As I said previously, all mobiles at Crossgates School will be fit for purpose.

28. Comment

You mentioned the school at Carno as having mobiles but that is because they are building a new school.

Response

The old school building at Carno was condemned in 1996 and the authority had to put alternative provision in place.

29. Comment

Welsh Government guidelines said mobiles should only be used for 3 years.

Response

Welsh Government guidelines state if a mobile classroom is used for 3 years or longer it has to be included in capacity calculations.

30. Question

How long have pupils at Ysgol Carno been taught in mobile classrooms?

Response

20 years.

It was decided to put mobile classrooms at Ysgol Carno because there was an emergency due to the old school building being condemned but a community group is now supporting the establishment of a new school build at Carno.

31. Comment

We need to hear that there are some long term plans. A mobile classroom does not fit the bill.

Response

It is an aspiration of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan not to use mobiles as a permanent solution. Likewise the aspiration is not to have pupils taught in buildings that are category C or D. The focus of investment as part of Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme will be on improving the quality of category C or D buildings.

32. Question

As Council Leader, do you think it is acceptable for children to continue to be taught in mobile classrooms in the 21st Century - yes or no?

Response

You have been told that the mobile will be a condition "B standard" and that it will be fit for purpose. I am listening closely to every comment made. All Cabinet members will look at the report when it comes to Cabinet. Cabinet members will also be visiting the schools that are being reviewed to see the schools.

33. Question

Is it acceptable for children to be taught in mobile classrooms?

Response

If that building is brought up to condition "B" standard then that would be acceptable.

34. Comment /Question

I am a parent of 2 children currently in Llanbister School. Powys County Council has proposed to close Llanbister School for financial reasons and I am here tonight to present concerns about the negative impact of requiring young children to attend a school a long way from their homes. There are major concerns about inaccuracies in the method used in the Community Impact Assessment to determine closest schools and the computation of distances and travelling times. There is also a lack of assessment of cognitive damage which will have an impact on the children.

Although the Community Impact Assessment states that closure of the school would lead to an increase in travel it did not consider the significance of this increase or consider a weighting. It identified an impact on pupil travel and extra-curricular activities. In determining schools and resultant travel times the table in the document is based on January 2015 figures and will be two years out of date at the time of the proposed closure of the school. A valid assessment can only be based on school attendance figures at the time of proposed closure. School transport distance travelled by the shortest walking distance to Llanbister does not fit easily with the statement that the rural catchment area of Llanbister School has been significantly increased following the closure of Beguildy School. Determining the next nearest school is not straightforward in a rural, hilly area. You have calculated the next closest school by the nearest but not the most practicable route. The B4355 is repeatedly closed because of snow and the roads to Newcastle are dangerous in winter. There were 20 days this winter when travel on local roads has been disrupted by floods or snow. You need to take into account local circumstances and context. The consultation document assumes that pupils will relocate to their closest schools and does not take into account that parents may opt for Welsh medium education.

We do not want children separated and placed in separate schools because of the transport policy. We want assurance that all children in Llanbister School will be entitled to free transport to Crossgates.

Response

All children who live in the current catchment of Llanbister School will be entitled to school transport to Crossgates.

35. Comment

We need to have assurance that siblings will be entitled to transport even if Crossgates is not their nearest school. Parents would be reluctant to separate children from their social groupings. We need assurance that all children will be accommodated in Crossgates School so that they can maintain their friendships.

Response

Transport would be provided to the nearest or allocated school. If all pupils went to one school, there would be economic advantages to the authority. If the authority names a receiving school, it has agreed to provide places at that school.

36. Question

What about the children who are not yet on the roll of Llanbister School?

Response

It would be for the County Council to determine what the allocation area is for Crossgates School.

37. Question

What if Crossgates School was full?

Response

In terms of criteria for admission to Crossgates School there is a ranking. Looked after children are given priority, followed by children who have siblings already in the school and children who live in the catchment area of the school.

38. Question

I have 3 children. By September 2 of my children will be in Llanbister School so my eldest two children will get a place at Crossgates School should Llanbister School close but what will happen to my third child?

Response

That would depend on whether or not you live in part of the normal allocation area of the school.

39. Comment

Can we clarify that if Cabinet agree, all children could be transported including future pupils, but if there was no capacity at Crossgates, future children could be refused admission.

40. Comment

You cannot guarantee that all our children will go to same school. You are splitting the community and you will be splitting families.

41. Comment

The consultation document does not assess the impact of closing Dolau and Nantmel School and that is an omission.

42. Comment

You quote Newcastle as being one of the nearest alternative schools but that school in England. Pupils are entitled to be educated in Wales.

43. Comment

The figures quoted for distances to the nearest alternative schools are inaccurate. The road route does not take account of the fact that some of those roads will be closed due to the construction of the Newtown by pass.

44. Comment/Question

All pupils will experience a 50% increase in distances to be travelled to school. The figures for distances to the nearest alternative schools are inaccurate. The maximum shortest journey to Crossgates is over 16 miles. What is the recommended travelling time for children to get to school?

Response

When we brought forward the travel measure clarification was sought around the Authority's responsibility to transport children to schools in England if a parent chose a school in England but Welsh Government decided that all children in Wales should have the opportunity to attend a school in Wales. We note the comment around the roads in relation to the bypass and will go back and look at that.

45. Question

What is the recommended traveling time for children to go to school?

Response

It would not normally be expected that a primary school pupil should have to travel more than 45 minutes each way.

46. Question

What is the recommended travelling time one way to school?

Response

Not normally more than 45 minutes.

47. Comment

You said 30 minutes before. It has been noted.

48. Comment/Question

There are pupils in Llanbister School who travel from Felindre and who have a journey time of 50 minutes already. The journey from Felindre to Llanbister and from Llanbister to Crossgates by the shortest route will take at least 60 minutes and, in poor weather conditions, this journey time would be increased. Why are some children travelling more than the recommended journey time and why are you recommending a proposal which will mean children will be travelling longer than the recommended journey time?

49. Comment

The journey time from Felindre to Llanbister takes 50 minutes and Llanbister is the closest school for children living in Felindre because you closed the closest school in 2013. The journey time from Llanbister to Crossgates is 10 minutes according to your timetables.

Response

If this proposal goes through would Crossgates be the closest school to Felindre?

50. Comment

Yes

Response

Please submit a copy of that information. It is essential that this information is captured so the Cabinet can see it.

51. Comment

The assessment document does not make any mention of emotional and cognitive impact on pupils. Educational psychologists have referred us to the work of John Bowlby which suggests that there is a high probability that pupils will be emotionally impacted by long journeys. For children of 4 years of age, separation anxiety is a key consideration. Children aged 5 and younger have little understanding of time. Their understanding and control of emotions is difficult. A long journey particularly if there is shared transport with older children is likely to have an effect. Longer journey times may mean parents may not be immediately available to attend if their child is taken ill at school and longer journey times can have a detrimental effect on children's ability and willingness to learn. Closure of Llanbister School will mean extra costs for families. The consultation document claims that activities at Crossgates School happen during the school day, however there are activities on 4 out of 5 evenings. The consultation document is based on out of date data. There is a lack of transparency in terms of negative impacts on the children of the proposal. There are significant omissions.

52. Comment

In Llanbister School Powys has a wonderful, well-supported, community school in the heart of the community. It is understood that savings have to be made and the school community is willing to work with you. You have heard about the potential impact to young children's learning of spending up to 2 hours a day commuting to school and the financial saving from the proposal, stated in document, has been question. We ask you to assist the children in achieving their futures. You need accurate data to calculate distances.

Response

Thank you for well researched information. I would be grateful if you could provide a copy as evidence.

53. Comment

School attendance is very important. For us families in a farming area it's a busy time – if there was bad weather and school transport didn't run, children wouldn't be going to school if they went to Crossgates as we wouldn't have time to take them, therefore attendance would drop. There is rural life to be taken into consideration and how school fits in around that.

54. Comment/Question

I speak as a parent of children at Llanbister School. You have already heard parents' concerns in relation to capacity at Crossgates School. The problem with the consultation document is that it does not give a full picture of the financial costs of closing Llanbister School. Powys County Council has deliberately excluded financial information. The financial costs of closing the school have been underestimated. The transport costs of transport the pupils of Llanbister to Crossgates School will be excessive. At Llanbister there are already sizeable transport costs due to the size of the catchment area and the children living miles from main "A" roads.

Table A shows the actual costs of transporting the current 32 children to Llanbister School. These costs are just over £68K. The estimated costs of transporting these children in January, 2017, to Crossgates will be increased according to the greater mileage travelled. We estimate the costs will be £142K for future transport provision to Crossgates and my method for calculating the cost is generous as routes have been amalgamated. Consultation document already quotes additional costs of £32K but these costs are underestimated. Are you willing to spend £142K on school transport provision which equates to a school's delegated budget? Children as young as 4 will be travelling on a school bus. It would be better value to spend the money on education rather than school transport. The School Organisation Code states that 'it is important that funding for education is cost effective'. I would question whether £142K for school transport is cost effective.

We asked a current transport provider for a verbal quote for transport costs – the quote received was £39K for a bus from Llaithddu to Crossgates. The same provider was not interested in quoting for link transport due to the rural nature of roads. Our estimated school transport costs have been based on 37 pupils in January, 2017. Those transport costs could double as the number of pupils is projected to increase to 64 pupils in 2019.

If Llanbister School closes children who live in the catchment of Llanbister but already travel to Crossgates would be eligible for transport – do the estimated costs include these pupils? This would incur an additional £13K in school transport costs for Powys.

Powys County Council pays huge variances to different transport school providers. The costs for school transport are annual costs, not one off payments. Table C suggests that the additional transport costs would be £74K, not £30,400 as stated in the consultation document. This will have an impact on overall savings, which would decrease significantly

The transport costs quoted in consultation document are inaccurate. This does not take into account other inaccurate information in the consultation document – concerns have been raised in the governors meeting about the other quoted savings, therefore there may be no savings at all from closing Llanbister School. Do not put these children's education at risk and prevent them from reaching their potential due to being tired as a result of additional school transport journey times. Please read all the additional information that has been presented to you. The data in the consultation document is not correct and does not explain the full impact closure of the school would have on the community or the financial impact. Please do not close our school based on unrealistic and inaccurate calculations. I have worked within the audit profession for the last 26 years and part of my job involves auditing local government information. I personally believe there would be financial discrepancy if the proposal to close Llanbister School goes ahead.

Response

There are huge differences between the figures you have provided and the Authority's figures. Based on the information you have presented today we will relook at those figures. The governors did present some additional information also. We have agreed to provide more detail to the governing body around how the costings have been calculated.

55. Comment

Governors showed there was no saving to the Authority by closure of Llanbister School but a cost of £122,000. You challenged one point. There are still £112K costs for you to transport the children to Crossgates School.

56. Comment (former pupil of Llanbister School and parent of pupil)

You have implied that high school and primary school children could travel together on school transport.

Response

The Council's policy is that we do transport primary and secondary pupils on the same bus where practical and feasible. There are about 40-50 shared school transport routes across the county.

57. Comment

I am concerned about the wellbeing of young children sharing school transport with secondary school aged children. I don't think my four year old daughter should be seeing the poor behaviour of secondary school children. The wellbeing of under 4s needs to be factored in. Young children may need the toilet when travelling on long journeys on school transport.

Response

Joint transport is usually a consideration where buses are running into towns where high schools are situated. The proposal under consideration is not to transport pupils to Llandrindod but to Crossgates School. Looking at the numbers projected, I don't think we would be looking at joint transport, but I can't say for definite that that wouldn't be the case.

58. Question

Would there be another adult on the school transport with the children other than the driver?

Response

In normal circumstances the Authority does not provide escorts on transport to/from mainstream schools.

59. Comment/Question

I am the parent of a child in the Ti a Fi playgroup. When I first moved to the area I found attendance at the group meant that I was no longer isolated and I found other parents at the playgroup to be very supportive. I am concerned about parents being isolated if the playgroup closes. The community has funded equipment for the group which is widely accessed by mothers and fathers in the community of Llanbister. There are regular opportunities for parents of children in the playgroup to meet and talk to teachers in the school which assists the children with transition to school. I plan for my child to attend Llanbister School in future. Please keep education in the community where it belongs.

60. Question

Page 35 of the consultation document states that if Llanbister School were to close, a transition programme would be put in place to aid pupils with their transfer to Crossgates. Please clarify what the transition process would be and where it would be held.

Response

Thank you for drawing attention to the impact closure of Llanbister School would have on parents and the children in the community. In terms of transition, where there is school closure there is normally 1 term's notice and, during that time, staff of the closing and the receiving school work closely together. School visits are arranged for staff to go into closing school and arrangements are put in place for the children to spend time at their new school. This is facilitated by the Council, but done in discussion between the staff of the two schools.

61. Comment/Question

Your response does not address the transition process for children in the playgroup. What provision is there for the playgroup?

Response

There is currently an early years setting on the Crossgates School site, which is run by a management committee. This is partly funded by the Authority. One of the aspects we need to look at as part of the proposed change to the age of admission is around transition from early years settings into school. We need to ensure all children have access to a funded 3 year-old place.

62. Comment

The setting on the Crossgates School site is for 2 year olds and 3 years olds, not a mothers and babies group.

Response

Should Llanbister School close, there is no reason why the early years provision couldn't remain in the community.

63. Question

How has Welsh language provision been factored in?

Response

The School Transport Policy states that the Authority will provide transport to the closest school delivering provision through the language of choice. There are some children from this area that attend Ysgol Trefonnen, there may be some that would want to attend Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd.

64. Comment

We have "Ti a Fi" in Llanbister. There is no playgroup in Crossgates. The children will not have the same ease of transition to school.

65. Comment

I am concerned about the impact on the wider community if Llanbister School closes. I am the Chair of Llanbadarn YFC. There is concern that closure of the school will have detrimental effect on Cantal and Llanbadran YFC. The clubs currently have 52 members but if Llanbister School was to close, children will travel to other schools and use youth services in other areas. The YFC would close in this area. If the Llanbister School site was

to remain open this would maintain and uphold the identity of the school in the community. There is a strong community spirit here. The YFC offers a local service which is very important to the community and I would not like to see this diminish. It would not diminish if the Llanbister School site was kept open.

66. Comment

My parents run the Lion Hotel in Llanbister village. The school and “The Lion” play an important part in community life. If the school closes it will impact on our family business. As a family, we have supported the school and have attended fund raising events. Any event at the school means the pub is busy. The school playground is used by the pub when there are weddings and funerals. The pub provides a service to the community. The majority of those buying papers and provisions from the pub parents of pupils in the school. The school and the pub are an essential part of community life. Llanbister has already lost the shop and no more must be lost. We need to keep the school open. It’s not the case that Llanbister School would lose it’s identity if it became a site of another school. If the school site closed, the identity of the community would be lost. We need the school to stay open and our family’s livelihood to continue. Closure of the school site will be a potential catastrophe for village life. The school needs to stay open.

67. Question

Will the community be able to use car parking on the school site if the school closes?

Response

The authority would need to go through the asset management process around disposal of the school site. There have been school closures where the Authority has given consideration to community requests to retain part of the site as an amenity for the community.

68. Question

How will Powys County Council help our businesses and community to survive if you close this school?

Response

No decision has yet been made. You will need to make representations to us about your concerns and these will be considered.

69. Comment

The community is in favour of retaining the school site, this is more important than retaining the school name.

70. Comment

I manage Llanbadarn community shop. What a huge loss it would be to the community it serves if the school closes. My grandchildren attended Llanbister School and received a fantastic education. Page 5 section 3 1.3 states one of the strengths of merging with Crossgates would be maintaining educational provision in Llanbister. People have said education needs to remain in Llanbister. The community is supportive of a merger with Crossgates School if education was retained on the Llanbister School site. We must nurture our children and encourage them to put down roots so that there is a future for this area.

71. Comment/Question

I am a former student of Llanbister CP School and I am here tonight to represent the Llanbister Hall Committee. Llanbister School currently pays the Hall Committee approximately £3K a year for use of the hall for school activities during the day. The Hall Committee also receives additional funding for school concerts and events held by the school. If the school was to close those income streams would be at threat. The hall is well used by all members of the community, both young and old. The hall is used by the community for a range of activities – YFC meetings, coffee mornings, parties and family gatherings, parent toddler groups, “Flix in the Stix”. What will Powys County Council do to help our hall survive if the primary school closes? An estimated 50% funding for the hall comes from the school.

72. Question

Will siblings of current pupils at Llanbister School be guaranteed a place at Crossgates School? I have 3 children, 1 in Llandrindod High School, 1 in Year 6 in Llanbister School and 1-year-old who won't be entitled to a place at Crossgates School because it is not our nearest school. There is difference of 30 miles between Llandrindod High School and our nearest primary school (Ladywell Green / Hafren). Our children may need to be educated in two different shires with all the impact that would have on their social lives. Is that acceptable?

Response

The current School Transport Policy states that qualifying pupils are entitled to school transport to their closest or allocated school which offers education through the language medium of choice. If Llanbister School was to close we would be asking the Cabinet to decide on the allocation area for Crossgates. I'm picking up that if the school were to close, the community would prefer all pupils from the catchment area to be transported to a single school. There are advantages to that for the authority e.g. it would mean a single bus.

73. Comment

If Llanbister School closes what steps have you taken, as our Local Authority, that there will be teachers to run the school from September to December as I understand there will be two teachers out of contract at the end of August.

Response

There will be discussion with Peter Thomas, Chair of Governors, regarding that next week. He will also be discussing this with the staff. Governors will aim to secure staff for the autumn term. Discussion will take place without prejudice to any decision on the future of the school.

74. Comment

I am a community councillor for Llanbadarn. Llanbister School serves the Upper Ithon Valley involving 3 community councils. Page 23 4.1 of the School Organisation Code states that the Authority will consult according to the School Organisation Code. Llanbadarn Community Council has not been formally informed of this process nor has Abbeycwmhir Community Council. As many pupils in Llanbister School come from the upper end of the Ithon Valley, do you not agree that Llanbadarn Community Council should have been informed of the consultation on the proposal to close the school in a timely manner? The actual number of residents in the Upper Ithon Valley impacted by the proposal would be

in excess of 1300. Llanbister School has many extra curricular activities which are open to parents and community members to attend. There are a number of extract curricular activities for the children at the school including gardening club, netball and football club. If the school closes the children would have to travel to Crossgates to take part in those activities and general sports activities for those children would be in jeopardy if they have to travel. Out of school clubs are held after school at Crossgates Schol and children from Llanbister would not be able to access these. The consultation document is inaccurate. On page 36 it states that the majority of extra-curricular activities at Crossgates School take place during the day and that is not true. The consultation document is not reliable or fit for purpose. I would suggest that the consultation process is suspended until residents of the Upper Ithon Valley and community councils are notified of the process in a timely manner. This school has given a good foundation for education for many years to enable children to become useful members of society and the school has strong community support.

Response

Every community council in the catchment area of Llanbister School should have received copy of the consultation document.

75. Comment

I am a mother of a 6 year old pupil at Llanbister School and a G.P. I am concerned about the Council's attitude to an issue raised at the Cabinet meeting. Exposure to benzene is a major public health concern. I hope council has had time to reflect on an international WHO paper about this. Parents are alarmed that it is proposed to send children to Crossgates School which lies within 100 m of a petrol station. Benzene is a carcinogen and children could be at risk of exposure to benzene which has been associated with leukaemia. The WHO paper recommends reducing exposure to children to benzene. Only basic tests have been undertaken at Crossgates School. I have spoken to the Consultant for Public Health medicine for Powys and he felt inadequately qualified to allay parents' concerns on this matter but parents were told by the Council not to be concerned. How can council members say we have no need for concern when not no evidence/data has been presented to back this up? Parents are entitled to a risk assessment of the situation. We need to know what the risks are and certainly there are risks. Provide us with some evidence from those who have assessed the risks properly.

Response

LLANBISTER – PETROLEUM/BENZENE

I can confirm that under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010, that Crossgates garage holds a part B Environmental Permit that includes conditions in respect of preventing vapour release.

The site has been assessed as being in the lowest category in terms of regulatory effort due to its high level of compliance with the environmental requirements of the permit.

The area has been tested for the presence of hydrocarbon in the atmosphere by Officers from the Council's Environmental Protection section, who are qualified and competent in such issues. A

Photoionization detector was used which is an industry recognised method for testing for leakage from fuel storage areas. The tests were negative.

In addition Powys County Council has also sought the advice of Public Health Wales who are of the view that given the set of circumstances there is no public health concern linked to benzene emissions on local air quality.

76. Comment/Question

I take offence to the statement that no children who attend Llanbister School were directly affected by closure of Beguildy School. My children attended the playgroup in Beguildy and were familiar with the school surroundings there. They were young but understood what was going to happen to the school. The closure of Beguildy School had a devastating effect on the community. Although close neighbours, the children are growing up as strangers as they now attend 7 different schools in Wales and England and there is a fear that the community will be lost altogether in 10 – 15 years time. Community events in Beguildy have reduced by 50% since the school closed. The playgroup and clubs will find it difficult to continue and local businesses are suffering. Young families do not want to move into the area. The economy of Powys will grind to a halt. All parents will be keeping their children at Llanbister School until the end of December. What has happened at Beguildy should be a lesson learnt. How does it fit in with the Council’s slogan “strong communities in the green heart of Wales”?

77. Comment

The purpose of consultation is to identify facts and information which have not so far been considered to enable the Panel to review information in order to reach a decision. Thank you for the information provided this evening which should enable the Panel to review and reach different recommendation. The whole matter rests on in the short term. What should short-term mean? Pupil numbers will double and surplus places will not be an issue. Education standards have never been a cause for concern and the leadership issues will be resolved. The school buildings are not a problem. To merge with Crossgates School would achieve aims identified and would achieve savings. It has to be accepted that Crossgates School does not have sufficient capacity in the long term to accommodate all the pupils. Parents will not accept education for their children in a substandard accommodation at Crossgates School. If 21st Century Schools funding is needed when would it be available? 5 reasons for recommending closure in School Organisation Review Panel report have been discounted. Recommending closure will cost substantially more than merger with the receiving school. We need to keep education based at this site in Llanbister.

Ian Roberts thanked Cllr John Brunt, Local Member, parents and community members for their contributions to the meeting and for the quality of the work they had undertaken in order to support their arguments, which had been delivered with passion and strong feeling. He stressed that the School Organisation Review Panel would not be taking the decision on the future of the school and that it would be the Council’s Cabinet which would consider the report and decide on the next steps.

Cllr Barry Thomas thanked everyone for the professional and courteous way in which they had presented their views.

78. Question

Will the Cabinet report be publicly available and will the Cabinet meeting be public?

Response

Yes

79. Comment

At the beginning of the meeting you asked for cogent arguments and the arguments presented tonight have been cogent and forensic in analysis. The community is willing to work with the Council in order to achieve the goal that the children continue be educated in their community. I urge the council to work with the community in order to achieve that goal.

80. Comment

The School Organisation Code states bodies should follow the guidance unless it can be demonstrated they are justified in not doing so. If you fail to follow guidance then your procedure is defective. One of the points you should take into account is to ensure there are enough places available to cope with fluctuations in the number of pupils. If the three schools under review are to close you are proposing that pupils would go to Rhayader and Crossgates School. If I add up the total capacity of schools in North Radnorshire and your projected pupils numbers in 2020 the capacity of those four schools is 892 and the pupils you expect from those communities is 870. You are going up to 98% of the receiving schools capacity. In the short term you should be looking at the period up to 2021. How many children on your figures are going to be at this school? The capacity of this school, according to your figures is 45 and the number of projected pupils is 54. How are you going to be able to deal with that capacity? You will fail to have a surplus capacity 10% in North Radnorshire and yet you talk about falling school numbers in justification of this proposal. The Powys School Transformation policy document on the the next page shows a total number of the projected pupils in 2018 – 9603. The numbers going up. Do not justify you proposal by falling school numbers in Powys because it doesn't add up.

The consultation process should provide plenty of time for intelligent consideration and response and include sufficient reasons for particular proposals and response. Has anyone considered that the consultation document has provided sufficient information for intelligent consideration and response? We are here to give you intelligent consideration and response to your documentation. We should not be telling you what to put in it. Did you consult with the Regional Transport Consortium? Have you come forward with the transport problems the children are likely to face? Have you given notice of the consultation to all the community and town councils of the area? Why did you fail to serve them?

Page 26 of the School Organisation Code says you should put forward descriptions of the benefits of each option – closure, merger or amalgamation. In you documentation you have only talked about closure not about merger.

Page 27 of the School Organisation Code states that you are expected to discuss standards of quality of education. I read your consultation document in which you say there will be an impact. What is the impact that is what your consultation should be discussing at the

time of the proposal? It should be in the proposal stage for you to come back to this community so that the community can come back to you with intelligent consideration and response to your proposals.

The capacity you have talked about in North Radnorshire area is not adequate. Buildings - Why did you not state in your proposal that you were intending to use a mobile classroom and why not? We had to work out that you were talking about a portacabin. Building / planning conditions state that you will demolish portacabins, so why have you not removed the portacabin? Are you in breach of your own building regulations?

You say children should not be traveling for more than 45 minutes each way to school. If a child is likely to be travelling for 60 minutes is that going to be within the code? The estimated additional transport costs in the Nantmel document are the same as Llanbister, however the average additional travelling for pupil transferring from Nantmel School is 3 miles but for pupils from Llanbister it is more than 7 miles. Those figures don't add up. You are going to have to look at the figures in relation to the cost of school transport presented to you tonight. Your officer said some of the figures were not accurate. If the figures are not accurate what effect can that have on consultation process? Can there be any intelligent response to inaccurate figures? You have taken on a number of points from the community. You have made assurance that there would be staff in place in the autumn term. How will you accommodate pupils in a school with a capacity of 210? How will staff be expected to teach children from Crossgates and the other schools you propose to close? I urge you to go away with the question about recommencing consultation and giving us the information. Powys County Council will face the criticism that it is the prosecutor, judge and jury. Under Appendix E of the School Organisation Code there is a process where you could appoint an independent body to look at your proposal and give you a fair and reasoned argument but you decided that your process would be for the Cabinet to take the decision. Why did you not follow appendix E of the School Organisation Code?

Darren Ivey thanked all parents and community members for points made and evidence presented and members and officers for their time and responding to the questions.

Marianne Evans explained the next steps in the statutory process. Parents and community members were informed that formal consultation closes on 24th March and were invited to send in written responses to the consultation (information on how to respond to the consultation is included on page 24 of the consultation document.) It was noted that following closure of the formal consultation period, all issues raised during the consultation would be analysed and a consultation report would be presented to the Council's Cabinet at the end of May/early June.

Cllr Arwel Jones thanked all for attending and expressed his appreciation for the information presented. He stated that the main purpose of public consultation is to improve transparency and to enable public involvement.

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**APPENDIX D – IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
LLANBISTER C.P. SCHOOL**

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1. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council's Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

Proposal	To close Llanbister CP School from the 31 st December 2016 with Crossgates CP School to be named as the receiving school	Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Sarah Astley
Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	5 th January 2016 Updated 29 th January 2016 Updated 12 th September 2016		

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

1. AIM or PURPOSE

Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change	Powys County Council recently carried out consultation on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closure of Llanbister CP School from the 31st December 2016. Crossgates CP School to be named as
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proposal being assessed.	the receiving school.	
2. OBJECTIVES		
Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.	<p>The authority commenced the statutory process to close Llanbister CP School because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school is currently in Special Measures - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years - There are more than 15% surplus places at the school - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average 	
3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES		
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<p>The benefits of the proposal are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More efficient use of resources - Reduction in surplus places - Improvement in quality of education for pupils 	
4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE		
How does this change proposal relate to the Powys Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	<p>The proposal supports Powys County Council's vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that</p> <p><i>'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'</i></p>	
5. DATA USED		
5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	

	Wider research reports and findings.	
	Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment	
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Please state the gaps: N/A How will the gaps be addressed going forward? N/A	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. DATA ANALYSIS		
6.1 Quantitative Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire. Key questions: i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this? ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?	Information on pupils who attend Llanbister CP School can be obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. The 2015 PLASC return provided the following information about the pupils at Llanbister C.P. School in relation to the protected characteristic groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 36 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 28 pupils are aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 58% are boys and 42% are girls. - Free school meals: 6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 17% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 17% of pupils have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: No pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% 	

	<p>The 2016 PLASC return provided the following information about the pupils at Llanbister C.P. School in relation to the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 31 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 21 pupils are aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 65% are boys and 35% are girls. - Free school meals: 0% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 10% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 10% of pupils have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: No pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% <p>This information shows that the proportion of pupils in the school that belong to the protected characteristic groups is very small.</p>
<p><u>6.2 Qualitative</u> Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p>	<p>Consultation on the closure of Llanbister CP School was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013), and included a meeting with pupils of Llanbister CP School. This provided qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and the impact on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>The following issues were raised in relation to the proposal's impact on those in the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concern about the impact on dyslexic pupils - It would be more difficult for pupils with additional needs if they had to travel to school - The receiving school might not have the right teachers to help pupils with additional needs

<p>i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</p> <p>iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</p> <p>iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It might be harder for pupils that are in a wheelchair to move around if the school is busy - Pupils with additional needs might get made fun of - Adverse impact on pupils from less well-off families as they will have reduced access to after school activities - A high proportion of pupils are in the foundation phase, therefore the proposal would have an adverse impact on the most vulnerable children 	
<p>7. EqIA RESULT</p>		
<p>Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.</p>	<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]</p>	✓
	<p>The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]</p>	
<p>8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT</p>		
<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p>	<p>i) Based on the pupils that were registered at the school on the 2015 PLASC counting date, 17% of pupils are in a protected characteristic group due to having additional learning needs. Based on the information provided by the 2016 PLASC figures, 10% of pupils are in a protected characteristic group due to having additional learning needs.</p>	

<p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>ii) Based on the 2015 PLASC information, 6% of pupils were eligible for free schools meals. However, based on the 2016 PLASC information, no pupils were eligible for free school meals. Should Llanbister CP School close, free home to school transport would be provided to all qualifying pupils currently attending the school, regardless of income. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils from low income families, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the alternative school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p> <p>iii) Based on the 2015 and 2016 PLASC information, no pupils at the school come from homes where Welsh is spoken, however information was received during the consultation which suggested that some pupils come from homes where some Welsh is spoken. However, Llanbister CP School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the Welsh-medium opportunities available to pupils.</p>
9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT	
<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p> <p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?</p>	<p>i) The authority is confident that the proposed receiving school and any other schools in the local area which pupils may prefer to transfer to would be able to meet the needs of pupils currently attending Llanbister CP School who belong to the protected characteristic groups, and the needs of pupils with any additional needs such as dyslexia. Transition planning would ensure that children are as familiar as possible with their new surroundings and their new teachers before they moved to the new school. Free home to school transport would be provided to qualifying pupils to the proposed receiving school or to their closest school.</p> <p>ii) The proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove this impact.</p> <p>iii) The proposal should not be considered for removal because of the degree of impact it is likely to have on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p>

iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?		
9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Date added..... Reference.....	No <input type="checkbox"/> ✓ If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy

10. ONGOING MONITORING

How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?		Please tick/shade
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	✓
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	

Monitoring arrangements

The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.

Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.

The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Publication of results of the impact assessment

The results of the impact assessment will be published on the Council's website

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Any actions identified as a result of this impact assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan

2. Community Impact Assessment

Background

A draft Community Impact Assessment was published as part of the Formal Consultation on the following proposal:

To close Llanbister C.P. School from the 31st December 2016, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school.

The consultation was held between the 11th February 2016 and the 5th May 2016.

The information provided in sections 2.1 – 2.5 was provided by the two schools prior to the commencement of the consultation period. Issues and information raised during consultation about the impact on the community are provided in section 2.6.

1. The affected communities

1.1 Llanbister

Llanbister is a village located in mid Powys, on the A483 between Llandrindod Wells and Newtown. The village is located approximately 7 miles north of the village of Crossgates and 10 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells, and approximately 16 miles south of the town of Newtown. According to the 2011 Census, the Llanbister Community Council area had 382 residents¹.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 14.32% of the population of Llanbister have one or more skills in Welsh. 1.05% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 ranks areas known as Local Super Output Areas (LSOA) in terms of deprivation, where 1 is the most deprived and 1909 is the least deprived. The village of Llanbister is located within the Llangunllo LSOA, which is ranked as follows²:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llangunllo	1296

Llanbister CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School, which serves a large rural area encompassing 4 parishes. The school has a co-located community hall.

1.2 Crossgates

Crossgates is a village located in Mid Powys approximately 3 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells. It is situated at the point where the A483 and the A44

¹ 2011 Census information for the Llanbister Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

² <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

meet. According to the 2011 Census, there were 701 residents³ in the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council, which includes the village of Crossgates.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 17.08% of the population of the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council have one or more skills in Welsh. 0.29% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

Crossgates is located within the Local Super Output Area (LSOA) of Llanbadarn Fawr. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks the Llanbadarn Fawr LSOA as follows, where 1 is the most deprived LSOA and 1909 is the least deprived⁴:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llanbadarn Fawr	1360

Crossgates CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School.

2. Community Impact Assessment

2.1 Impact on pupil travel

i) Llanbister CP School

The home addresses of the 36 children (N – Yr 6) that were attending Llanbister CP School at the last PLASC counting day in January 2015 were analysed by the council's Research and Information Unit. This analysis showed that Llanbister CP School was the closest school for 32 pupils, which is 88.9% of the pupils attending the school. The closest schools for all of the 36 pupils is summarised in the following table:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Llanbister CP School	32
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	4

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for pupils attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 was 3.76 miles.

If there were no school in Llanbister, the next closest school for the children that were attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 would be as follows:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Crossgates C.P. School	18
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	9
Ladywell Green N & I School / Hafren Junior School, Newtown	8
Newcastle CE Primary School, Shropshire	1

³ 2011 Census information for the Rhayader Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

⁴ <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for the pupils that were attending Llanbister CP School in January 2015 to their nearest alternative school would be 7.58 miles.

Should there be no school in Llanbister, there would be an increase in travel for the 32 pupils for whom Llanbister CP School was their closest school. The maximum journey for a pupil to their closest alternative school would be 10.18 miles.

2.2 Extra-curricular activities provided by the schools

i) Llanbister CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours, depending on the season:

- i) Breakfast Club
- ii) Gardening Club
- iii) Netball Club
- iv) Football Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Hockey; Cross country; Orienteering; Athletics; Art project undertaken with local artist; Educational walk with the Country Landowners Association (School was chosen to take part due to its proximity to the moor)

ii) Crossgates CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours:

- i) Crossgates Out of School Club
- ii) Breakfast Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Netball; Ball Skills; Green Club; Games Club; ICT Club

2.3 Community use of the school building

i) Llanbister CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Use of school building and equipment by Cantal YFC and Llanbadarn Fynydd YFC

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Social and fundraising events held by the PTA; Community sports events; School yard is used for parking for funerals, concerts, meetings and parties

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Privately run Early Years centre based in mobile across the car park

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Regular events held by the school's PTA in the school buildings and on the grounds

2.4 Other links with the community

i) Llanbister CP School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

Involvement with Llanbister Community Sports, which is held annually in May and Llanbadarn Fynydd Community Sports, which is held annually in June. This includes involvement with organising recreational activities on the field and participation in competitions held specifically for Llanbister CP School pupils.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school has links with a number of organisations and individuals within the community, which include the following:

Vicar, Golden Age Club

2.5 Support that could be offered by the receiving school to parents and pupils that currently attend Llanbister CP School

A transition programme would be put in place to support pupils with their transition to Crossgates CP School.

a. Issues raised during the consultation period

A wide range of concerns in relation to the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation period on this proposal. All issues raised are listed in Section 5 of the Consultation Report – 'Issues raised during the Consultation Period'.

In relation to the proposal's impact on the community, the issues raised included the following:

- Impact on the community hall
- Impact on community organisations e.g. churches, playgroup, YFCs, village show
- Impact of closure of the school on the community
- The area has already lost Beguildy School and Dolfor School in recent years
- The school serves a very wide catchment area
- If there were no school, people wouldn't want to live in Llanbister
- Concern about impact on the local economy
- Reference to Powys County Council's Vision – 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'

- Closure of the school would lead to rural isolation

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in section 6 – 'Impact on the Community' in the list of issues raised.

Issues were also raised relating to the impact of additional travel on pupils. These included the following:

- Some pupils would have to travel up to 15 miles each way, with a journey time of up to 45 minutes
- Longer school days for pupils
- Impact of additional travel time on pupil well-being
- Longer journeys will cause separation anxiety, emotional problems and stress for pupils
- Longer journeys will be detrimental to the health of young children and will mean that children will be unable to learn well
- Travel time for pupils would exceed the recommended maximum travel time
- Pupils will be unable to access after-school activities
- Concern about children travelling on school transport unaccompanied
- Concern about cost and environmental impact of additional travel
- Concern about children travelling on dangerous roads

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in section 3 – 'Travel Implications' in the list of issues raised in the Consultation Report.

Issues were also raised regarding the extra-curricular opportunities that would be available to pupils should Llanbister C.P. School close. These included:

- Llanbister CP School provides opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of activities, including academic, sporting, artistic and musical
- Pupils get more opportunities to take part as there are less pupils in the school
- Pupils won't be able to take part in as many activities as there are more pupils at Crossgates CP School
- After-school activities take place at Crossgates on most days, therefore current Llanbister pupils would miss out on these.

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in the section 8.5 and section 10.7 in the list of issues raised in the Consultation Report.

2.7 Conclusion

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Llanbister has a community hall located on the site of the school. The draft recommendation in relation to Llanbister CP School does not propose any changes to this hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community. However, the authority acknowledges the concerns raised during the consultation period in relation to the impact closure of the school would have on the community hall.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanbister CP School and at the proposed receiving school. Should Llanbister CP School close,

and it is acknowledged that it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. Whilst information received from Crossgates CP School prior to the commencement of consultation suggested that the majority of extra-curricular activities take place during the school day, information received during the consultation period suggested that after school activities take place on several school days. However, should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils.

The authority acknowledges that closure of Llanbister CP School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils for whom this is currently the closest school, particularly given that Llanbister CP School already serves a very large catchment area. A significant number of issues relating to the impact of this additional travel were raised during the consultation period, in particular relating to the lengthy journeys that would be required for pupils should the school close. These issues are summarised above, and are listed in the consultation report.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit incorporating Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation. **Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Ian Roberts	Strategic Director	Jeremy Patterson	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Arwel Jones
Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	School Transformation Policy						
Outline Summary							
This Impact Assessment relates to a proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school. The Council has carried out consultation on this proposal in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013)							

1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Sarah Astley	Project Manager, Schools Transformation	12/09/16

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How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's strategic vision?

Council Priority	How does the policy / change objective impact on this priority?	Inherent Judgement Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	Residual Judgement Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives	Although there would be no education provision in Llanbister, provision would be available in Crossgates CP School and other local schools. These schools are larger and more viable, and will ensure a greater level of stability and resilience in terms of the provision of primary education. There is a community hall in Llanbister, and whilst the proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, concern has been expressed about the potential impact of	Poor		Poor	Consultation Report

	closure of the school on the community hall, in particular the financial impact. Concern has also been expressed about the impact closure of the school could have on other organisations and activities that take place in Llanbister, and the possibility that closure of the school would lead to rural isolation.				
Developing the economy	<p>Concern has been expressed that the lack of a school in Llanbister will have an impact on job opportunities in the village, and that lack of rural employment would be exacerbated by closure of the school. It has been stated that the school employs local people, therefore closure of the school would impact on incomes. However, should the school close, people from the village would be able to seek employment elsewhere.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	Consultation Report
Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage	<p>The proposal aims to ensure that high quality education is accessible to all, and that it is affordable and sustainable with a focus on high quality leadership, teaching and learning. Llanbister C.P. School is currently in Special Measures.</p> <p>All children and young people (including those in receipt of free school meals and with additional learning needs) will be supported to achieve their full potential at the named receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to.</p>	Neutral	Should Llanbister C.P. School close, transition plans would be put in place to support pupils with their move to alternative provision, to ensure that disruption is minimised and to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.	Good	Consultation Report, ERW School Improvement Strategy, One Powys Plan

	Concern has been expressed that closure of Llanbister C.P. School would have a negative impact on learner outcomes, however the authority's view is that the proposal would maintain or improve learner outcomes.				
Remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>The proposal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reduce overall surplus capacity ii) Deliver a more cost-effective delivery of learning iii) Provide an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges 	Good		Good	Consultation Report

3. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the Welsh Assembly's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does the policy / change objective contribute this goal?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
<p>A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will</p>	Good		Good	Consultation report

	prepare them to enter the workforce.				
<p>A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>In the Welsh Government Survey carried out in 2009, Llanbister C.P. School was graded C for sustainability whilst Crossgates C.P. School was graded B.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Llanbister C.P. School.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	
<p>A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>Significant concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the well-being of pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School due to the proposed change of school and the additional travel that would be required.</p>	Poor	<p>Full support will be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to limit the impact on pupil well-being.</p> <p>The authority notes the concern in</p>	Neutral	Consultation report

			relation to the additional travel, however travel times would be within the authority's suggested maximum journey time.		
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the community of Llanbister, the community hall, community organisations and community activities in the area.	Poor		Poor	Consultation report
A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.	<p>In the Welsh Government Survey carried out in 2009, Llanbister C.P. School was graded C for sustainability whilst Crossgates C.P. School was graded B.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Llanfihangel</p>	Neutral	Full support would be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to ensure the well-being of all pupils.	Good	Consultation report

	<p>Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>The proposal seeks to improve the learning opportunities and outcomes for all children, and has the best interests of the child at heart. However, concern was expressed during the consultation period about the proposal's impact on pupil well-being, and on the well-being of the community of Llanbister.</p>				
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A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.					
<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</i>	Llanbister C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore the proposal will not impact on pupils' ability to access to Welsh-medium education.	Neutral	N/A	Neutral	
<i>Treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	As above	Good	N/A	Good	
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	As above	Good	N/A	Good	
<i>Welsh Language impact on staff</i>	N/A	Good	N/A	Good	
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	<p>Llanbister C.P. School offers a range of extra-curricular opportunities which provide opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and recreation.</p> <p>A range of activities are also provided at the named receiving school. However, during the consultation period, concern was expressed that the larger number of pupils at Crossgates C.P. School would mean that not all pupils would be able to take part in all activities.</p> <p>Concern has also been expressed that children currently attending Llanbister C.P. School would be unable to access activities provided after school due to their reliance on home to school transport.</p>	Poor		<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the named receiving school and other schools pupils may wish to transfer to, to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners.</p>	Community Impact Assessment, Consultation Report
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).					
<i>Age</i>	Please see separate Equality Impact Assessment	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

<i>Disability</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Race</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Religion or belief</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Sex</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Equality Impact on PCC Staff</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

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4 How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the policy / change objective impact on this principle?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Sustainable Development Principle					

<p>Long Term: <i>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</i></p>	<p>The School Transformation Programme considers the general long term forecasts for the Powys population, where it is identified that the population figures for school aged children will continue to fall.</p> <p>This proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	Good		Good	
<p>Collaboration: <i>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>The named receiving school will continue to work in collaboration with other schools in the cluster and regionally, and with other partners, to ensure that every pupil is fully supported.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	
<p>Involvement: <i>The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</i></p> <p>Communication and Engagement</p>	<p>A number of meetings took place with the governing body of Llanbister C.P. School when determining the proposal to close the school. Consultation on the proposal has taken place in accordance with the School Organisation Code, which included consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents / community, as well as a meeting with the school council.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanbister, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for parents and others to engage with the school.</p>	Poor	<p>If the proposal is implemented, there will be an opportunity for any parent to seek election to the governing body of Crossgates CP School in the future, and there will be an opportunity for all parents to continue to engage with the school and governing body.</p> <p>Crossgates CP School already serves a rural catchment area, therefore has experience of engaging with parents of pupils who do not live in the village of Crossgates itself.</p>	Neutral	

<p>Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.</p>	<p>The reasons for the proposal to close Llanbister C.P. School were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school is currently in Special Measures - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years - There are more than 15% surplus places at the school - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average <p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education.</p>	Good		Good	
<p>Integration: Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	<p>Most of the issues raised during the consultation exercise were not supportive of the proposal.</p>	Poor	<p>If the proposal is implemented, the authority will support the receiving school and any other school pupils may wish to transfer to, to support those parents and their children to become fully integrated in the school community.</p>	Neutral	
<p>Preventing Poverty: Prevention, including helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty.</p>	<p>Should the school close, free transport would be provided to all qualifying pupils. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils on low incomes for whom Llanbister C.P. School is currently the closest school, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p>	Poor	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the named receiving school and other schools pupils may wish to transfer to, to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners and their families.</p>	Neutral	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>

Safeguarding: Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.	Safeguarding is of the utmost importance and safeguarding measures are in place in the named receiving school and any other school pupils may wish to transfer to.	Neutral		Neutral	
Corporate Parenting: Enabling our looked after children to fulfil their potential.	The named receiving school has experience of meeting the needs of looked after children, therefore the authority would have no major concerns about looked after children moving to this school.	Neutral		Neutral	
Impact on Workforce	Staff at Llanbister C.P. School would be adversely affected by the proposal.	Poor	Staff with 2 years or more continuous service would be entitled to a redundancy payment. The authority will also attempt to identify alternative employment for staff through the redeployment process.	Neutral	

Achievability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Impact on Service / Council	Deliverability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	Inherent Risk
Low	Low	Low

6. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Description of risks			
Parents choose for their children to attend a school other than Crossgates C.P. School			
Increase in demand for education in the Llanbister area in the future			
Judgement (to be included in service risk register)			
Very High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
			X
Mitigating Actions			Residual Risk
N/A			Choose an item.
			Choose an item.
			Choose an item.

Does the Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving have potential to impact on another service area?

No

7. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report) Cabinet Report Reference:

It is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on the community of Llanbister due to the loss of primary provision in the village, however good quality primary provision would continue to be provided to pupils at neighbouring schools, and free transport would be provided to eligible pupils. During the consultation period, concern was expressed in relation to the possible impact on the community should the school close. Whilst the proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, concerns were expressed during the consultation period that closure of the school would have an impact on the viability of the community hall. However, the authority's view is that the proposal would provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education. Concern was also expressed about the impact of additional travel on pupil well-being.

8. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Consultation responses, consultation report

On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The School Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.
Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.
The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

If it is decided to proceed with the publication of Statutory Notices in respect of closure of Llanbister C.P. School, the Impact Assessment will be reviewed when considering the Objection Report in order to make a final decision on the proposal.

10. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Service Manager:	Marianne Evans	Marianne Evans	16/09/2016

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Head of Service:	Ian Roberts	Ian Roberts	16/09/2016
Strategic Director:	Jeremy Patterson	Jeremy Patterson	20/09/2016
Portfolio Holder:	Arwel Jones	Arwel Jones	20/09/2016



POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

**Proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community
Primary School from the 31st December 2016**

Date: 11th February 2016 – 24th March 2016

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As Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Primary (C.P.) School is an English medium school and all other schools which may be affected by the proposal are also English medium schools, the consultation documentation is only available in English.

If a Welsh language copy is required, or if you require a copy of the document in a different format, please contact the School Modernisation Team on 01597 826265, or e-mail school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk.

1. THE PROPOSAL

Powys County Council (“the authority”) is proposing to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Dolau, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5TW from the 31st December 2016, with Crossgates C.P. School, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6RE to be named as the receiving school. Free home to school transport will be provided for qualifying¹ pupils.

1.1 Background to the proposal

In November 2014, Powys County Council agreed a new Powys Schools Transformation Policy, which set out the authority’s vision and process for the transformation of primary and secondary schools in the county.

The Policy includes:

- A range of criteria to be used to determine which schools would be reviewed
- The establishment of a School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) to carry out reviews of schools
- The establishment of a School Review Process to be used to review schools

In December 2014, the SORP carried out an Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with the School Review Process, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were also ranked against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School met the following criteria:

- Pupil Numbers: The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years
- Capacity: The percentage of surplus places in the school is higher than 15%
- Building Condition: The overall building condition is categorised as category D or C based on the Welsh Government’s assessment of building condition

As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, the SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

Meetings have subsequently taken place between the SORP and the Governing Body, Headteacher and Local Member for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. In November 2015, the SORP determined that the draft recommendation in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was

¹ Primary pupils are entitled to free home to school transport if they live more than 2 miles from the nearest school providing education in the language of their choice.

closure of the school, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school.

At a meeting held on the 26th January 2016, the authority's Cabinet received the SORP's draft recommendation in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and approved the commencement of consultation on closure of the school from the 31st December 2016.

1.2 Reason for the proposal

The authority is proposing to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for the following reasons:

- The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50
- The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average

1.3 Alternative options considered

A range of options were considered in line with the Schools Transformation Policy. These options, and the strengths and weaknesses of each, are outlined below.

i) Status quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers would continue to be below 50
Maintains provision in Dolau	Cost per pupil would continue to be more than 120% of the Council's average for primary schools
	Potentially difficult to recruit a permanent headteacher
	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools

i) Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and site

Strengths	Weaknesses
Would address the issue of low pupil numbers	Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is currently the closest school
Would reduce the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools	Loss of education provision from Dolau
Would address the issue around cost per pupil	
Permanent leadership arrangements currently in place in proposed receiving school	

ii) Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School, but keep the site open as part of Crossgates CP School

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers on the Dolau site would continue to be below 50
Maintains education provision in Dolau	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Permanent leadership arrangements currently in place in alternative school	Under the current funding arrangements, current pupil numbers on the Dolau site would not attract sufficient funding to maintain 2 classes, therefore the site would need to be subsidised by the other school
Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School would lose its own identity
	Implications for Crossgates CP School, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - governing body would have to take responsibility for an additional building

iii) Federation of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and another school

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers in Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School would continue to be below 50
Maintains education provision in Dolau	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	Cost per pupil would continue to be more than 120% of the Council's average for primary schools
Both schools would retain their own identity	

iv) Amalgamation of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and another school to create a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
No additional transport or travel required	Pupil numbers on the Dolau site would continue to be below 50
Maintains education provision in Dolau	No reduction in the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
Increased opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	Under the current funding arrangements, current pupil numbers on the Dolau site would not attract sufficient funding to maintain 2 classes, therefore the site would need to be subsidised by the other site. If the other site also had less than 50 pupils, this model would be unviable
	Both schools would lose their own identities

Having considered all of these options, and the strengths and weaknesses associated with each, the authority considers that closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and site is the most suitable way forward.

1.4 Advantages and disadvantages of the proposal

As outlined above, the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are listed below.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Would address the issue of low pupil numbers	Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school
Would reduce the Authority's overall surplus capacity in primary schools	Loss of provision from Dolau
Would address the issue around cost per pupil	
Permanent leadership arrangements currently in place in proposed receiving school	

1.5 Risks associated with the proposal

The following risks are associated with the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

Risk	Probability	Impact	Response Strategy
Parents choose for their children to attend schools other than Crossgates C.P. School	Medium	Low	The authority will support the right of parents to apply for a place for their child at any school, and will allocate places where they are available. Transport would only be provided to qualifying pupils where a school is the closest provision to a child's home.
Insufficient capacity at	Medium	High	There is currently

neighbouring schools to accommodate pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

sufficient capacity at Crossgates C.P. School to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the authority would continue to monitor the situation in relation to capacity at Crossgates C.P. School, and would identify options in order to extend the school's capacity if / when necessary.

2. IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Impact of the proposal

2.1.1 Impact on the affected schools

i) Impact on the affected schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage

The number of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on the affected schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage to be significant.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. However the authority's view is that this would not mean that the school would be unable to deliver the full curriculum in each Key Stage.

ii) Impact on outcomes at the affected schools

The number of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on outcomes at the affected schools to be significant.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. However the authority's view is that this would not have a significant impact on outcomes at the affected schools.

iii) Impact on provision at the affected schools

Should the proposal be implemented, education would no longer be provided in Dolau. Pupils would be able to access alternative provision at Crossgates C.P. School or other schools in the local area.

The number of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on provision at the affected schools to be significant.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant.

iv) Impact on leadership and management at the affected schools

The number of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small, therefore the authority would not expect the impact on leadership and management at the affected schools to be significant.

The authority is currently going through the statutory process in relation to closure of two other schools in the area local to Crossgates C.P. School, however Crossgates C.P. School is only the named receiving school for one of these other proposals. Should all three schools close, the impact on Crossgates C.P. School would be more significant. Should a large number of pupils from schools in the local area transfer to Crossgates C.P. School, the leadership and management of Crossgates C.P. School could initially face challenges during this period of transition. However, it is not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on leadership and management at Crossgates C.P. School in the longer term.

2.1.2 Impact on staff

If a decision is made to proceed with the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, a staff redundancy process would be necessary. This would be conducted in line with the School's Redundancy Policies for teaching and support staff.

2.1.3 Impact Assessments

i) Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. This assessment is provided in Appendix A.

The assessment found that the proposal would impact on a small number of pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups. However, the authority is confident that Crossgates C.P. School or any other school pupils might access can meet the needs of all pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

In terms of any pupils from low income families, free home to school transport will be provided to the alternative provision for qualifying pupils. This will ensure that the proposal does not have an adverse impact on pupils from lower income families. However, the authority does accept that might be more difficult for pupils from lower income families for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently their closest school to access extra-curricular activities offered after school at Crossgates C.P. School or any alternative school due to their reliance on home to school transport.

ii) Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. This assessment is provided in Appendix B.

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Dolau has a community hall located on the site of the school. The draft recommendation in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School does not propose any changes to this hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and at the proposed receiving school. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School close, it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. However, from the information received from Crossgates CP School, the majority of extra-curricular activities take place during the school day.

Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils that currently live closest to the school.

2.2 Other implications

i) Financial implications

An assessment of the potential financial savings from the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School has been carried out.

The estimated savings following closure of the school are provided below, based on the school's budget for 2015/16. The assessment does not include any possible redundancy costs.

Area of Funding	Full year Saving
Total Delegated Budget not transferring with the pupils to their alternative school	66,298
Additional Projected Savings	
Savings re Headteacher's Post (L12 – UPS3)	15,580
Projected Reduction in Canteen Subsidy	10,000
Total Additional Savings	25,580
Total Estimated Savings	91,878
Less Estimated Additional Transport Costs	(22,800)
Net Estimated Savings	69,078

Any savings to the authority realised as a result of the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School will be deployed in line with the Schools Service Medium Term Financial Plan to support other schools' delegated budgets and to support the authority's 21st Century Schools programme through prudential borrowing.

ii) Land, buildings and resources

No capital funding is required in order to achieve the proposal. It is not currently anticipated that any building works would be necessary to ensure that the pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School could be accommodated at Crossgates C.P. School or any other school which might be affected by this proposal. However, the authority would continue to monitor the position in relation to the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School, and would investigate options in order to increase the school's capacity if / when necessary.

The land and buildings currently occupied by Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are owned by the authority. If the school were to close, the authority would follow the agreed asset management disposal process in relation to the land and buildings. Any capital receipts received would be reinvested back into the authority's capital programme.

iii) Transport and travel

In the event of the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, qualifying pupils currently attending the school would receive transport to Crossgates C.P. School if they live two miles or more from the school. It should be noted that this arrangement would only apply to

those pupils where Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is their nearest or allocated provision. If on closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, another Powys school was the closest provision to their home address, pupils would receive transport to that school if they lived more than two miles from the school.

For new pupils from the area of the closed school who would be attending alternative provision, entitlement to free transport would be in accordance with the Council's policy at the time. The current policy is that pupils are eligible for free transport if they meet each of the following criteria:

- They are of primary school age, in accordance with Powys' admissions policy
- They attend their nearest or allocated school, or the school designated by the Council
- They live further away from the school than the statutory walking distance of two miles

It should be noted:

- Distance is measured by the shortest walking route between home and school (from the nearest council maintained road to the property, to the nearest school entrance onto the school site).
- Where contract or public passenger vehicles are used, it is not always possible to arrange the routes of vehicles to pass close to the home of all pupils. Therefore, parents may be required to make their own arrangements for their children to get to and from the nearest 'pick-up' point of the vehicle. Every effort is made to keep this distance to a minimum and it should not exceed 1 mile.

The actual transport arrangements would be known as soon as a contractor was appointed. Parents will be advised accordingly in relation to pick-up points, times etc.

In the event of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, it is unlikely that there would be suitable walking routes to the alternative schools available for pupils currently attending the school.

iv) Admissions

Admissions for both Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School are administered by the authority.

In the event of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, parents of pupils currently attending the school would be allocated places at

Crossgates C.P. School, or they would need to apply for a place in another chosen school in accordance with the authority's admissions process, which is as follows:

- i) Parents to complete an application form, which will be provided by the authority
- ii) Admissions form to be returned to the authority
- iii) Authority to inform parents whether admission to the chosen school has been granted.

The authority's Admissions Team can be contacted by e-mailing admissionsandtransport@powys.gov.uk or by phoning (01597) 826477.

3. DETAILS OF AFFECTED SCHOOLS

The School Organisation Code states that information must be provided during a consultation about any schools affected by the proposal – these include any schools to which it might reasonably be considered that pupils may wish to transfer.

Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, there are four alternative schools which would be the closest school for pupils that currently attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. These are:

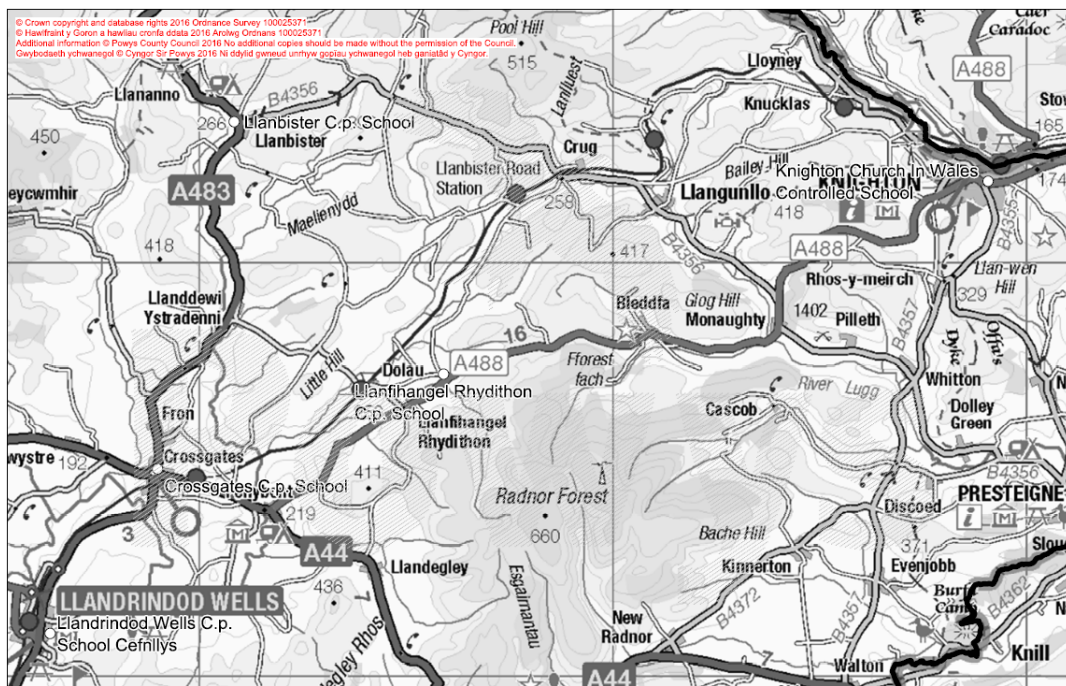
- Crossgates C.P. School, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6RE
- Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys, Cefnlllys Lane, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6AH
- Llanbister C.P. School, Llanbister, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6TN
- Knighton Church in Wales Controlled School, Knighton, Powys, LD7 1HP

The Council is also carrying out consultation in relation to closure of Llanbister C.P. School. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, one of the other schools listed above would be the closest school for the pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

Information about these four schools, as well as Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Dolau, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5TW are provided below.

3.1 Location map of the affected schools

The following map shows the location of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the other schools which may be affected by this proposal:



The distance from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School by road to the other schools is as follows:

Crossgates C.P. School – 5.33 miles
 Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys – 8.63 miles
 Llanbister C.P. School – 7.21 miles
 Knighton C. in W. School – 10.49 miles

3.2 General school information

School	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Capacity (R – Yr 6)	Nursery Places	Age Range
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	Community Primary	English Medium	5	36	5	4 – 11
Crossgates C.P. School	Community Primary	English medium	30	210	28	4 – 11
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys	Community Primary	English Medium	37	258	37	4 – 11
Llanbister C.P. School	Community Primary	English Medium	6	45	6	4 – 11
Knighton C. in W. School	Voluntary Controlled C. in W. Primary	English Medium	35	249	35	4 – 11

The above capacity figures are based on the current assessed use of the school buildings. The capacities at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School and Llanbister C.P. School have additional areas that have been used as teaching spaces in the past, and if demand increased could be used again.

3.3 Pupil numbers

i) Current and historical pupil numbers

Based on PLASC information, the total number of pupils (R – Yr 6) in each of the schools over the last 5 years is as follows:

	January 2015	January 2014	January 2013	January 2012	January 2011
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	29	34	34	38	34
Crossgates C.P. School	142	120	126	138	143
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys	218	219	223	201	220
Llanbister C.P.School	32	35	34	40	43
Knighton C. in W. School	203	194	186	197	194

ii) **Projected pupil numbers**

The current projected pupil numbers (R – Yr 6) for each of the schools is as follows

School	Jan. 2016²	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021³
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	28	28	34	34	34	34
Crossgates C.P. School	140	144	140	145	147	145
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys	249	245	246	239	237	245
Llanbister C.P.School	25	31	35	42	54	54
Knighton C. in W. School	198	204	215	220	225	230

² Actual pupil numbers taken from Teacher Centre on the 29th January 2016, however these are not verified PLASC figures

³ Provisional projection based on the number of year 6 pupils that would be leaving the school in 2020.

3.4 School building condition

The Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Survey identified that the quality of accommodation at each of the affected schools is as follows⁴:

	Condition	Suitability	Sustainability
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	C	B	B
Crossgates C.P. School	B	A	B
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys	C	B	C
Llanbister C.P. School	C	B	C
Knighton C. in W. School	B	B	C

3.5 Quality of the current provision

i) Estyn

Details of the most recent inspection for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Llanbister C.P. School and Knighton C. in W. School are provided in the following table:

	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	Llanbister C.P. School	Knighton C. in W. School
Date of Inspection	May 2012	January 2015	June 2014
School's Current Performance	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate

⁴ The categories used in the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Survey are defined as follows:

Category A	Good
Category B	Satisfactory
Category C	Poor
Category D	Bad

Prospects for Improvement	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Adequate
Follow up activity	Estyn monitoring Estyn monitoring visit July 2013 – The school was judged to have made good progress, and was removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring	Special Measures	Estyn monitoring

Crossgates C.P. School and Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys were last inspected before 2011, under the previous Estyn inspection arrangements. The grades awarded for each of the key questions are provided in the following table:

	Crossgates C.P. School	Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys
Date of inspection:	June 2010	December 2009
KQ 1: How well do learners achieve?	2	1
KQ 2: How effective are teaching, learning and assessment?	2	1
KQ 3: How well do learners' experiences meet the needs and interests of the learners and the wider community?	1	2
KQ 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	1
KQ 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2	1
KQ 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2	2
KQ 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1	1

ii) **National School Categorisation System**

The National School Categorisation system gives a clear and fair picture of how well a school is performing compared with other schools across Wales and helps to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve.

The system has been developed collectively between regional education consortia and Welsh Government. Its primary function is to identify, across Wales, the schools that need the most support. The colour category of support allocated to a school will trigger a bespoke, tailored support programme.

The system is based on three steps. It is not purely data-driven and takes into account the quality of leadership, teaching and learning in schools.

- **Step one – Standards group:** A range of information is used to make a judgement about the school’s standards, resulting in a standards group
- **Step two – Improvement capacity:** An evaluation of the school’s capacity to improve further, taking account of the evidence about the standards and the quality of leadership, teaching and learning, resulting in an improvement capacity
- **Step three – Support category:** Bringing the judgement on the standards group and improvement capacity together to decide on the school’s support category, colour coded either green, yellow, amber or red, with the schools in the green category needing the least support and those in the red category needing the most intensive support.

The affected schools were categorised as follows during 2015/16:

School	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Category
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	2	B	Yellow
Crossgates C.P. School	2	B	Yellow
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys	3	C	Amber
Llanbister C.P. School	3	D	Red
Knighton C. in W. School	2	C	Amber

4. CONSULTATION DETAILS

4.1 Who will we consult with?

The authority will consult with all those required in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2013, which includes the following:

- The Governing Bodies of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys, Llanbister C.P. School and Knighton C. in W. School
- Parents, carers, guardians and staff of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys, Llanbister C.P. School and Knighton C. in W. School
- Pupils of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Crossgates C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells C.P. School Cefnlllys, Llanbister C.P. School and Knighton C. in W. School
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Town and Community Councils in the local area
- Local Powys County Councillors
- The AM for Brecknock & Radnor and regional AMs for the area
- The MP for Brecknock & Radnor
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- ERW
- The Police & Crime Commissioner
- The Regional Transport Consortium
- Nursery providers in the local area
- The Powys Children and Young People's Partnership

4.2 The consultation period

The consultation period for the current proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st December 2016 will commence on the 11th February 2016 and will end on the 24th March 2016.

4.3 The statutory process

Consultation on this proposal will follow the guidelines set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2013). The process is summarised below:

4.3.1 Consultation

Consultation will start on the 11th February 2016 and will end on the 24th March 2016. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and it is anticipated that a report will be presented to the authority's Cabinet during either the spring or summer term 2016. The authority's Cabinet will consider the report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

4.3.2 Statutory notice

If the Cabinet decides to proceed, a statutory notice will be published, which will give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there are objections, the authority will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority's determination. Only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered in this report. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period will need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period if they are to be considered as objections.

A further report will be presented to the authority's Cabinet, which they will consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

4.3.3 Implementation

If the Cabinet approves the proposal, it will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date.

4.4 How to respond to the Consultation

A consultation questionnaire is attached to this document, and is also available on the authority's internet site at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/plans-for-powys-schools/>. Alternatively, you can respond in writing.

Completed questionnaires and other written responses should be sent to the following address:

School Modernisation Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk

Responses must be received by the 24th March 2016.

If you have any further questions about this proposal, you can contact the School Modernisation Team using the above contact details, or on (01597) 826265.

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment



Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council's Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

Proposal	To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School from the 31 st December 2016 with Crossgates CP School to be named as the receiving school	Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Sarah Astley
Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	5 th January 2016 Updated 29 th January 2016		
<p>The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':</p> <p>(a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;</p> <p>(b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;</p> <p>(c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p><i>The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.</i></p> <p>The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.</p>			
1. AIM or PURPOSE			
Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change	This consultation is about whether Powys County Council should commence the statutory process for the following: Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School from the 31 st December 2016. Crossgates CP School to be named as the		

proposal being assessed.	receiving school.	
2. OBJECTIVES		
Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.	<p>The authority is considering commencing the statutory process to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average 	
3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES		
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<p>The benefits of the proposal are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More efficient use of resources - Reduction in surplus places 	
4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE		
How does this change proposal relate to the Powys Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	<p>The proposal supports Powys County Council's vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that <i>'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'</i></p>	
5. DATA USED		
5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	
	Wider research reports and findings.	
Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment		
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ✓ Please state the gaps: Qualitative data is not currently provided	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>How will the gaps be addressed going forward?</p> <p>Qualitative data will be gathered during the formal consultation process and the EqIA will be updated to reflect the qualitative information received.</p>	
<h2>6. DATA ANALYSIS</h2>		
<p><u>6.1 Quantitative</u> Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?</p>	<p>Information on pupils who attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School can be obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census 2015 (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. In relation to the protected characteristic groups, the profile of pupils at the school is provided below:</p> <p><u>Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 29 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 26 pupils aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 45% are boys and 55% are girls. - Free school meals: No pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 14% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 14% have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: 3% of pupils come from homes where some Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% <p>This information shows that the proportion of pupils in the school that belong to the protected characteristic groups is small. 14% of pupils have additional learning needs and are in a protected characteristic group for disability. 3% of pupils come from a home where some Welsh is spoken.</p>	

<p>6.2 Qualitative Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this? ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views? iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position? iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics? 	<p>Formal consultation on the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013), and will include a meeting with pupils. This will provide qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and the impact on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Further detail will be added to the EqIA following the conclusion of the consultation period and consideration of the responses received.</p>
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7. EqIA RESULT

<p>Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to</p>	<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality.</p>	✓

provide the EqIA assessment result.	[Proceed to question 8]	
	The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]	
8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT		
<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) Based on the pupils that were registered at the school on the 2015 PLASC counting date, 14% of pupils are in a protected characteristic group due to having additional learning needs.</p> <p>ii) No pupils are eligible for free schools meals. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School close, free home to school transport would be provided to all qualifying currently attending the school, regardless of income. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils from low income families, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the alternative school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p> <p>iii) Although 3% of pupils come from a home where some Welsh is spoken, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would have an adverse impact on Welsh speakers.</p>	
9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT		
<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p>	<p>i) The authority is confident that the proposed receiving school and any other schools in the local area which pupils may prefer to transfer to would be able to meet the need of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School who belong to the protected characteristic groups. Free home to school transport would be provided to qualifying pupils to the proposed receiving school or to their closest school.</p> <p>ii) At the current time, the proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove the impact, however this EqIA will be reviewed and updated following the formal consultation exercise.</p>	

<p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?</p> <p>iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>iii) At the current time, the proposal should not be considered for removal. However this EqIA will be reviewed and updated following the formal consultation exercise.</p>	
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<p>9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</p>
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10. ONGOING MONITORING

<p>How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?</p>		Please tick/shade
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	

Monitoring arrangements

The School Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing

change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.

Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.

The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Publication of results of the impact assessment

The results of the impact assessment will be published on the Council's website

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Any actions identified as a result of this impact assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan

APPENDIX B COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. The affected communities

1.1 Llanfihangel Rhydithon

Llanfihangel Rhydithon is a community located in mid Powys, which includes the small village of Dolau, in which Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is located. Dolau is located approximately 5 miles from the village of Crossgates, and approximately 9 miles from the town of Llandrindod Wells. According to the 2011 Census, there are 228 residents in the area served by Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council⁵.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 13.45% of the population have one or more skills in Welsh. 1.75% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 ranks areas known as Local Super Output Areas (LSOA) in terms of deprivation, where 1 is the most deprived and 1909 is the least deprived. The village of Dolau is located within the Llangunllo LSOA, which is ranked as follows⁶:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llangunllo	1296

Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School. The school has a co-located community hall.

1.2 Crossgates

Crossgates is a village located in Mid Powys approximately 3 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells. It is situated at the point where the A483 and the A44 meet. According to the 2011 Census, there were 701 residents⁷ in the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council, which includes the village of Crossgates.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 17.08% of the population of the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council have one or more skills in Welsh. 0.29% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

⁵ 2011 Census information for the Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

⁶ <https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

⁷ 2011 Census information for the Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

Crossgates is located within the Local Super Output Area (LSOA) of Llanbadarn Fawr. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks the Llanbadarn Fawr LSOA as follows, where 1 is the most deprived LSOA and 1909 is the least deprived⁸:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llanbadarn Fawr	1360

Crossgates CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School.

2. Community Impact Assessment

2.1 Impact on pupil travel

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The home addresses of the 29 children that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School at the last PLASC counting day in January 2015 were analysed by the council's Research and Information Unit. This analysis showed that Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was the closest school for 21 of the pupils attending the school, which is 72% of the pupils attending the school. The closest schools for all of the 29 pupils is summarised in the following table:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	21
Crossgates CP School	7
Llandrindod CP School Cefnlllys	1

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was 2.78 miles.

If there were no school in Dolau, the next closest school for the children that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in January 2015 would be as follows:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Crossgates CP School	26
Llandrindod Wells CP School Cefnlllys	1
Llanbister CP School	1
Knighton C in W School	1

⁸ <https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for the pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in January 2015 to their nearest alternative school would be 4.49 miles.

Should there be no school at Dolau, there would be an increase in travel for the 21 pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was their closest school. However, there would be a reduction in travel for the remaining 8 pupils, should they transfer to their closest school. The maximum journey for a pupil to their closest alternative school would be 7.85 miles.

2.2 Extra-curricular activities provided by the schools

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- i) Football
- ii) Eisteddfod Club
- iii) Friday Club (for Foundation Phase pupils – arts and crafts)
- iv) French Club
- v) Welsh Club
- vi) Tennis
- vii) Games club (chess, dominoes)
- viii) Gardening
- ix) Book club (reading)

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

Piano lessons; Brass lessons; Weekly welly walks / outdoor lessons for all pupils; Participation in swimming galas and other sports activities; Participation in the Llandrindod eisteddfod.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours:

- i) Crossgates Out of School Club
- ii) Breakfast Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Netball; Ball Skills; Green Club; Games Club; ICT Club

2.3 Community use of the school building

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The school accommodates the following groups:

3+ setting; Parent and Toddler sessions; Youth club

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

YFC use the school grounds; Community centre use the school grounds; Community centre used the school playground as car parking; Youth centre use the school grounds

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Privately run Early Years centre based in mobile across the car park

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Regular events held by the school's PTA in the school buildings and on the grounds

2.4 Other links with the community

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

The Youth Club and the YFC; Dolau church – the vicar supports collective worship and Christian festivals in schools, and the school supports and promotes 'Messy Church' within the community; Dolau Chapel; Dolau Station, which is maintained by community volunteers; Links with a local business, which promotes pupils' entrepreneurial skills.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school has links with a number of organisations and individuals within the community, which include the following:

Vicar, Golden Age Club

2.4 Support that could be offered by the receiving school to parents and pupils that currently attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

A transition programme would be put in place to support pupils with their transition to Crossgates CP School.

2.5 Conclusion

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Dolau has a community hall located on the site of the school. The draft recommendation in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School does not propose any changes to this hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and at the proposed receiving school. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School close, it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. However, from the information received from Crossgates CP School, the majority of extra-curricular activities take place during the school day.

Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils that currently live closest to the school.

**APPENDIX C RESPONSE FORM – LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P.
SCHOOL**

Please provide your comments in the space provided. You can use additional sheets if necessary.

1. Please let us know your views on the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, including any alternatives to the proposal you think we should consider:

2. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent, member of staff, governor)

3. Name (optional)

4(a). Would you like to be informed of the publication of the consultation report?

Yes No

4(b). If you answered 'Yes', please provide an e-mail address or postal address:

Completed questionnaires should be sent to the following address, by the **24th March 2016**:

School Modernisation Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk



Consultation on the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Consultation Report

August 2016

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Consultation on the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

1. Overview of the consultation

Powys County Council consulted on a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School with effect from the 31st December 2016 during the period 11th February 2016 to the 5th May 2016.

1.1 Consultation methods

The consultation documentation was available on the council's website throughout the consultation period, and was distributed to stakeholders, as required by the School Organisation Code (2013). A separate version for young people was also available and distributed to pupils, and was also available on the council's website throughout the consultation period.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing an online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall, or writing to the School Modernisation Team.

Meetings were also held with the following:

- School Council – 25th February 2016
- Staff – 1st March 2016
- Governors – 1st March 2016
- Parents / community – 1st March 2016

1.2 Responses received

A total of 129 written responses were received to the consultation. These included:

- i) 26 responses to the online questionnaire
- ii) 103 other written responses

This included a response from Estyn, which is provided on page 14.

6 written responses were received from pupils.

2 Consultation with pupils

2.1 Written responses from pupils

6 written responses were received from pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

The issues raised in these responses are summarised below:

- There are good teachers at the school
- Pupils have good friends at the school
- Pupils can take part in a range of activities
- Pupils will not be able to do as many activities in a big school as they will be in a bigger class
- Pupils are sad to think the school might close
- Some pupils have been to a few schools and have been the happiest at this school – this is the only school where they haven't been bullied
- The children are really nice
- The school is like a family
- Crossgates School don't compete in the Eisteddfod so pupils won't get a chance to compete again
- Learning is really fun at the school
- Pupils won't know many of the children or any of the teachers
- Teachers will lose their jobs

2.2 Meeting with the School Council

Officers from the local authority met with the School Council of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to get their views on the proposal. The issues raised in this meeting are summarised below:

What do you like about Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School?

- They know everyone in the school
- They have lots of friends and there is no bullying
- They all play with each other
- Because the school is small they all know each other better
- The teachers are nice
- Members of the community go to the school and read to them
- They like the activities they do – School Plays, Activities Day, Sports Day, Fundraising, St David's Day activities
- P.E.
- The food is nice
- They have lots of books
- They like the outside play equipment – playhouse, shelter, climbing frames
- They get more 1-1 with the teachers

- The classes are small (10 pupils in one class and 20 pupils in another) so they get more attention from the teacher
- There is plenty of room in the classrooms
- The classes aren't too noisy so they can concentrate
- They like D&T and Art and they think the teacher is fab

What don't you like about Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School?

- The school is cold in the mornings
- The conservation area is messy

What would be worse if you had to move to a different school?

- They will spend longer travelling and will have to get up earlier
- They will have to make new friends
- They will have different teachers
- They will have different classrooms
- They will be in bigger classes and the teacher will have less time to help them
- They will be separated from friends
- The bigger classes will be noisy so it will be harder to concentrate
- They will need to get used to a new school layout
- The play equipment at the school may not be as good
- There may not be enough toys etc. for everyone and they may not get a chance to use the play equipment
- Members of the community won't be able to read to them anymore
- There may be more arguing because they don't know each other
- School dinners may not be as nice
- They will have to queue for ages to get their dinner
- They will be in different classes to their current friends (Different age groups are in the same class at the moment)
- The teams will be larger for sports and so they may not get to have a go

Is there anything that would be better if you had to move to a different school?

- Make more friends – they would know more people when they went to high school
- The same ages will be in a class
- There is a larger field at Crossgates
- There will be more time for teachers to explain the lessons because they will only have to explain a lesson for 1 year and not 3/4 years
- Larger sports teams more opportunity to play sports

What do you think the impact of closure would be on pupils that have additional needs?

- They may not get as much time with specialists in a bigger school
- They may get annoyed with the long journey

Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following issues were asked:

- What would happen to the school building if the school closed?

3 Consultation meetings

Consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents / the community were held during the consultation period. The issues raised at these meetings are listed below:

3.1 Meeting with staff

- If the Cabinet decides to close the school, how would that affect the staff from 31st December 2016?
- There were far fewer pupils in Llangurig C.P. School when that school closed – we can't believe this is happening
- There are lots of children whose parents want them to come to this school
- There is a new early years setting at Crossgates which operates from one of the mobile units
- If you put children from this school, Llanbister and Nantmel into Crossgates, where will the children from the early years setting go?
- There won't be enough capacity for the children coming into the early years setting from all the other early years settings if the schools close
- A number of children on the list to come to this school next term and in the future, and the same is true for the early years setting
- Numbers in the playgroup in Dolau went down to two children at one point, the community pulled together to keep the playgroup going
- What size will classes be at Crossgates School if it is proposed that the school receives pupils from both Llanbister and Llanfihangel Rhydithon?
- Concern about taking pupils from a good building to a mobile classroom
- Concern about whether the mobile will be warm enough
- What would your advice be to individual parents if they have a concern about the receiving school?
- If Llanbister, Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Nantmel schools close there will be no other rural school in the area
- There are children in this school who can only cope with a smaller number in the class – the education system will fail these children if there are no small schools
- How will the County Council ensure standards of education are maintained if children are in bigger classes?
- Teachers at this school put a lot of effort in
- How do teachers know that the next school will ensure pupils achieve the targets set by teachers here?
- Do you have proof that when children move they achieve their targets?
- Concern that children whose progress is 'average' get forgotten – we need evidence that their education is not affected
- Pupils in year 6 will only have a few months to move to high school, therefore the same children will be affected by two school closures
- Concern about the impact on pupils

- December would be the wrong time for the school to close – would be detrimental for year 5 and year 6 pupils to have to go through more than one transition
- When will Cabinet members visit the school?
- A shame that Cabinet can make the decision without visiting the school
- We have high standards of attainment at this school
- Is there any local representation on the Cabinet?
- It is the wrong time to have carried out consultation on the age of school admission
- Schools will be against the proposal to change the school admission age if it lowers their numbers
- You will have to increase funding for pre-school settings if the school admission age changes
- If the school closes what are the options for staff?
- Would staff need to pay back redundancy pay if re-employed by the authority within 12 months?
- Is there enough capacity within HR to deal with the redundancy process if the school closes?

3.2 Meeting with governors

- Confusion around the figures provided for capacity of Crossgates C.P. School
- Under the impression that you could not transfer pupils from a permanent school building to a mobile classroom
- What is the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School excluding the mobile classroom?
- How many pupils are there in Crossgates C.P. School?
- How many of the criteria for review of a school have to be met in order to trigger a review?
- Crossgates C.P. School has surplus capacity – why has that not triggered a review of Crossgates School?
- The condition of the school building is not urgent enough to trigger a review
- Has Estyn been informed of the proposal?
- Will Estyn be inspecting the receiving school?
- Crossgates C.P. School hasn't been inspected by Estyn for 6 years
- What would happen if standards fell at Crossgates C.P. School?
- You will be dramatically increasing numbers at Crossgates C.P. School
- You will be taking children from a school where they are receiving a high standard of education
- There is a new headteacher at Crossgates C.P. School who will have had relatively little experience in dealing with a school with a large number of pupils
- One of the schools near here has been assessed as being in the 'red' category
- We have a permanent leadership arrangement at this school

- We have tried to work with you in the past to arrive at a more permanent leadership arrangement
- We were going to look into becoming a Church in Wales School
- Shutting schools should be a last resort – we should be celebrating rural schools
- Of the three schools under review, Llanfihangel Rhydithon is the cheapest to run and has excellent standards
- The school offers ‘value for money’
- Is it true that you will not be transferring the full cost of the pupil when they transfer to another school?
- The building here doesn’t cost you anything
- Additional children in Crossgates will cost the Council money
- The Council is not taking the additional travel costs into account
- We have had independent quotes to indicate that additional transport costs will be £58,000, based on parents choosing to send their children to Crossgates School.
- Would not want to put 4 year old children on a bus
- Is there a protocol in place in relation to shared transport with secondary school children and journey times?
- Concern that children could be travelling up to 1 hour on school transport
- Concern about pupil wellbeing
- Concern that children could get upset on the bus
- The buses will need supervision
- How long are mobiles likely to last?
- The transformation document says that children should not be moved from a permanent structure to a temporary classroom.
- Could be 39 children from Dolau, Llanbister and Crossgates nursery going into a classroom in January 2017.
- Mobile classrooms should not be used as a permanent solution
- You cannot fit any more than 30 pupils in a classrooms
- What will happen to the capacity of Crossgates if pupils continue to come from Llandrindod to Crossgates School?
- Isn't it good practice for schools to have 10% surplus capacity? There will be no surplus capacity at Crossgates
- You are sacrificing two schools to build up the numbers at Crossgates
- There will be nothing to encourage young families to move into the area because there will be no places for children in the school
- Once you start closing schools you will never open them again
- 130 new houses are going to be built in Crossgates, and a development of affordable housing is also planned for Llandewi – schools will be at capacity
- If you close the school what is there here for the children?
- You are not looking at the long term
- If you have a big school of over 500 pupils funded at £5268 per pupil would you say that was an expensive school?
- What is the cost per pupil for the federated schools in the north of the county?

- Why have different figures been used for average per pupil funding in different reports – average per pupil funding quoted in report on Welshpool primary schools review was different to that in the report for Cabinet in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School even though the reports were considered by Cabinet on the same day – there can't be two averages
- There were 31 pupils, including early years, in the school in January 2015, but in the consultation document it says there were 29.
- In 2017 there will be 36 pupils in the school including the nursery
- There are two pupils at the school that receive free school meals
- How does it give the school a chance if you are using outdated data?
- What would happen about parking for the community hall if the school building is disposed of?
- What weighting is given to the impact on the community of a school's closure? – according to Welsh Government guidelines weighting should be applied.

3.3 Meeting with parents / community

- On what basis do you project that pupil numbers in the future will be as low as they are now?
- No great account is taken of population change in the area
- There is currently a natural dip in numbers in schools in the area and currently there are fewer children, but the houses that the older generation occupy will be occupied by a younger generation
- Concern that there will be no primary school between Crossgates and Presteigne
- Proposal is 'short termist' – there will be dips in the population but numbers will rise
- This is a very good school and has been for many years
- Greater consideration needs to be given to this area and its remoteness
- You have to accept that pupil numbers could increase in a few years if more houses are built and there are more jobs
- Questioned the estimated saving of £66,298
- Questioned the saving of £15,580 for Headteacher post
- Questioned the canteen subsidy of £10,000 – no canteen at Dolau, all meals are cooked in Crossgates and transferred to Dolau
- Estimated cost of transport is £22800 – we estimate £84234 over the school year
- If you transfer pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon School to Crossgates, it will cost £15,798.50
- Request for clarification in relation to the delegated budget for pupils transferring?
- Will the children receive less funding per pupil if the school closes and they transfer to the receiving school?
- Request for clarification in relation to the £15,580 saving from the Headteacher's post
- You should be consulting with the correct figures, not the incorrect figures

- Have calculated that there would be additional annual mileage of 32,456 for pupils if they were transferred from Llanfihangel Rhydithon to Crossgates
- Concern that there is no facility for schools to work together as part of this consultation
- Powys needs more vision to get more young people into this area – if you close the schools how are you going to attract younger people into the area?
- Have you looked at other areas where there are small rural schools?
- What about federation?
- Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School should be working together to make sure we have the most viable primary school system we can get.
- Have you looked at new technologies / video conferencing between schools?
- You have a responsibility to have a vision for the future and to look at new ways of working so that small schools can be viable and there is career progression for teachers
- Reference to the Wye Forest federation in Gloucestershire – their Ofsted reports have improved since federation
- Are the four new primary schools in Ystradgynlais as cost effective as you had hoped as all exceed the cost per pupil average
- Wouldn't the SORP panel's time be better spent on Ysgol Bro Hyddgen which is failing educationally and financially?
- Making schools bigger does not make them better either financially or educationally.
- What evidence is there that bigger schools are better?
- Why is there no information for the Foundation Phase for Ysgol Bro Hyddgen?
- Crossgates C.P. School last inspected in June 2010 under previous Estyn regime – how can you say that the school is better or as good as Llanfihangel Rhydithon School?
- Concern about capacity of Crossgates C.P. School
- Cabinet meeting in 2005 – members asked that mobile classrooms should not be regarded as permanent fixtures
- Planning for extension and remodelling of Crossgates C.P. School was granted based on capacity of 162 – 179, 6 kitchen staff and 30 – 40 school staff – does your planning consent allow you to increase the capacity of the school?
- Standard of development provided by Dolau playgroup is second to none. Pupil numbers went down to 2 at one time. There are now 15 children.
- The playgroup was not mentioned in the consultation document
- What will happen to the playgroup if the school closes?
- A number of young couples have bought properties in the area – what will be the impact if there is no school in the area?
- What impact will closing the school have on the future of the village and the wider community and on young people moving into the area to start families?
- When I moved to the area, the mother and toddler group was my main point of interaction with other mothers in the area – now feel part of the community

- What would the class sizes be in Crossgates if Llanbister C.P. and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. were to close? Has been stated that there could be class sizes of 34 at Crossgates.
- If this school closed, there would be no other alternative school apart from Crossgates C.P. School
- What would be the alternative rural school?
- How many children get bussed from Llandrindod to Crossgates because Llandrindod schools are deemed to be full? If the two Llandrindod primary schools are full, where will the overspill go?
- Has Estyn been made aware of the possibility that Crossgates School may be increasing in numbers by 50%
- What will you do if you close this school and Crossgates School has a poor Estyn inspection? Would you reopen this school?
- Reference to council's slogan – 'Strong communities in the green heart of Wales'
- Schools are the nucleus of a community
- In Dolau, starts with the toddler group, then the playgroup then the school, then the local youth club, young farmers club, WI, bowls club etc all based on the school site
- You only have to look at the number of people at this meeting to know how well supported the school is
- Reason for the recommendation is financial
- Would the panel agree that teaching and leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School are not in question?
- Is the proposal to close the school about education or finance?
- Friends of Dolau School have raised £28K over a number of years to finance play equipment and to subsidise school trips and swimming. Larger primary schools struggle to form a committee. In rural communities parents come together to raise money for the children, this is more difficult in larger schools
- What follow up monitoring has there been following other school closures e.g. Howey, Beguildy, Rhosgoch? Has children's welfare suffered as a result? Where can your research be viewed?
- Dolau Youth Club meets in the hall – concern about the impact of closure of the school on the youth club.
- You said that the consultation document is a work in progress – the consultation should not be a work in progress. The document you consult on has to be accurate.
- People have chosen to send their children to a small, rural school for many reasons. If this school closes, this community will not have that choice – that is not fair when other communities do have the choice.
- Schools in rural Radnorshire are strategically important
- Your transport policy could be legally challenged – it is illegal to make parents travel a mile with their children to catch a bus – parents do that to be helpful
- There are other options which would mean that the children could stay in their community, the community wants to work with you to achieve this.

- Proposals in Ystradgynlais worked because the community was offered something better – pupils were not being shoehorned into a school which didn't have capacity to take them, so it's not fair to compare school reorganisation in Ystradgynlais with the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
- The Council needs to offer this community something better – a vision and a future where young people want to stay and work
- UN Rights of the Child states that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration
- Our children are suffering emotionally under this consultation – you are not doing your best for my children
- Concern that children in year 5 will have to spend their final year in primary school with children they don't know and will have additional travel
- Powys County Council is trying to deprive our children of a decent education
- Concern that pupils will be in bigger classes
- Why hasn't the option of federation been included in the consultation document?
- Closure must be the last resort
- Savings don't add up
- Pupil number figures are incorrect
- Cabinet has based its decision on the wrong figures
- Children are scared of going to school in a community where she knows the children do not like her
- These proceedings have affected the children
- Sometimes it is better to find a solution that works for communities and not budgets
- Not one child will leave this school until you drag us out!
- What is your advice to parents of pupils due to start at the school in the next couple of terms? If the school closes, will be at the school for a short time then have to move, alternatively could start at the receiving school.
- Many parents who live closer to Crossgates School choose to bring their children to Dolau School
- Don't our children have human rights to go to a rural school?
- The school is part of the rural economy that pays for Powys County Council
- Numbers in the playgroup are increasing
- Condition of the school building is good and there is room to expand
- School's standards are leading the way in Powys County Council
- Reference to someone who lives in Dolfor who has chosen to take her child to Kerry because she wants her child to go to a rural school
- Has the Portfolio Holder done any research into solutions for saving small schools e.g. Dilwyn and Almeley schools in Herefordshire where pupil numbers are less? Have you spoken to Governors and Cabinet members in other rural counties?

4 ESTYN

Estyn's response to the consultation is provided below:

Estyn response to the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School with pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School subject to parental preference.

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is by Powys County Council.

The proposal is to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School with pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School subject to parental preference.

Summary

The proposal is part of Powys County Council's Schools Transformation Policy, which sets out the authority's vision and process for the transformation of primary and secondary schools in the county.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Description and benefits

The local authority has given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to finance, surplus places and the continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The proposer also explains clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for school modernisation.

The proposal clearly defines the expected benefits of the proposal and these link well to the stated purpose and rationale. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the area.

The proposal notes appropriately the advantages of the proposal, which include the efficient and effective use of resources, a reduction of unfilled pupil places within the primary school network and permanent leadership arrangements are currently in place at the proposed receiving school.

The proposal has identified appropriately the disadvantages to the current proposal, which focus on the loss of provision in the village of Dolau and the additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on pupil travel arrangements. It intends to support home to school travel in line with the council's transport policy. It further recognises that the proposal will potentially result in additional travel time for many pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school. However, the proposal recognises that there would be a reduction in travel time for the remaining minority of pupils should they transfer to their nearest school. The proposer also recognises that in the event of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, it is unlikely that there would be suitable walking routes to the alternative schools available for pupils currently attending the school.

The proposer has appropriately shown how the proposal will affect surplus places by providing pupil numbers and the capacity of each school in the area for 2015. The proposal is likely to reduce the surplus places at local primary schools including Crossgates C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells C.P. School, Llanbister C.P. School and Knighton Church in Wales School subject to parental preference.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the other four local primary schools in the local area are classified as English Medium Community Primary schools. None of these schools provide education through the medium of Welsh but teach Welsh as a second language. There would therefore appear to be no impact on the Welsh language arising from this proposal should pupils transfer to these schools.

The proposer has considered reasonably well the impact of the proposals on the quality of the outcomes, provision and leadership and management at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School. The proposer has considered the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspection reports for all five schools in the area, along with their categorisation in relation to the National School Categorisation system on the quality of leadership and pupil outcomes. However, the proposer has not commented on end of key stage outcomes for each school when compared with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals.

The proposer has considered appropriately the impact of the proposals on the quality of the outcomes, provision and leadership and management at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It has also appropriately considered the likely impact of the proposals on standards, wellbeing and curriculum delivery. The proposer has undertaken an appropriate equality impact assessment, which considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups including those with special educational needs.

5 ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD

The following tables list the issues raised during the consultation period, including issues raised in writing by pupils and all other consultees, and issues raised in the consultation meetings held with the School Council, staff, governors and parents / the community.

REF	ISSUE	LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE
1 IMPACT ON PUPILS		
1.1 Pupil well-being		
1.1.1	Children's welfare should be high on the list for consideration	<p>The authority is committed to ensuring the welfare of all children, and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. <p>Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
1.1.2	Pupils are very happy at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that pupils are happy in their learning environment, and should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would be

		expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition
1.1.3	Closure of the school would be traumatic for the children	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.4	The proposal is having a negative effect on the children	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.5	Concern about welfare of children having to leave home very early and return very late	The authority accepts that the closure of the school will increase the travel times for some children living within the current catchment area of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It is the authority's view that the majority of pupils will be able to access the named school within a travel time of 30 minutes for a single journey.
1.1.6	Concern about additional stress for young children if they have to travel alone, without supervision	The authority does not normally provide escorts on home to school transport. The authority monitors any issues raised on transport by providers, children and parents and has a very low incidence of any issues on transport provided to Primary School.
1.1.7	Proposal has had a detrimental impact on some children attending the school – it has affected their physical and mental health	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.8	None of the children embrace the prospect of extended travel time	The authority notes this comment.
1.1.9	There is evidence that children are becoming more anxious and stressed	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their

		transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.10	Closure would be catastrophic for children and would have a detrimental impact on their future and the community around them	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. However, the authority is satisfied that the education that would be provided in the named receiving school would be of an equivalent standard, and would not have a detrimental impact on their future. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into account when determining how to proceed.
1.1.11	The impact and upset on some of these children should be paramount	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.12	Concern that it will take some time for children to settle in alternative schools	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.13	Concern that some pupils aren't very accepting of new pupils	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for the affected pupils. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.1.14	The school is essential for the well-being of pupils	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure the well-being of all pupils, and should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition
1.1.15	Every effort should be made to take account of the wishes and needs of the children as the over-riding priority	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to

		minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.16	Children are scared about going to a school in a community where they know the children don't like them	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.17	The council is not doing its best for the children	<p>The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'. <p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</p>
1.1.18	A child being bullied won't learn or thrive in a larger school environment	The authority notes this concern, and acknowledges that some pupils might be happier in a small school environment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that pupils are happy in their learning environment. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.1.19	Tantrums, bed wetting and irrational	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of

	behaviour have happened during the consultation	uncertainty for the pupils involved, and is concerned to hear that the consultation is having this impact on pupils. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.
1.1.20	Integration is not always automatic in receiving schools	The authority notes this concern, and acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for the affected pupils. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.1.21	Reference to closure of Llangunllo School in 1984 – had a negative effect on pupils, have struggled to fit in and with self-confidence since then	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for the affected pupils. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2 Separation from friends		
1.2.1	Concern about children being split up from their friends	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.2	Concern about children having to form new friends	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.3	Reference to Llangunllo School which closed in 1984 when there were 9 pupils, all of the pupils went in different directions to new schools	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.4	Pupils have good friends at the school	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any

		other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.2.5	Concern that pupils will be in different classes to their current friends who are in different year groups	The authority notes this concern, and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3 Disruption to pupils		
1.3.1	Pupils will be taken out of their comfort zone	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.2	Closure would be disruptive to pupils, particularly those that will be moving into year 6 in September	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved, particularly those moving into year 6. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.3	Concern about more and repeated disruption to the education of pupils who have already moved schools as a result of previous closures	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. The information held by the authority shows that none of the pupils who would be attending the school in December 2016 have previously been affected by previous school closures.
1.3.4	Concern about children having to adjust to new surroundings	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.5	Pupils won't know many of the children in Crossgates	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.

1.3.6	Pupils won't know any of the teachers in Crossgates	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.7	On average, it takes a term for pupils to settle into a new school	The authority notes this comment, and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.8	Pupils in year 6 will only have a few months before they move to high school, therefore the same children will be affected by two school closures	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved, particularly those moving into year 6. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The authority's current proposal in relation to high school provision does not propose any change to the current location.
1.3.9	December would be the wrong time to close the school – it would be detrimental for year 5 and 6 pupils to have to go through more than one transition	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition. Due to the lengthy statutory process that must be followed when closing a school, it would not be possible to conclude in time for the school to close at the end of the summer term 2016, this is why the authority's consultation proposed closure of the school from the end of December.
1.3.10	Concern about impact on pupils due to start at the school in the next couple of terms – if the school closes, will be at the school for a short time then have to move.	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.3.11	Concern that pupils in year 5 will have to spend their final year in primary school with children they don't know and will have to deal with additional travel	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.

1.3.12	Pupils are worried about being in a different class to their friends that are in different year groups	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.4 Impact on quality of education provided to pupils		
1.4.1	Closure would be detrimental to pupils current standard of education	The authority's view is that the standard of education provided at the named receiving school is at least equivalent to the standard of education provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.4.2	Closure would impact on people's chances of getting good grades and/or a good education	The authority does not agree with this statement. 'Transforming learning and skills' is one of the priorities in the One Powys Plan, and within this priority, the plan states the authority's aspiration to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority is satisfied that pupils would continue to be able to achieve good grades and have a good education in the named receiving school.
1.4.3	School closure is messing up students educational needs	<p>The authority does not agree with this statement. 'Transforming learning and skills' is one of the priorities in the One Powys Plan, and within this priority, the plan states the authority's aspiration to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority is satisfied that the standard of education provided at the named receiving school is equivalent to that provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and

		resource management)'.
1.4.4	Concern that children will have to re-do work they have already done	Teachers will be responsible for assessing the ability and stage of development of the pupils and will differentiate accordingly to avoid repetition and ensure learning builds on previous experiences.
1.4.5	Pupils that have moved from Dolau will be educationally worse off	The authority is satisfied that the standard of education provided at the named receiving school is equivalent to that provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.4.6	Do you have proof that when children move schools they achieve their targets?	In the Maesydderwen catchment, the authority closed 10 primary schools and established four new larger primary schools. This has resulted in improved outcomes and standards of wellbeing, which is evidenced in the recent Estyn inspections of all four schools.
1.4.7	Concern that children whose progress is 'average' get forgotten – we need evidence that their education is not affected	Schools are required to monitor the progress of all pupils, regardless of their ability to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. In the Maesydderwen catchment, the authority closed 10 primary schools and established four new larger primary schools. This has resulted in improved standards, which is evidenced in the recent Estyn inspections of all four schools.
1.4.8	Children will lose the personal touch they are used to	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
1.4.9	The Council is trying to deprive our children of a decent education	The authority does not agree with this statement. 'Transforming learning and skills' is one of the priorities in the One Powys Plan, and within this priority, the plan states the authority's aspiration to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority is satisfied that the standard of education provided at the named receiving school is equivalent to that provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.4.10	No child has volunteered the view that going to Crossgates would be to their educational advantage	The authority notes this comment.

1.4.11	Is it ethical to remove children from a school where 100% of pupils are achieving the expected outcomes to a school where 94% of pupils are achieving the expected outcomes (mylocalschool 2015)?	Pupil performance fluctuates to varying degrees in all schools. It would be unfair to compare attainment in terms of percentages when comparing schools that have over 100 pupils with schools that have under 30 pupils. In addition, standards in schools are judged on data over a three year period, rather than then one set of data.
1.4.12	Pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would inevitably receive education of a lower standard than they currently receive – contrary to Welsh Government guidelines of ‘securing better outcomes for learners’	The authority is satisfied that the standard of education provided at the named receiving school is equivalent to that provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.4.13	Query about the attainment of pupils who have been moved from a closing school – would be interesting to find out if they achieve the target they were set at the end of KS2 after they have moved schools	The authority would always ensure that all pupil performance data is shared between closing schools and receiving schools. In circumstances where pupils have moved schools following a school closure, staff in the closing school and the receiving school have worked closely to ensure seamless transition and effective sharing of individual pupil data. There is no evidence to show that pupils do not attain as well as they should.
1.4.14	Reference to recommendations in the Donaldson review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales	The authority notes this point in relation to the recommendations of the Donaldson review, however there is no reason to believe that equivalent opportunities would not be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
1.5 Lack of equal opportunity		
1.5.1	Closing the school would fail the children their right to be taught in their local school / community	The authority notes that should the school close, pupils would have to attend a different school which is not their local school. However, the aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure. The authority’s view is that high-quality education would still be available to children who currently attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School within a reasonable distance.
1.5.2	Fundamental right of the child is that	The authority agrees that every child has a right to education. However, the authority has

	of education and to be educated at a school of choice	a duty to ensure the sustainability of high-quality education within a reasonable distance to a child's home. The authority's view is that high-quality education would still be available to children who currently attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School within a reasonable distance.
1.5.3	None of the children actively wish to move from the school	The authority notes this comment.
1.5.4	Concern that children living in the area won't get the same opportunities as pupils who went to Llanfihangel Rhydithon School	The authority notes this comment. The One Powys Plan states the authority's aspiration to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority is satisfied that appropriate opportunities would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school to ensure that pupils are able to achieve their potential.
1.5.5	Reference to article 3 and article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	The authority fully respects the rights of children, and is committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority's view is that Crossgates C.P. School can provide education of the highest-quality education to the children currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.5.6	Don't our children have human rights to go to a rural school?	Crossgates C.P. School, the named receiving school in respect of this proposal, serves a rural catchment area rather than an urban catchment area, therefore there is no reason to believe that the school would be unable to meet the needs of pupils from a rural background.
1.5.7	UN Convention on the Rights of a Child states that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration	<p>This is also the authority's primary consideration.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and

		resource management)'. The authority's view is that Crossgates C.P. School can provide high quality education to the children currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.5.8	Why shouldn't our children have the same opportunities as children in other areas of Wales?	The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School faces a number of issues which impact upon its sustainability and Crossgates C.P. School will provide pupils with the same opportunities as pupils in other areas of Wales. As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority is committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. In order to achieve this, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
1.5.9	Request that the Council respects the rights of children, as embodied in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	The authority fully respects the rights of children, and is committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority's view is that Crossgates C.P. School can provide high quality education to the children currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
1.5.10	Article 3 Part 1 of UN Convention on Rights of the Child: 'In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration'	<p>The authority fully respects the rights of children and all actions are taken in the best interest of children. The authority is committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The authority's view is that Crossgates C.P. School can provide high quality education to the children currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and

resource management)'.

1.6 Impact of moving to a larger school

1.6.1	In a big school, children won't be taught as individuals	The authority accepts that should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, pupils would have to go to bigger schools. However, the named receiving school or any other school pupils may wish to transfer to would be expected to treat each child as an individual and to address their individual needs.
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1.7 Separation from the community

1.7.1	Closure of the school would remove opportunities for pupils to make friends with their neighbours	The authority notes this concern. Should the school close, Crossgates C.P. School would be the closest school for the vast majority of pupils, therefore it is likely that pupils would still go to the same school as their neighbours and would continue to be able to make friends with them.
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1.8 Other

1.8.1	Does the council realise it is dealing with children not sheep?	The authority is fully aware that it is dealing with children and not sheep.
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1.8.2	Children are not the priority in this matter, and they should be	<p>The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible opportunities for all Powys pupils. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan, and within this priority, the plan states the authority's aspiration to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'.</p> <p>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• outcomes (standards and wellbeing);• provision (learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance, and learning environment); and
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- leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'.

2 IMPACT ON PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS / VULNERABLE PUPILS

2.1 Pupils with Additional Needs

2.1.1	In small schools, teachers can give extra support to children with varying needs, and can spend more time with children who need extra support	The authority recognises that there are children who need more support, and this is accounted for in the ALN delegated budget as well as access to the graduated response to need e.g. top up funding. The ALN budget currently provided to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small due to the school's size and demography, the ALN budget in the named receiving school is significantly larger.
2.1.2	Pupils with dyslexia able to get on well in smaller school – pushed by teaching staff to learn to read and write. Would not have had the same preparation for high school in a larger school	Identification of a special educational need such as dyslexia is dependent on good quality teaching and assessment together with effective SENCo practice and expertise. All Powys schools have access to advisory support and so there is no reason why a pupil with a specific learning difficulty will not have those needs recognised and responded to in the alternative schools.
2.1.3	Pupils that previously needed additional needs support no longer need this thanks to the support provided at the school	The authority is pleased to note this. There is no reason to think that pupils would not be similarly well supported in the named receiving school.
2.1.4	The environment at Dolau is a good environment for children with special needs of all sorts	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to think that pupils with special needs would not be similarly well supported in the named receiving school.
2.1.5	Pupils with additional needs have been supported very well at Dolau	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to think that pupils with additional needs would not be similarly well supported in the named receiving school.
2.1.6	At Dolau school, additional support is provided for children without the need for special classes which have a	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to think that pupils with special needs would not be similarly well supported in the named receiving school.

	danger of giving children a label / undermining their confidence	
2.1.7	Concern that pupils with additional needs would not get as much time with specialists in a bigger school	The authority recognises that there are children who need more support, and this is accounted for in the ALN delegated budget as well as access to the graduated response to need e.g. top up funding. The ALN budget currently provided to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small due to the school's size and demography, the ALN budget in the named receiving school is significantly larger.
2.1.8	Concern about the impact of additional travel on pupils with additional needs	The authority would undertake a needs assessment in respect of any pupils with additional needs that required home to school transport.
2.2 Vulnerable Pupils		
2.2.1	The Child Poverty Act 2010 creates a duty for local authorities to reduce child poverty	<p>The needs of families on low incomes were considered in the Equality Impact Assessment in respect of this proposal which was included in the consultation document. According to PLASC 2015, there were no pupils eligible for free school meals at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. PLASC 2016 indicates that 6% of the school population are eligible for free school meals. The Equality Impact Assessment will be updated to reflect the 2016 PLASC data and views received during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. However, the PLASC data suggests that the level of poverty in the area is relatively low.</p> <p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, and all pupils would be fully supported to achieve their potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.</p>
2.2.2	A report by the Commission for Rural Communities states that 'If poverty is to be tackled effectively, it must be a priority to identify and consult with those families who don't know about or are prevented from accessing	Consultation took place with all parents of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and a wide range of other stakeholders in accordance with the School Organisation Code.

	services'	
2.2.3	The consultation document states that there are no pupils at the school who are eligible for free school meals – this is incorrect	The authority notes this comment. The information provided in the consultation document referred to the PLASC information from January 2015, which stated that no pupils were eligible for free school meals. An updated equality impact assessment will be produced to take account of the information received during the consultation, and will also include the updated PLASC information from January 2016.
3 TRAVEL IMPLICATIONS		
3.1 Additional travel time / distance for pupils		
3.1.1	Concern about additional travel for pupils	The authority notes this concern.
3.1.2	Concern that a child's day would be 10-12 hours long due to the additional travel	The authority accepts that closure of the school would increase the length of time the children were travelling to / from school, but the estimated travel times are within the Welsh Governments guidelines.
3.1.3	Closure of the school would mean that children as young as 4 would have to travel approximately 8 miles to school	The authority accepts that should the school close, the length of journey to school would increase for some children, but the travel times required will be within the Welsh Government and Authority's guidelines.
3.1.4	Concern about pupils having to travel 20 minutes to get to school	The authority notes this concern. The authority's current policy for primary aged pupils states that children will not normally travel more than 30 minutes each way, therefore pupils travelling 20 minutes to get to school would be within the authority's maximum travel time.
3.1.5	Concern about pupils putting in longer hours than most of their teachers	The authority notes this comment.
3.1.6	Why should children have to travel miles and miles on a bus to get educated?	Powys is a large rural authority and the majority of children will access their education through the use of Home to School transport at some stage of their education career. The time that the children would be required to travel is within both Welsh Government and the

		authority's guidelines.
3.1.7	Concern about longer days for pupils – from 7am – 4.30pm	The authority accepts that closure of the school would increase the length of time the children are travelling to / from school and therefore the length of their school day, but the estimated travel times are within the Welsh Governments guidelines. The authority does not accept that a child will be leaving home at 7am and returning home at 4.30pm should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close.
3.1.8	How long would each trip take each morning and afternoon?	The length and time of the transport to the named receiving school will be dependent on the required routes based on the pick-up points for the children. It is expected that the route to and from school would be under 30 minutes each way.
3.1.9	What is the total mileage involved in collecting and transporting each of the current pupils from their doorstep to Crossgates?	The actual additional mileage to transport the pupils from their home to the proposed school in Crossgates would be dependent on the number of transport routes required and the actual routes used. The maximum additional mileage per child is the distance of 5.4 miles between Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School, which would amount to 54 miles per week and 2,052 miles for the 380 journeys required for the 190 pupil days. For some children who live closer to the named receiving school than Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School the actual mileage travelled would reduce.
3.1.10	Concern about little children travelling many more miles – 38,000 more miles for Dolau	The authority notes this comment. As stated above the maximum additional mileage per child is 2,052 mile per annum
3.1.11	Concern about pupils travelling in bad weather	The authority, schools and appointed contractors have policies and procedures in place in respect of home to school transport provision in periods of adverse weather.
3.1.12	Concern about how additional travel will affect how the children learn in the classroom	The authority transport a significant percentage of the overall schools population on Home to School transport with most of the Primary aged children travelling on routes that take less than 30 minutes.
3.1.13	Pupils will have to travel over 100 miles extra a week to get to school	The distance from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School has been measured using a GIS system as 5.4 miles with 10 journeys per week the maximum additional mileage would be 54 miles per week, this would be reduced for those learners who live in the area between the two schools and the Llandegley areas.

3.1.14	Would not want to put 4 year old children on a bus	The authority notes this comment.
3.1.15	Concern that children could be travelling up to 1 hour on school transport	The authority does not accept that any child living in the current catchment area of Llanfihangel Rhydithon would be required to travel an hour per journey on school transport, with the majority of children being transported to the named receiving school in under 30 minutes.
3.1.16	Have calculated that there would additional annual mileage of 32,456 for pupils if they were transferred from Llanfihangel Rhydithon to Crossgates	The authority notes this comment, as stated above the maximum additional mileage per child is 2,052 mile per annum.
3.1.17	Some children already travel considerable distances to Dolau, this will be exacerbated by any closure	An analysis of the home addresses of the current pupils against the authority's GIS system gives a current maximum travel distance of approximately 6 miles, which is not considered considerable by the authority. The closure of the school would extend this to around 11 miles.
3.1.18	If Dolau school closed all but one child would be transported to Crossgates, with substantially longer journeys than at present	The authority accepts that there would be an increase in journey times to school should pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School transfer to Crossgates C.P. School.
3.2 Cost of additional travel		
3.2.1	Concern about transport costs	The authority notes this comment, and accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.2	Concern that transport routes are inefficient – the council stopped the one high school bus which did the route a few years ago, now there are 5 buses / mini buses covering what	The authority notes this comment and is investigating this statement.

	one bus was doing before	
3.2.3	Any savings will be negated by extra transport to get the children to Crossgates	The authority notes this comment, and accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.4	Fuel costs are set to rise, so transporting to other schools is not a sustainable option for the future	The cost of fuel is one of several costs that are accounted for in any transport tender process and the future costs of both transport and the current school structure will be considered as part of the final determination of the proposals.
3.2.5	It cannot be cost effective to transport all these children	The authority acknowledges that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.6	Have you thought about how much it is going to cost the council to transport children from door to door	The authority accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.2.7	Environmental cost of additional transport – will add to the council's carbon footprint	The authority accepts that there will be an environmental impact due to the provision of additional transport, however this will be mitigated to some extent by a reduction in the building footprint of schools and a reduction in parental transport.
3.2.8	Would the council prefer to spend this substantial sum of money transporting our children around the countryside than to spend it on them in our excellent educational facilities at Dolau?	The authority accepts that implementation of the proposal would lead to an increase in transport costs. The estimated additional cost of school transport should the proposal be implemented was included in the consultation document.
3.3 Impact on access to after school activities		
3.3.1	Concern about additional travel to after school clubs	The authority notes this comment and accepts that parents will have increased travel to allow their children to access after school clubs. The authority will work with and support the receiving school to maximise the access to extra-curricular opportunities for all pupils.

3.3.2	Will the council be paying for transport to enable pupils from Dolau to attend after school clubs?	The Authority does not and will not provide separate transport for children to access clubs before or after school, however it will work with the receiving school to ensure that pupils from the Dolau area are provided with as equitable access to clubs as the other children that are currently transported to the named receiving school.
3.3.3	Nuffield Foundation states that 'Those who attend after-school clubs one day per week had, on average a 1.7 point higher actual key stage 2 score than predicated, while those who attended two days had on average a three point higher actual total point than predicated' – extra-curricular activities enable children to have fun without realising they are learning.	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, the authority would work with the receiving school to ensure that pupils from the Dolau area are provided with as equitable access to clubs as the other children that are currently transported to the named receiving school.
3.4 Additional transport requirements for pupils who currently make their own way to school		
3.4.1	Many parents now transport their children here for free	The authority notes this comment.
3.4.2	Only 5 children presently have school transport	The authority notes this comment.
3.4.3	Under 25% of pupils currently have transport paid for, this would increase to all but 3 pupils	The authority notes this comment.
3.4.4	Most children currently get to school under parental supervision at their own cost	The authority notes this comment.
3.5 Concerns about the transport that will be provided		
3.5.1	Concern about possibility that pupils	The authority's transport policy provides for joint transport where possible, and a

	could be put on high school transport that comes from Dolau – doesn't this go against the Council's safeguarding and child protection policies?	significant number of routes across the authority operate as joint transport for both primary and secondary aged pupils on the same transport. However, as no secondary transport goes to Crossgates, it is unlikely that pupils would be transported with secondary pupils in this case.
3.5.2	Concern about pupils having to travel on the service bus e.g. children from Llandegley have to get on the service bus from Kington	The authority does not transport primary aged pupils on busses that are operating as a public service, there are some occasions where the authority uses an off-service service bus to run a home to school transport route.
3.5.3	Would there be an escort on the school bus to support the driver?	The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.4	Concern about unaccompanied children as young as four travelling to school alone	The authority notes this concern. The authority's current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes.
3.5.5	How will a bus driver reassure parents their child will be OK if young children are upset about having to go to school and travel on a school bus?	The authority would work with the school, transport provider and parents to ensure that the transition to the new transport arrangements are undertaken as smoothly as possible. Parents from other small schools that have closed raised similar issues prior to the school closure, but the authority has had no significant issues raised with it following the subsequent closure of the school.
3.5.6	Concern about the well-being and safety of children whilst travelling – children with medical/behavioural issues will need supervision and support	The authority notes this concern. The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.7	Concern about what will happen to pupils with medical conditions e.g. epi pen – what will happen if these are needed on school transport – how will a bus driver deal with this?	Pupils that have medical conditions already travel on authority provided home to school transport. The authority and transport providers have a process in place to undertake and regularly review risk assessments and travel health care plans for children with medical needs, which would include details of the actions to be followed in cases of emergency.

3.5.8	Is there a protocol in place in relation to shared transport with secondary school children and journey times?	The authority does operate shared Primary / Secondary Transport in some areas of the authority, but mainly when children are being transported into the town where the Secondary School is located. Under such arrangements there is no provision for an escort on the transport. It is however unlikely that children will be transport to the named receiving school on joint transport, unless the opening and closing time of the two schools allowed such an arrangement
3.5.9	The school buses will need supervision	The current provision does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes, but this provision has been provided in exceptional circumstances, especially where there are behavioural issues on the transport.
3.5.10	Safety issues with transporting large numbers of primary pupils	The authority transport a significant percentage of Primary aged pupils on provided Home to School transport and has a very good safety record in respect to this provision.
3.5.11	The safety burden on drivers of school transport is heavy – an accident waiting to happen	The authority transport a significant percentage of Primary aged pupils on provided Home to School transport and has a very good safety record in respect to this provision.
3.6 Other		
3.6.1	Concern about pupil well-being when on school transport	The well-being of pupils is prioritised as part of any school reorganisation process. If the school were to close the authority would provide support to ensure a smooth transition to the named receiving school, which would include the transport arrangements.
3.6.2	Concern that pupils could get upset on the bus	The well-being of pupils is prioritised as part of any school reorganisation process. If the school were to close the authority would provide support to ensure a smooth transition to the named receiving school, which would include the transport arrangements.
3.6.3	Parents would lose contact with the school and teachers would lose the ability to discuss issues at the start or end of the day	Communication between all parents and children is critical to their success at schools. Many pupils are transported to school by home to school transport, which means that their parents are unable to speak to the teachers at the start or end of the school day, however there are many other ways for schools to ensure that contact with parents is maintained, such as home to school books, regular telephone contact, e-mail etc.

3.6.4	Having to supervise journeys would create a substantial increase in transport costs for the council	The authority notes this comment, however the council does not normally include the provision of an escort on mainstream routes.
3.6.5	Statistics on RAC Foundation website – ‘60% of road fatalities occur on country roads. People killed on country roads is 10 times higher than on motorways. In 2014 there were 1040 fatalities and 9051 serious injuries on country roads.’	The authority notes this comment.
4 IMPACT ON STAFF		
4.1	Concern about the impact on staff	The authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for staff working in any school affected by the proposal
4.2	Concern that staff will lose their jobs	The authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for staff working in any school affected by the proposal
4.3	If the Cabinet decides to close the school, how would that affect the staff from the 31 st December 2016?	Should a decision be taken to close the school then consultation would be entered into with all of the relevant staff and Trades Unions.
4.4	How do teachers know that the next school will ensure pupils achieve the targets set by teachers here?	The authority would always ensure that all pupil performance data is shared between closing schools and receiving schools. In circumstances where pupils have moved schools following a school closure, staff in the closing school and the receiving school have worked closely to ensure seamless transition and effective sharing of individual pupil data. There is no evidence to show that pupils do not attain as well as they should.
4.5	If the school closes, what are the options for staff?	Should a decision be taken to close the school, staff would be entitled to be placed on the redeployment list and Powys County Council will make every effort to identify suitable alternative positions for them. In the event that a suitable alternative position is not identified then staff would be made redundant and compensated accordingly in line with the Council's policies and procedures. If staff choose to then they can volunteer for

		redundancy or early retirement (depending upon their personal circumstances).
4.6	Would staff need to pay back redundancy pay if they were re-employed by the authority within 12 months?	Powys County Council's policy is to not re-employ any employee who has received a redundancy payment for a period of 12 months, so staff would not be considered for a role with Powys County Council for a period of 12 months following any payment being made.
4.7	Is there enough capacity within HR to deal with the redundancy process if the school closes?	Should a decision be made to proceed with closure of the school, there is capacity available within HR to deal with the redundancy process.
4.8	Extra staff would be needed at Crossgates School to cope with the extra children – these may not necessarily be the staff from the closed schools	<p>The employment of staff at the receiving school is at the discretion of the governing body in collaboration with senior leaders.</p> <p>Whilst Powys County Council cannot force Headteachers or Governing Bodies to give priority to applications from redeployees, Headteachers recognise that in situations such as school closures it is not the fault of the redeployee that they are in the situation that they are and there is no implied criticism of their abilities or work performance. We are hopeful that Headteachers and Governing Bodies would be sympathetic to the position of redeployees. In the event that a decision is taken to close the school and pupils transfer to Crossgates CP School it may be possible to agree with the Governing Body of Crossgates CP School to give priority to staff who would otherwise be at risk of compulsory redundancy.</p>
5 IMPACT ON PARENTS / FAMILIES		
5.1 Removing choice for families		
5.1.1	There are many young people in the community who are planning to have children and want their children to go to this school	The authority notes this comment. However the current pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. Whilst the community has provided information which suggests that pupil numbers may increase, the school would continue to be a small school. The One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'

5.1.2	Couples have moved back to the area after university so that their children can go to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	The authority notes this comment. However the current pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. Whilst the community has provided information which suggests that pupil numbers may increase, the school would continue to be a small school. The One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
5.1.3	Parents consciously chose this school for the richness and distinctive approach to education within the community which it offers	The authority notes this comment. However the current pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. Whilst the community has provided information which suggests that pupil numbers may increase, the school would continue to be a small school. The One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
5.1.4	Should the school close there would be no choice for families – it would be Crossgates or nothing	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.1.5	Choice is being taken away from parents	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.1.6	Concern about removing choice for future generations	The authority notes this comment. However the current pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. Whilst the community has provided information which suggests that pupil numbers may increase, the school would continue to be a small school. The One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.' The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure.
5.1.7	Parents choose Dolau although	The authority notes this comment. However the current pupil numbers at Llanfihangel

	Crossgates is currently their closest school and they would get transport there	Rhydithon C.P. School are low. Whilst the community has provided information which suggests that pupil numbers may increase, the school would continue to be a small school. The One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
5.1.8	There is only one choice of alternative school which is Crossgates, we should have a second choice which is preferably a village school with a higher standard than we already have	The authority notes this comment.
5.1.9	I was under the impression that education was all about choice	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.1.10	Parents living in urban areas may be located within reasonable travel distance of several schools – this is a luxury that is being taken away from us in rural areas	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.1.11	Concerned about the lack of alternative options for parents	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.1.12	Parents travel 24 miles a day to take their children to Dolau School although this is not their closest school	The authority notes this comment.

5.1.13	Parents should have some choice about where their children are educated – different schools suit different children and trying to make one size fit all is removing parental choice	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close, parents would be able to apply for a place in any other school, therefore parents would still have freedom of choice about what type of school they wished their children to go to. However, it is acknowledged that there may be less schools in the local area, depending on the outcomes of proposals relating to other schools.
5.2 No choice of rural school		
5.2.1	Powys has closed all the local rural schools, so there is no choice for parents	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.2.2	Parents should be offered choice of educational setting for their children, small schools should be part of this choice	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.2.3	There would be no other rural option for parents	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.2.4	If Dolau School closed, there would be no other small, rural schools for parents to look at	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.2.5	If the school closes, this community will not have the choice to send their children to a small, rural school – that is not fair when other communities do have the choice	The authority notes this concern. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.2.6	Unfair that I can make a choice for my child to be taught either Welsh	The authority has a statutory duty to provide Welsh-medium education for pupils who choose it, there is no statutory requirement for the authority to provide access to a small /

	medium or English medium but I cannot have a choice between a large primary school or a small / rural primary school	rural primary school.
5.2.7	Powys needs to provide rural schools to encourage people seeking the lifestyle choices that Powys offers to move to the country	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high-quality education infrastructure taking account of the challenges faced by the county in terms of pupil numbers, leadership and finances.
5.3 Impact on families		
5.3.1	In Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, parents who are farmers can pop over and pick their children up from school in between jobs	The authority notes this comment.
5.3.2	The school is a hub for the parents to meet	The authority notes this comment.
5.3.3	Through the school, young families can build lifelong connections which make them want to remain in the area	The authority notes this comment.
5.3.4	Concern that parents could have children going to more than one school if Crossgates was full	The authority notes this concern.
5.3.5	Parents are worried about the education their children will receive	The authority notes this concern. Whilst the named receiving school is larger than Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, the authority's view is that the standard of education provided is at least equivalent to the standard of education currently provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
5.3.6	Parents will have to take children out of the community to have fun	The authority notes this concern.

5.4 Other		
5.4.1	Some pupils from out of the catchment area come to this school as some parents prefer smaller schools to big schools	The authority notes this comment. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the authority would continue to support the right of parents to apply for a place in any school, and places would be allocated, as long as there are places available.
5.4.2	Families living both locally and further afield apply to Dolau	The authority notes this comment. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the authority would continue to support the right of parents to apply for a place in any school, and places would be allocated, as long as there are places available.
5.4.3	What would your advice be to individual parents if they have a concern about the receiving school?	Parents who have concerns about the receiving school would be advised to visit the school and meet with the headteacher to discuss any questions or concerns they have.
5.4.4	Concern that there would be no primary school between Crossgates and Presteigne	The authority notes this comment.
5.4.5	We would consider home tutoring our children if the school closed	The authority notes this comment.
5.4.6	Many of the families here are from farming backgrounds – they don't have the option to move away to seek better education and opportunities for their children	The authority notes this comment.
6 IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY		
6.1 Community hall		
6.1.1	The community hall will suffer if the school closes	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss

		of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.2	Closure of the school would affect the community hall in terms of running costs, which would mean that many community events would not take place, and other groups would cease to exist	The authority acknowledges this concern. Whilst the authority's current proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.3	Continuing to support the Community Hall is no substitute for closing the school	The authority acknowledges that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.4	The village hall is used by the school during weekdays in school terms, and by parents and other adults in the evenings, weekends and school holidays	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.5	The school regularly uses the community hall	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.6	Concern that the community hall may end up as an empty building	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.7	The community hall is the centre of our community, clubs are hosted most nights of the week	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.8	The school has priority over use of the community hall during the day, but works with the community when necessary e.g. funeral teas, election days	The authority notes this comment.

6.1.9	What would happen about parking for the community hall if the school building is disposed of?	If the school were to close the authority would consider transferring / leasing part of the site to the community centre management committee for use as a car park. This could be as an extension of the lease referred to in 6.1.13 below.
6.1.10	The school and the community hall work in harmony with each other – the hall is used by the school for breakfast club, playgroup, lunch times, assemblies, wet weather playtimes and for some extra-curricular activities e.g. piano, brass, singing lessons	The authority notes this comment.
6.1.11	Closure of the school would lead to significant financial loss to the community hall – the school contributes £3700 per annum to the hall	The authority acknowledges this concern, and acknowledges that there would be a loss of income to the hall should the school close, due to the school's extensive use of the hall during the school day.
6.1.12	Reference to partnership with Powys County Council to provide a new community centre on the school site to provide statutory school hall provision	The authority funds the hall through the schools delegated budget for the school use of the hall for assemblies and other activities.
6.1.13	When the community hall opened in 1998, a 99 year lease was granted by the Council for use of all playground area as a car park when the school is not in use – this would limit the council's ability to sell the school buildings for development, leaving a derelict building	The authority notes this comment.

6.2 Provision for pre-school aged children		
6.2.1	The mothers and toddlers group meet weekly in the hall	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.2	The playgroup at Dolau enables local mothers and children to get to know each other	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.3	Mother and toddler group and playgroup bring people together	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.4	The mother and toddler group is thriving and the playgroup is popular	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.5	Dolau playgroup provides seamless progression from parent and toddler group to playgroup and then into school, for parents as well as children	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.6	Important to have local pre-school provision due to the lack of public transport	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.7	Pre-school provision offers friendship and peer support to avoid feelings of isolation which can lead to mental health problems like depression	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.8	There is seamless transition from parent and toddlers group to playgroup then on to school	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.9	Parent and toddler group arranges trips which provide support to parents	The authority notes this comment.

	at difficult times	
6.2.10	Closure of the school would impact on the parent and toddler group as people would not feel the same allegiance to the community	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.11	Continuity provided from Mothers and Toddlers, Playgroup, Preschool and school all on one site – an unusual situation which has huge emotional and developmental benefits for small children	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.12	When the change in the age of admission is implemented in 2017, the numbers in the playschool would rise, as in the few remaining settings in the area	The authority is, under a separate management of change process, currently developing tender documentation for the recommissioning of early years education. This recommissioning is expected to be completed by the end of the Autumn term.
6.2.13	There have been peaks and troughs in numbers in the playgroup – was once down to 2 and threatened with closure, now thriving with 15 members	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.14	Setting now at capacity with a waiting list, attracting children from up to 15 miles away	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.15	Concern about what would happen to the playgroup if the school were to close?	The authority is, under a separate management of change process, currently developing tender documentation for the recommissioning of early years education. This recommissioning is expected to be completed by the end of the Autumn term.
6.2.16	The mother and toddler group is the	The authority notes this comment.

	main point of interaction with other mothers in the area when new mums move to the area and makes it easier for them to settle in the area	
6.2.17	CSSIW inspection of Dolau playgroup in January 2015 had good findings	This authority accepts that this is a true statement.
6.2.18	Estyn inspection of Dolau playgroup in 2011 – outcome was ‘good’	This authority accepts that this is a true statement.
6.2.19	Playgroup is beneficial to the mental health and well-being of people in this rural community	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.20	Playgroup is currently running at a profit	The authority notes this comment.
6.2.21	Concern about the jobs of those that work in the playgroup – would alternative employment be provided in the next nearest setting?	If the early years setting were to close at the same time as the school the authority would look to seek alternative employment for the staff in accordance with the same management of change process used for the staff funded through the schools delegated budget.
6.2.22	Pre-school groups would not be viable on their own if pre-school funding were not available	The authority is, under a separate management of change process, currently developing tender documentation for the recommissioning of early years education. This recommissioning is expected to be completed by the end of the Autumn term.
6.3 Other community organisations and activities		
6.3.1	Concern about impact on the youth club, which has been in existence for nearly 20 years, and meets twice a week for young people to take part in a range of activities and learn many skills	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the youth club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

6.3.2	Concern about impact on the YFC	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the local YFC. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.3	The school is a seeding ground for other groups such as the youth club and the YFC – without the school, these groups will not exist	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on other groups in the area. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.4	Concern about impact on the bowls club, which has been running for over 15 years	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the local bowls club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.5	Where will the community groups who use the school's facilities go?	As part of the closure process, the authority would consider the impact of the closure on the community and in particular those groups that use the school facilities. The school is co-located with the community hall and it is the authority's understanding that many of the community groups also use this facility. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.6	Concern that if the school closes, many activities would cease to continue	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on activities in the area. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.7	Groups such as the YFC, WI, short mat bowls bring people together	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on other groups in the area. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the

		community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.8	The youth club has seen numbers drop in recent years but is once again thriving	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the local youth club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.9	Dolau YFC gives many opportunities to meet other young people from surrounding local areas	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.10	Children would not travel to youth club in Llandrindod if the youth club in Dolau ended. There is no youth club in Crossgates.	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the local youth club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.11	Dolau Mixture choir meets in the community hall – concern about the impact on the choir	The authority notes this comment in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the Dolau Mixture choir. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.12	Organisations pay a fee for hire of the hall. Closure of the school would mean less use of the hall during the day, which would lead to increased hire fees for users, which would mean that it would no longer be affordable and would lead to the disbandment of the choir	As part of the closure process the authority would consider the impact of the closure on the community. The payment from the school's budget to the hall is for the costs incurred by the hall during the school's use. These costs would not be incurred if the school closed, although the authority recognises that the current payment also supports some other ongoing costs such as R & M.
6.3.13	The school feeds the Youth Club, the	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term

	local YFC and brings new members to the WI	sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.14	Children that have been to the school go on to the Youth Club then to other youth organisations in the village	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.15	Concern about how the youth club will survive if there is no school	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the local youth club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.16	If the school closes, membership of community groups is likely to dwindle as parents will be attracted to groups linked to the new school	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on community groups. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.17	The community has organised 'one off' celebrations and events such as the Queens Diamond Jubilee, Royal Wedding, annual village walk, Nights Out Scheme	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.18	Without collaboration with the school, events would be less well attended, possibly less frequent	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on local events. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.19	In Dolau, links with the community start with the toddler group, then the	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social

	playgroup then the school, then the local youth club, young farmers club, WI, bowls club etc, which are all based on the school site	factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.20	Concern about impact on Dolau Recreation Association	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the Dolau Recreation Association. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.3.21	Concern about impact on Football Club	The authority notes this concern in relation to the impact of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on the Football Club. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4 Concern about impact of closing a school on the community / village		
6.4.1	For a rural community to be bereft of a primary school is a travesty	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.2	Community schools shouldn't be closed as this would damage the community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.3	The school is the heart of the community / village	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

6.4.4	Closing the school would be failing the community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.5	Closing the school will kill the community / village	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.6	The school is a vital facility in a rural area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.7	Failure to consider the impact on the wider community is short-sighted in the extreme	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.8	There would be nothing for children to do around the village	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.9	The impact on the well-being of the community would be enormous	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.10	Closure of the school would have an adverse effect on the cohesiveness of the surrounding communities	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

6.4.11	The school is the hub of the community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.12	The close knit community will lose its 'centre' – the school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.13	Closing the school would force families to scatter, and to travel in their car more often – this goes against country and PCC policy	If Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School closes, analysis of pupils' home postcodes suggests that Crossgates C.P. School would be the closest school for the majority of pupils, therefore families would not scatter. In accordance with the authority's Home-to-School transport policy, free transport would be provided to pupils who live further than 2 miles from their closest school. The Authority acknowledges that there may be some additional travel involved for families to access school related activities, however the distances involved are not excessive.
6.4.14	Closure of the school would have a detrimental impact on the whole community, not just families with young children	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.15	Closure of the school would be another nail in the coffin of this small community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.16	Closure would cause rural isolation, lack of social activities, will turn the village into a retirement hub	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.17	The school is essential for the people who live and work in this part of	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social

	Powys	factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.18	Schools are the nucleus of a community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.19	The village would suffer a huge blow in terms of status and pride if the school closed	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.20	A report by the Commission for Rural Communities states that: 'Small village schools are in close contact with families and have a track record for providing good outcomes for children. Based in isolated communities, small schools may hold the key to engaging the most disadvantaged families, but their numbers are decreasing.'	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.21	Closure of a school is a choice to worsen the lives and chances of people in that community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.22	Closure of the school could lead to isolation	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.23	Reference to detrimental impact of	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term

	closure of Llangunllo school on the community	sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.24	Community impact assessment compiled on behalf of the community shows what would happen to the community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.25	Closure of the school would cause a negative impact on the artistic, social, cultural and social life of the area and could lead to loss of many sports, fitness and social activities, which appears opposite to the intentions of Welsh and National Governments	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.26	Research has found that closure of small schools not only creates divisions between communities, also leads to reduction in parental and community involvement in school life	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.4.27	Reference to work of Robinson and Whittaker (2012) on the effect of small school closures on rural communities – found that closures not only creates division between communities but also leads to a reduction in parental and community involvement in school life.	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5 Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Dolau		
6.5.1	Would have a detrimental impact on	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term

	university graduates or young professionals returning to the area for a more community orientated education provision	sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.2	Taking away the school will leave an elderly generation	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.3	A village school is a draw to young couples looking to set up home	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.4	A village with a shuttered up school always looks as if it's resigned to housing only the retired	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.5	Closure of the school would affect the demographics of the area – will lead to a loss of families with young children who want their children to go to a smaller country school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.6	Small schools such as Llanfihangel Rhydithon are important in bringing people to our area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.7	There is little to bring me back to the area from London without the opportunity for my children to have the same upbringing and small school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.

	experience that I had	
6.5.8	Closure would set Dolau on course to becoming a museum, a retirement village	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.9	People have settled down in the area in order for their children to go to Dolau school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.10	With no school, no local early years provision and reduced community activity, the area would have less to attract people	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.11	The village and surrounding area would lose its appeal to many young families	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.12	There will be nothing to encourage young families to move into the area because there will be no places for children in the schools	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.5.13	Powys needs more vision to get younger people into the area – if you close the schools how are you going to attract younger people?	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aspiration is to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the primary consideration when reorganising schools. The School Organisation Code states that 'the primary purpose of schools is the provision of education'. During the last five years, pupil numbers at the school have reduced from 34 to 29 which does not support the claim that a local school attracts young people or families into an area.
6.5.14	The Council needs to offer this	The authority notes this comment.

	community something better – a vision and a future where young people want to stay and work	
6.6 Impact on the local economy		
6.6.1	Will have a huge impact on the local economy as we will lose out on skills and professional individuals	It is acknowledged that the school plays a part in the local community. Community links can be maintained in the receiving school, which is five miles away from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
6.6.2	A community needs people with other skills, not just those who want to farm the land	It is acknowledged that the school plays a part in the local community. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
6.6.3	The school employs local people, closure would impact on incomes	The authority notes this comment. If a decision is made to proceed with the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, a staff redundancy process would be necessary. This would be conducted in line with the School's Redundancy Policies for teaching and support staff.
6.6.4	Concern that houses would lose value if there were no school in the village	It is acknowledged that the school plays a part in the local community. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
6.6.5	Lack of rural employment will be exacerbated by the closure	It is acknowledged that the school plays a part in the local community. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
6.6.6	The school is part of the rural economy that pays for Powys County Council	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues.
6.6.7	The Council hasn't fully thought through the implication of the loss of	The Authority has published a draft community impact assessment, this will be updated to take account of views received during the consultation period, and will be considered by

	the school for the rural economy	Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
6.7 Reference to the One Powys Plant / Powys County Council's Vision – 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'		
6.7.1	We are led to believe that supporting community well-being is one of the paramount aims of Powys County Council, however this is not reflected by this proposal	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.7.2	The Council's slogan is 'Strong Communities in the Green Heart of Wales' – by taking away the school you will be killing the community in Dolau	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.7.3	Motto is laughable – closing the school will contribute to weak communities in the green desert of Wales	It is true that the Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.7.4	The One Powys Plan for Stronger Communities states that by the end of 2017 'our towns and villages are more community focused, self-reliant and resilient' – how can this be if our children are bussed to schools further away and out of our community?	The Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
6.7.5	Closure of the school will weaken the strong bonds in our community and act against the objectives of the One Powys Plan for Stronger	The Council's vision is 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'. However, one of the Council's priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is 'Transforming Learning and Skills'. Within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate

	Communities	leadership capacity.’
6.7.6	Older people help our children by listening to them read – this contributes to the One Powys Plan’s objective to support old people in the community	The authority notes that the One Powys Plan includes an aspiration that ‘Older people will be supported to lead fulfilled lives within their communities’. ‘Transforming learning and skills’ is another of the priorities within the One Powys Plan, with the aspiration that ‘All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential’. Within this priority, the Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
6.7.7	The One Powys Plan talks of protecting and promoting sustainable communities – we already have that in Dolau, we need to ensure that this is not jeopardised	It is true that one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan is ‘Stronger, safer and economically viable communities’. ‘Transforming learning and skills’ is another of the priorities within the One Powys Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
6.7.8	The recommendations are contrary to council policy and would undermine the core values the council is trying to promote of stronger communities	It is true that the Council’s vision is ‘Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales’. However, one of the Council’s priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is ‘Transforming Learning and Skills’. Within this priority, the Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
6.7.9	One Powys Plan states that ‘In strong communities people are in touch, talk to and help each other out. They are more likely to feel that they belong and have a sense of pride about where they live. With reduced public sector funding, it is important we work together to develop resilient sustainable communities both in rural and urban areas’ – closing the school would be against this	The notes this comment in relation to the content of the One Powys Plan with regard to Stronger Communities. However, one of the Council’s priorities, as outlined in the One Powys Plan, is ‘Transforming Learning and Skills’. Within this priority, the Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
6.8 Issues relating to rural isolation		

6.8.1	The challenges of rural isolation will be exacerbated by closure of the school	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.8.2	It is widely recognised that people living in rural areas can suffer from social isolation or deprivation	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.8.3	Closure would exacerbate loneliness and isolation in the area	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.9 Other		
6.9.1	What will happen to the school buildings if the Council goes ahead with closure?	If the school were to shut the Schools Service would declare the building surplus to its requirements. If no other service wished to take over the building, the building and land would be disposed of in accordance with the authority's asset disposal policy.
6.9.2	In Penybont the Public House is the centre of the community – would councillors rather a pub or a school be the centre of a community?	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aspiration is to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the primary consideration when reorganising schools. The School Organisation Code states that 'the primary purpose of schools is the provision of education'. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
6.9.3	What weighting is given to the impact on the community of a school's closure? – according to Welsh Government guidelines, weighting should be applied	The Community Impact Assessment is one of a number of considerations to be taken into account by Cabinet when determining how to proceed. There is no weighting to any of the considerations.
6.9.4	There is a lack of facilities in the local	The authority notes this comment.

	area – no play parks, swimming facilities, leisure centres, soft play	
6.9.5	The Community Impact Assessment recognises the high level of community activity and support provided	The Community Impact Assessment is one of a number of considerations to be taken into account by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.9.6	Reference to impact of closure of Llangunllo School on that community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
6.9.7	Presence of a school is one element that makes for a sustainable community	The authority notes this comment. The aim of the Proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of a high quality education infrastructure. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues. The impact of closing the school on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
7 ISSUES RELATING TO PUPIL NUMBERS / SURPLUS PLACES		
7.1 Expected increase in pupil numbers		
7.1.1	There are lots of young families in the area who want their children to go to the school	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.2	On the day of the proposed closure, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School will be over capacity	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.3	The early years setting at the school is growing weekly – there are 15 children on the books and more are showing an interest in joining	The authority notes this comment.

7.1.4	The numbers that attend the mother and toddlers group are also growing	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.5	Pupil numbers are set to increase not decrease	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.6	Play school numbers currently stand at 17 which is a good indication of future school numbers	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.7	Dolau is having another baby boom	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.8	New properties are being built in the area, which will encourage people to move to the area	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.9	Pupil numbers have dropped recently but the population is increasing	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.10	A list of prospective pupils is available and has been shared with the council	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.11	There are a number of children on the list to come to this school next term and in the future, the same is true for the early years setting	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.12	In January 2017 there will be 36 pupils in the school including nursery, meaning that the school will be full to capacity	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.13	Numbers are forecast to increase due to good attendance at the playgroup which has 15 children and mother	The authority notes this comment.

	and toddler group which has 20 children	
7.1.14	Surplus capacity at Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Crossgates will be required to accommodate pupils	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.15	Local Health Board has recently spent considerable money on the maternity unit in Llandrindod hospital, anticipating the birth rate will not drop	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.16	In terms of pupil numbers and surplus places, the school is moving in a positive direction and will soon meet the Council's criteria. Should one more pupil move to the school it would reduce the current surplus places to less than 15%	Surplus places is only one of the criteria considered by the authority when reviewing schools. Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, and whilst they are expected to increase in the coming years, they are expected to remain below 50.
7.1.17	Closure of small schools is irreversible – should the population increase, there would be no school to accommodate the children	The authority notes this comment.
7.1.18	The Council can't afford to be building more school extensions to accommodate the forthcoming surge in pupil numbers when it already has good functional buildings strategically placed that are performing well	The authority notes this comment.
7.2 Fluctuations in pupil numbers		
7.2.1	Pupils numbers at the school have	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current

	fluctuated – 36 years ago pupil numbers were below 20	pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.2	Presumption in the consultation document that pupil numbers will continue to be below 50, however pupil numbers fluctuate – have previously gone down to 11 and risen to over 60 in a few years	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.3	Pupil numbers fluctuate depending on the generation	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.4	The numbers attending the playgroup in Dolau went down to two children at one point, however they have since increased significantly	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.5	There is currently a natural dip in numbers in schools in the area and currently there are fewer children	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.6	The proposal is ‘short termist’ – there will be dips in the population but numbers will rise	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’

7.2.7	Only 3 years ago, there were 43 children in the school – we are being targeted for closure now because we are short of numbers	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.2.8	Hope the council will put full weight behind the potential pupil numbers that will need to be accommodated in its rural schools, which will fluctuate year on year	The authority accepts that pupil numbers in small rural schools fluctuate. However, current pupil numbers are low, and whilst information has been received from the community which suggests that pupil numbers may grow, the school would remain small. The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’
7.3 Decline in pupil numbers		
7.3.1	Numbers at the school would increase if our schools future could be safeguarded	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges that any school reorganisation process will lead to a period of uncertainty for the schools affected. The authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty.
7.3.2	Where have Powys’ figures that say pupil numbers will go down come from?	The projected pupil numbers provided in the consultation document show that pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are expected to increase in the coming years.
7.3.3	The estimated transport costs are based on 28 pupils, predicted numbers by January 2017 are higher, which would raise the costs to £29,640	The majority of the cost of running transport is linked to the provision of the bus, additional pupils may impact on the marginal cost of the additional transport.
7.4 Housing developments in the local area		
7.4.1	130 new houses are going to be built in Crossgates, and a development of affordable housing is also planned for	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.

	Llanddewi	
7.4.2	You have to accept that pupil numbers could increase in a few years if more houses are built and there are more jobs	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.3	Development plans are underway to develop new housing in Dolau which would make the school even more viable	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.4	There is planning for more houses in Dolau and the local area, including in the catchment area of the school e.g. Llandewi, Llandegley and Penybont – where will the children go?	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.5	18 houses currently being built in Llanddewi	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.6	High level of planning permission in Llandrindod, Crossgates, Llanddewi, Dolau and Penybont – where do you propose the additional children be educated?	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.7	64 new homes have been approved in Crossgates	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.
7.4.8	Powys 2011-2026 Written Statement says that from January 2015, 398 housing units are in the planning	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and is aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers.

	process in the Llandrindod area.	
7.4.9	With the roll out of faster broadband and more house building in the area, there will be a migration of younger, family aged people who can homework	The authority notes this comment.
7.5 Issues relating to other schools		
7.5.1	Short term thinking to close a school to fill a larger school which is under 30% short of capacity	The Council is not proposing closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in order to fill another school.
7.5.2	Closure of rural schools will leave the council short of school places	The authority is required to plan future school places as part of their Asset Managemnet Plan. It is aware of the pressures on pupil places in some areas of the Llandrindod catchment area.
7.5.3	Has any research been done to discover if parents at other recently closed schools would like places at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School?	The Council has not asked parents at other recently closed schools whether they would like places at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, however parents are entitled to apply for a place at any school they choose, and places would be allocated as long as there were places available.
7.5.4	Original planned size of Trefonnen was cut down, and the school cannot now accommodate all pupils within its catchment area	Trefonnen School was built at its planned size of 240 pupils, there has been some pressure for places in Llandrindod, partly caused by the turbulent nature of family movement in the area.
7.6 Pupil numbers / capacity at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School		
7.6.1	The school is viable despite being below the 50 required	Small schools are provided additional funding to ensure that they can function with a staffing level that meets statutory class size requirements, this funding results in the smaller schools having a higher than average funding when measured on a per pupil basis.

7.6.2	The full capacity of Dolau would only be 36, it seems to me that the school is already fairly full	The school has three class bases of 40, 47 and 50 sq m including the mobile classroom. If all three spaces were included in the capacity calculation the total number of available spaces would be 70.
7.6.3	The fact that there are less than 50 children is neither here nor there, this is a purely arbitrary number used to suit the council's purposes	The authority notes this comment.
7.6.4	There is no evidence that children attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are suffering educationally because there are fewer than 50 children in the school	The standard of education provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why the authority is proposing closure of the school. However, the authority's view is that education that is at least of an equivalent standard would be provided at the named receiving school.
7.6.5	If pupil numbers were falling below 15-20 children with numbers predicted to fall below 10, could understand a review taking place, but our school is thriving – numbers are way above 20	The authority notes this comment. One of the criteria for reviewing schools as stated in the School Transformation Policy (2014) is 'a primary school has fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years'. Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are below 50, and whilst pupil numbers are projected to increase, they are not expected to increase to above 50.
7.6.6	The capacity of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently 36. With negligible expense and by utilising the end room, this could be increased to 61. With the inclusion of the temporary classroom, the school could accommodate 80 plus children in the future if needed	The school has three class bases of 40, 47 and 50 sq m including the mobile classroom. If all three spaces were included in the capacity calculation the total number of available spaces would be 70.
7.7 Other		
7.7.1	The refugee crisis could be turned to our advantage	The authority notes this comment.

7.7.2	There is no direct association between school numbers and success	The authority acknowledges that there are good examples of small schools and of larger schools.
7.7.3	The authority is biased against small schools – this is shown by the fact that numbers being below 50 is one of the main reasons for closure	The authority acknowledges that there are good examples of small schools and of larger schools. However, the One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’ Pupil numbers below 50 was one of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) for ranking schools, and this is why it is one of the reasons listed for proposing to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
7.7.4	Claimed that the council can work out how many children would be entering a school until 2030, however there have already been mistakes in calculations such as Trefonnen and Newbridge, which are full in many year groups	The authority through the Welsh Government’s statistical department has high level population data forecasts for the next 2 decades, these projections give the authority the general trend in population growth etc. The authority has seen some pressure for pupil places in some areas of the Llandrindod catchment.
8 POSITIVES ABOUT LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P. SCHOOL		
8.1 Standards / educational provision		
8.1.1	Pupils benefit from the excellent education provided at the school	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.2	The school provides outstanding education to children	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.3	Educational standards in Dolau are	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.

	exceptional	School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.4	Dolau is a tremendous school, it achieves top level marks	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.5	High standards of work are expected of pupils	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.6	The high standard of education at the school gives children the foundation knowledge they need	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.7	Standard of education received at the school encourages pupils to stay in education	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.8	The school is categorised as a yellow school with 100% attainment at foundation phase and KS2 – it is in the top 11% of pupils in Powys	All schools in Wales are categorised annually by the four consortia in line with Welsh Government guidelines. This data is accurate for 2015. However, in 2014 at key stage 2, the school performed in the bottom 25% of similar schools in all subjects.
8.1.9	The school does very well in league tables	There are no league tables for schools in Wales. All schools in Wales are categorised annually by the four consortia in line with Welsh Government guidelines.
8.1.10	The school is in the top 15% of achievement in both Key Stages 1 & 2 in Powys	Key Stage 1 no longer exists in Wales. Pupils are assessed against Foundation Phase outcomes at the end of Year 2. This data is accurate for 2015. However, in 2014 at key stage 2, the school performed in the bottom 25% of similar schools in all subjects.

8.1.11	It is an effective and well performing school	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.12	The education provided at Dolau is far better than the education at Crossgates	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.13	Children have had an excellent, well rounded education at the school	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.14	We have high standards of attainment at this school	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed. However, should the school close, the authority is satisfied that education of an equivalent standard would be provided to pupils at the named receiving school.
8.1.15	Teaching and leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School are not in question	The authority notes this comment. The standard of teaching and leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not one of the reasons why closure of the school is being proposed.
8.1.16	The school is categorised as yellow, this means that less support is needed from the local authority	The authority notes this comment. The named receiving school is also categorised as yellow.
8.2 Class Sizes		
8.2.1	The smaller class sizes at the school allow for individual and personal help in specific areas	The authority notes this comment. Pupils achieve well in larger classes and in smaller classes. The aspiration for primary education in Powys is to have schools with single year group classes, and schools that have headteachers with no classroom responsibilities.

8.2.2	The smaller class sizes at the school mean that pupils can be challenged further in areas they are better at	The authority notes this comment. All schools would be expected to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils, regardless of class size.
8.2.3	As the class sizes are small, children get the opportunity to do work aimed at older children if they are ready – they would not get this help and support in classes of 32 plus	All teachers differentiate and target work for pupils, whatever their age or ability. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
8.2.4	The smaller class sizes in the school mean that pupils can have more one to one support	The authority notes this comment. All schools would be expected to provide an appropriate level of support to each child in order to meet their needs.
8.2.5	The smaller class sizes in the school are beneficial to pupils education, behaviour and motivation	There is no evidence to substantiate this comment. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
8.2.6	The pupil-teacher ratio is very good, at a level many people around the country would choose to pay for in an independent school – it is perverse that anyone would seek to remove from a community such as Dolau the kind of provision that would be privately paid for in other parts of the country	The authority notes this comment. However, class sizes in Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are very small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
8.3 Behaviour and Attendance		
8.3.1	High standard of behaviour is expected of pupils	The authority notes this comment. However, a high standard of behaviour is expected of pupils at all Powys schools.
8.3.2	Children in the school are always enthusiastic and their behaviour is	The authority notes this comment.

	impeccable	
8.3.3	Dolau children are always a credit to their school and their parents	The authority notes this comment.
8.3.4	High attendance proves the children enjoy being in this school and don't pretend to be ill	All schools make an effort to ensure that pupils are genuinely ill when they are absent from school. If a pupil is absent for other reasons this would be investigated and the correct support would be put in place.
8.3.5	The school is top of Powys' own league table for attendance	The authority acknowledges that attendance figures at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are high. The latest provisional attendance report for 2015-16 places the school in equal 4 th . However, attendance can vary year on year.
8.3.6	Children are polite and well-mannered and cause no problems or concerns	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that the pupils would not be polite and well-mannered if they attended a different school.
8.3.7	Children are always complimented on their behaviour	The authority note this comment.
8.3.8	Pupils are taught good behaviour and manners from an early age in this small rural school where staff have time to spend with pupils	The authority notes this comment. The authority would expect pupils at all Powys schools to be taught good behaviour and manners.
8.3.9	Pupils demonstrate a tremendous sense of pride and belonging	The authority notes this comment.
8.4 Buildings and Facilities		
8.4.1	The school provides a great learning environment	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.2	The school has wonderful buildings and a hall	The authority notes this comment.

8.4.3	The school has a good solid building which has many years left in it	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.4	The school has a sound building and outdoor areas	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.5	The school is in good repair and would be left empty	The authority notes this comment. Should the school close the Schools Service would declare it surplus to its requirement and the authority would implement its asset management transfer and disposal policy.
8.4.6	The school has excellent facilities, particularly when taken into consideration with the community hall	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.7	The children can learn and play whilst observing the farming culture they are a part of – these sights cannot be observed at Crossgates as they are at Llanfihangel Rhydithon	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.8	The children are currently in a solid, low maintenance buildings, where they have space to learn effectively and develop as lifelong learners	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.9	May be an old building, but it functions without the ongoing snagging lists of other schools built in the last few years	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.10	The condition of the school building is good and there is room to expand	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.11	The building is more than 80 years	The authority notes this comment.

	old but is in very good repair inside and out	
8.4.12	The school has excellent ICT facilities	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.13	The school is modern on the inside and has a good play area outside	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.14	Lovely outdoor area has been enhanced by covered area, agility trail, conservation area, play house etc.	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.15	The school only needs double glazing and minor tweaking to bring it up to standard	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.16	Building condition score is C, but the only work identified is repointing a chimney breast and some double glazing – priority score of 3	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.17	In 80 years, the building has had an extension and some cosmetic repairs. In this time, Trefonnen has been replaced at least twice and Crossgates which only opened 40 years ago has been almost totally rebuilt	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.18	There is plenty of room in the classrooms	The authority notes this comment.
8.4.19	Can you confirm the last time any general maintenance work was	The last job undertaken at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was work to repair an issue with emergency lighting in June. The job does not have a final cost, but has an estimated

	carried out on Dolau School along with the cost?	cost of £82.
8.5 Opportunities for pupils		
8.5.1	As the number of pupils is small, all pupils had to take part in sports opportunities, which is good for children's health	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that the small number of pupils at the school means that all pupils can take part in activities.
8.5.2	Pupils can take part in many activities e.g. football coaching after school, visit to the theatre	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.3	Musical nativity play held at the Albert Hall, Llandrindod at Christmas to a packed auditorium. All pupils had a speaking part.	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that the small number of pupils at the school means that all pupils can take part in activities.
8.5.4	The school has taken part in the Llandrindod Children's Eisteddfod for the last three years – the smallest school taking part, but have continued to be consistent in the quality of their work and gained prizes in all categories	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.5	Pupils play a key role alongside teachers in guiding new pupils and young children	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.6	Range of extra-curricular clubs and lessons are available for children e.g. breakfast club, piano lessons, trumpet lessons, eco club, eisteddfod club,	The authority notes this comment.

	football club, gardening club	
8.5.7	Extra-curricular opportunities offered at the school are beneficial to pupils	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.8	Children are happy at the school and support each other	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that children would not be happy at an alternative school.
8.5.9	All children are able to take part in everything – all activities and lessons	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that the small number of pupils at the school means that all pupils can take part in activities.
8.5.10	Lots of opportunities provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School e.g. trips, swimming galas, cross country, singing carols, harvest, Christmas plays	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.11	Pupils in other schools don't have the same opportunities to take part in activities	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.12	Extra-curricular activities are better at Dolau	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.13	Breakfast club is very popular, attended by over half of pupils regularly	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.14	Mylocalschool.com provides information about the % of pupils who enjoy PE lessons – Llanfihangel Rhydithon – 87.5%, Powys average – 65.7%, Wales average – 60.1%	The authority notes this comment.
8.5.15	The school regularly enters and	The authority notes this comment.

	competes in district wide events and is always commended for its efforts	
8.6 Staff		
8.6.1	As the number of pupils is small, teachers have the time to give pupils all the help they needed	The authority notes this comment. All teachers are expected to give pupils all the help they need, regardless of how many pupils there are.
8.6.2	Teachers at Dolau always taught to a high standard despite them teaching a wide age range	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.3	As it is a small school, teachers can give extra support to children that need it	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that extra support would not be provided to children that need it in an alternative school.
8.6.4	The teaching staff are excellent / amazing	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.5	The teaching staff are very committed	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.6	The staff are committed to helping the children in any way they can and are always approachable	The authority notes this comment. The authority would expect staff in all schools to be committed to helping the children in any way they can and to be approachable.
8.6.7	The school has a superb team of teachers led by a shared Headteacher	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.8	There are young, dedicated teachers at the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.9	There is an experienced, popular, approachable Headteacher at the	The authority notes this comment.

	school	
8.6.10	Teachers at the school are dedicated and make a lot of effort with each child	The authority notes this comment. The authority would expect teachers in all schools to be dedicated and to make an effort with each child.
8.6.11	Teachers choose termly topics that spark the children's interest	The authority notes this comment.
8.6.12	The school has a strong team of staff and governors who are constantly driving educational standards up towards the green band	The authority notes this comment.
8.7 Support provided to the school		
8.7.1	The school is well supported by parents, grandparents and community members	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.
8.7.2	'Friends of Dolau School' PTA group raise large sums of money to provide funds for extras such as swimming bus and educational visits away from the village	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by the PTA.
8.7.3	'Friends of Dolau School' have raised nearly £29,000 for the children of the school in the last 5 years	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by the Friends of Dolau School.
8.7.4	£11,000 more has been raised this year, with £8,000 raised in a single night through a promise aucation	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by the Friends of Dolau School.
8.7.5	There is good local support for the	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school.

	school e.g. fund raising to provide equipment for the school e.g. laptops, shelter and climbing frame, items for the eco garden	
8.7.6	Volunteers from the community help out in the school e.g. listening to children reading, after school football and other activities, rugby, provide money for swimming bus and school outings	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by members of the community.
8.7.7	The community has always supported the school	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by members of the community.
8.7.8	Friends of Dolau School events are lovely social gatherings that bring the community together	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges that social events arranged by the Friends of Dolau School help to bring the community together.
8.7.9	Friends of Dolau School have raised £28K over a number of years to finance play equipment and to subsidise school trips and swimming. Larger primary schools struggle to form a committee.	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges the support provided to the school by the Friends of Dolau School.
8.7.10	Would be ill judged to think that the support provided to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would automatically be transferred to Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
8.7.11	Fund raising occasions for the school are enjoyable with a variety of themes and are lots of fun so nobody minds	The authority notes this comment.

	giving	
8.7.12	Breakfast club is a valuable addition to the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8 Friendly nature of the school		
8.8.1	It is a community and a family as well as a school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.2	Dolau is a very friendly school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.3	The community feel of the school has allowed friendships to form and be maintained for a lifetime	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.4	There is a strong sense of family at this school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.5	If a child is upset in the playground, others will come to their aid immediately – this rarely happens in large schools where there are hundreds of children in the playground	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.6	Many pupils have been accepted into the school over the years who have not been accepted in other schools	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.7	There is a friendly, community atmosphere in the school which encourages children in all aspects of their development	The authority notes this comment.

8.8.8	There is a genuine warmth and passion about the school	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.9	There is a caring environment	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.10	Bullying is rare and resolved immediately in those rare instances	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a very small school, and therefore it is possible that there are fewer incidents of bullying at this school than at larger schools. However, bullying occurs in all schools and the important issue is how the school responds to bullying, when it occurs, addressing the needs of both the young person who has experienced the bullying and the young person who has carried out the bullying.</p> <p>The named receiving school has an effective anti-bullying policy, which is regularly reviewed, and this is part of the Safeguarding arrangements within the school.</p>
8.8.11	Older children look after younger ones, each new child has a buddy to help them settle in	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.12	There is no bullying in Dolau, unlike other nearby schools	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a very small school, and therefore it is possible that there are fewer incidents of bullying at this school than at larger schools. However, bullying occurs in all schools and the important issue is how the school responds to bullying, when it occurs, addressing the needs of both the young person who has experienced the bullying and the young person who has carried out the bullying.</p> <p>The named receiving school has an effective anti-bullying policy, which is regularly reviewed, and this is part of the Safeguarding arrangements within the school.</p>
8.8.13	Pupils are friends with pupils in other years	The authority notes this comment.
8.8.14	Children from all backgrounds are welcomed at the school	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expected to welcome children from all backgrounds.
8.8.15	Everyone knows each other	The authority notes this comment.

8.8.16	Pupils of all ages play together	The authority notes this comment.
8.9 Success of previous pupils		
8.9.1	Former pupils feel that they wouldn't be where they are today without the school	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to be successful should they attend a different school.
8.9.2	Pupils achieved better than expected because of the school	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.3	Previous pupils gained many life skills from attending Dolau School	The authority notes this comment. The authority would expect pupils to continue to have the opportunity to gain a wide range of life skills should they attend a different school.
8.9.4	The school has produced high level scholars	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.5	Past pupils have gone into many walks of life – this will not happen if the school closes	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.6	The school produces year 7 pupils that are ready and prepared to learn at high school, well-rounded young people	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to be ready and prepared to learn at high school should they attend a different school.
8.9.7	The excellent start provided to pupils at the school is evidenced by pupils' achievements at Llandrindod High School – the school produced many head boys and girls and sports captains	The authority is pleased to note the success of previous pupils of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to have the same success should they attend a different school.

8.9.8	Children from Dolau have always done better than children from Crossgates	Both Crossgates C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. were classified as 2B Yellow in the National Classification of Schools in 2015-2016.
8.9.9	Dolau has an outstanding record of high achievers	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.10	School enabled pupils to achieve their full potentially academically as well as being encouraged as community members	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.11	A child who might have been labelled a disruptive child had they gone to a different school left the school on target thanks to the hard work and excellent staff at Dolau	The authority is pleased to note the success of previous pupils. There is no reason to believe that the child would not have left the school on target had they attended a different school.
8.9.12	Many pupils from Dolau have gone on to achieve wonderful results at GCSE, AS and A Level, and many have gone on to higher education and have had high power roles in society	The authority notes this comment. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to achieve to the best of their ability should they attend a different school.
8.9.13	Pupil attending Dolau School has changed from a shy toddler to being confident, happy and well spoken	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that the child would not also have gained confidence in this way had they attended a different school.
8.10 The school's place in the community		
8.10.1	The school is a place where families in isolated homes come together and support each other	The authority notes this comment.

8.10.2	The school gate is an important meeting place and reduces isolation	The authority notes this comment.
8.10.3	There is community spirit and enthusiasm at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School which is not seen in Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
8.10.4	The school and the community work hand in hand at Dolau	The authority notes this comment.
8.10.5	The school takes part in many village functions	The authority notes this comment.
8.11 Financial issues		
8.11.1	The school budget is in the black	This statement is true. The school ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £13,359.
8.11.2	Having a non-teaching shared head has saved some money, and the school has two recently qualified excellent young teachers who are under the average cost bracket	The authority notes this comment. The saving in relation to the shared head position is a saving for the individual schools, as the funding is delegated.
8.11.3	The governing body have maintained good financial control	The school ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £13,359, and have a planned cumulative surplus of £3,832 for the year ended 31st March 2017.
8.11.4	The school is good value for money	The school's cost per pupil for 2016/17 is £4410, which is 125% of the council's average cost per pupil.
8.12 Support provided to pupils		
8.12.1	Children get the care and support they need and learn the key skills	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that children would not receive the same care and support at an alternative school.

	they need to support them throughout their academic lives	
8.12.2	At this school, a child is not merely a number, and can be supported as an individual to achieve their potential – not simply their academic potential	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expected to support all pupils as individuals to achieve their potential.
8.12.3	The school provides educational and emotional support to pupils	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that similar educational and emotional support would be provided to pupils at an alternative school.
8.12.4	Level of attention given in the school is astonishing, can only be received in a small school	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expected to provide an appropriate level of support to pupils to ensure that they can achieve their potential.
8.12.5	The school is able to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils e.g. pupils with dyslexia benefit from the additional support provided, gifted and talented children can take advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities available, middle of the road children are pushed	The authority works hard with schools to ensure that they can meet the needs of all pupils. There is no reason to believe that Crossgates C.P. School is unable to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils.
8.12.6	Dolau school treats each child individually and caters for their individual needs	The authority notes this comment. All schools are expected to treat pupils as individuals and to cater for their individual needs.
8.13 Other		
8.13.1	Dolau is a school the village can be proud of	The authority notes this comment.
8.13.2	The school is the embodiment of a successful and thriving place of	The authority notes this comment.

	education for our children	
8.13.3	The school is proud of its history and ready to take on the challenges of the modern world	The authority notes this comment. However, pupil numbers at the school are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
8.13.4	Latest inspection report stated that 'This is a good school, an excellent ethos of care, guidance and support. It is a highly valued member of its local community, with which there are excellent links benefiting pupils. On leaving Dolau, pupils are confident, independent and self-assured young people. They possess excellent social skills which contribute to their outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to others.' Also rates the school in the effectiveness of its care, guidance, leadership and support for pupils.	This statement does not appear in the report of the Estyn inspection of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School carried out in May 2012. During this inspection, standards were judged to be Adequate and the school's prospects for improvement were also judged as Adequate.
8.13.5	Any small problems are resolved immediately	The authority notes this comment.
8.13.6	The school is strategically located and already acts as an area school	The authority notes this comment. However, pupil numbers at the school are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
8.13.7	The classes aren't too noisy so they can concentrate	The authority notes this comment. However class sizes at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are very small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
9 POSITIVES ABOUT SMALL / RURAL SCHOOLS		

9.1 Benefits of small schools		
9.1.1	In small schools, everyone knows each other, so pupils know that they can go to anyone if they have a problem	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that in small schools, everyone knows each other. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
9.1.2	In small schools, pupils have a good base of friends for when they move to high school	The authority notes this comment.
9.1.3	In small schools, everyone wants to be each other's friend, so there is no bullying	<p>The authority notes this comment. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a very small school, and therefore it is possible that there are fewer incidents of bullying at this school than at larger schools. However, bullying occurs in all schools and the important issue is how the school responds to bullying, when it occurs, addressing the needs of both the young person who has experienced the bullying and the young person who has carried out the bullying.</p> <p>The named receiving school has an effective anti-bullying policy, which is regularly reviewed, and this is part of the Safeguarding arrangements within the school.</p>
9.1.4	A wide range of extra-curricular activities are offered at smaller schools	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that in smaller schools, all pupils can take part in activities. However in some cases, a wider range of activities can be offered at larger schools due to the increased number of pupils and staff.
9.1.5	There is a greater sense of community in smaller schools	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
9.1.6	Being taught in a small rural school is beneficial to pupils' education	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate

		leadership capacity’.
9.1.7	In a small environment all children are included, in larger schools some children can get lost	The authority notes this comment, however the authority would expect all schools to ensure that all children are included and don't get 'lost' regardless of the school's size.
9.1.8	Small primary schools give the best possible opportunity for pupils to have the best start in the learning process	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect pupils to continue to have the best possible opportunities should they attend a different school.
9.1.9	Low numbers mean more individual attention for pupils, a more caring environment and a greater sense of community	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'. Effective teaching would ensure that all pupils are taught effectively, regardless of the number of pupils in the class.
9.1.10	Small schools foster confidence, co-operation and a strong sense of community which cannot flourish in larger schools	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools would be expected to support pupils to foster confidence and co-operation, regardless of the size of the school.
9.1.11	The values of a small school cannot be measured in monetary terms	The authority notes this comment.
9.1.12	Small schools provide a safe environment to nurture a child's well-being	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'. All schools are expected to provide a safe environment and ensure pupil well-being, regardless of size.
9.1.13	Small schools work very effectively	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools

		(primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
9.1.14	More opportunities for pupils in smaller schools	The authority notes this comment. However in general, more opportunities are provided in larger schools as the greater number of pupils and staff mean that a wider range of opportunities can be provided to pupils.
9.1.15	Studies have shown the effectiveness of small schools in forming positive relationships with parents	The authority acknowledges that it is true that staff in small schools would know all of the parents, however the authority would expect all schools to form positive relationships with parents.
9.1.16	Estyn study – Small Primary Schools in Wales, 2006 – ‘The quality and extent of parents’ contribution to school life is best in the smallest schools. Often a special closeness develops between the schools and parents, which contributes positively to school life’.	The authority notes the comments made by Estyn.
9.1.17	Small schools that have multiple year groups in a class can be used to absorb any extras and are more versatile in reacting to demand and lack of it as numbers rise and fall	The authority notes this comment. However pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’. Effective teaching would ensure that all pupils are taught effectively, regardless of the number of pupils in the class.
9.1.18	The buildings which house small schools are often in better repair than newer buildings	The authority notes this comment, buildings are given three assessments in respect of their quality in terms of Condition, Suitability and Sustainability. The authority does have some significant building issues with schools that were built in the 30 years following the Second World War.
9.1.19	Small schools should be seen as centres of excellence	The authority expects all schools to aspire to be centres of excellence, regardless of their size.
9.1.20	In small schools, educational	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that there are good examples of

	standards are high	small schools and larger schools. The authority is committed to ensuring the best possible education for all pupils in Powys, and would expect education of a high standard to be provided to pupils should they attend a different school.
9.1.21	In small schools, the emotional well-being of pupils and staff is good, and they are more effective at ensuring the wellbeing of pupils and that their emotional needs are being met	The authority notes this comment. All schools, regardless of size, are expected to ensure the emotional well-being of pupils and staff, and to ensure that pupils' emotional needs are being met.
9.1.22	Children achieve well in small schools and having been members of a small community they are encouraged to aspire to greater things	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that pupils would not continue to be encouraged to aspire to greater things should they attend a larger school.
9.1.23	A high proportion of pupils from small schools go on to 6 th form and higher education	There is no statistical evidence to support this claim.
9.1.24	Pupils from small schools have a higher representation at high school prize-giving ceremonies and many go on to higher education and take up high power roles in society	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that pupils would not continue to be successful should they attend a larger school.
9.1.25	Being a member of a small school can give more opportunities to children who might be overlooked in a larger class or setting	The authority acknowledges that the small number of pupils at the school means that all pupils can take part in activities. However, all schools are expected to ensure that appropriate opportunities are provided to all children, regardless of the school / class size.
9.1.26	The positives of small schools far outweigh the minimal savings you may achieve	The authority notes this comment.
9.1.27	A small school and its associated	The authority notes this comment.

	clubs are important to a community to bring people together	
9.1.28	In a small school, it isn't possible for children to 'fall through the net'	The authority notes this comment. However, the authority would expect all schools, regardless of size, to ensure that all pupils are encouraged to meet their potential, to avoid any pupils 'falling through the net'.
9.2 Benefits of small classes		
9.2.1	In smaller classes, if a child needs extra help this is spotted straight away – this would not be the case in larger classes	All schools would be expected to identify any pupils in need of extra help and to respond appropriately.
9.2.2	Larger classes have greater variation of educational levels, and therefore requires differentiation of work for several levels of ability within one class – cannot see how children with differing abilities will be supported appropriately, therefore pupils' education will be compromised	All teachers differentiate and target work for pupils, whatever their age or ability. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
9.2.3	Smaller class sizes provide more of a one-to-one approach to learning, meaning that children of all abilities are catered for	All teachers differentiate and target work for pupils, whatever their age or ability. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
9.2.4	Being taught in smaller class sizes has been beneficial to pupils' education	The authority acknowledges that there are good examples in small and larger classes.
9.2.5	Education and support cannot possibly be as good in larger class sizes	There is no evidence to substantiate this comment. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.

9.2.6	It would be impossible for teachers to spread themselves between a class of over 30 children	The authority does not agree with this comment. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
9.2.7	Children are doing well thanks to the extra help and support they get in small classes	The authority notes this comment. There is no reason to believe that pupils would not continue to do well in an alternative school.
9.2.8	Small class sizes mean that teachers have more time to spend with pupils and can have more personal interaction	The authority notes this comment. However, pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
9.2.9	Some children can only cope with a smaller number in the class – the education system will fail these children if there are no small schools	The authority acknowledges that some pupils might be happier in a small class, however all schools are expected to ensure that pupils are happy in their learning environment, and should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school would be expected to provide full support to pupils to aid their transition.
9.2.10	How will the County Council ensure standards of education are maintained if children are in bigger classes?	School size varies significantly across the authority. All schools are monitored, supported and challenged in line with the ERW consortium's Ladder of Support. This is delivered via a designated Challenge Adviser for each school.
9.2.11	The more pupils there are, the harder and less sufficient the teachers can do their job	The authority does not agree with this comment.
9.2.12	Smaller class sizes would provide a better standard of education and a friendly environment	There is no evidence to substantiate this comment. Pupils achieve well in larger classes as well as in smaller classes.
9.2.13	In larger classes, any child that needs more one-to-one support will get overlooked, and test results and	All schools are expected to support all pupils to achieve their potential and to provide additional support where necessary.

	standards would plummet	
9.2.14	In smaller classes, teachers know every child and can ensure that their needs are met	All teachers are expected to know every child and to ensure that their needs are met, regardless of the size of the class.
9.2.15	The Council has a legal obligation to ensure class sizes are no larger than 30 pupils	<p>The legal requirement for classes of no more than 30 is only statutory in the Foundation Phase. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
9.2.16	The Welsh Government proposes that the 30 pupil class size maximum should be continued throughout the junior class and has provided funding to LAs so as to achieve junior classes of 30 or less	<p>The legal requirement for classes of no more than 30 is only statutory in the Foundation Phase. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
9.3 Benefits of rural / village schools		
9.3.1	The UK government has made it clear that rural schools play an important role in maintaining the viability of the countryside, and has made clear that the case for closing them has to be strong	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aspiration is to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the primary consideration when reorganising schools. The School Organisation Code states that 'the primary purpose of schools is the provision of education'. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.

9.3.2	Pupils in rural schools form stronger bonds with their peers	The authority notes this comment. The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils, however should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, and to ensure the pupils settle into their new school.
9.3.3	A family environment is provided by going to a rural school which addresses each child as an individual	The authority notes this comment, however all schools are expected to treat pupils as individuals, regardless of their size or whether or not they are a rural school.
9.3.4	In rural communities, parents come together to raise money for the children, this is more difficult in larger schools	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.5	Village schools have a critical role in supporting individual families in needs	The authority notes this comment. However, pupil numbers in Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post-16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
9.3.6	Village schools have a critical role as a hub for activities that will promote learning, economic well-being and social cohesion	The authority notes this comment. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
9.3.7	Maintaining small village schools would help tackle problems of poverty, aspiration and lack of economic opportunities in those areas	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aspiration is to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the primary consideration when reorganising schools. The School Organisation Code states that 'the primary purpose of schools is the provision of education'. Ultimately, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
9.3.8	Local primary schools bring mothers and children together	The authority notes this comment.
9.3.9	When children are attending a local	The authority notes this comment, however all schools are expected to ensure that

	school, parents can take them, make sure they are settled, meet the teachers and have a good relationship with the school	teachers have a good relationship with parents, regardless of the size and location of the school.
9.3.10	Rural schools are a focal point for the community	The authority notes this comment. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
9.3.11	The bond between school and community is vital if rural communities are to be sustained	The authority notes this comment. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
9.3.12	Schools in rural Radnorshire are strategically important	The authority notes this comment. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
9.3.13	Closure of rural schools is not seen as a problem for those with private transport and steady employment, but contradicts the statutory responsibilities of local education authorities in relation to child poverty	<p>The needs of families on low incomes were considered in the Equality Impact Assessment in respect of this proposal which was included in the consultation document. In this assessment, the authority acknowledged that it might be more difficult for the parents of pupils from low income families, due to the additional travel required of parents.</p> <p>According to PLASC 2015, there were no pupils eligible for free school meals at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. PLASC 2016 indicates that 6% of the school population are eligible for free school meals. The Equality Impact Assessment will be updated to reflect the 2016 PLASC data and views received during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. However, the PLASC data suggests that the level of poverty in the area is relatively low.</p> <p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, and all pupils would be fully supported to achieve their potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.</p>

9.4 Concern about bigger schools / classes		
9.4.1	Big schools don't have the same community feel	The authority does not agree with this comment. All schools have links within their community, whether this is within a single community or as area schools.
9.4.2	Concern about bullying in bigger schools	The authority notes this comment. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a very small school, and therefore it is possible that there are fewer incidents of bullying at this school than at larger schools. However, bullying occurs in all schools and the important issue is how the school responds to bullying, when it occurs, addressing the needs of both the young person who has experienced the bullying and the young person who has carried out the bullying.
9.4.3	What evidence is there that bigger schools are better?	The authority acknowledges that there are good examples of small schools and larger schools.
9.4.4	Larger schools have no sense of community	The authority does not agree with this comment. All schools have links within their community, whether this is within a single community or as area schools.
9.4.5	Concern that larger class sizes could mean that the school would not notice if a child wasn't settled in	All school are responsible for ensuring the highest standards of achievement, attainment and pupil wellbeing for all pupils, regardless of the size of the class. The authority accepts that should the school close, it is likely that pupils would be educated in larger classes, although these would be single-age classes which is not the case currently in Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School. Pupils would be taught with pupils of the same age and similar abilities. This is likely to improve a teacher's ability to better meet the needs of all learners.
9.4.6	Making schools bigger does not make them better either financially or educationally	The authority notes this comment. However, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School faces a number of challenges with regard to its sustainability.
9.4.7	Mega primaries have not been shown to serve the children any better	There are examples of high-performing small schools and high-performing large school across Powys and Wales. However, is essential that there is a viable model of education for the pupils of Dolau and surrounding areas in future.
9.5 Other		

9.5.1	Parents will travel to take their children to rural schools	The authority notes this comment.
9.5.2	Maintenance of small primary schools is essential for the future of the children and communities in which they and their families live	The authority notes this comment. The proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
9.5.3	Shutting schools should be a last resort – we should be celebrating rural schools	The authority notes this comment. However as stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
9.5.4	Rural schools may be more expensive to run but that ignores economies of scale that benefit schools in larger communities and the fact that rural schools provide a hub for a wide range of activities	The authority notes this comment.
9.5.5	Only confident, thick skinned people thrive among large numbers. In small groups every individual is special, and it is easy for those who are shy or struggling to excel	All schools are responsible for ensuring the highest standards of achievement, attainment and pupil wellbeing for all pupils, regardless of the size of the school or the class.
9.5.6	Reference to inquiry into reorganisation of Rural Schools in Wales in November 2008 – found no convincing evidence that small schools are underperforming, no evidence that small schools are an inferior option	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges that there are good examples of small schools and larger schools. However as stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'
10 ISSUES RELATING TO THE NAMED RECEIVING SCHOOL		

10.1 Capacity		
10.1.1	Concern about ability of receiving school to accommodate all of the displaced pupils	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.2	Ask that capacity of Crossgates is thoroughly investigated	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.3	Concern about the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School – the capacity figure seems to change to suit the question asked and from one day to the next	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.4	According to the planning permission approved when the school was extended, the capacity of the school was to be 160 – 179 children plus staff – this would be exceeded if Dolau and Llanbister children are added – isn't this going against Powys' own planning laws?	The authority has reviewed the planning permission and there were no restrictions placed on the authority in respect of the number of children educated at the school. The capacity of the school is based on the use of the physical rooms in the school. Crossgates C.P. School has 8 classrooms (including the mobile), each of which can accommodate 28 to 30 pupils using the Welsh Government's assessment basis.
10.1.5	Will all the children realistically fit into the receiving school?	The authority has a duty to ensure that a place is available in the named receiving school for all pupils that is affected by a school's closure. Pupil admissions is a fluid process and the authority monitors the numbers in Crossgates C.P. School on a regular basis.
10.1.6	What total number on roll did the council receive planning permission for at Crossgates? Would the proposed closure mean that this figure would be exceeded?	The authority has reviewed the planning permission and there were no restrictions placed on the authority in respect of the number of children educated at the school. The capacity of the school is based on the use of the physical rooms in the school. Crossgates C.P. School has 8 classrooms (including the mobile), each of which can accommodate 28 to 30 pupils using the Welsh Government's assessment basis.

10.1.7	Crossgates doesn't have the capacity to cater for the influx of children, so where will the children be taught?	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.8	Concern that Crossgates C.P. School doesn't have the capacity to take all the extra children	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.9	Can you put more than 179 children in Crossgates without breaking your own planning rules?	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
10.1.10	What is the capacity of Crossgates C.P. School excluding the mobile classroom?	The named receiving school at Crossgates has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site. The capacity of the school excluding the mobile would be 210.
10.1.11	How many pupils are there in Crossgates C.P. School?	There were 150 on Crossgates C.P. School roll at the PLASC census date in January 2016.
10.1.12	What will happen to the capacity of Crossgates if pupils continue to come from Llandrindod to Crossgates School?	Admissions to schools are managed by the authority, but if a school has a place available when parents apply for a place at a school, the authority must offer that place. Only when all places in a year group have been allocated would the authority refuse a place. If Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School closed the catchment area of Crossgates would be expanded to include the current catchment area of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and pupils living in the enlarged catchment area would be given priority for places in Crossgates C.P. School over those children who live in Llandrindod or other neighbouring areas.
10.1.13	Isn't it good practice for schools to have 10% surplus capacity? There will be no surplus capacity at Crossgates	The Welsh Government's aim is for all schools to function at between 85% and 105% of the calculated capacity.
10.1.14	You are sacrificing two schools to build up the numbers at Crossgates	Crossgates is a viable school. The proposal around Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is based on factors relating to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and is not based on

	C.P. School	factors relating to Crossgates C.P. School. The authority does however have a duty to ensure it has sufficient pupil places for all pupils displaced by a school closure.
10.1.15	Planning for the extension and remodelling of Crossgates C.P. School was granted based on a capacity of 162 – 179, 6 kitchen staff and 30 – 40 school staff – does your planning consent allow you to increase the capacity of the school?	The authority has reviewed the planning permission and there were no restrictions placed on the authority in respect of the number of children educated in the school. The capacity of the school is based on the use of the physical rooms in the school. Crossgates C.P. School has 8 classrooms (including the mobile), each of which can accommodate 28 to 30 pupils using the Welsh Government's assessment basis.
10.1.16	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is being sacrificed because Crossgates C.P. School is currently under capacity	Crossgates is a viable school. The proposal around Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is based on factors relating to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and is not based on factors relating to Crossgates C.P. School. The authority does however have a duty to ensure it has sufficient pupil places for all pupils displaced by a school closure.
10.1.17	Crossgates has had a rapid rise in pupil numbers due to the schools in Llandrindod being full	Some children have been placed in Crossgates C.P. School due to the authority not having available places in the relevant school year in Llandrindod, however other parents have chosen Crossgates C.P. School as their preferred school.
10.1.18	Two demountable classrooms still occupy the Crossgates site, yet it was a condition of planning approval for Crossgates' extension that they be removed on completion of the new construction works – it would appear that there is a breach of planning conditions and the county council is now using this breach as a contingency measure	The authority has reviewed the planning permission and there were no restrictions placed on the authority in respect of the number of children educated in the school. The capacity of the school is based on the use of the physical rooms in the school. Crossgates C.P. School has 8 classrooms (including the mobile), each of which can accommodate 28 to 30 pupils using the Welsh Government's assessment basis.
10.1.19	Query re capacity of Crossgates C.P. School – 210 in the Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Llanbister consultation documents, 162 in the Builth Wells	Crossgates C.P. School has 7 classrooms in the main building, each with a capacity of 30 pupils (210 in total). The actual number on roll is less than 200 and therefore the school is using one or more of the classrooms as a resource base which is then removed from the capacity calculation, resulting in the lower capacity given in the secondary school

	and Llandrindod High School consultation document – are both figures used to suit whichever outcome Powys desires?	consultation.
10.1.20	Pupils are already travelling from Llandrindod Wells to Crossgates C.P. School due to lack of space in the town	Some children have been placed in Crossgates C.P. School due to the authority not having available places available in the relevant school year in Llandrindod, other parents have chosen Crossgates C.P. School as their preferred school.
10.1.21	How many children get transported from Llandrindod to Crossgates because the Llandrindod schools are deemed to be full? Where will the overflow go, if the two Llandrindod schools are full?	Approximately 5 children are being transported to Crossgates C.P. School from Llandrindod by the authority. The authority reviews its pupil places on a regular basis as part of its asset management planning, if places are not available in the parents first choice school, the authority has a duty to place a child in another local school.
10.1.22	Concern about the school's capacity to accommodate children from Llanbister, Dolau and possibly Nantmel	There is sufficient capacity in Crossgates C.P. School to accommodate all the pupils from Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and some of the pupils from Nantmel C. in W. School. The change in the age of admission from September 2017 will allow the authority more flexibility in the use of the school space as it is expected that the early years provision will continue in the co-located early years centre.
10.2 Concern about use of mobile classroom		
10.2.1	Concern about pupils being taught in a portacabin	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the site of Crossgates C.P. School will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Dolau that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the pupil numbers were higher in that school.
10.2.2	Current portacabin used for after school club is not a fit/healthy environment to be taught in	The authority is undertaking some repair to the building, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).

10.2.3	Children will be leaving well equipped schools to be herded into inadequate sheds	The mobile classroom is not a "shed" it is a building which, following some minor works, will be assessed as a condition B building.
10.2.4	Can you confirm that pupils won't be taught in portacabins that aren't fit for use?	Yes, the authority is undertaking some repair work to the portacabin at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.5	How old is the portacabin at Crossgates?	The portacabin at Crossgates C.P. School is 13 years old.
10.2.6	Is the portacabin on site at Crossgates?	Yes, the portacabin is on site at Crossgates C.P. School.
10.2.7	What is the usual life of a temporary portacabin?	The lifespan of mobile classrooms on school sites is normally 20 – 30 years.
10.2.8	Concern about the use of temporary classrooms	The authority is undertaking some repair work to the portacabin at Crossgates C.P. School, following which property services have confirmed that it would be assessed to be in a good condition (B).
10.2.9	Transporting pupils to Crossgates would not be in accordance with the School Transformation Policy aim of minimising dependency on temporary accommodation	The mobile classroom is 1 of 8 teaching spaces on the site of Crossgates C.P. School. The authority does have a long term aim to reduce dependency on temporary accommodation within its Asset Management Plan. With the change to the age of admission from September 2017 the school may not need to utilise the mobile classroom from that date.
10.2.10	Proposal to educate children in portable buildings in Crossgates is totally inadequate for our children	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the Crossgates site will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the pupil numbers were higher in that school.

10.2.11	How can you condone moving children from a solid structure into temporary, mobile accommodation that was supposed to have been removed by now and is therefore in breach of original planning conditions?	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the Crossgates site will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the pupil numbers were higher in that school.
10.2.12	Powys Transformation Policy states that children should be taught in a permanent structure.	The mobile classroom is 1 of 8 teaching spaces on the site of Crossgates C.P. School. The authority does have a long term aim to reduce the dependency on temporary accommodation within its Asset Management Plan. With the change to the age of admission from September 2017, the school may not need to utilise the mobile classroom from that date.
10.2.13	Concern about moving pupils from a good building to a mobile classroom	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the site of Crossgates C.P. School will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the pupil numbers were higher in that school.
10.2.14	Concern about whether the mobile would be warm enough	The mobile classroom has adequate heating.
10.2.15	The transformation document says that children should not be moved from a permanent structure to a temporary classroom	The mobile classroom is 1 of 8 teaching spaces on the site of Crossgates C.P. School. The authority does have a long term aim to reduce the dependency on temporary accommodation within its Asset Management Plan. With the change to the age of admission from September 2017 the school may not need to utilise the mobile classroom from that date.
10.2.16	Mobile classrooms should not be used as a permanent solution	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the site of Crossgates C.P. School will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the

		pupil numbers were higher in that school.
10.2.17	In a Cabinet meeting in 2005, members asked that mobile classrooms should not be regarded as permanent fixtures	The authority's long term strategy is to reduce the number of children taught in mobile classrooms. A condition assessment has shown that following some works to the roof of the mobile, the mobile classroom on the site of Crossgates C.P. School will be a "B" school in terms of its physical condition. There is also a mobile classroom at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School that has been used to teach children in in previous years when the pupil numbers were higher in that school.
10.2.18	The portacabin is basically a shed	The mobile classroom is not a "shed" it is a building which following some minor works will be assessed as a condition B building.
10.3 Class sizes and the impact on classes		
10.3.1	The impact of closing three schools would be felt in every class at Crossgates C.P. School	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.2	Crossgates C.P. School will need classes of over 30 to accommodate all pupils – is this allowed?	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.3	Children are currently taught in classes of 16, in Crossgates they would be in classes of well over 30,	Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2. There

	how can this be good for their education?	is no evidence that larger class sizes are detrimental to pupils' education.
10.3.4	Class sizes will be bigger than Dolau School	<p>It is true that class sizes in Crossgates C.P. School are likely to be similar to the total size of Dolau School. The authority's view is that the current class sizes at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are not sustainable.</p> <p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.5	Concern that class sizes will increase to 34 when children move to Crossgates	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.6	How will the classrooms at Crossgates manage the proposed increase in numbers?	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.7	Class sizes at Crossgates C.P.	The authority notes this comment. Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with

	School have risen dramatically due to an influx of pupils from Llandrindod Wells	the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.
10.3.8	What would the class sizes be at Crossgates should Llanbister and Llanfihangel Rhydithon close?	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2. The actual class sizes would depend on the number of pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School and on the internal arrangements made by the governing body.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.9	How do the proposed class sizes equate to the room sizes mapped out by the authority when rebuilding the school a few years ago?	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2. The actual class sizes would depend on the number of pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School and on the internal arrangements made by the governing body.</p> <p>The classes at Crossgates C.P. School would accommodate up to 30 pupils in line with the capacity of the room.</p>
10.3.10	Anticipate that class sizes in Crossgates will be in excess of 30 children, so personal interaction will be lost	Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2. The actual class sizes would depend on the number of pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School and on the internal arrangements made by the governing body. Regardless of class size, all schools are expected to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil continue to be met.
10.3.11	Concern that the increase to class sizes at Crossgates will place additional pressure on over stretched	The authority notes this comment.

	teachers	
10.3.12	Class sizes at Crossgates will be well above the Powys, Welsh and National average	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.13	There could be 39 children from Dolau, Llanbister and Crossgates nursery going into a classroom in January 2017.	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.14	You cannot fit any more than 30 pupils in a classroom	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2. The actual class sizes would depend on the number of pupils transferring to Crossgates C.P. School and on the internal arrangements made by the governing body.</p> <p>The classes at Crossgates C.P. School would accommodate up to 30 pupils in line with the capacity of the room.</p>
10.3.15	Proposed classroom size will be 34, will not meet Powys County Council's policy of 30	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that</p>

		the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.
10.3.16	Crossgates has an average of 30 pupils to one teacher, Dolau has 30 pupils over 2 classes to 2 teachers – you can see who is getting more attention and one to one help	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil continue to be met, regardless of class size. There is no evidence that larger class sizes are detrimental to pupils' education.
10.3.17	The Council will need to ensure that they are complying with class size legislation in the N/R class at Crossgates and whether their consultation will have an impact on this compliance	<p>Crossgates C.P. School is funded in accordance with the authority's fair funding formula and it is the governors' responsibility to maintain class sizes within the statutory infant class sizes, and to ensure that reasonable arrangements are made in Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Where additional pupils join year groups in the foundation phase that already have 30 pupils, the governing body would need to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the school continues to conform with statutory guidance, which could include pupils being taught in other foundation phase classes.</p>
10.3.18	Concern about overcrowding – classes filled to the max might be good for efficiency but aren't good for the children	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil continue to be met, regardless of class size. There is no evidence that larger class sizes are detrimental to pupils' education.
10.3.19	Concern that pupils could get lost in the abundance of children in one class	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil continue to be met, regardless of class size. There is no evidence that larger class sizes are detrimental to pupils' education.
10.3.20	The bigger classes will be noisy so it will be harder for pupils to concentrate	The authority notes this comment. However, all schools are expected to ensure that pupils achieve to the best of their ability, regardless of class size. There is no evidence that larger class sizes are detrimental to pupils' education.
10.4 Access and car parking		
10.4.1	Health and safety concerns in relation to the parking at Crossgates C.P.	The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way

School	<p>system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidences in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.2 Cars are already parked everywhere in Crossgates School, before adding any additional cars	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidences in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.3 Management of the petrol station have expressed concerns regarding the safety of pupils at drop off and pick up times as many parents are parking at the petrol station	<p>The authority notes this comment. The children from the Dolau catchment area will be transported on funded home to school transport and will be dropped off / picked up from the school site, which will be subject to the school and authority's risk assessment criteria and policies.</p>
10.4.4 The area around Crossgates C.P. School is already congested at the start and end of the school day – there is not enough space to cope with all the extra vehicles involved	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p>

		<p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidences in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.5	Issues with access and parking at Crossgates School at drop off and collection time	<p>The car parking at Crossgates C.P. School was significantly increased in 2007-08 when the school was remodelled. The car parking operates through the use of a one way system with specific spaces for drop off and spaces for minibus and coach areas. The current number of available spaces is in excess of 65.</p> <p>As a significant percentage of children are transported to the school on the authority run transport, it is the authority's view that the car parking arrangements are suitable if they are managed and used appropriately by staff and parents.</p> <p>There are no major incidents recorded in the authority's health and safety records in respect of incidences in the car parking area at Crossgates C.P. School since the school was remodelled and extended.</p>
10.4.6	Parents have to park in the Service Station and walk their child to school	<p>The authority notes this comment, the children from the Dolau area will be transported on funded Home to School transport and will be dropped off / picked up from the school site. Although not ideal there is a safe walking route from the service station to the school. The authority's Schools Health and Safety officer provides schools advice and support on these issues.</p>
10.4.7	Increasing pupil numbers by a third is only going to exacerbate an already dangerous problem	<p>If the authority's proposals go forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and other schools, the affected pupils will mainly be transported to the named receiving schools through funded Home to School transport and will be subject to the authority's risk assessment criteria.</p>
10.4.8	Concern about parking at Crossgates, particularly on days where there are school events taking place	<p>The authority accepts that a larger school will have more parking requirements especially around the larger social / school events. The service will work with the school to ensure all relevant risk assessments are in place.</p>

10.4.9	Where will all the extra cars park safely, particularly on days when there are school events taking place?	The authority accepts that a larger school will have more parking requirements especially around the larger social / school events. The service will work with the school to ensure all relevant risk assessments are in place.
10.4.10	Children often seen running around the petrol forecourt at Crossgates to get to their lift – this is a health and safety issue	The authority notes this issue and will work with the school and relevant road safety and health and safety officers to provide awareness training to children
10.5 Building and facilities		
10.5.1	There is no guarantee of an equivalent learning environment for pupils in alternative schools	The named receiving school is a recently remodelled / constructed school with a large external area and provides a suitable learning environment.
10.5.2	Children currently attending Crossgates are happy in a permanent structure that was designed to teach children in, not a shed outside	The mobile classroom is not a "shed" it is a building which following some minor works will be assessed as a condition B building.
10.5.3	Concern about current pupils being thrown out of their classes to benefit others	The organisation of the class structure of a school is a decision for the headteacher and the governing body. Schools reorganise class structures on a regular basis which is dependent on the year group numbers, funding etc. It is the authority's view that after any initial class restructure following the transfer of children from the closing schools the class structure at Crossgates should be more robust with mainly single age classes.
10.5.4	Extra children at Crossgates would add to the already overcrowded playground area which has less than halved since the building work at the school	There are guidelines for the size of external areas, both hard and soft areas. Those schools with insufficient hard play areas will be included in the service's long term capital strategy.
10.5.5	The children are currently taught in a good building which is structurally	Yes, Crossgates C.P. School is a recently remodelled school that is in good condition with a mobile classroom that following some minor works will be a "B" school in terms of

	sound, can you ensure that this will continue?	condition.
10.5.6	Concern that the play equipment at the school may not be as good as it is at Dolau, and that everyone won't get a chance to use it	The authority notes this comment.
10.5.7	Concern that pupils will have to queue for ages to get their dinner	The authority notes this comment.
10.5.8	'When was the last time any general maintenance work was carried out at Crossgates School and what was the cost?'	The last job undertaken at Crossgates C.P. School was work to repair an issue with the heating system in July. The job does not have a final cost, but it has an estimated cost of £75.
10.6 Quality of education and standards		
10.6.1	Concern that pressure of accommodating displaced pupils will further compromise the quality of the educational provision at Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
10.6.2	Closure of 3 schools would have a massive impact on standards at Crossgates C.P. School	The authority notes this comment, however there is no evidence to suggest that this would be the case.
10.6.3	It is only 10 minutes from Llanbister C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School, and if these pupils travelled this distance they would receive better education than they are receiving now – this isn't the case for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	The authority notes this comment.

10.6.4	Crossgates C.P. School hasn't had an Estyn inspection for nearly 6 years	As stated in the consultation document, it is true that Estyn's last inspection of Crossgates C.P. School was in 2011.
10.6.5	Surely an Estyn inspection of Crossgates C.P. School should be carried out before pushing our children to a school where we have no idea of how good the level of teaching is?	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority.
10.6.6	Crossgates C.P. School hasn't been inspected under the new Estyn regime so standards cannot be easily compared	School performance is analysed annually through the Welsh Government's National Categorisation of Schools in Wales. In 2015, both Crossgates C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rydithon C.P. School were awarded 2 for standards.
10.6.7	Current standards in Crossgates C.P. School will deteriorate due to increase in class sizes	There is no evidence to suggest that this would be the case.
10.6.8	Logical thing to do is to ensure that Crossgates has an Estyn inspection before any decision is made on Llanfihangel Rhydithon.	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority.
10.6.9	Need to ensure that the classification of Crossgates has not deteriorated and is still of sufficient standard to accept pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon	The authority notes this comment. School performance is analysed annually through the Welsh Government's National Categorisation of Schools in Wales. In 2015, both Crossgates C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rydithon C.P. School were awarded 2 for standards.
10.6.10	Grave concern about whether Crossgates C.P. School can maintain its educational standards	The National Classification of Schools in 2015 awarded Crossgates C.P. School's capacity to improve further as B, therefore there is no evidence that Crossgates C.P. School cannot maintain its current educational standards.

10.6.11	What would happen if standards fell at Crossgates C.P. School?	Standards at all schools are monitored by Challenge Advisers on a regular basis. If standards at any school deteriorate, intervention powers could be used by the LA.
10.6.12	Not proven that Crossgates is the answer to the educational needs of children who currently attend Dolau School	The authority notes this comment.
10.6.13	Crossgates has a whole new set of pupils and has had a big change of staff since the last inspection	The authority notes this comment.
10.6.14	There is no evidence that making Crossgates bigger will make it better – it may have the opposite effect	The authority notes this comment.
10.6.15	Although Crossgates and Dolau are both 'yellow', information on mylocalschool shows that Dolau is outperforming Crossgates at every level	Pupil performance fluctuates to varying degrees in all schools. It would be unfair to compare attainment in terms of percentages when comparing schools that have more than 100 pupils with schools that have under 30 pupils. In addition, standards in schools are judged on data over a three year period, rather than then one set of data.
10.6.16	Are you pushing to close the small schools so quickly due to the fact that you feel the Estyn status of Crossgates School may change following an imminent inspection?	This is not the case.
10.6.17	Need an inspection of Crossgates to provide a baseline to measure what effect the additional pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon would have on the stable school structure at Crossgates	Schools are inspected by Estyn at least once every 7 years. The decision when to inspect schools is at the discretion of Estyn and not the local authority.

10.7 Pre-school provision		
10.7.1	The pre-school setting in Crossgates is not directly associated with the school	The pre-school setting at Crossgates and the school have close links and liaise over pre-school / early years transition arrangements. The early years provision is currently being recommissioned across the county.
10.7.2	Does the setting in Crossgates have capacity for an additional 15 children?	Yes, the setting in Crossgates does have capacity.
10.7.3	If the playgroup portacabin is to be used as a classroom, what happens to the playgroup setting that has no affiliation to the school?	The mobile classroom that is being considered as a teaching space is the mobile next to the school. The early years provision will remain in the current buildings.
10.7.4	There is no mother & toddler or playgroup setting at Crossgates so younger children would miss out	The early years setting at Crossgates C.P. School is a new setting and the authority understands that the management committee is considering providing extended services.
10.7.5	What will happen to the pre-school aged children, with the change to the age of admission?	Under the age of admission proposals the provision of pre-school provision is to be increased from 10 hours per week to 12.5 hours per week and for the period from the term after the child's third birthday to the end of the summer term before they start school full time at the start of the reception age group.
10.7.6	Moving children to Crossgates would have an effect on the early years setting there	The authority is currently in the process of recommissioning the early years provision and any proposed school changes will be factored into this work program.
10.7.7	There won't be enough capacity for the children coming into the early years setting from all the other early years settings if Dolau and other schools in the area close	This issue has been considered as part of the wider planning of school places in the area.
10.8 Opportunities for pupils		

10.8.1	Pupils won't be able to take part in as many extra-curricular activities	The authority notes this comment.
10.8.2	Pupils wouldn't have as many opportunities at Crossgates C.P. School as there are more pupils	The authority acknowledges that as there are more pupils at Crossgates C.P. School it is possible that not all pupils will be able to take part in all activities. However all schools are expected to offer a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, and to ensure that all pupils are able to take part.
10.8.3	Crossgates School do not compete in the Eisteddfod	The authority notes this comment.
10.8.4	Pupils would not have the same chance to represent the school in a bigger school as there would be more children	The authority acknowledges that as there are more pupils at Crossgates C.P. School it is possible that not all pupils will be able to take part in all activities. However all schools are expected to offer a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, and to ensure that all pupils are able to take part.
10.8.5	Concern about lack of extracurricular activities at Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
10.8.6	Extracurricular activities and links with the community in Crossgates are in no way positively comparable with those at Dolau	The authority notes this comment.
10.8.7	There isn't the same connection between the school and the community in Crossgates	The authority notes this comment.
10.9 Other issues		
10.9.1	Crossgates C.P. School has a new headteacher who is still finding her feet	The National Classification of Schools in 2015 awarded Crossgates C.P. School's capacity to improve further as B.
10.9.2	Concern about impact of 90 children	The authority notes this comment. No final decisions have yet been made on this proposal

	joining the school next January	or the proposals relating to other schools in the local area.
10.9.3	Concern that several shifts will be required for lunch unless the eating area is enlarged	Crossgates C.P. School has a large hall, and large schools are used to having two or more sittings for lunch, with infants normally eating first followed by the juniors.
10.9.4	The receiving school will not give pupils the individual attention currently provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	All school are responsible for ensuring the highest standards of achievement, attainment pupil wellbeing, and to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil are met.
10.9.5	Crossgates is no longer a village primary school due to the influx of pupils from Llandrindod Wells	Many village schools attract children from local towns through parental choice. The majority of the pupils in Crossgates C.P. School are still from the village and surrounding smaller communities.
10.9.6	Crossgates C.P. School should not be an acceptable alternative for the children of this community	The authority notes this comment.
10.9.7	Crossgates is a much bigger school	The authority acknowledges that Crossgates C.P. School is bigger than Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. As stated in the One Powys Plan, “we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
10.9.8	There will be an additional workload and impact on the personal wellbeing of Crossgates teachers	The authority notes this comment.
10.9.9	There is a new headteacher at Crossgates C.P. School who will have had relatively little experience in dealing with a school with a large number of pupils	The National Classification of Schools in 2015 awarded the school's capacity to improve further as B.
10.9.10	You are planning on staggering	The provision and timing of school meals is agreed by the school and the catering service,

	dinner times – that is wrong in every sense as the children should all eat together	the school has a large hall but in a school of 200 pupils it would be normal practice that the early years children eat at the first sitting with the juniors eating at a second sitting.
10.9.11	If there were capacity in Trefonnen and Cefnlllys, Crossgates would be well under capacity and its price per head would be well above what Dolau's is	The delegated funding per pupil for Llanfihangel Rhydithon for the 2016-17 school year is £4,410, with the equivalent figure for Crossgates being £3,556. Although the funding per pupil would increase at Crossgates C.P. School if the children from Llandrindod were not in the school this increase would not amount to the £850 current differential.
10.9.12	Concern that Crossgates C.P. School is being investigated for health reasons due to its proximity to the petrol station	This issue has been fully investigated and there are no issues that have been raised.
10.9.13	There may be more arguing at Crossgates C.P. School as pupils won't know each other	The authority notes this concern and accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the school close, the receiving school would provide support to pupils to aid their transition.
11 CONCERNS ABOUT OTHER SCHOOLS PUPILS MIGHT WISH TO TRANSFER TO		
11.1	The nature and quality of the educational alternatives proposed will be different, and in many ways inferior to that which the children currently experience	The authority notes this comment. Crossgates C.P. School is the named receiving school in respect of this proposal, and the authority is satisfied that the quality of education provided at this school is equivalent to the education provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
11.2	Issues with the other alternative schools listed in the document other than Crossgates C.P. School – Llanbister is also proposed to close, Knighton is 10.49 miles from Dolau and is currently under Estyn monitoring and Amber, Cefnlllys is also listed as Amber – why would the	The authority notes this comment. Crossgates C.P. School is the named receiving school in respect of this proposal, and the authority is satisfied that the quality of education provided at this school is equivalent to the education provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

	authority assume that parents would be willing to leave a school considered 'good' and attend schools that are rated in need of improvement?	
11.3	Concern about current standards at Knighton	In the national classification of schools in 2015, Welsh Government placed Knighton School in Standards Group 2 (1 being the highest). In addition, the school was monitored by a team of Estyn inspectors in summer 2016 and was judged to have made good progress in respect of the key issues for action following the Estyn visit in June 2016. The school was consequently removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring. There will be no further Estyn monitoring visits.
12 ISSUES RELATING TO OTHER PROPOSALS		
12.1	Closure of 3 schools will limit choice and will affect children who don't get on in a particular school and need an alternative	The authority notes this comment.
12.2	One of the rural schools in this area should remain available to give parents the choice of a small rural school	The authority notes this comment.
12.3	The capacity of Crossgates School will be exceeded if you proceed with the closure of Dolau and Llanbister	The authority notes this comment. The capacity of Crossgates C.P. School will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to the proposals in respect of both Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Llanbister C.P. School.
12.4	If Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School closes along with Llanbister and Nantmel, where are all the children that may move into the area with all the building that is going on going to	The authority as part of its Schools Asset Management Plan has identified all significant proposed developments contained within the LDP and are aware of the potential impact these developments will have on future pupil numbers

	go to school?	
12.5	Concern that there will be no primary schools between Llandrindod and Newtown except Crossgates, and children are already being bussed out from Llandrindod due to lack of space	The authority is aware of the 20 mile distance between Crossgates and Newtown and Cabinet will take this into consideration when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
12.6	There were far fewer pupils in Llangurig C.P. School when that school closed – we can't believe this is happening here.	The authority acknowledges that there were less pupils in Llangurig C.P. School when that school closed. However, pupil numbers in Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. As stated in the One Powys Plan, 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
12.7	Of the three schools under review, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is the cheapest to run and has excellent standards	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was identified for review as it met a number of the criteria outlined in the Schools Transformation Policy (2014).</p> <p>As stated in the consultation document, the authority is proposing to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average.
12.8	Concern that there is no facility for schools to work together as part of this consultation	The authority notes this comment.
12.9	It's not fair to compare this proposal with school reorganisation in Ystradgynlais – the proposals in Ystradgynlais worked because the community was offered something better	The authority notes this comment.
12.10	If you close Dolau and the two other	This proposal is only about Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. No final decisions have

	schools you will have engineered a demographic change which is totally unnecessary	yet been made on the future of this school or the other schools referred to.
12.11	Reference to closure of Llangunllo, Whitton and John Beddoes schools – is the council trying to wipe out our history?	The council is not trying to wipe out the area’s history. However, pupil numbers in Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low. As stated in the One Powys Plan, ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’.
12.12	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School has the highest educational standards of the 3 small schools currently up for closure	The authority notes this comment. The authority has no concern about standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, this is not one of the reasons why the school is currently being reviewed.
12.13	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School has the lowest cost per pupil of the 3 small schools currently up for closure	<p>The authority notes that this statement is true. The 2016/17 cost per pupil for each school was as follows:</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School: £4410 Nantmel C. in W. School: £4471 Llanbister C.P. School: £4327</p> <p>However, the cost per pupil for all three schools exceeds 120% of the average cost per pupil, therefore all three schools meet this criteria as outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014).</p>
12.14	If the 3 small schools close and high school reorganisation also happens in 5 years time it will be the same children affected during both phases of their education	The authority notes this concern. The recent consultation in relation to high school provision does not propose any change to the current location of secondary provision in the area.
12.15	Reference to success of John Beddoes High School merging with Newtown High School	The authority is pleased to note the success of the merger of John Beddoes High School with Newtown High School.

12.16	One of the schools near here has been assessed as being in the 'red' category	It is true that one of Llanfihangel Rhydithon's neighbouring schools is in the 'red' category, this is noted in the consultation document.
13 ISSUES RELATING TO FINANCE		
13.1 Average cost per pupil / funding per pupil		
13.1.1	The school will be virtually full in the next few years, which will reduce the per pupil cost	The authority notes this comment.
13.1.2	If you had a big school of over 500 pupils funded at £5268 per pupil would you say that was an expensive school?	This would be above the current average cost per pupil for Powys primary schools, which is £3535.
13.1.3	What is the cost per pupil for the federated schools in the north of the county?	The 2016/17 cost per pupil for the three schools within the federation is as follows: Ysgol Gynradd Carno: £4568 Ysgol Llanbrynmair: £4090 Ysgol Glantwymyn: £3802
13.1.4	Why have different figures been used for average per pupil funding in different reports – the average per pupil funding quoted in the report on Welshpool primary schools review was different to that in the report for Cabinet in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School even though the reports were considered by Cabinet on the same day	This was an error in respect of the Welshpool report.
13.1.5	Will the children receive less funding	Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, the receiving school will receive the per

	per pupil if the school closes and they transfer to the receiving school?	pupil element delegated through the authority's fair funding formula.
13.1.6	Request for clarification in relation to the delegated budget for pupils transferring	Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, £51,243 of the £136,704 delegated to the school for the 2016/17 financial year would transfer in order to support the funding for the pupils transferred to other schools.
13.1.7	Are the four new primary schools in Ystradgynlais as cost effective as you had hoped as all exceed the cost per pupil average?	The 2016/17 cost per pupil for the four new primary schools in Ystradgynlais is £3282, £3586, £3605 and £3837. The Powys average for 2016/17 is £3535.
13.1.8	Only just true that the cost per pupil is more than 120% of the Council's average – the authority is nit picking!	The authority notes this comment. The criteria in the School Transformation Policy (2014) is 'The cost per pupil is more than 120% of the Council's average for the sector.' Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School meets this criteria.
13.1.9	The cost per pupil will decrease with the predicted rise in numbers	The authority notes this comment.
13.2 Queries about estimated savings		
13.2.1	Real concerns about whether the savings the Council predict are going to be as much as expected	The estimated savings as stated at the time of consultation were £69,078 based on the 2015/16 financial year formula. The figures have been rerun using the formula for 2016/17 and updated actual costs for canteen costs and the estimated savings are £91,464. This increase is due to the requirement to provide an additional small schools allowance to the school due to numbers increasing from 29 on the PLASC counting date in January 2015 to 31 on the PLASC counting date in January 2016.
13.2.2	Request to see the cost saving plan you seem so confident you can achieve	The figures have been rerun based on the 2016/17 financial year and are broken down as follows: Delegated Funding that would not transfer: £85,462 Headteacher savings (L12-UPS3): £16,288 Reduction in Canteen Subsidy: £12,514 (Actual Costs 2015-16) Less Estimated Additional Transport Costs: (£22,800)

Total Estimated Savings: £91,464		
13.2.3	The projected savings don't add up	The projected savings were included in the consultation document. These figures have been rerun using the formula for 2016/17 and the estimated savings are now £91,464. This increase is due to the requirement to provide an additional small schools allowance to the school due to numbers increasing from 29 on the PLASC counting date in January 2015 to 31 on the PLASC counting date in January 2016.
13.2.4	Closure of Dolau School would lead to a small saving in education costs but a massive overspend in transport costs	The estimated additional transport costs were included in the estimated saving calculation provided in the consultation document.
13.2.5	The claim that the council will save £70K is rubbish – it will cost an additional £20K to move the children to Crossgates	The estimated savings for the 2016/17 financial year are £91,464.
13.2.6	A re-working of the figures for costs saved has been promised – is this now available?	<p>The figures have been rerun based on the 2016/17 financial year and are broken down as follows:</p> <p>Delegated Funding that would not transfer: £85,462 Headteacher savings (L12-UPS3): £16,288 Reduction in Canteen Subsidy: £12,514 (Actual Costs 2015-16) Less Estimated Additional Transport Costs: (£22,800)</p> <p>Total Estimated Savings: £91,464</p>
13.2.7	The cost of additional transport has been underestimated	The additional transport costs have been estimated by the authority at a net additional £120 per day
13.2.8	The amount of money you will save is small	The authority notes this comment.

13.2.9	Figures presented by a parent at the consultation meeting painted a picture of very little saving	The savings have been updated using the 2016/17 formula and have increased to an estimated £91,464.
13.2.10	Unbelievable that you can save money from this	The estimated savings at the time of consultation were included in the consultation document. The figures have been updated for 2016/17 and are now estimated at £91,464
13.2.11	Have you included in your calculated savings the additional costs that will be needed to offer additional support to children?	<p>The savings include delegated budget savings, canteen and Headteacher savings. The receiving school will receive additional delegated monies for the pupils transferring to them, which has been factored in when considering the estimated net savings.</p> <p>The authority recognises that there are children who need more support, and this is accounted for in the ALN delegated budget as well as access to the graduated response to need e.g. top up funding. The ALN budget currently provided to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is small due to the school's size and demography, the ALN budget in the named receiving school is significantly larger.</p>
13.2.12	Other costs will undoubtedly be incurred – transport costs, staff redundancy payments	The estimated additional transport costs were included in the calculation provided in the consultation document. The consultation document also made clear that redundancy payments were not included in the estimated saving. Redundancy costs are a one-off cost.
13.2.13	Any financial savings identified are insignificant compared to the increase in annual transport costs	The estimated savings provided in the consultation document took the estimated increase in transport costs into account.
13.2.14	The positives of small schools far outweigh the minimal savings you may achieve	The authority notes this comment.
13.2.15	The Council is not taking the additional travel costs into account	The estimated savings provided in the consultation document took the estimated increase in transport costs into account.
13.2.16	Additional children in Crossgates will cost the Council money	The delegated funding that would transfer to support the pupils in the receiving schools has been taken into consideration when calculating the estimated savings.

13.2.17	We have had independent quotes which indicate that additional transport costs will be £58,000	The additional transport costs have been estimated by the authority at a net additional £120 per day and are included in the net saving within the consultation document.
13.2.18	Questioned the estimated saving of £66,298	The estimated saving of £66,298 is based on 29 funded pupils for the 2015/16 financial year, for 2016/17 this has increased to £85,462 based on 31 funded pupils. The increase in saving is due to the additional small schools allowance delegated to the school, which would not transfer if the school closed.
13.2.19	Questioned the saving of £15,580 for the Headteacher post	The saving of £15k in the report is the difference between the bottom point of the Leadership scale for the school (Leadership point 12) and the top of the teachers scale upper threshold three, including oncosts for the 2015/16 financial year.
13.2.20	Questioned the canteen subsidy of £10,000 – there is no canteen at Dolau, all meals are cooked in Crossgates and are transferred to Dolau	<p>Canteen Savings have been updated following the finalisation of the 2015/16 accounts and are broken down as follows:</p> <p>Cashiers: £2,458 Cook Preparation: £1,784 Driver & Serving: £5,422 Van Costs: £1,693 Provisions/General Costs: £1,157</p> <p>Total: £12,514</p>
13.2.21	Question the estimated cost of transport which is £22800 – we estimate that it would be £84234 over the school year	The additional transport costs have been estimated by the authority at a net additional £120 per day and are included in the net saving within the consultation document.
13.2.22	If you transfer pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to Crossgates C.P. School, it will cost an additional £15,798.50	The additional transport costs have been estimated by the authority at a net additional £120 per day and are included in the net saving within the consultation document.

13.2.23	£10,000 saving on canteen facilities – Dolau dinners are cooked in Crossgates and transported to Dolau, so the only saving would be the cost of transporting the food to Dolau	<p>Canteen Savings have been updated following the finalisation of the 2015/16 accounts and are broken down as follows:</p> <p>Cashiers: £2,458 Cook Preperation: £1,784 Driver & Serving: £5,422 Van Costs: £1,693 Provisions/General Costs: £1,157</p> <p>Total: £12,514</p>
13.2.24	Looks like the savings figures are being inflated to make it look like closing the school will bring a greater saving than it will in reality	The estimated savings figures have been calculated using the funding formula currently in place.
13.2.25	Many figures don't match up with Dolau school's profit and loss sheet	The figures are based on the delegated funding the school receives each year.
13.2.26	You have used estimated costs rather than actual ones, especially where teaching salaries are concerned	The costs are estimated and will only become actual costs in the year in which a school closes.
13.2.27	The estimated transport costs are based on 28 pupils, predicted numbers by January 2017 are higher, which would raise the costs to £29,640	Estimated savings were calculated based on the pupils within the school at the time, this is always subject to change for pupil movement.
13.2.28	Do the estimated savings include the cost of the consultation process and subsequent costs when we contest the Cabinet's decision?	No, the estimated savings do not include the cost of the consultation process or any subsequent costs.
13.2.29	Have the actual savings in the two	No, the actual savings are recalculated using the current formula in place in the financial

	years following recent school closures been as stated in the consultation documents?	year which the school closes, as well as being updated for actual pupil movements once schools have closed in relation to transport costs. In respect of the last 2 schools to close both savings has been more than stated in the consultation documents
13.2.30	The cost of travel has not been calculated on real children and real routes, and on investigation it may not give the expected saving	The estimated additional costs for transport were based on a review of current routes operating to the school.
13.3 Fair Funding Formula		
13.3.1	The funding formula should be changed to be fair to federated schools and fair to the council	The authority notes this comment. Under current legislation, local authorities are required to determine an individual delegated budget for each school within a federation arrangement.
13.3.2	A fairer funding formula which does not discriminate against rural schools is vital to keeping small rural schools viable	The authority notes this comment.
13.3.3	We need a more sophisticated approach to funding pupil places	The authority notes this comment.
13.3.4	If the cost per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average, this is due to the authority's funding formula and should not be blamed on the school	The authority notes this comment. However, one of the criteria within the authority's School Transformation Policy (2014) for reviewing a school was 'The cost per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average for the sector'. The school met this criteria, therefore this is one of the reasons why the school is being reviewed.
13.3.5	Concern that schools are entitled to extra money for children that are entitled to free school meals – confused as to why the council are spending less on my children's education than those entitled to free	The additional monies schools receive for Free School Meal pupils is in the form of the Pupil Deprivation Grant, which is a Welsh Government initiative.

	school meals – this is discriminating against children from hard working families and works against Dolau's favour	
13.4 Issues relating to the Council's financial strategy		
13.4.1	Saving money at the cost of destroying a community is unacceptable	The authority notes this comment.
13.4.2	The population of younger children in Powys is below the Wales average, but this doesn't mean we should be making cuts to education	The authority notes this comment.
13.4.3	More effort should be spent on trying to address budget management at other schools rather than closing this achieving school	The authority notes this comment and continues to work will schools to ensure that all schools comply with the Scheme for Financing Schools.
13.4.4	This proposal has nothing to do with 'school modernisation' and has everything to do with finances	The authority notes this comment. However, one of the criteria within the authority's School Transformation Policy (2014) for reviewing a school was 'The cost per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average for the sector'. The school met this criteria, therefore this is one of the reasons why the school is being reviewed.
13.4.5	Welsh Government policy is that schools should not be closed for financial reasons	As included in the consultation document the authority is proposing to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average
13.4.6	Public money should not be wasted making jobs for the boys / girls	The authority notes this comment.

13.4.7	There are no significant financial savings to be made from closing the school, but there would be a great loss to the community in terms of community cohesion	The authority notes this comment.
13.4.8	The council is wasting tax payers money and councillors time on this consultation	The authority notes this comment.
13.4.9	How much does the consultation process cost from initial research, document creation, meetings, school modernisation team's wages, cabinet members time, outside consultants through to the next Cabinet meeting when the school's fate will be decided?	The authority is required to go through a statutory consultation process in accordance with the School Organisation Code in respect of any proposal to close a school. This is part of the work of the authority's School Modernisation Team and other officers, and is part of the role of Cabinet members, therefore there is no additional cost to the authority. There was a cost of £936 for the consultants who facilitated the public meeting, as well as a cost of £50 for the hire of translation equipment.
13.4.10	Closing the school would put further pressure on Council resources by having to have help from the One Powys Plan and community champions	The authority notes this comment.
13.4.11	A large school performing badly will cost the authority more than a small school in total	All schools must comply with the scheme for financing schools.
13.4.12	The sole reason for proposing to close the school is financial, and the reason used to justify this is the school's low pupil numbers	The school was identified for review based on the criteria outlined in the authority's School Transformation Policy (2014).

13.5 Issues relating to funding received from Welsh Government		
13.5.1	The Council should ask the Welsh assembly for more money to spend on local schools	Officers and Members actively seek to influence funding levels for Powys whenever possible. Lobbying together with MPs and AMs successfully gained additional funding for Powys as part of the 2016/17 financial settlement from Welsh Government. An additional £1.2m was delegated to all schools via the fair funding formula during the 2016/17 budget round.
13.5.2	I understand that the Welsh Assembly has awarded more funding for education in Powys and hope some of this might be used to support the retention of smaller schools	Lobbying together with MPs and AMs successfully gained additional funding for Powys as part of the 2016/17 financial settlement from Welsh Government. An additional £1.2m was delegated to all schools via the fair funding formula during the 2016/17 budget round.
13.6 Other		
13.6.1	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School offers 'value for money'	The cost per pupil for 2016/17 is £4410, which is 125% of the council's average.
13.6.2	The building at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School doesn't cost you anything	The school is funded for property costs in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula, and although there has not been significant capital expenditure recently, the authority is required to maintain the property to the required standards.
13.6.3	Dolau School is deemed to be running its budget in the red through a calculation drawn on average teacher costs	The school ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £13,359, and have a planned cumulative surplus of £3,832 for the year ended 31st March 2017
14 ISSUES RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AT LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P. SCHOOL		
14.1	The current acting headteacher has brought in new ideas and encouragement to staff, governors and pupils	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.

14.2	The school has benefitted due to sharing the services and experience of a headteacher with Llanelwedd which is a result of effective deployment of resources	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.3	There is an excellent permanent headteacher at the school	The current arrangement in relation to leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not a permanent arrangement.
14.4	The school has continued to support Powys County Council in the idea of shared headship which has been working efficiently and cost effectively	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.5	The present solution of a shared head is working very well – enables sharing of resources, teaching ideas and expertise and helps to reduce costs	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.6	We have a permanent leadership arrangement at this school	The current arrangement in relation to leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not a permanent arrangement.
14.7	We have tried to work with you in the past to arrive at a more permanent leadership arrangement	The authority notes this comment.
14.8	Current shared arrangement with Llanelwedd works fantastically well	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.9	Current shared head means that children enjoy shared days out on trips, shared resources	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.10	Current shared head arrangement saves you money – should be	The current shared head arrangement is a saving to the school, as the authority funds a full time headteacher post in each school, however there is no saving to the authority.

	championed in other smaller primary schools	There are shared Headteacher arrangements in place across Powys, however in most cases, these are temporary arrangements.
14.11	Dolau found its own solution to a lack of a headteacher by working with Llanelwedd and sharing a headteacher	The authority notes this comment. However, this is a temporary arrangement.
14.12	The current arrangement is working effectively and efficiently	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
14.13	The current headteacher is doing a very successful job and is well liked by parents and children	The authority is pleased to note that the current shared head arrangement has been a success.
15 CRITICISM OF THE AUTHORITY		
15.1 General criticism of the council		
15.1.1	Ironic that the Council is thinking about closing the school when it is on the up	The authority notes this comment. The authority is currently reviewing the school as it met a number of the criteria for school review outlined in the authority's School Transformation Policy (2014).
15.1.2	Guessing that not one of those making the decisions have little grandchildren so they can't understand where we're coming from	The authority does not accept this comment. As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aim is to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the authority's primary aim when developing school reorganisation proposals.
15.1.3	In Powys, children are treated as commodities to be bussed around	This is not true. The One Powys Plan states the authority's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.1.4	Many in the community are losing their belief in Powys County Council	The authority notes this comment.

15.1.5	Shouldn't the Council be spending time looking at ways to improve schools that are struggling academically?	All schools are monitored, supported and challenged in line with the ERW consortium's Ladder of Support. This approach aligns with the National Categorisation of Schools.
15.1.6	It is the wrong time for the Council to have carried out consultation on changing the age of school admission	The authority notes this comment.
15.1.7	The message from Powys' Education Department is that 'We don't back you, we don't believe in you, we don't share your aspirations, we don't understand your ambitions'	The One Powys Plan states the authority's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.1.8	There is a lack of vision from Powys Education Department, closure of rural schools has been a quick and easy fix to fill surplus places in larger local primary schools	The One Powys Plan states the authority's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.1.9	Powys County Council cannot sit back and accept long term population trends as inevitable when this would mean an unsustainable future	The authority note this comment.
15.1.10	Too many bad judgements are made under the heading of 'Progress' or 'Modernisation'	The authority notes this comment.
15.1.11	The education department is failing the schools, the staff, the parents, the wider community and the children	The One Powys Plan states the authority's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.

15.1.12	Closure of the school would be an inhumane act by the Council	The authority notes this comment.
15.1.13	The Council has not fully thought out the full implications of shutting this school	The authority notes this comment. All issues raised during the consultation will be taken into consideration by the council's Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
15.1.14	Wouldn't the Council's time be better spent on Ysgol Bro Hyddgen which is failing educationally and financially?	All schools are monitored, supported and challenged in line with the ERW consortium's Ladder of Support. This approach aligns with the National Categorisation of Schools.
15.2 Criticism of the Cabinet		
15.2.1	Request for Cabinet members to visit the school	Cabinet members have visited the school.
15.2.2	Councillors and the Cabinet need to take heed of who elected them and who they serve	The authority notes this comment.
15.2.3	Is there any local representation on the Cabinet?	Two of the nine current Cabinet members are from Radnorshire.
15.2.4	In a press release, Barry Thomas said the consultation was not simply about money, but what other reason do you have to close the school?	<p>The reasons why the authority is proposing closure of the school were listed in the consultation document, and are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average
15.2.5	Cabinet have admitted that it is not the standard of education that is in question, that this is because of pupil numbers and because the school is	The authority notes this comment.

	under capacity, however the school will be at capacity at Christmas	
15.3 Criticism of officers		
15.3.1	Powys officers feed inaccuracies and untruths to councillors	This comment is refuted.
15.3.2	Officers are fooling the cabinet members with incorrect information time and time again	This comment is refuted.
15.3.3	Officers do not seem to be able to produce or listen to the facts and figures continually given to them by the Head, governors, parents and wider community	The authority notes this comment and acknowledges the additional information that have been received. The consultation documentation is based on the latest verified information that was available to the authority at the time.
15.3.4	Surely someone is accountable for the inaccuracies in the documentation?	The consultation documentation is based on the latest verified information that was available to the authority at the time.
15.4 Criticism of Council's money saving plans		
15.4.1	The Council should reduce costs in other ways – why do we need a Powys building at the RWAS?	The authority notes this comment.
15.4.2	Closing small schools is an easy target	The authority notes this comment. However, the One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'. Schools were identified for review in accordance with the criteria in the authority's School Transformation Policy (2014).
15.4.3	There are plenty of savings that could be made to the Education budget	The Authority notes this comment. The Schools Service has identified £4.5m of savings over the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years, which is part of the Authority's

Medium Term Financial Strategy.		
15.4.4	Children are not a column in a profit and loss account – their education is important and worth investing in	The authority notes this comment. The One Powys Plan states the authority's aim to ensure that 'All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential'. The plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.4.5	Schools will be against the proposal to change the school admission age if it lowers their pupil numbers	The authority notes this comment and the impact the change to the age of admission will have on school pupil numbers.
15.4.6	You will have to increase funding for pre-school settings if the school admission age changes	This will be considered as part of the Change of Admission Age project.
15.5 Criticism of Council policy		
15.5.1	Powys County Council does not work hard enough to find alternative methods of delivery to address the needs of its residents	The authority notes this comment. A range of options were considered in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, these are listed in the consultation document.
15.5.2	Powys should keep as many schools open as possible	The authority notes this comment. However, the One Powys Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.5.3	Urge the Education Department and County Councillors to give serious consideration to re-thinking the school modernisation programme which promotes school closures	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.4	Unacceptable that the Council is planning to close 8 more schools	The authority notes this comment.

15.5.5	Powys County Council's education department needs to modernise its thinking in relation to keeping thriving communities alive rather than killing them	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.6	Feel that Powys County Council are doing too much too quickly with regard to the reorganisation of schools in Powys, with the closure of high schools and primary schools	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.7	The One Powys Plan states that 'In strong communities people are in touch, talk to and help each other out. They are more likely to feel that they belong and have a sense of pride about where they live. With reduced public sector funding, it is important we work together to develop resilient sustainable communities both in rural and urban areas' – closing the school would be against the Council's own policy	The authority notes this comment, and acknowledges that this is stated in the One Powys Plan. However, the One Powys Plan also states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.5.8	Once you start closing schools you will never open them again	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.9	The Council's Transport Policy could be legally challenged – it is illegal to make parents travel a mile with their children to catch a bus – parents do that to be helpful	The authority notes this comment.
15.5.10	The Council needs to work on a long	The authority notes this comment.

	term plan to attract families with children – working up proposals that will attract the wealth-creating sectors of the future and lobbying Welsh and Westminster Governments for support e.g. energy generation and other environmental technologies, sustainable agriculture	
15.5.11	PCC could ask parents to pay for school transport, as happens with school dinners	Free home to school transport is currently provided to pupils in accordance with the authority's home to school transport policy.
15.5.12	Why are the authority obsessed with reducing surplus places?	In 2012, the Welsh Government set targets for all authorities to reduce surplus places in schools. Further to this, Estyn published a report entitled 'How do surplus places affect the resources available for expenditure on improving outcomes for pupils' in May 2012, which concluded that 'where there is a higher than necessary level of school places, resources are being deployed inefficiently that could be better used to improve the quality of education for all learners.'
15.6 Criticism of the Council's treatment of rural communities		
15.6.1	Shortsighted approach by the Council which does little to address the needs of rural communities	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.2	Powys County Council does not take its responsibilities to rural communities robustly enough	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.

15.6.3	Local Government has an obligation to the communities they serve	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.4	Understand the issues and problems that face Powys, but also understand the value to Powys of the community in which we live	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.5	Closing so many rural schools will inevitably lead to the decline of those communities	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.6	Closure would be another step towards making Mid Wales a social, cultural and economic wilderness	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.7	Decisions made by councillors will decimate the communities they serve	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.

15.6.8	The council should be bringing communities together, not removing its heart	The authority is committed to addressing the needs of rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.9	Unfair to the people of rural Radnorshire to be penalised in this way because of the geography of where they choose to live	As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority's aspiration is to ensure that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential', and this is the primary consideration when reorganising schools. The authority's view is that high quality education can be provided to the current pupils of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School at Crossgates C.P. School, and that this school is within a reasonable travel distance.
15.6.10	Rural nature of Powys causes unique challenges which require unique local solutions	The authority is fully aware of the challenges caused by the rural nature of Powys. A number of options were considered in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, these are listed in the consultation document.
15.6.11	Rural communities want to expand but are not allowed to by local authorities	The authority note this comment.
15.6.12	Powys need to recognise the importance of ensuring that rural communities thrive, benefit from and contribute to economic growth	The authority is committed to supporting rural communities. This is reflected in the One Powys Plan, which includes 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities' as one of its priorities. However, 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.13	Rural tax payers get little or nothing for their taxation other than the school – all that would be left would be rubbish collections	Should the school close, education would continue to be provided to children living in Dolau at an alternative school, and free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils.
15.6.14	The Council should have a more	The authority notes this comment. As stated in the One Powys Plan, the authority is

	positive outlook on the role of local schools	committed to ensuring that 'all children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential.' In order to achieve this, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
15.6.15	In 2011 an estimated 58.7% of Powys residents lived in villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings' – this shows that there is a need for rural schools as such a large percentage of people live in rural places	The authority is fully aware that a large percentage of Powys residents live in rural areas.
15.6.16	If the Council continues with its policy of wholesale closure of rural schools, particularly in Brecon and Radnorshire, the future rural workforce will simply not exist	The authority notes this comment.
15.6.17	If the proposal goes ahead, it will be seen in the future to have been as short-sighted as the Beeching proposals for the closure of the Heart of Wales railway line	The authority notes this comment.
15.6.18	Equality Act 2010 – there to eliminate discrimination against people for any reason. We are being discriminated against because we are a small community, as are Llanbister and Nantmel	The review of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was triggered by a process which considered a number of criteria. Ultimately, the primary consideration for the Authority when reorganising schools is the interests of the child. The School Organisation Code states that 'the primary purpose of schools is the provision of education'. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 were taken into consideration through the production of an Equality Impact Assessment in respect of this proposal, which was included in the consultation document. This Assessment will be updated to reflect views received during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
15.6.29	How can Powys make towns and	The authority notes this comment. 'Stronger, safer and economically viable communities'

	villages 'more community focussed, self reliant and resilient' by closing our rural school?	is one of the priorities in the One Powys Plan. 'Transformation Learning and Skills' is another priority within the Plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that 'we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'.
16 QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE PROCESS		
16.1 Consultation meetings		
16.1.1	Disappointed that points put to the panel in the consultation meeting weren't answered	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.2	Disappointed that I was only allowed 5 minutes to talk through my financial analysis at the consultation meeting, this was nowhere near long enough	The authority notes this comment. The purpose of the consultation meeting was to hear the views of a wide range of stakeholders, therefore the amount of time allocated for each individual to speak had to be restricted.
16.1.3	I am awaiting answers to questions that were asked at the consultation meeting	Information was provided in response to specific requests.
16.1.4	The public consultation meeting showed the integrity and compassion and commitment of the community	The authority notes this comment.
16.1.5	Over 200 members of the local community attended the public meeting, where we were subjected to out of date information, inaccuracies, estimates and lies from Powys officials	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.6	People left the meeting frustrated and exasperated by the attitude of the	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period,

	officials	including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.7	The meeting raised more questions than it gave answers	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.8	A disgrace that none of you had prepared answers to many of the questions asked by concerned parents at the consultation meeting	Officers were unable to prepare answers to the questions as they were unaware of the questions that would be asked. Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.9	Not good enough that officers were unable to answer questions on the impact of school closures on communities	Officers endeavoured to answer all questions posed in the consultation meeting to the best of their abilities. Responses to all issues raised during the consultation period, including those raised in the consultation meetings, are provided in this report.
16.1.10	You only need to look at the number of people that attended the public meeting to know how well supported the school is	The authority notes this comment.
16.1.11	The panel did not want some of the facts and figures that had been gathered to be displayed on the projector, however this was not a problem at one of the other schools	At the public Consultation Meeting held at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, following a request from a member of the public, a short presentation was provided by the community.
16.1.12	The meeting in one of the other schools continued well beyond the allotted time until every question had been asked	The authority notes this comment. The authority's view is that two hours is sufficient for a meeting of this type, however there can be a level of flexibility with this.
16.1.13	It was unfair that the schools did not have a level playing field at the	The authority planned all consultation meetings in the same way in order to ensure consistency, however the audiences at each meeting participated in different ways.

consultation meetings		
16.2 SORP process		
16.2.1	How many of the criteria for review of a school have to be met in order to trigger a review?	There is no minimum number of criteria that have to be met in order to trigger a review. Any school that met one or more of the criteria could have been reviewed.
16.2.2	Crossgates C.P. School has surplus capacity – why has that not triggered a review of Crossgates?	Crossgates C.P. School only met one of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014). The schools currently being reviewed met more than one of the criteria.
16.2.3	The condition of the Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building is not urgent enough to trigger a review	The authority notes this comment. However, the building condition met the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014).
16.2.4	Concern that the SORP process has been created with the sole aim of closing rural schools	The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’ The SORP process was established to review schools based on a range of criteria which are common to all schools, regardless of size and area.
16.2.5	The SORP process is not at all independent and unbiased, and is not acting in the best interests of our children or community	The One Powys Plan states that ‘we need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.’ The SORP process was established to review schools based on a range of criteria which are common to all schools, regardless of size and area.
16.2.6	The main criteria should be educational standards	The authority notes this comment. Educational standards is one of the criteria for review listed in the School Transformation Policy. Where schools are reviewed, the Council is committed to ensuring that education of an equivalent standard is provided at the named receiving school.
16.2.7	There are many other schools in the county that have a higher cost per pupil, and it is unfair that this school is being ‘picked on’ in this way	All schools were ranked against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy, and the SORP determined which schools to review based on this exercise. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School met a number of the criteria, and this is the reason why the school is being reviewed. It is not true that the school is being ‘picked on’.

16.2.8	There are other schools in Powys whose cost per pupil is far greater than Dolau and where standards are not as high, yet these are not being reviewed	All schools were ranked against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy, and the SORP determined which schools to review based on this exercise. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School met a number of the criteria, and this is the reason why the school is being reviewed.
16.2.9	Feel that Dolau should not have been put into consultation in the first place as the figures are not current	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is under review as a result of meeting a number of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014).
16.2.10	Size is not a determining factor in terms of how good a school is – there are good schools of all sizes	The authority acknowledges that there are good examples of small schools and larger schools. However, pupil numbers was one of the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy (2014) to be used to identify schools to be reviewed, and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School met this criteria.
16.3 View that a final decision has already been made		
16.3.1	Have no expectation that the consultation exercise will change the decision doubtless already made to close the school	No decision has been made on the future of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. All issues raised during the consultation period, and the authority's response to these issues, will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed with this proposal.
16.3.2	Suspect the consultation exercise is being undertaken simply to fulfil statutory obligations	No decision has been made on the future of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. All issues raised during the consultation period, and the authority's response to these issues, will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed with this proposal.
16.3.3	Hope that the council will honour its promise to give due regard to the wishes of the local people they have been elected to represent	The decision on how to proceed in relation to this proposal will be made by the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet members will receive the consultation report which lists all issues raised during the consultation period, and will take this into consideration when determining how to proceed in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
16.3.4	If funding in Powys is so short, no one will have time to read through the	All consultation responses received will be read.

responses		
16.4 Other		
16.4.1	Parents at Crossgates C.P. School haven't had a say in what is going to happen	Whilst no meeting was held with parents at Crossgates C.P. School, a letter advising them of the consultation was sent to the school for distribution. The consultation documentation was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period, and anyone could respond to the consultation.
16.4.2	If only one school in the local area is to close, the reason should be educational standards	The authority notes this comment.
16.4.3	The School Organisation Code requires authorities to assess the full impact of closure of a school on the local community	A community impact assessment was carried out in line with the guidance provided in the School Organisation Code. All issues raised during the consultation relating to the proposal's impact on the community will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in respect of this proposal.
16.4.4	Angry that so much money is being wasted on the consultation procedure – staff hours will negate any savings that might have been made	The authority notes this comment.
16.4.5	Waste of tax payers and councillors time on consultation – can only be described as a farce	The authority notes this comment.
16.4.6	Has Powys informed Estyn of the proposals?	Yes, Powys has informed Estyn of the proposal. Their response to the consultation is provided in this consultation report.
16.4.7	Parents at Crossgates C.P. School feel like they have been totally overlooked	Whilst no meeting was held with parents at Crossgates C.P. School, a letter advising them of the consultation was sent to the school for distribution. The consultation documentation was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period, and anyone could respond to the consultation.

16.4.8	Why was the playgroup not consulted?	Copies of the consultation document were provided to the school for distribution to the playgroup.
16.4.9	Request for assurance that the inaccuracies of the whole process and the way in which the consultation was handled and the way the education department deals with schools, governing bodies and staff is looked into thoroughly?	The consultation process has been carried out in compliance with the School Organisation Code and the Schools Transformation Policy 2014. Issues raised in respect of inaccuracies with data have been addressed in this consultation report.
16.4.10	Have the governors and parents at Crossgates been involved in this consultation?	The governors and parents at Crossgates C.P. School have been informed of the consultation.
17 QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION		
17.1 Aspects which aren't included in the documentation		
17.1.1	Has the Council looked at pre-school aged activity?	Reference is made to pre-school activity in the Community Impact Assessment on page 33 of the consultation document. The Community Impact Assessment will be updated to take account of view received during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.2	The consultation document has failed to identify the social costs of closing a well-established and successful community school in a sparsely populated but socially active area	The consultation document included a community impact assessment, which was based on the guidance in the School Organisation Code, which considered the proposal's impact on the community. This community impact assessment will be updated to take account of issues raised during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.3	The proposer has not commented on end of key stage outcomes for each school when compared with similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals	This statement is true. Information on the quality current provision is provided on pages 18 – 20 of the consultation document, and includes details of the latest Estyn inspections of each affected school, and details of the latest categorisation of each school as part of the National School Categorisation System.

17.1.4	A lack of information has been given on the impacts of school closure on other more recently closed schools	The authority notes this comment.
17.1.5	The playgroup is not mentioned in the consultation document	Reference is made to the playgroup in relation to community use of the school building in the Community Impact Assessment on page 33 of the consultation document. The Community Impact Assessment will be updated to take account of view received during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.6	School Organisation Code requires authorities to assess the full impact of closure on the local community	The consultation document included a community impact assessment, which was based on the guidance in the School Organisation Code, which considered the proposal's impact on the community. This community impact assessment will be updated to take account of issues raised during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.7	Surely you should have carried out full investigations into possible impacts on the community before going to consultation – this was clearly not the case	The consultation document included a community impact assessment, which was based on the guidance in the School Organisation Code, which considered the proposal's impact on the community. The information included in this assessment was provided by Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the named receiving school. This community impact assessment will be updated to take account of issues raised during the consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.8	The document doesn't highlight the nature of the cost of additional transport to the children in terms of lost time, environmental impact	The authority notes this comment.
17.1.9	School Organisation Code – 'When considering whether a closure is appropriate, special attention should be given to the following: the overall effect of a closure on the local	The consultation document included a community impact assessment, which was based on the guidance in the School Organisation Code, which considered the proposal's impact on the community. The information included in this assessment was provided by Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the named receiving school. This community impact assessment will be updated to take account of issues raised during the

	community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community), particularly in rural areas or those receiving funding as part of regeneration activity'	consultation period, and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.1.10	The council has not carried out a full investigation into the social and economic impact of closure on the local community – there is no indication of the scale and nature of the impact, whether this will be in the short, medium or long term	The authority has carried out a Community Impact Assessment in-line with the guidance in the School Organisation Code. This will be updated to take account of views expressed during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. Whilst the Council acknowledges that closure of a school will have an impact on the local community, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
17.1.11	There is no evidence that the council has considered the wider impact of rural school closures on the rural economy	The authority has carried out a Community Impact Assessment in-line with the guidance in the School Organisation Code. This will be updated to take account of views expressed during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. Whilst the Council acknowledges that closure of a school will have an impact on the local community, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
17.1.12	There is no evidence that any account has been given to the long term future of the substantially rural nature of our county	The authority has carried out a Community Impact Assessment in-line with the guidance in the School Organisation Code. This will be updated to take account of views expressed during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. Whilst the Council acknowledges that closure of a school will have an impact on the local community, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
17.1.13	There is no reference to 'disruption to children' in Appendix A – Benefits and Outcomes	This is true. 'Disruption to children' is not a benefit of this proposal, therefore would not be included in this section.

17.1.14	The consultation document does not refer to research or consultation with other education authorities that have championed rural education, which is disappointing	The authority notes this comment.
17.1.15	The proposals presented by Powys County Council lacked an assessment of the potential impact of closing the school on the community	The authority has carried out a Community Impact Assessment in-line with the guidance in the School Organisation Code. This will be updated to take account of views expressed during the consultation period and will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal. Whilst the Council acknowledges that closure of a school will have an impact on the local community, economic and social factors are non-educational issues and they should not be allowed to compromise the education of children.
17.1.16	The proposals do not fulfil the requirements of the Wales Wellbeing Act	A Single Integrated Impact Assessment, which takes account of the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.2 Request for clarification of aspects of the documentation		
17.2.1	The figures in the consultation document have been called into question	The authority notes this comment. The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.2.2	There are inaccuracies and estimates by the officers in the consultation document	The authority notes this comment. The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.2.3	The consultation document minimises the impact of the school's closure by reference to the continued provision of the community hall	The authority is not proposing any change to the community hall.
17.2.4	The table on p12 re financial savings shows a complete lack of details and	The authority notes this comment.

	transparency	
17.2.5	If estimates are to be used, any assumptions used must be clearly stated to allow critical analysis	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.6	In your weaknesses of closure, you have not listed the impact on the children – shouldn't they be our priority?	The authority notes this comment. The weaknesses do refer to the impact of additional travel for pupils.
17.2.7	The consultation paper is full of inaccuracies, in particular pupil numbers	As stated in the consultation document, the data includes pupils from Reception to Year 6 based on the latest verified PLASC information that was available at the time.
17.2.8	The transport costs are inaccurate in the consultation paper	The additional transport costs have been estimated by the authority at a net additional £120 per day.
17.2.9	Confusion around the figures provided for capacity of Crossgates C.P. School	Crossgates C.P. School has 7 classrooms in the main building, each with a capacity of 30 pupils (210 in total). The school has a maximum capacity to accommodate 238 pupils which would include the use of the mobile classroom on the site.
17.2.10	There were 31 pupils, including early years, in the school in January 2015, but in the consultation document it says there were 29	As stated in the consultation document, the data includes pupils from Reception to Year 6 based on the latest verified PLASC information that was available at the time.
17.2.11	There are two pupils at the school that receive free school meals	As stated in the consultation document, the data is based on the latest verified PLASC information that was available at the time. At this time, no pupils were eligible for free school meals. The equality impact assessment will be updated to include the most recent data, and this will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed.
17.2.12	On what basis do you project that pupil numbers in the future will be as low as they are now?	The information provided in the consultation document states that pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are expected to increase.

17.2.13	No great account is taken of population change in the area	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.14	Consultation document contains wrong information – pupil numbers are wrong, additional transport cost is wrong, canteen cost is wrong	The authority notes this comment. The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation document is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.2.15	Document uses historical rather than current information in a few places	The authority notes this comment. The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation document is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.2.16	Free school meals – just because a child doesn't have free school meals doesn't mean that they are not eligible	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.17	Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon, Llanbister and Nantmel schools would mean that the impact on Crossgates would be much more than 'not have a significant impact'	The authority notes this comment. Reference is made to the fact that closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, Llanbister C.P. School and Nantmel C in W School would have a more significant impact on Crossgates C.P. School in sections (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) on pages 9 and 10 of the consultation document.
17.2.18	Challenge the presumption in the consultation document that 'pupil numbers on the Dolau site would continue to be below 50' in all scenarios	The authority notes this comment. The projected pupil numbers provided on page 17 of the consultation document show that pupil numbers are proposed to remain well below 50 over the next 5 years. Although information has been received which suggests that there may be a greater increase in pupil numbers, it is unlikely that pupil numbers would rise to be above 50.
17.2.19	Challenge to the strengths and weaknesses outlined for the various options in the consultation document	The authority notes this comment.
17.2.20	Challenge to the advantages and	The authority notes this comment.

	disadvantages of the proposal listed in the consultation document	
17.2.21	Challenge to the risks associated with the proposal listed in the consultation document	The authority notes this comment.
17.3 General criticism of the consultation document		
17.3.1	The case for closure as outlined in the consultation document left me totally unconvinced	The authority notes this comment.
17.3.2	The reasoning lacks substance	The authority notes this comment.
17.3.3	The endless tables in the consultation document feel computer generated rather than being the result of intelligent reasoning	The authority notes this comment. The consultation document has been produced in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, which requires the inclusion of a significant amount of data.
17.3.4	Not convinced that information was available in a child-friendly form	A pupil version of the consultation document was produced, which was in line with the pupil versions produced for previous proposals, which were developed with input from the authority's Children and Young People's Partnership. In addition, officers met with the School Council of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to discuss the proposal with them.
17.3.5	Surely a decision to close a school should at least be based on accurate and up to date information	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.3.6	The Council should be consulting with the correct figures, not incorrect figures	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.3.7	You said that the consultation document was a work in progress – it	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when

	should not be a work in progress. The document you consult on has to be accurate	the document was produced.
17.3.8	How can anyone have confidence in the council when the veracity of the consultation document is in such obvious doubt?	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.4 Other		
17.4.1	Kirsty Williams advised in the consultation meeting that the consultation document should have been factual in the first place	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
17.4.2	Hope the council response to the consultation will clearly indicate the degree to which children have been consulted, been responsive and had their views properly considered, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	The issues raised by pupils are outlined on page 4 – 6 of this report, and responses to the issues raised are provided in the main body of the report. Issues raised by pupils will be taken into consideration by Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.
17.4.3	How can you have a valid consultation when it is based on wrong information issued by the council?	The authority is satisfied that the information contained in the consultation is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date verified information that was available to the authority when the document was produced.
18 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS		
18.1 Federation / Split Site School		
18.1.1	Why not have one headteacher for Dolau and Llanbister?	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of amalgamating or federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be

		<p>considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these were not considered to be suitable solutions at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.2	Federation with another school would be a good idea as the school already shares a headteacher with another school	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.3	Federation would mean no upheaval for pupils and would keep the community growing	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.4	Dolau school is already semi-federated with a school head from another school	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p>

		All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
18.1.5	What about federation?	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.6	Why hasn't the option of federation been included in the consultation document?	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, and this option is listed on page 6 of the consultation document. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.7	Federation would be appropriate – reference to successful models such as the Wye Forest Federation	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet</p>

		when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
18.1.8	Federation or sharing headteachers would lead to the advantage of sharing teacher expertise and makes the use of specialist teachers an easier option	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.1.9	Urge you to consider federation as a cost saving which would allow for flexibility in the future	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of federating with another school when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. The school currently shares a headteacher with Llanelwedd C. in W. School, and as the Welsh Government's Federation Regulations do not allow federation between a Church school and a C.P. school, federation between these two schools is not possible.</p> <p>Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.2 Status Quo		
18.2.1	The Council should pursue the option of keeping the school open in its present form	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of maintaining the Status Quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a

		<p>suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.2.2	There is nothing to stop the Council choosing to keep a thriving small school open as there is no significant evidence to suggest that schools the size of this one cannot be successful	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of maintaining the Status Quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.2.3	Why doesn't the authority keep Dolau open to accept children from the 2 other schools, or at least children from Llanbister?	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of maintaining the Status Quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.2.4	The Council could use our school as a rural option, which would enable local people to educate their children here and would free up spaces at bigger, more centrally placed primary schools	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of maintaining the Status Quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.2.5	The school could fly the 'rural option' flag for Powys	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered the option of maintaining the Status Quo when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However this was not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet</p>

		when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
18.3 Shared Headship		
18.3.1	The Council should consider the benefits of the current shared headship arrangement	Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.
18.3.2	One head could be shared by three smaller schools, resulting in even less cost	Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.
18.3.3	Urge you to consider sharing headteachers as a cost saving which would allow for flexibility in the future	Whilst shared headteacher arrangements have provided successful short term arrangements where schools have been unable to appoint a headteacher, this is not a permanent solution. A shared headteacher arrangement could only become a permanent arrangement following an organisational change to the school, such as federation or amalgamation / merger.
18.4 Collaboration		
18.4.1	Joint management of staff and resources across several schools	The authority notes this comment.
18.4.2	Closer working with other local schools	The authority notes this comment.
18.4.3	Pooling resources would be a good place to start – keeping costs down but broadening horizons	The authority notes this comment. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is already part of a shared headteacher arrangement with Llanelwedd C. in W. which has allowed for some pooling of resources, however this is not a permanent arrangement.
18.4.4	Have you looked at methods of joint	The authority uses video conferencing in the secondary sector to deliver specific subjects

	working with other schools e.g. video conferencing, other IT ideas – these are used elsewhere in public and private education	where there are small classes in one or more schools. In most cases, the video conferencing at secondary level is used for post-16 or 14-16 provision, where pupils are able to supervise themselves. However, the authority does not believe this an appropriate or acceptable delivery method for primary education.
18.4.5	Shared teaching via skype and video conferencing	The authority uses video conferencing in the secondary sector to deliver specific subjects where there are small classes in one or more schools. In most cases, the video conferencing at secondary level is used for post-16 or 14-16 provision, where pupils are able to supervise themselves. However, the authority does not believe this is an appropriate or acceptable delivery method for primary education.
18.4.6	The council should develop new collaborative models of education delivery that ensure that children are educated in the community	The authority notes this comment.
18.4.7	Collaborative model is already successfully delivering a quality educational experience via the collaborative arrangements between Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Llanelwedd	The authority notes this comment and is pleased to note the success of the current collaborative arrangements between Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Llanelwedd C. in W. School. However, this is not a permanent arrangement.
18.4.8	There is no evidence to suggest that the council has made any effort to deal with issues in relation to collaboration between C.P. and Church in Wales Schools	The authority notes this comment. However, the current shared headteacher arrangement between Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Llanelwedd C in W School is an example of successful collaboration between C.P. and Church in Wales schools.
18.4.9	Collaboration model between the two schools should be pursued further rather than looking at closure as the first option	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time. All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet

		when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
18.4.10	Llanbister C.P. School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School should be working together to make sure we have the most viable primary school system we can get.	<p>The authority notes this comment. The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendations to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Llanbister C.P. School, which included federation or amalgamation with other schools. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.4.11	The school has formed relationships with Nantmel and now Llanelwedd which works well, this should be encouraged to ensure pupils can continue to be educated in their community	The authority notes this comment.
18.5 Examples of successful arrangements elsewhere		
18.5.1	In England, local involvement and management has led to small schools filling up and being rated outstanding E.g. Almeley and Dilwyn in Herefordshire	The authority notes this comment.
18.5.2	Have Cabinet members been in contact with or visited small schools that have remained open by various means? Will they?	No, Cabinet members have not been in contact with or visited small school that have remained open and there are no current plans for them to do so. However, the authority regularly has discussions with various authorities within Wales through networks arranged by the regional consortium and the Welsh Government.
18.5.3	In England, small schools have saved themselves from closure by becoming free schools – parents like this approach and pupil numbers and	The authority notes this comment.

	standards have gone up	
18.5.4	English primary schools are investing in primary education and diversifying into academies, so taking control from local authorities	The authority notes this comment.
18.5.5	Have you looked at other areas where there are small rural schools?	The authority regularly has discussions with various authorities within Wales through networks arranged by the regional consortium and the Welsh Government.
18.5.6	Reference to Wye Forest federation in Gloucestershire – their Ofsted reportsd have improved since federation	The authority notes this comment.
18.5.7	Has the Portfolio Holder done any research into solutions for saving small schools e.g. Dilwyn and Almeley schools in Herefordshire where pupil numbers are less?	No, the Portfolio Holder has not done any research of this kind. However, the authority regularly has discussions with various authorities within Wales through networks arranged by the regional consortium and the Welsh Government.
18.5.8	Have you spoken to Governors and Cabinet members in other rural counties?	The authority regularly has discussions with various authorities within Wales through networks arranged by the regional consortium and the Welsh Government.
18.5.9	If the school was in England and was closed, it would become a thriving free school, however that is not an option in Wales	The authority notes this comment.
18.6 Other Comments		
18.6.1	Dolau can work to provide an alternative method of teaching delivery – you should be ensuring that	The authority notes this comment.

	the community and the Council works together to make this happen	
18.6.2	The Council should lobby the Welsh Government to allow Free Schools as in England	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.3	The Council should pursue options that would enable continued education at this school	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.6.4	The rural nature of Powys causes unique challenges which require unique local solutions	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.5	There is an opportunity here to make improvements instead of insignificant savings	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.6	Has the Council thought of school twinning?	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.6.7	Urge you to consider all options before making any decisions	The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.

		All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.
18.6.8	The school has made enquiries about becoming a Church in Wales school	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.9	You have a responsibility to have a vision for the future and to look at new ways of working so that small schools can be viable and there is career progression for teachers	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.10	There are other options which would mean that the children could stay in their community – the community wants to work with you to achieve this	<p>The School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) considered a range of options when deciding on the draft recommendation to be considered by Cabinet in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. However these options were not considered to be a suitable solution at that time.</p> <p>All alternative options suggested during this consultation will be considered by Cabinet when determining the way forward in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>
18.6.11	Sometimes it is better to find a solution that works for communities and not budgets	The authority notes this comment.
18.6.12	Powys could take a more imaginative approach to the future development of schooling and educational provision	The authority notes this comment.
19 OTHER QUESTIONS / COMMENTS		
19.1	Concern about Llandrindod High School closing and pupils having to travel another 11 miles to get to Builth	This consultation is about the future of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Possible changes to secondary provision are being considered as part of a separate exercise, however the current proposal for the reorganisation of secondary schools includes

	Wells	retaining the provision on the Llandrindod High School site.
19.2	Closing the school would be a backward slide, pushing us into being a third world country	The authority does not agree that closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would push us into being a third world country.
19.3	People living in Dolau pay the same council tax as people living in towns where there are more things for children to do	The authority notes this comment.
19.4	If the school closes, would council tax go down for the people of Dolau?	Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, there would not be a reduction in council tax for the people of Dolau. Education would continue to be provided to children living in Dolau in an alternative school.
19.5	Reference to BBC Question Time on the 19 th April 2016 – politicians confirm that there are over 100 schools in Wales without a headteacher	The authority is fully aware of the difficulties with recruiting headteachers currently being faced in Wales.
20 COMMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSAL		
20.1	Understand the financial benefits of closing small schools and grouping pupils in one larger school	The authority notes this comment.
20.2	The proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area	The authority notes this comment.
20.3	Pupils would be able to make more friends, so they would know more people when they went to high school	The authority notes this comment.

20.4	There will be more time for teachers to explain the lessons because they will only have to explain a lesson for 1 year and not 3 or 4 years	The authority notes this comment.
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Appendix G – Minutes of meetings with School Council, Staff, Governors and Parents / Community – Llanfihangel Rhydithon

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**Report on meeting with the School Council of
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School**

25th February 2016

Meeting with the School Council of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School

Officers in attendance:

Marianne Evans, Senior Manager School transformation
Sarah Astley, Project Manager, School Transformation Team
Jade Clay, Schools Transformation Programme Support Officer

School representatives in attendance:

Adam Shearman, Acting Headteacher, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School
Nigel Bufton, Governor, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

A meeting with the School Council of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School was held on the 25th February 2016.

Sarah Astley, Project Manager explained the proposal to close the school. Pupils were then asked a number of questions. Their responses are summarised below:

1. What do you like about Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School?

- They know everyone in the school
- They have lots of friends and there is no bullying
- They all play with each other
- Because the school is small they all know each other better
- The teachers are nice
- Members of the community go to the school and read to them
- They like the activities they do – School Plays, Activities Day, Sports Day, Fundraising, St David’s Day activities
- P.E.
- The food is nice
- They have lots of books
- They like the outside play equipment – playhouse, shelter, climbing frames
- They get more 1-1 with the teachers
- The classes are small (10 pupils in one class and 20 pupils in another) so they get more attention from the teacher
- There is plenty of room in the classrooms
- The classes aren’t too noisy so they can concentrate
- They like D&T and Art and they think the teacher is fab

2. What don’t you like about Llanfihangel Rhydithon School?

- The school is cold in the mornings
- The conservation area is messy

3. What would be worse if you had to move schools?

- They will spend longer travelling and will have to get up earlier
- They will have to make new friends
- They will have different teachers
- They will have different classrooms
- They will be in bigger classes and the teacher will have less time to help them
- They will be separated from friends
- The bigger classes will be noisy so it will be harder to concentrate
- They will need to get used to a new school layout
- The play equipment at the school may not be as good
- There may not be enough toys etc. for everyone and they may not get a chance to use the play equipment
- Members of the community won't be able to read to them anymore
- There may be more arguing because they don't know each other
- School dinners may not be as nice
- They will have to queue for ages to get their dinner
- They will be in different classes to their current friends (Different age groups are in the same class at the moment)
- The teams will be larger for sports and so they may not get to have a go

4. Is there anything that would be better if you had to move schools?

- Make more friends – they would know more people when they went to high school
- The same ages will be in a class
- There is a larger field at Crossgates
- There will be more time for teachers to explain the lessons because they will only have to explain a lesson for 1 year and not 3/4 years
- Larger sports teams more opportunity to play sports

5. What do you think the impact of closure of the school would be on pupils with additional needs?

- They may not get as much time with specialists in a bigger school
- They may get annoyed with the long journey

6. Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following questions were raised?

- What would happen to the school building if the school closed?

Minutes of a meeting with staff of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School, held at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School on 1st March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, School Transformation
Catherine Cottle, HR Business Partner, Schools

Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services
Kelly Lock, Opinion Research Services

Bernadette Morgan, member of staff
Ellen Thomas, Foundation Phase Teacher
Mary Lomax, Chair of Governors
Adam Wright, Key Stage 2 Teacher
Tracey Jones, member of staff
Joanne Bradford, member of staff
Sue Colman, Dolau playschool
Clare Morris, member of staff
June Hardwick, member of staff
Gemma Bradford, member of staff
Adam Shearman, Headteacher

Gareth Jones welcomed school staff to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.

Gareth Jones explained the background leading up to the review of the school. It was noted that, in line with the School Transformation Policy, 2014, a range of criteria was used to determine schools to be reviewed. The School Organisation Review Panel had met with school governors between February and November, 2015, in order to discuss data for the school. This had resulted in a report to Cabinet in January, when Cabinet members had agreed to commence consultation on the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School from 31st December, 2016, with Crossgates C P School being named as the receiving school. Reasons for the proposal were given as follows:

- The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50.
- The funding per pupils is more than 120% of the Council's average.

Staff were informed that the purpose of the consultation meeting was to receive their views on the proposal to close the school and, should Cabinet take a decision to proceed with the proposal, a separate consultation with staff would take place in relation to the HR process.

Staff were informed that the minutes of the consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents and community would be shared with the headteacher and governing body and would be included with the report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet in May.

The following comments/questions were received from school representatives:

1. Question

If the Cabinet takes a decision to close the school, how does that affect us, as staff, from 31st December, 2016?

Response

The HR process with staff would not begin until the Council's Cabinet takes a final decision to close the school. If Cabinet members decide to take forward the recommendation to close the school, following the Cabinet meeting in May, then a statutory notice of closure will be published for a period of 28 days, of which 15 days must be school term time. During that period formal objections to the proposal may be received. Following the statutory notice period, a further report with an analysis of the responses received, will be considered by the Cabinet, which will take the final decision as to whether or not to close the school. There will be no referral to Welsh Government. Under new regulations, it will be the Council's Cabinet, which takes the final decision. If a decision is taken to close the school, discussion with staff will commence at the beginning of the autumn term. If the school closes on 31st December, it is important that pupils do not see any significant change during the autumn term. When Whitton School closed, the headteacher and some staff were employed to deal with the formal closure of the school after the pupils left the school.

2. Comment

We can't believe that this is happening. There were far fewer pupils in Llangurig CP School than in Llanfihangel Rhydithon School. There are a lot of children whose parents want them to come to this school. There is a new early years setting at Crossgates which operates from one of the mobile units.

Response

The 3+ setting operates from the double mobile and is not included in the school's capacity.

3. Question

If you have to put the children from this school and those from Nantmel C in W and Llanbister C P School into Crossgates CP School, where are the children from the early years setting going to go?

Response

A consultation is taking place on a proposal to change the age of school admission and the Cabinet will be considering a report on that proposal on 12th April. If the Council's Cabinet approves the proposal to change the school admission age then an assessment of the number of early years places will need to be undertaken. The early years mobiles at Crossgates CP School were funded from a different capital stream.

4. Comment

You will not have enough capacity for the children coming into the early years setting from here and from other early years settings.

Response

We need to have information on projected numbers in the early years setting so Cabinet members can be informed of the correct numbers.

5. Comment

There are a number of children on the list to come to this school next term and, in the future, and in the early years setting.

Response

Rhayader C in W School has been named as the receiving school for pupils of Nantmel C in W School and Crossgates C P School has been named as the receiving school for pupils of Llanbister and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School. The capacity at Crossgates C P School has been considered.

6. Comment

At one point, numbers in the playgroup in Dolau went down to two children and, at that time, everyone in the community pulled together to keep the playgroup going.

7. Question

What size will the classes be at Crossgates C P School if it is proposed that Crossgates will be taking pupils from Llanbister and Llanfihangel Rhydithon Schools if the schools close?

Response

The current capacity of Crossgates C P School is 210 but the capacity of the school can be increased to 238. The school has 7 classes and the mobile on site, which is currently used for the breakfast club, but could be used to extend the capacity of the school. Guidelines for Key Stage 1 classes are that they should not exceed 30 but there is no legal limit for Key Stage 2 classes. The majority of junior classes in the Authority's schools are under 30 but junior classes can go up to 33.

8. Question

**So you can take pupils from a good building and put them in a mobile classroom?
Will the mobile be warm enough?**

Responses

Many portacabins are no different to classrooms. If the proposal was taken forward it would be recognised that some children would be educated in the mobile classroom.

One of the aspects to be considered is having an understanding of which schools parents wish their children to go to. The choice of alternative schools is more restricted in Dolau.

9. Question

What would your advice be to individual parents if they have a concern about the receiving school?

Response

Parents would need to visit individual local schools and make their choice. It would not be for me to advise the parents. The Authority has to ensure there are available places in the named receiving school.

Response

In a county like Powys it is difficult due to the county's rurality and sparsity. Is a balance of large and small schools needed? Some parents may choose a small school, because of what small schools have to offer and the council has to recognise that issue. It may look as if the council is trying to create a structure of large schools. There is a debate about the value of having smaller rural schools in the mix.

10. Comment

If Llanbister, Llanfihangel Rhydithon and Nantmel schools close there will be no other rural school in the area. We have children in this school who can only cope with a smaller number in the class. The education system is going to fail those children if there are no small schools.

Response

Yes. What suits one child may not suit another. That is a question we need to reflect on.

11. Question

How are the County Council going to ensure that standards of education are maintained if children are in bigger classes?

Response

There is evidence to show the Authority has both good small and good large schools. Standards of teaching and learning are monitored through the Schools Service challenge advisors. If the school was to close the transition process would need to be carefully managed.

12. Question

Teachers at this school put in a lot of effort. How do teachers know that the next school will ensure pupils achieve the targets set by teachers here? Have you got proof that when children move they can achieve their targets?

Response

In Ystradgynlais the Authority closed 10 primary schools and opened four new ones. When the new primary schools were inspected by Estyn they all received good reports and there is evidence that standards have improved. Pupils' progress can be tracked using the "Teacher Centre" Management Information System.

13. Comment

I am concerned that children whose progress is "average" get forgotten. We need evidence that their education is not affected.

14. Comment

Pupils in year 6 will only have a few months to move to High school meaning that the same children will be affected by two school closures.

Response

The County Council is proposing closure of Llandrindod High School but not the site. The proposal is for a dual sited secondary school.

15. Comment

There is concern about the effect on the pupils. If the decision is taken to close the school, December would be the wrong time for the school to close. It would be detrimental for year 5 and year 6 pupils to have to go through more than one transition.

Response

It is understood that you don't want the school to close but if the Cabinet takes the decision to close the school, do you think closure should be at the end of the academic year rather than in December?

16. Comment

We do not want the school to close but if it does, December would be the wrong time for the children.

Response

Because of the processes that are required to be followed we cannot close the school at end of summer term this year. Although we can undertake consultation during “purdah” for the Welsh Government elections, the Cabinet will not be taking decisions during that period.

17. Comment

I would like to know when the Cabinet members are going to visit our school.

Response

The community meeting tonight will be chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Cllr Barry Thomas, Leader of the Council, will also be present. You can put that comment to them but the response I would expect is that it is down to individual cabinet members as to whether or not they visit the school.

18. Comment

I think that it is a shame that the Cabinet can take the decision without visiting the school. We have high standards of attainment at this school.

Response

The Authority is required to ensure that standards at the named, receiving school are as good as or better than the closing school.

19. Question

Do the cabinet have any local representation?

Response

2 cabinet members represent wards in Radnorshire, one in Breconshire and the other members represent wards in Montgomeryshire.

Response

Is there anything you want to raise here, as staff, in addition to the issues likely to be raised at parent and community meeting? All issues raised in consultation will be taken account of. The Cabinet will need to consider all the issues included in the consultation report before members take any further decisions on the future of the school.

When responses to the consultation are received, they are collated and logged. Officers go through the responses analysing all the issues. Themes and sub themes will be identified and responded to and included in a report for Cabinet to be compiled by officers. Welsh Government require the Authority to bring to the fore issues identified by young people and the response from Estyn.

The Cabinet has a duty to consider all the responses received but also has the responsibility of determining the next steps.. The percentage of responses against the proposal does not necessarily mean the proposal will not be taken forward.

Response

A similar process is being followed in relation to consultation on the proposed change of school admission age. 675 responses have been received. These all have to be analysed and all issues raised documented.

20. Comment

It is the wrong time to have carried out consultation on the age of school admission. Schools will be against the proposal to change the school admission age if it lowers their numbers.

Response

One of issues not taken account of yet is the impact on the school's role if the school admission age changes.

21. Comment/Question

You are going to have to increase funding for pre-school settings if the school admission age changes. It won't save any money. The adult child ratios are not being revised then? Up to 4 years of age, the adult child ratio is 1:4.

Response

I will check on that but it is my understanding that the adult child ratio for a 3+ setting is 1:8.

School representatives were informed about the next steps in the process:

The consultation period closes on 24th March. Following the end of the consultation period, a report, which includes an analysis of the issues raised in the consultation and the Council's response to them, will be considered by the Cabinet. If the Cabinet decides to take forward the proposal, a statutory notice of closure will be published for a period of 28 days during which objections to the proposal may be submitted. Any objection to the proposal submitted during the consultation period will need to be re-submitted during the statutory notice period. Following the statutory notice period, a further report containing an analysis of all the issues raised will be prepared for the Cabinet. Following consideration of the report, the Cabinet will take the final decision on the proposal. If a decision is taken to close the school, then there will discussion with staff in relation to the HR processes to be followed. School staff were advised how to respond to the consultation. It was noted that written responses to the consultation can be submitted online, by letter, or by e-mailing school.moderniation@powys.gov.uk. Consultation responses need to be with the Authority by 24th March.

22. Question

If worse comes to the worst what are the options for staff?

Response

If the decision is taken to close the school, a business case will be produced to be agreed by the governing body. The governing body will be asked to declare the posts redundant. A consultation period with staff will follow. This is normally 30 days during which discussion will take place with individual staff. If the decision is taken to close the school, then it is unlikely there would be an alternative to making all posts redundant. At the end of the staff consultation period, staff would be informed they were at risk of redundancy and would be invited to register on the redeployment list. Those staff on the redeployment register would be informed of potential alternative employment

and would be guaranteed an interview for any post in which they express an interest. The Authority would hope to redeploy staff during the notice period but it would depend on staff personal circumstances as to whether an alternative offer of employment might be considered reasonable. The Authority's HR team will work with staff to try to secure alternative suitable employment and will discuss with them what alternative work might be available. If the end of the notice period is reached and no alternative employment has been secured, staff would be made redundant. If any staff secure a job on a lower rate of pay or with reduced hours, a compensatory payment would be made. If no alternative employment with the Authority is secured by the end of the notice period, a modification order is in place whereby the Council has an agreement with a group of employers and if staff secure employment with any of those employers within a month of their redundancy their continuous service with the Authority would stand and count towards sickness pay and redundancy with the new employer. Staff would need to pay back redundancy pay if they found work with the employer via the modification order within a month. In addition, if staff are reemployed by the Council within a 12 month period of their redundancy, they would be required to pay back redundancy. In relation to posts in schools, this would only apply if schools had adopted the Council's policy.

Response

Redundancy pay up to £30K is not liable for tax but compensatory payment incurs tax and NI charges.

23. Question

Would you need to pay back all redundancy pay if reemployed by the authority within 12 months?

Response

This will be checked.

Comment

If a decision is taken to close the school, the authority would support the governing body in writing the business case.

Comment

If staff are offered a maternity cover post, the redundancy pay would be paid at the end of the maternity cover period.

Comment

Staff need 2 years continuous service in order to qualify for redundancy pay. Continuous service with other local authorities would also count towards redundancy pay. If you get a quote for redundancy pay check it covers the period of service you have had.

Gareth Jones thanked school representatives for attending the meeting. He informed members who were governors that that they would welcome to join the next meeting for governors and the public consultation meeting later.

24. Question

Is there enough staff capacity within HR to deal with the process if the schools close?

Response

Additional capacity is being made available in the HR team.

Minutes of a meeting with governors of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School, held at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School on 1st March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Ian Roberts, Head of Schools
Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance
Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation

Darren Ivey, ORS
Kelly Lock, ORS

Adam Shearman, Acting Headteacher
Steve Vipond, LEA Governor
Jo Bradford, Clerk to Governors
Carl Watkins, Community Governor
Ellen Thomas, Teacher Governor
Nigel Bufton, Parent Governor
Mary Lomax, Chair of Governors
Rob Lyon, Parent Governor
David Lewis, Community Governor
Cllr Hywel Lewis, Local Member

Apologies – Kath Bufton, Vice Chair of Governors

Ian Roberts welcomed governors to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He informed governors that the meeting was part of the formal consultation process around the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School as from 31st December, 2016.

He explained that it would be the Council's Cabinet which will take the final decision on the proposal and not officers. He informed governors that he would not be reiterating the proposal, of which they had already been informed, unless they wished him to do this.

Mary Lomax pointed out a discrepancy between the number of pupils on roll given in the consultation paper (28 on 29th January, 2016) and the number of pupils stated within a budget document supplied by the Authority which had stated 31.

Gareth Jones explained that the figure of 31 include nursery pupils which are funded. The capacity information provided to Welsh Government is based on the number of pupils in the Reception to Year 6 year groups

1. Comment

There is confusion around the figures provided for the capacity of Crossgates C P School. I was under the impression you could not transfer pupils from a permanent school building to a mobile classroom.

Response

The capacity of 238 at Crossgates C P School includes use of the mobile classroom.

2. Question

What is the capacity of Crossgates CP School excluding the mobile classroom?

Response

The current capacity of Crossgates School, excluding the mobile classroom, is 210. There are currently 7 teaching spaces including nursery and reception. If the mobile classroom is included, that brings the capacity of the school up to 238. In the same way if the mobile classroom was included in the capacity calculation for this school it would bring the capacity of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School up to approximately 70.

3. Question

How many pupils are there in Crossgates C P School?

Response

In January this year there were 140 pupils in Crossgates CP School from reception to year 6.

The current 210 place capacity at Crossgates Schools includes the nursery.

4. Question

How many of the criteria for review of a school have to be met in order to trigger a review?

Response

There are a range of triggers for review of school.

5. Comment/Question

So one criteria met in relation to review of this school is the fact that the number of pupils on roll is below 50. Crossgates CP School has surplus capacity. Why has that not triggered a review of Crossgates School?

Response

When the review started every primary school in Powys was mapped against 6/7 criteria. A lot of schools met one of the criteria and a judgement had to be made as to which schools would be reviewed. The range of criteria which might trigger review of a school include:

Pupil numbers
Level of surplus capacity
Cost per pupil
Building condition

6. Comment

The condition of this school building is not urgent enough to trigger a review. This building will be standing for a long time.

Response

It is open to you to challenge the data in the consultation report via written representation which could form part of the report to the Cabinet.

Funding per pupil was one of a range of a criteria considered but we are not here to debate with you but to receive your views.

7. Question

Has Estyn have been informed about the proposal? Will Estyn be inspecting the receiving school?

Response

Yes, Estyn has been sent a copy of the consultation document as part of the formal process. Estyn will provide a response before the end of the consultation period which will be included in the consultation report to cabinet. Estyn will look at data and the performance of the receiving school but will not carry out an inspection of the school as a result of the proposal. The Authority has to ensure that the standards in the receiving school are as good as or better than the closing school.

8. Comment

Estyn last carried out an inspection of Crossgates CP School 6 years ago.

Response

The Local Authority cannot dictate to Estyn when to inspect a school but inspections are normally carried out on a 6-year cycle and it is anticipated that the school will be inspected this academic year

9. Question

What would happen if standards fall at Crossgates School?

Response

Any school is only 20 days from inspection.

10. Comment

You are talking about dramatically increasing numbers at Crossgates School. You will be taking children from a school where they are receiving a high standard of education. There is a new headteacher at Crossgates who will have had relatively little experience in dealing with a school with a large number of pupils.

Response

There is currently no evidence which would raise concerns about standards at Crossgates School.

11. Comment

A Cabinet member indicated that one of the schools near here had been assessed as being in the "red" category.

Response

The categorisation colour grading is a support category which indicates what support a school needs. If you are referring to a school under review, that school is in special measures and entitled to 25 days of support. Estyn would have data and look at how a school compares within its family of schools. It will look at attendance, quartile performance, previous inspection report and outcome of monitoring visits.

Response

We recognise that Crossgates School could initially face challenges due to the transition but we don't anticipate it would have long term effect on leadership but that is something we have to take into account.

There is a permanent leadership arrangement in place at Crossgates School, which is a strength.

12. Comment

We have a permanent leadership arrangement at this school.

Response

You only have a temporary leadership arrangement at this school.

13. Comment

We have tried to work with you in the past to arrive at a more permanent leadership arrangement.

Response

It would not be possible for the school to formally federate with Llanelwedd C in W School because Llanelwedd is a Church controlled school whereas Llanfihangel Rhydithon School is a Community Primary school.

14. Comment

We were going to look into becoming a Church in Wales School. A 9-month contract was going to be put in place for the headteacher.

Response

Legally, if the status of the school was changed to a Church in Wales School, the headteacher post would need to be advertised nationally.

15. Comment

We now have to put our energies into saving the school.

16. Comment

Shutting schools should be a last resort. We should be celebrating rural schools.

17. Comment

Of the three schools under review, Llanfihangel Rhydithon School is the cheapest school to run and it has excellent standards.

Mary Lomax provided a Powerpoint presentation, a copy of which she requested to be submitted with the Cabinet report.

In response to the presentation the following comments were noted:

- There are no concerns about standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School
- When comparing standards at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School with other schools, it is important to note there are significant differences in the make-up of cohorts of pupils at different schools so using percentages to compare standards does not give the complete picture.
- Some schools may have pupils within a cohort with a very high level of special education needs or complex physical, emotional or behavioural difficulties, who may be unlikely to achieve core subject indicators and this can “skew” percentage rates for the whole cohort in relation to attainment.

- There are differences between small schools – included in the sample given in the presentation are schools with Welsh medium stream and schools in areas of deprivation.
- A fairer comparison would be to compare the attainment levels achieved by pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School with the levels achieved by pupils in schools within the same family of schools.

18. Comment

The data presented shows that Llanfihangel Rhydithon School offers “value for money”.

Response

It shows that there are no concerns about standards of education in Llanfihangel Rhydithon School.

Response

The reasons for the proposal are stated in the consultation document. It is not about standards of education at the school. It is about low pupil numbers.

Response

It is unlikely average costs would go up if numbers went up. The formula is generated from different elements driven by a number of factors e.g. pupil numbers. Other aspects of funding are based on lump sums and the floor area in the school and that can sometimes distort the cost per pupil. When there are fewer pupils in a school that drives up the cost per pupil. If you had more pupils the average cost per pupil would come down.

19. Comment

A parent has provided me with figures that indicate you will not be transferring the full cost of the pupil when they are transfer to another school.

Response

Only part of the funding will be transferred. The receiving schools will only receive funding for the pupil related elements. They do not need additional premises funding as this is already provided. Because the receiving school will have more pupils, the per pupil cost will go down. In terms of the current years formula, the per pupil funding at Crossgates is £3,265. If all the pupils were to transfer to Crossgates School from Llanbister CP School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon School that cost would change.

Response

There are two different elements of funding. The pupil figures quoted in the consultation document don't include nursery but the per pupil funding does include funding for nursery aged children. You have per pupil funding and a 0.65 teacher funded to all schools – lump sum element. For small schools the Authority provides a small school allowance for schools with 30 pupils or less. We need to make sure nursery and early years classes are under 30. Schools with 31 pupils or more get funded at 2.30 f.t.e.

Other factors include property-related costs. If the square meterage of the receiving school is not increasing, there will be no extra funding for premises acquired or provided.

20. Comment

This building is here. It does not cost you anything. All those children in Crossgates School will cost the Council money. You are not taking into account the additional travel costs. We have independent quotes to indicate that additional transport costs will be £58,000.

Response

More work needs to be done in order to have a better understanding of which schools parents will choose to send their children, should Llanfihangel Rhydithon School close. However, the transport figure quoted in the document is the authority's estimated additional cost of transport.

21. Comment

The estimates of transport costs we have provided have been based on parents choosing to send their children to Crossgates School.

Response

I would encourage you to submit that information so that it can be included as part of the Cabinet report. Provide us with that information to bring to the attention of the Cabinet, including the names of transport providers. We would want to know how that transport provider has given a figure of £58K when our figures are far less.

22. Question/Comment

I would not want to put my 4 year old on the bus. Is there a protocol in place in relation to shared transport with secondary school children and journey times? Children could be travelling up to 1 hour on school transport.

Response

Safeguarding the children is paramount.

23. Comment

That includes wellbeing. Children may get upset on the bus. The buses will need supervision on them.

Response

The Authority is currently consulting on changing the age of school admission to the start of the academic year following a child's fourth birthday. The Authority has no statutory responsibility for transporting children under the age of 5. The Authority does not normally provide escorts on mainstream transport routes.

24. Question

How long are mobiles likely to last? In the transformation document it says children should not be moved from a permanent structure to a temporary classroom.

Response

We would want the Cabinet to be aware of parents' concern around that.

25. Comment

You may be able to fit the children in the mobile but there could be 39 children from Dolau, Llanbister and Crossgates nursery going into a classroom in January 2017.

Response

Should closure happen we will need to work with the receiving school in relation to their class structure. The classes may need to be restructured to make class sizes manageable. There will be significant work with the receiving school to ensure the class structure is suitable.

26. Comment

Mobile classrooms should not be used as a permanent solution.

27. Comment

You cannot fit any more than 30 pupils in a classroom

Response

The maximum capacity for a classroom is 30 according to the Measurement of Schools Capacity (Wales) regulations. In terms of number of places we can only take account of a maximum of 30 unless a classroom is a double classroom. 2.3 square metres is the allocation per nursery and reception aged pupil with 1.86 square meters being used for other children.

28. Comment

We know there are quite a lot of pupils coming from Llandrindod to Crossgates School. What happens if that continues? What is going to happen to the capacity of Crossgates School if more pupils come from Llandrindod and small schools are going to close? Crossgates School is going to run out of room.

Response

A number of families are moving in and out of Llandrindod. There have been a number of admission appeals. A number of those admission appeals have been lost by the parents and if that trend continues it is going to place pressure on places at Crossgates School.

29. Question

Isn't it good practice for schools to have 10% surplus capacity?

Response

Welsh Government expects local authorities to plan for pupil place demand.

30. Comment

But there will be no surplus capacity. You are sacrificing two schools to build up the numbers at Crossgates School.

31. Comment

There will be no encouragement for young families to move into the area because there will be no places for children in the school.

32. Comment

Once you start closing schools you will never open them again.

33. Comment

130 new houses are going to be built in Crossgates. Schools will be at capacity.

34. Comment

A development of affordable housing is also planned for Llandewi.

Response

You are putting forward your argument to maintain school provision at Dolau. You have mentioned transport costs, the capacity of Crossgates School and that is the purpose of consultation - to enter into dialogue with you as communities to bring up issues such as these. You have the local information which we may not have to hand.

Response

There are around 60,000 Band D properties in Powys. On average there is 1 primary school aged child for every 6 Band D properties.

35. Comment

If you close this school what is there here for the children? You are not looking long term. You think you will save £60k by closing 3 schools but you are not looking long term.

Response

Llanfihangel Rhydithon School has the 13th highest funding per pupil of all Powys schools. If the school had been funded on 31 pupils last year the per pupil funding would have been over £5,000.

36. Question

If you have a big school of over 500 pupils and funded at £5268k per pupil would you say that was an expensive school?

37. Question

What is the cost per pupil for the federated schools in the North of the county?

Response

The cost per pupil for Ysgol Llanbrynmair is £4269, for Ysgol Glantwymyn £3781 per pupil, and for Ysgol Carno £4392 per pupils so comparable with Dolau.

Ysgol Carno has a capacity of 49 excluding nursery. The capacity of Ysgol Glantwymyn at 84 (excluding nursery) is higher and the capacity of Ysgol Llanbrynmair is currently 53 excluding nursery.

The per pupil funding for Ysgol Bro hydgen is higher because of funding placed in the secondary sector.

Ysgol Bro Hydgen also receives a Welsh language uplift. The catchment area is complex demographically and there are increasing numbers in the Welsh stream.

38. Question

Why have different figures been used for average per pupil funding in different reports for the Cabinet. The average per pupil funding quoted in the report on the Welshpool primary schools review was different to that quoted in the report for Cabinet in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon School even though the reports were received by the Cabinet on the same day.

Response

That will have to be looked at.

39. Comment

You are using two different calculations. Which one are you using? There can't be two averages.

Response

The cost per pupil at Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP would still be in excess of 120% of the county average.

40. Comment

No - it would be 106%.

Response

I understand you are challenging the figures but the Cabinet did decide to consult on the closure. If the data is wrong then that needs correcting in the Cabinet report. We need to ensure the data for Llanfihangel Rhydithon is correct so if there are errors those need to be corrected. We are consulting on your situation here based on your data. We need to ensure the data is right for your school.

41. Comment

There were 31 pupils, including early years, in the school, in January 2015, but in the consultation document it says there were 29.

Response

There were 29 pupils in the school from Reception to Year 6 in 2015/2016 year and 28 pupils from Reception to Year 6 in January, 2016.

42. Comment

In 2017 there will 36 pupils in the school including the nursery.

Response

The PLASC data will be verified in March in advance of the report on the proposal being taken to Cabinet in May.

Response

I understand it impacts on percentages but data on pupil numbers is only accurate at a given point in time.

43. Comment

We have also informed you about two pupils receiving free school meals.

Response

We have used the PLASC data for January 2015.

44. Question

How does that give the school a chance if you are using outdated data?

Response

The report that goes to Cabinet will include January 2016 data.

Response

Following consultation, there will still need to be a dialogue with the school to update the data on pupil numbers.

Response

We tried to give the Cabinet members an up to date fact sheet and it was dismissed in cabinet.

Response

All the data re the number of pupils on free school meals would be contained within the Community Impact Assessment.

45. Question

It is understood that as the land and buildings are owned by the Authority the agreed asset management process would be followed in the event of the school's closure and any capital receipts would go back to the Authority. What would happen about parking for the community hall if the school building is disposed of?

Response

That is part of the discussion to be had with the community.

Where other schools with community halls attached have closed, there has been an agreement that part of the parking space would be transferred to the community but a full discussion will be needed should Cabinet take a decision to close the school.

46. Question

What weighting is given to the impact on the community of a school's closure?

Response

No weighting is applied, but it is a factor that the Cabinet is required to consider.

47. Comment

According to Welsh Government guidelines weighting should be applied.

Response

In event of closure the impact on the community, particularly around community use of school facilities that are concerned with education, has to be taken into account and there is one statement that says the wider implications on the community need to be considered. At the moment we are only beginning to gather information about the impact on the community, if the school closes. The Community Impact Assessment is a draft document which will be added to as the process goes forward. Information gathered will be included in a final Community Impact Assessment.

Response

It is important the Cabinet members attending the public meeting hear your views about the impact school closure will have on the community.

It was noted that figures prepared by a parent would be presented at the public meeting.

Ian Roberts thanked governors for attending and for their contributions.

Minutes of a meeting with parents and community of Llanfihangel Rhydithon School, held at Dolau Community Hall on 1st March, 2016, on a proposal to close the school from 31st December, 2016.

Present

Cllr B Thomas, Leader of the Council
 Cllr A Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education
 Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
 Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation
 Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance
 Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services

Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services

Kelly Lock, Opinion Research Services

Edward Jones	parent	Becky Price	Former pupil and member of Dolau YFC
James Hughes	parent	Elliot Watkins	Former pupil and member of Dolau YFC
Rachel Hughes	parent	Luan Price	Staff member and parent of former pupil
Anna Jones	parent	Gemma Bradford	Staff member
Kate Jones	concerned local	Gary Price	PCC Cllr for Llandrindod Wells
Rob Lyon	parent governor	Matthew Williams	Llanbister School
Jess Lyon	parent	Keith Williams	Dolau & Llanbister Sch.
Phil Grierson	local resident	Barry Bevan	Parent
Kevin Lewis	parent	Jane Bevan	Parent
Helen McCarthy	chairman hall committee	Alison Ewart	Parent
Gillian Preece	chairman Dolau playschool and parent	Chris Morris	Parent
Jessica Bufton	parent	Clare Morris	Parent
Liz Lewis	parent chair of Dolau mothers and toddlers	Tracey Jones	Parent
Glenda Lawrence	parent	Andrew Jones	Parent
John Lawrence	parent	Elizabeth Newman	Community member
Clare Haslam	Nantmel School	Rev Andrew Perrin	Parish priest
Rachel Powell	Former pupil	Meurig Jones	Community Councillor
Joy Gayther	Community member	Daniel Drew	Community member
Phil Gayther	Community member	Darrilyn Drew	Community member
Tim Gayther	Former pupil	Cathy Hughes	Parent of prospective pupil
Katrina Gayther	Former pupil	Richard Thomas	Former pupil and parent
Dorothy Jones	Community	Carol Thomas	Parent
Victor Jones	Community	Ben Duggan	Former pupil
Carl Watkins	Parent governor	Jolene Powell	Community member
Wendy Watkins	Parent	Pearl Ruell	Community member
Myra Powell	Parent and YFC Leader	Joanne Bradford	Staff member
Stephen Powell	Parent, YFC vice president and community	Ellen Thomas	Staff member

Sue Colman	councillor Playleader Dolau playschool	David Lewis Caroline Phillips John Phillips	Community member Community member Football coach
Karon Duggan William Brown	Parent Parent of former pupil	Cllr John Powell Steve Vipond Sarah Griffiths	Dolau School PCC Member Governor Parent of 2015/16 starter
Valerie Freeman	Former member of staff	Bernadette Underhill	Parent of former pupils
Ellen Louise E M Duggan	Dolau YFC Parent of child in playgroup	Mark Underhill	Parent of former pupils
Andrew Duggan	Parent of child in playgroup	Rhian Duggan	Parent of former pupils
John Nixon Kathleen Nixon Menna Bennett	Grandparent of pupil Grandparent of pupil Parent of child at playgroup	Jennifer Bufton Hannah Baker	Former pupil Parent of former pupils
Michael Lawrence	Grandparent	Michael Baker	Parent of former pupils
Andrew Lewis	Relative of pupil	Linda Allen	Community member
Ruth Lewis	Relative of pupil	David Allen	Community member
Sandra Ruell	Community member	Sandra Thomas	Community member
Janet Watkins	Community member	Rob Shelton	Community member
Nikki Lewis	Community member	Barbara Shelton	Community member
Gwyn Probert	Community member	Kirsty Williams	AM Brecon & Radnor
Wayne Davies	Community member	Ben Hardwick	Former pupil, Dolau YFC
Ellyn Thomas	Community member	Sarah Price	Former pupil, Dolau YFC
Naomi Jones	Community member	Dan Price	Community member
Evan Jones	Community member	Julie Hardwick	Community member & staff
Claire Bowen	Community member	Phil Hardwick	Community member and former pupil
Abi Morris	Community member	Wendy Duggan	Parent of former pupil and community member
Barry Gwynne	Community member	Elizabeth Lewis	Parent of former pupil and community member
Colette Gwynne	Community member	Amy Haddon	Parent of prospective pupil
Ruth Billingsley	Grandparent of prospective pupils		
Andrew Billingsley	Grandparent of prospective pupils		
Carolyn Kennard	Parent of former pupils		
Bob Kennard	Parent of former pupils		
Mark Davies	Former pupil Dolau YFC		
Andrew Davies	Parent of former pupils and YFC leader		

Cllr Arwel Jones welcomed parents and community members to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He informed those attending that the meeting was part of the formal consultation

process on the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School as from 31st December, 2016. He explained that consultation is a regulatory process with the aim of improving transparency, efficiency and public involvement. It was noted that consultation meetings had already taken place with the staff and governing body of the school.

Officers and Cabinet members introduced themselves.

Darren Ivey from Opinion Research Services (ORS) explained his role as an independent facilitator for the consultation process. He informed those attending of the proposed format and structure of the event. It was noted that the Council has a legal requirement to consider all comments received and respond to them. Darren Ivey explained what consultation is – a debate to inform a decision. It was stressed that no decision has yet been taken on the future of the school and that the only decision that has been made to date is the decision to consult. Consultation is not a referendum or a vote based on how many people support a particular proposal. It was noted that the Council's Cabinet would ultimately make a decision on the future of the school, based on various factors including the outcome of consultation, data, and the evidence provided.

Marianne Evans informed those attending of the context of the review. It was explained that the Cabinet had agreed a new schools transformation policy in 2014 which outlined the process for reorganisation of schools. All schools were assessed against a range of criteria. Any school which met one of criteria could be subject to review. The review process for Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School started in December 2014 and members of the School Organisation Review Panel had met with governors of the school between February and December 2015. Recommendation to close school was considered by Cabinet in December which took the decision to consult on closure of the school. It was explained that reasons for proposal low pupil numbers: The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for three previous years and numbers on roll are not projected to increase significantly. The cost per pupil is over the average cost per pupil for the county's primary schools. Parents and community members were informed that consultation would close on 24th March, 2016, following which a full analysis of all the issues raised would be undertaken before a report was taken to the Council's Cabinet, when members would take a decision on the next steps.

It was explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for parents and community members to express their views on the proposal and to ask questions.

1. Question

The decision likely to be based on low pupil numbers. Can you explain on what basis that you project that numbers in future will be as low as they are now?

Response

In terms of how we project pupil numbers for individual schools, colleagues in the Health Service provide us with information on live birth data and we also take into account information in the Local Development Plan in relation to the number of houses to be built in each community. The accuracy of the data is better for a wider catchment area and varies on individual primary school basis. We know the number of pupils in the current year and have received information from the school around numbers expected in the next few years. We also need to factor in the Impact of any change to the school admission age. In planning of school places, we need to identify pupil numbers correctly. We are required to ensure that there is not a significant number of surplus places in schools. Welsh Government guidelines indicate a maximum of 10% surplus places when measured across the Authority's whole school estate.

2. Comment

Something that puzzles me is that no great account is taken of in population change in area. At this point in time there is a natural dip in numbers in schools in the area and currently there are fewer children but the houses that the older generation occupy are going to be occupied by a younger generation. Whitton School has closed and you are now proposing to close 3 schools in this area. There will be no primary school between Whitton and Crossgates and no school between here and Presteigne. You need to look at demography of the population and their ages. Your proposal is “short termism.” There are going to be dips in the population of children but it the numbers are going to rise. This is a very good school and has been so for many years. I would say greater consideration needs to be given to the area and its remoteness with regard to schools and the people who live here.

Response

You are right. There is demographic change across the authority. Our statisticians provide an estimated population growth in the 50+ but not for the under 50s. It is acknowledged that there are going to be peaks and troughs in individual areas.

Across the county as a whole, the Authority has 700 fewer pupils in the secondary sector than in previous years. We know primary school population is starting to increase across the county. There are some areas where there is a shortage of places but there are other areas where there are significant surplus places. Are part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan data on projected pupil numbers from existing housing stock and from potential future housing stock under the Local Development Plan is considered. Local housing developments will be taken into account.

3. Comment

I think you have to accept that pupil numbers could climb within a few years if more houses are built and there are more jobs. It is about having a long term vision.

A parent provided a presentation in relation to calculations on the cost school closure:



Financial Analysis of proposal to close school revised 2402. Financial info Dolau

4. Comment

In consultation document it states that £66298 of the total delegated budget does not transfer with the pupils to their alternative school. Given Dolau’s total delegated budget is £132271, we derive that £65, 973 is the budget that gets transferred to the pupils’ alternative school. This seems a low amount and equates to £2356 per pupil.

When the budget per pupil according to “My Local School” at Crossgates in 2015 was £3702 per pupil, we would expect the delegated budget per pupil from Dolau to equate to the delegated budget for a Crossgates pupil.

If this were the case the delegated budget transferring would be £3702 x 28 which make £103,656 which makes an estimate saving of £28,615 not £66,298.

The savings for the Headteacher post you have said is £15,580. We cannot understand where that figure has come from.

You have said that the canteen subsidy of £10,000 is going to be saved there is no canteen at Dolau – all the meals are cooked in Crossgates and get transferred to Dolau.

You have estimated the cost of transporting the pupils to Crossgates to be £22800. This means £3.65 per child per day. We asked a current transport provider for a quote and they came up with an estimate of between £12-15 per day per child. $32 \times 13.50 \times 195$ school days equating to £84,234 transport costs over the school year.

There are only 2 children at this school who have school transport. All other children are brought to school by their parents.

According to my calculations the savings of £64,993.50 are based on the lowest numbers in the school. If you transfer pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon School to Crossgates it is going to cost you £15,798.50.

Response

Please submit your calculations as part of the formal consultation and we will look at them

5. Question

Could you please provide clarity for parents and stakeholders in relation to the delegated budget for pupils transferring?

Response

In terms of the delegated funding we gave the figure of the amount that would not transfer with pupil. Schools are funded based on the formula and not on the individual cost per pupil.

6. Question

So the children will receive less funding per pupil if the school closes and they transfer to the receiving school?

Response

The Fair Funding Formula is made up of a number of elements. There is a teaching cost allowance, and, in addition to that there is a Foundation Phase allocation based on the number of pupils in the nursery to year 2. The rest is based on lump sums payable, property and other factors. The lump sum Crossgates and Dolau would receive would be the same lump sum for .60 or .65 of teacher. We are not going to provide Crossgates School with two lump sums. Part of the funding is based on premises costs of school. We will provide a breakdown of the figures for the funding to be transferred with the pupils to Crossgates. In respect of the kitchen subsidy, there is no canteen at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School but there is the cost of a van on daily basis and the cost of staff employed on site to serve meals has to be taken into account but we will provide a detailed calculation. In terms of transport the cost of this is not provided on a per pupil basis. It is dependent on the size of vehicle used to transport the children and 75% -80% of the cost is of the cost of the bus. We can provide more clarification and detail around the figures. For 10 of the pupils who attend the school Llanfihangel Rhydithon School is not the closest school and there may be some pupils already attending Crossgates School for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon is the closest school. There is also some use of shared transport between primary and secondary, where appropriate, to Llandrindod High School.

7. Question

Could you please provide the basis of the £15,580 saving from the Headteacher's post?

Response

The way the authority funds a school for teaching costs is based on the average teaching costs for the school. Even though there is shared headship with Llanelwedd Church in Wales school, Llanfihangel Rhydithon School is still funded as if the school has a separate Headteacher. The figure of £15580 is the difference in cost between leadership scale on Point 12 and the highest scale a main scale Headteacher would be employed on. We can provide you with a breakdown of the figures.

8. Question

When can you provide the figures? We need a chance to respond to them.

Response

The figures can be provided by the end of next week.

9. Question

Should you not have had those figures already? Should not you have accurate documentation on which you base your proposal? How can you put a school into consultation when do not have accurate figures and facts?

Response

The figures are accurate in terms of the delegated budget but we will provide a breakdown. The figures in relation to the cost of transport are to be clarified. The differences in teacher's pay are based on figures which I am happy to share with you.

Response

The transport figures are based on figures provided by the Authority's Transport Team. They are going to review the figures. The transport figures you have provided are based on a quote.

10. Comment

You should be consulting with the correct figures; not the incorrect figures.

11. Comment

In terms of school transport some work has been completed on how many miles the children would have to travel if the school closes. 37 children would like to come to this school. I have assumed the pickup will be at public road and not at their doorstep. I calculated if all the children transferred from Llanfihangel Rhydithon School to Crossgates School they would be travelling a total of 32,456 extra miles a year.

Response

Please submit that information as part of the consultation. This consultation is about evidence for the final decision making. Thank you for work you have put in.

Response

The Council's home to school transport policy states that primary school children would not be expected to travel more than 45 minutes each way to school.

12. Comment/Question

I live between Llanbardarn and Felindre. In this area we have already seen closures of Dolfor C P School and Beguildy Church in Wales School. There is individual consultation but no facility for different schools to work together. I have looked at the demographic changes. In 10 years the numbers over 50 will have doubled but the numbers of under 15s will have gone down by 20%. Powys needs to have more vision get more younger people into this area. If you close down the schools how are you going to attract younger people to the area? Have you looked at other areas where there are small rural schools? What about federation? Llanbister C P School and Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School should be working together to make sure we have the most viable primary school system we can get. Have you looked at new technologies? Have you looked at video conferencing between schools? You have a responsibility to have a vision for the future and to look at new ways of working so that small schools can be viable and there is career progression for teachers, which is essential. I would look for more vision and evidence that you have done your homework.

Response

I will respond to the points you have raised around federation and looking at school over 2/3 sites. Under Welsh Government regulations it is not possible to federate a Church controlled school with a Community Primary school so it would not be possible for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School to federate with Llanelwedd Church in Wales School. They are not Powys County Council regulations but national regulations. Federated school would be funded as separate schools but governors could choose for those schools to have a single budget. Another model would be to close both schools and open a single school over both sites. In terms of primary schools, a .6 lump sum would only be provided to one school. The authority could change its formula if it wished to and it is something that has been considered. The formula will be reviewed again during the next financial year.

13. Comment

The small school in Gloucestershire I was referring to has just two classes and their Ofsted reports have improved since federation. It is the Wye Forest federation in Gloucestershire.

Response

The funding and function of schools in England is different to Wales.

Response

Alternative ways of schools working together to keep schools open have been given consideration.

14. Comment/Question

I have been looking at data from "My Local School". Are the four new primary schools in Ystradygnlais as cost effective as you had hoped? All exceed the cost per pupil average and there is a super school in Machynlleth which is failing its pupils. Would the finance department think the School Organisation Review Panel's time would be better spent on Ysgol Bro Hyddgen as it is failing educationally and financially? Making schools bigger does not make them better either financially or educationally.

15. Question

What evidence is there that bigger schools are better?

Response

Ysgol Bro Hyddgen is not a failing school. If you are referring to the national categorisation of schools, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen has been judged as being in a “red” support category. Any school at any time could need additional support to stabilise. Ysgol Bro Hyddgen was established in September 2014. What the “red” support category means is that a school in that category will be given 25 days support. If you look at pupil outcomes in the primary sector for Ysgol Bro Hyddgen (formerly Machynlleth CP School) these have improved continuously over the last four years. Categorisation of schools is not a league table. It is a support category and schools can move between support categories.

16. Question

Why do they not include a category for the Foundation Stage for Ysgol Bro Hyddgen?

Response

I would have expected the Foundation phase details to be included on the website, but, if not, I will raise it with Welsh Government officials

Response

To clarify on facts, for the four primary schools in Ystradgynlais the per pupil funding ranges from between £3500 and £4189 per pupil. In relation to the budget position, each school has set a balanced or surplus budget apart from one which has a small deficit budget of £464. All four schools are in compliance with the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Response

There are a number of factors within the Fair Funding Formula, which take account of funding - one is SEN funding and that is based on pupil numbers and 50% based on number of pupils receiving free school meals. The amount of funding to those schools provided under the SEN allowance is higher in deprived areas. For the Welsh medium primary school in Ystradgynlais, Ysgol Dyffryn y Glowyr, there is some additional funding around Welsh medium. More detail can be provided around this, if required.

Response

The arguments are around protecting this school rather than comparing it with other schools.

17. Question/Comment

I want to focus on the capacity within the receiving school. My first question is in terms of the last Estyn inspection for Crossgates and for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School. This school was deemed as “adequate” in May 2012. Crossgates CP School was last inspected in June 2010 under the previous Estyn regime. The two schools were inspected under different regimes. How can you say that the named receiving school is better than or as good as Llanfihangel Rhydithon School?

My second question relates to the capacity of Crossgates School. In 2005 the Board agreed to provide development money in order to remodel an extension to Crossgates School. Before that time the school had capacity for 100 pupils. The Council spent £2.2m. I wanted to point out that you are saying that the school has a capacity of 210 and you are proposing to use a mobile classroom in order to bring the capacity of the school up to 238. At the Cabinet meeting in 2005, members asked that mobile classrooms should not be regarded as permanent fixtures. As part of the planning application for the extension and the remodelling of school a condition was placed on granting of planning permission in relation to the capacity of the school that the number of pupils varies between 162-179, a maximum of 6 for kitchen staff and the number of school staff between 30 -40. Does your

planning consent allow you to increase the capacity of school? Conditions were put on the planning consent in relation to the capacity of the school.

Response

I refer to your question in relation to the receiving school and standards. In any school reorganisation proposal there has to be consultation with Estyn during the consultation period and Estyn are expected to make a comment about the named receiving school. The Inspection Framework differed in 2010. Both this school and Crossgates School have been categorised as being in a “yellow” support category and both schools are entitled to the same level of support. Both schools would have been placed on the vertical access in the National Model of School Categorisation as standard 2. The standards at Crossgates School are as good as those at Llanfihangel Rhydithon. Both schools are categorised as B. There are robust systems in place for planning for self-improvement and both schools are performing equally as well.

Response

The capacity of a school is based on the physical measurement of classrooms used to teach in. Crossgates School has 7 classrooms. The larger of the classroom is used for the Nursery. The guidelines state that children in the Nursery age group should be allowed 2.3 square metres per pupil. That room has a capacity of 30. The mobile is 53 square metres and has a capacity of 28. It is understood that the mobile is of suitable quality for teaching. There are a number of schools across Powys with mobiles and the interior of those mobiles is equivalent to permanent builds, and, in many cases, better. Ysgol Carno has been delivering education through a number of mobiles joined together. In terms of the planning conditions your comments have been noted and this will be checked with colleagues in Planning and Property Services.

18. Comment/Question

My 3 children have all attended Dolau playgroup. The standard of development of the children provided by the playgroup is second to none. The number of pupils in the playgroup went down to 2 at one time that the playgroup was under threat of closure. The community sought financial help and promoted the setting. There are now 15 children on the waiting list for the playgroup and those children who have siblings who will also be joining the playgroup. Dolau Playgroup attracts children from up to 15 miles away. The playgroup was not mentioned in the consultation document. The consultation document is incomplete. What will happen to playgroup if our wonderful school closes?

Response

The authority is consulting on a proposal to change of the age of primary school admission. The consultation closes today. As part of the consultation consideration will be given as to the delivery of enhanced pre-school provision. Account will need to be taken of whether a funded pre-school setting is needed in this area and that will be included in the Community Impact Assessment.

19. Comment/Question

We bought a property here in May and there are a number of other young couples in the area. What will be impact if there is no school in this area? What impact do you think closing the school will have on the future of the village and the wider community and on young people moving into the area to start families?

Response

That is a valid question and I am not denying that closure of a school in any village will not have an impact in any community. We want to give the children of Powys the best education possible.

20. Comment

If you want to do that you should be keeping this school open.

21. Comment

I moved to the area a few years ago and the mother and toddler group was my main point of interaction with other mothers in the area. I now feel part of the community and my daughter is part of the playgroup. Without having local groups young mothers could be isolated. If the school closed there would not be opportunity for mothers to interact with other mothers in the area.

22. Question

What would the class sizes in Crossgates School be if Llanbister CP and Llanfihangel Rhydithon School were to close and pupils transfer to Crossgates? It has been minuted there could be class sizes of 34 at Crossgates School.

Response

For pupils up to year 2 there is a statutory requirement that there cannot normally be more than 30 pupils in a class. The main exception is when children are admitted to school outside the normal admission round. For KS2 classes there is no statutory limit for class size although the Authority provides additional funding for classes over 33. In terms of individual year groups schools do not always function with single age classes. If the Cabinet approve the recommendations in respect of both Llanbister and Llanfihangel Rhydithon Schools, officers would need a discussion with the receiving school and with the parents about their chosen schools.

23. Comment/Question

If Llanfihangel Rhydithon School was to close there would be no alternative school other than Crossgates CP School. What options do parents have?

Response

I would agree if you are parent in Dolau the options in relation to alternative schools would be few.

24. Question

What would be an alternative rural school?

Response

That would depend on what you consider to be a rural school. Welsh Government would consider Crossgates C P School to be a rural school. In England schools are being built to accommodate up to 120 per year group. I acknowledge that if Llanfihangel Rhydithon School was to close, options for alternative schools would be limited.

25. Question

I would like to ask how many children get bused from Llandrindod to Crossgates because Llandrindod schools are deemed to be full. If the two Llandrindod primary schools are full where will the overspill go to?

Response

There are two different transport methods to Crossgates School as there is a bus run by the school. In terms of Llandrindod Primary schools there are some year groups that are full in Llandrindod C P School and in Trefonnen Church in Wales School. Trefonnen is a dual stream school.

26. Question

Crossgates School is due for an inspection imminently. Has Estyn been made aware that the pupil numbers in Crossgates School may be increasing the numbers by 50% and that may have an impact on how staff deal with it?

Response

Estyn is aware of the proposal and has an opportunity to come back to us for more information if they need it. Any school is only 20 days from inspection and Crossgates School has not yet been inspected under current cycle.

27. Question

What will you do if you close this school and Crossgates School has a poor Estyn inspection? Would you reopen this school?

Response

That is an interesting question but, at this point in time, the national categorisation model states Crossgates CP School has a similar categorisation as Llanfihangel Rhydithon School. If Llanfihangel Rhydithon school closes and pupils go to Crossgates School the Local Authority would need to work with the school to ensure that standards continue to improve. It is not possible to answer the question as to whether the school would be reopened if Crossgates School had a poor inspection outcome as that would prejudice cabinet decision. No decision to close the school has yet been taken.

28. Comment

The Council's slogan is "Strong communities in the green heart of Wales". Schools are the nucleus of a community. It starts with the toddler group, then play group which is full and thriving and which feeds Llanfihangel Rhydithon School. The school offers a variety of clubs. The local youth club, young farmers club run by volunteers, W.I., bowls club and chapel affiliated group are all based at this school site. I would suggest the Cabinet thinks hard before killing this community for £60K and not to mention neighbouring communities of Llanbister and Nantmel.

29. Comment

I am getting the impression that you are changing the rules as you go along. You have only got to look at the number of people in this hall tonight to know how well supported the school is. It would be a grave mistake to try and close it.

30. Comment

The reason for your recommendation is financial. There was a school half a mile from here before the present school site and the numbers in the school went up. My great grandfather offered this particular site for the school. It gave the opportunity for young families to come in to this area to live at low rent – low cost housing. Those families have stayed in this area. The County Council had holdings as well. When you do the calculations don't make assumptions. It is not guesswork. This community was important then and it is now.

31. Question

Would the Panel agree that teaching and leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School are not in question?

Response

Standards at the school are not in question.

32. Comment/Question

On 26th February, Cllr Wynne Jones stated in the “County Times” savings from school closures are insignificant and school reorganisation is about the quality of education. Is the proposal to close the school about education or finance?

Response

Transforming learning and skills is a key priority under the Powys One Plan. It states that the authority needs to reorganise schools to ensure affordability and sustainability.

33. Comment

I am currently the Vice Chair of Friends of Dolau School. Over a number of years the Friends of Dolau School have raised £28K to finance play equipment and to subsidise school trips and swimming. I have friends in larger primary schools who struggle to form a committee. The Friends of Dolau School have raised over £6K in the past 12 months. Friends of Dolau School have raised £209 for every pupil in the school whereas Friends of Crossgates School have only raised £9.86 per pupil. In rural communities parents come together to raise money for the children. That is more difficult in larger schools.

34. Question/Comment

Where you have implemented previous school closures for instance in Howey, Beguildy and Rhosgoch what follow up monitoring has there been? Has children’s welfare suffered as a results of changes? Where can your research be viewed? You cannot make life changing decisions without full analysis of outcomes.

Response

In Ystradgynlais the authority closed 10 primary schools, ranging from 20 – 150 pupils in capacity, and opened 4 new primary schools as part of the School Modernisation Programme. When the new schools were inspect some were rated as good and some as outstanding in terms of practice for wellbeing. Each school had a good inspection outcome with no Estyn follow up. Obviously a school move impacts on individual pupils differently and that is determined by a range of factors including additional learning needs and emotional and social factors. Those children with additional needs will receive additional support. There is no evidence to suggest that the school reorganisation in Ystradgynlais had a detrimental impact on the pupils.

35. Comment/Question from young people of Dolau Youth Club

Dolau Youth Club was formed over 15 years ago. The Youth Club meets in this hall and the next closest youth club is in Llandrindod. If you close this school there would be no youth club and no community - no thanks! How can you justify the destruction of our community?

Ian Roberts thanked the young people for their comments.

Response

As children and young people who have gone to Dolau School you still value coming back and seeing your friends and using this building to socialise. Thank you for speaking so passionately.

36. Comment

Can I say when you said the consultation document is a work in progress, the consultation document should not be work in progress. It is not legally possible to change the consultation document. The document you consult on has to be accurate otherwise, legally, I think you may be in some difficulty if parents and the community were to take a legal challenge on the status of your consultation. People have chosen to send their children to a small, rural school for many different reasons. Now you are saying that this community will no longer have a choice and that is not fair when other communities have that choice. Schools in rural Radnorshire are strategically important. It is illegal to make parents travel a mile with their children to catch the bus. Parents do that to be helpful. The policy you are operating could be legally challenged. Ystradgynlais has been a success. All our schools and teachers are doing their best for the children. There are other options to keep children within their communities and the community wants to work with you to achieve that. The only thing that is stopping is your funding formula. It worked in Ystradgynlais because the community was offered something better. Pupils were not being shoehorned into a school, which did not have the capacity to take them. They were offered new buildings so it not fair to compare school reorganisation in Ystradgynlais with the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon School. Powys County Council needs to offer this community something better - a vision and a future where young people want to stay and to work. There is a better and more imaginative option that will keep children here. That could be Powys County Council's legacy. It would be better than closing Radnorshire schools.

37. Comment/Question

Unfortunately, I cannot say exactly what I want to say. I was one of the children who were ousted when the council closed another school. This had a negative effect on my education. The UN Rights of the Child states that for all administrative authorities the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration. Under this consultation our children are suffering emotionally. My child is suffering. It is having a huge effect on him, his siblings and my family. You are not doing your best for my children. How is this consultation in the best interests of our children?

38. Comment

I think you should be ashamed of yourselves. I went to this school. We had the introduction of a mobile classroom, a canteen and a hall. In future I hope to have my children educated at this school. Why should I have to put my children on a bus to Crossgates. Would you agree with me if I wanted to start a family and for them to go to a rural school I should go to Montgomeryshire?

Response

You have asked a question about rural schools and I appreciate it is an emotive subject. The Cabinet members will be coming to visit the schools. That won't be a public meeting. They will be coming to see the schools working before the paper goes to cabinet. As many Cabinet members as possible will come to visit the school. You mentioned Montgomeryshire. There have been schools closed in

Montgomeryshire too. Difficult decisions have to be taken. We are taking this matter seriously. We want the best education possible for our children. The comments you have made will be taken on board. The minutes of this meeting will be submitted with the Cabinet report.

39. Comment

I have a daughter in year 5 whose formal education at this school has been successful. She will spend her final year in primary school with children she has not met and she will have to travel an extra 100 miles per week. Due to proposals for the Secondary schools she also be disrupted in her final year of Secondary education. We live in a deprived area of Wales and Powys County Council is trying to deprive my child of a decent education. How can this disruption in an important phase of her primary education be an advantage to my daughter? She will be in a bigger class if the school closes.

Response

With any school organisation proposal there will always be children who are nearing the end of their time in the primary school and, should Cabinet decide to go ahead with the proposal, it would be essential that Crossgates School staff work closely with staff in Llanfihangel Rhydithon School to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. You are right that the transition year would need to be managed effectively. The Cabinet has decided consultation on a proposal to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools but to retain education on both of the sites. No decision has been taken to close the Secondary schools.

40. Comment/Question

I am a community councillor of Dolau and Vice President of the Young Farmers Club but, most importantly, a parent of children at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School. I know how supportive this community is. The Powys One Plan mentions how important it is for members of communities to have a sense of pride in where they live. As a community we have raised £28,641 for the school. Why hasn't the option of federation been included in the consultation document? Closure must be the last resort. Your savings don't add up. The pupil number figures are incorrect. The Cabinet has based its decision on the wrong figures and that disgusts me. I hope you will put forward a true picture of what happens in this community. My child is scared of going to school in a community where she knows the children do not like her. These proceedings have affected the children. Sometimes it is better to find a solution that works for communities and not budgets. Not one child will leave this school until you drag us out the door!

Response

Thank you for all the comments we have heard tonight, not only about education but about the value the school gives to the community. After this consultation a report which includes all the issues raised during the consultation, including during the meeting with school council, will be prepared for the Cabinet. Part of that report will include a Community Impact Assessment. The Cabinet has a statutory duty to consider all issues raised during consultation and part of that will be the impact on the community. The issues you have raised tonight will inform the Community Impact Assessment. All points made in this meeting have been noted.

41. Question

My daughter is due to start at Llanfihangel Rhydithon School after Easter. If the school closes, my daughter will be here for 2 terms and then move on. Alternatively, she could start at the receiving school. What is your advice to me?

Response

That is your decision. If I was to say to you leave your child here that is your decision. If I was to say move your child that could be perceived as prejudicing the decision of the Cabinet.

42. Comment/Question

The people here tonight are very passionate about keeping the school open. It is all very well for Cabinet members to read the reports but they cannot see the passion here about our village school. Young people are moving into the area. There is a total of 64 developments in the UDP planned for Llandewi, Llandgely and Penybont. Where is the vision of councillors? Where will future generations go to school with all those houses being built?

Response

Your response shows the value of local consultation in providing information on how the community is changing.

43. Comment/Question

One of questioners mentioned for school children who attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon School Crossgates is their closest school and for some pupils who attend Crossgates School, Llanfihangel Rhydithon is the closest school. I have 3 children in Llanfihangel Rhydithon School and Crossgates C P School is our nearest school but I chose to bring our children to Dolau and I have been "blown away" by the quality of the teaching at the school and the community. There is no other choice of rural school if Llanfihangel Rhydithon School was to close. Don't our children have human rights? The pupils from Llanfihangel Rhydithon School have excelled when they move on to High School. Do parents have any choice and human rights in relation to their choice of school? Parents have a right to choose rural education for their children.

Response

The issues are rural choice and affordability and sustainability of education in communities such as Dolau. You have made it clear that you feel strongly about the need for a choice to be there as well. You are concerned about the lack of choice of schooling for your children in surrounding areas when there are no other options. There is no other school between here and Crossgates and between here and Presteigne. You believe that closing the school at Dolau would take away the choice for parents in relation to their children's education.

44. Comment

There is a difference in closing a small school and transferring children to a larger school from putting one or two children into a large year group. The model for school reorganisation in Ystradgynlais was different.

Response

When Dolfor School closed the majority of pupils went to a school in Newtown, which is a very high performing school. Well-being of pupil is good in that school. There are always cases where some children may not be as comfortable with change as others initially. You are right the model in Ystradgynlais was different.

45. Comment

I would like to welcome the Panel to Dolau School tonight. I am a past pupil and I live and run a business in Dolau which employs 5 people. In this hall there are farmers, builders, engineers. Llanfihangel Rhydithon School is more than just a school. It is part of the rural

economy that pays for Powys County Council. My children are in Dolau School and my child's teachers have supported him with his reading. There are increasing numbers in the playgroup. The school staff are second to none. The condition of the school building is good and there is room to expand. The school's standards are leading the way in Powys. Mr W teaches the children to play rugby in his own time. Pupil teacher relationships are important. If pupils are happy then they will learn. To use a rugby analogy – The children are our forwards, we are the backs and you should be our supporters. I would like to thank you for providing an opportunity to community to discuss the future of the school. Dolau School will not close. This is our school, our future and our children's future. This is the future of Powys. Dolau School will not close.

46. Comment

I have been a football coach at Dolau School for 27 years and my children went to this school. If you had seen the school's Christmas concert you would not be thinking of closing this school today.

47. Comment

I want to say that I know someone who lives in Dolfor who has chosen to take her child to Kerry because she wants her child to go to a rural school. Choice is important in Dolfor too.

48. Comment/Question

The school in any community is the "beating heart of the village". I want to ask the Portfolio Holder if you have done research into where solutions for saving small schools have been successful. Have you seen the success of Dilwyn and Almeley schools in Herefordshire where pupil numbers are less? Have you spoken to governors and Cabinet members for education in other rural counties where they have been able to save their schools?

Response

Powys is part of a regional network which includes other Welsh rural authorities. There has been regular discussion in ERW (Education Regional Working) around school reorganisation. In a demographically complex area as Powys it is not possible to have a "one size fits all solution." Members of the association of directors in Wales meet regularly to discuss what is happening with school reorganisation in other local authority areas.

Response

As Leader of the Council I am a member of the ERW Joint Committee. The comments you have made will be noted and mentioned in the report.

Response

Thank you for the impassioned and clear way you have put your comments across. This has been useful in contributing to the process. We have heard the issues you have raised around the capacity at the receiving school, in relation to the sustainability of the community, the wellbeing of children and the divisive effects of school closures on communities in the area. We have heard your concerns in relation to school transport. This meeting has been a really useful session.

Next Steps

Marianne Evans described the next steps in the statutory process.

- Formal consultation closes on 24th March.
- Responses should be submitted in writing before the end of the consultation period, either online, via letter to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall, Llandrinod Wells, LD1 5LG, or via e-mail to school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk
- Following closure of the formal consultation period, all issues raised during consultation will be analysed and included within a report to the Council's Cabinet in May when Cabinet Members will take a decision on whether or not to publish a statutory notice of closure.
- Clarification will be provided in relation to questions raised during the meeting concerning finance/figures.

Marianne Evans also clarified a point that had been raised by Kirsty Williams earlier – the consultation document is not a 'work in progress'. It is the published consultation document for this formal consultation.

Cllr Arwel Jones thanked parents and community members for attending the meeting and urged them to respond to the consultation. He informed them that every issue raised would receive a response and would be included in the report for the Cabinet.

**APPENDIX H – IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P. SCHOOL**

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1. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council's Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

Proposal	To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School from the 31 st December 2016 with Crossgates CP School to be named as the receiving school	Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Sarah Astley
Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	5 th January 2016 Updated 29 th January 2016 Updated 12 th September 2016		
<p>The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':</p> <p>(a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p><i>The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.</i></p> <p>The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.</p>			
1. AIM or PURPOSE			
Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change	Powys County Council recently carried out consultation on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School from the 31st December 2016. Crossgates CP School to be 		

proposal being assessed.	named as the receiving school.	
2. OBJECTIVES		
Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.	<p>The authority commenced the statutory process to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average 	
3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES		
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<p>The benefits of the proposal are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More efficient use of resources - Reduction in surplus places 	
4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE		
How does this change proposal relate to the Powys Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	<p>The proposal supports Powys County Council's vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. 'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that</p> <p><i>'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'</i></p>	
5. DATA USED		
5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	

	Wider research reports and findings.	
	Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment	
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Please state the gaps: N/A How will the gaps be addressed going forward? N/A	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. DATA ANALYSIS		
6.1 Quantitative Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire. Key questions: i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this? ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?	Information on pupils who attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School can be obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. The 2015 PLASC return provided the following information about the pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in relation to the protected characteristic groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 29 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 26 pupils aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 45% are boys and 55% are girls. - Free school meals: No pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 14% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 14% have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: 3% of pupils come from homes where some Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% 	

	<p>The 2016 PLASC return provided the following information about the pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in relation to the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 31 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11. 27 pupils aged between 5 and 11. - Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 48% are boys and 52% are girls. - Free school meals: 6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. - SEN: No pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 6% have special needs but do not have a statement. - Disabilities: 6% of pupils have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: There are no EAL pupils at the school. - Welsh Language: 3% of pupils come from a home where Welsh is spoken. - Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over at the school is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 100% <p>This information shows that the proportion of pupils in the school that belong to the protected characteristic groups is very small.</p>
<p><u>6.2 Qualitative</u> Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p>	<p>Consultation on the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013), and included a meeting with pupils of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School. This provided qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and the impact on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>The following issues were raised in relation to the proposal’s impact on those in the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In small schools, teachers can give extra support to children with varying needs, and can spend more time with children who need extra support

<p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</p> <p>iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</p> <p>iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils with dyslexia are able to get on well in small schools – they wouldn’t have the same support in larger schools - Pupils that previously needed additional needs support no longer need this thanks to the support provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School - The environment at the school is good for children with special needs of all sorts - Pupils with additional needs have been supported very well at Dolau - Additional support is provided for children without the need of special classes which have a danger of giving children a label / undermining their confidence - Concern that pupils with additional needs would not get as much time with specialists in a bigger school - Concern about the impact of additional travel on pupils with additional needs - Reference to the Child Poverty Act 2010 – creates a duty for local authorities to reduce child poverty - Incorrect that there are no pupils at the school who are eligible for free school meals
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7. EqIA RESULT

<p>Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.</p>	<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]</p>	✓
	<p>The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]</p>	

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas</p>	<p>i) Based on the pupils that were registered at the school on the 2015 PLASC counting date, 14% of pupils were in a protected characteristic group due to having additional</p>
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<p>of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>learning needs. Based on the information provided by the 2016 PLASC figures, 6% of pupils are in a protected characteristic group due to having additional learning needs.</p> <p>ii) Based on the 2015 PLASC information, no pupils at the school were eligible for free school meals. However, based on the 2016 PLASC information, 6% of pupils were eligible for free school meals. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School close, free home to school transport would be provided to all qualifying currently attending the school, regardless of income. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils from low income families, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the alternative school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p> <p>iii) Although 3% of pupils come from a home where some Welsh is spoken, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the Welsh-medium opportunities available to pupils.</p>
<p>9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT</p>	
<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p> <p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to</p>	<p>i) The authority is confident that the proposed receiving school and any other schools in the local area which pupils may prefer to transfer to would be able to meet the need of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School who belong to the protected characteristic groups, and the needs of pupils with any additional needs such as dyslexia. Transition planning would ensure that children are as familiar as possible with their new surroundings and their new teachers before they moved to the new school. Free home to school transport would be provided to qualifying pupils to the proposed receiving school or to their closest school.</p> <p>ii) The proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove this impact.</p>

<p>reduce or remove this impact?</p> <p>iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>iii) The proposal should not be considered for removal because of the degree of impact it is likely to have on pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups.</p>	
<p>9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</p>
<p>10. ONGOING MONITORING</p>		
<p>How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?</p>		<p>Please tick/shade</p>
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	
<p>Monitoring arrangements</p>		

The School Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.
Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.
The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Publication of results of the impact assessment

The results of the impact assessment will be published on the Council's website

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Any actions identified as a result of this impact assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan

2. Community Impact Assessment

Background

A draft Community Impact Assessment was published as part of the Formal Consultation on the following proposal:

To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st December 2016, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school.

The consultation was held between the 11th February 2016 and the 5th May 2016.

The information provided in sections 2.1 – 2.5 was provided by the two schools prior to the commencement of the consultation period. Issues and information raised during consultation about the impact on the community are provided in section 2.6.

1. The affected communities

1.1 Llanfihangel Rhydithon

Llanfihangel Rhydithon is a community located in mid Powys, which includes the small village of Dolau, in which Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is located. Dolau is located approximately 5 miles from the village of Crossgates, and approximately 9 miles from the town of Llandrindod Wells. According to the 2011 Census, there are 228 residents in the area served by Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council¹.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 13.45% of the population have one or more skills in Welsh. 1.75% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 ranks areas known as Local Super Output Areas (LSOA) in terms of deprivation, where 1 is the most deprived and 1909 is the least deprived. The village of Dolau is located within the Llangunllo LSOA, which is ranked as follows²:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llangunllo	1296

Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School. The school has a co-located community hall.

1.2 Crossgates

Crossgates is a village located in Mid Powys approximately 3 miles north of the town of Llandrindod Wells. It is situated at the point where the A483 and the A44

¹ 2011 Census information for the Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

² <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

meet. According to the 2011 Census, there were 701 residents³ in the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council, which includes the village of Crossgates.

English is the main language spoken in the area, however according to the 2011 Census, 17.08% of the population of the area served by Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council have one or more skills in Welsh. 0.29% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White.

Crossgates is located within the Local Super Output Area (LSOA) of Llanbadarn Fawr. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks the Llanbadarn Fawr LSOA as follows, where 1 is the most deprived LSOA and 1909 is the least deprived⁴:

Local Super Output Area (LSOA)	WIMD Rank 2014
Llanbadarn Fawr	1360

Crossgates CP School is an English-medium Community Primary School.

2. Community Impact Assessment

2.1 Impact on pupil travel

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The home addresses of the 29 children that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School at the last PLASC counting day in January 2015 were analysed by the council's Research and Information Unit. This analysis showed that Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was the closest school for 21 of the pupils attending the school, which is 72% of the pupils attending the school. The closest schools for all of the 29 pupils is summarised in the following table:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School	21
Crossgates CP School	7
Llandrindod CP School Cefnlllys	1

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was 2.78 miles.

If there were no school in Dolau, the next closest school for the children that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in January 2015 would be as follows:

Closest School	Number of Pupils
Crossgates CP School	26
Llandrindod Wells CP School Cefnlllys	1
Llanbister CP School	1
Knighton C in W School	1

³ 2011 Census information for the Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council area, taken from <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/statistics/view-statistics-about-your-area/detailed-census-information/>

⁴ <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2014>

Based on this analysis, the average one way journey to school per child for the pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School in January 2015 to their nearest alternative school would be 4.49 miles.

Should there be no school at Dolau, there would be an increase in travel for the 21 pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School was their closest school. However, there would be a reduction in travel for the remaining 8 pupils, should they transfer to their closest school. The maximum journey for a pupil to their closest alternative school would be 7.85 miles.

2.2 Extra-curricular activities provided by the schools

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- i) Football
- ii) Eisteddfod Club
- iii) Friday Club (for Foundation Phase pupils – arts and crafts)
- iv) French Club
- v) Welsh Club
- vi) Tennis
- vii) Games club (chess, dominoes)
- viii) Gardening
- ix) Book club (reading)

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

Piano lessons; Brass lessons; Weekly welly walks / outdoor lessons for all pupils; Participation in swimming galas and other sports activities; Participation in the Llandrindod eisteddfod.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The following clubs are provided by the school after school hours:

- i) Crossgates Out of School Club
- ii) Breakfast Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided during the school day:

Netball; Ball Skills; Green Club; Games Club; ICT Club

2.3 Community use of the school building

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The school accommodates the following groups:

3+ setting; Parent and Toddler sessions; Youth club

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

YFC use the school grounds; Community centre use the school grounds; Community centre used the school playground as car parking; Youth centre use the school grounds

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school accommodates the following community groups:

Privately run Early Years centre based in mobile across the car park

In addition, the school's facilities are used by the community regularly for the following activities:

Regular events held by the school's PTA in the school buildings and on the grounds

2.4 Other links with the community

i) Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

The Youth Club and the YFC; Dolau church – the vicar supports collective worship and Christian festivals in schools, and the school supports and promotes 'Messy Church' within the community; Dolau Chapel; Dolau Station, which is maintained by community volunteers; Links with a local business, which promotes pupils' entrepreneurial skills.

ii) Crossgates CP School

The school has links with a number of organisations and individuals within the community, which include the following:

Vicar, Golden Age Club

2.5 Support that could be offered by the receiving school to parents and pupils that currently attend Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

A transition programme would be put in place to support pupils with their transition to Crossgates CP School.

2.6 Issues raised during the consultation period

A wide range of concerns in relation to the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation period on this proposal. All issues raised are listed in Section 5 of the Consultation Report – 'Issues raised during the Consultation Period'.

In relation to the proposal's impact on the community, the issues raised included the following:

- Impact on the community hall

- Impact on community organisations e.g. youth club, YFC, bowls club, WI, Dolau Mixture choir, Dolau Recreation Association, football club
- Impact on community activities / events
- Impact on pre-school provision
- Impact of closure of the school on the community
- If there were no school, people wouldn't want to live in Dolau
- Concern about impact on the local economy
- Reference to Powys County Council's Vision – 'Stronger Communities in the Green Heart of Wales'
- Closure of the school would increase rural isolation

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in section 6 – 'Impact on the Community' in the list of issues raised.

Issues were also raised relating to the impact of additional travel on pupils. These included the following:

- Longer journey times for pupils
- Impact of additional travel on children's ability to learn
- Concern about cost and environmental impact of additional travel
- Pupils will be unable to access after-school activities
- Concern about children travelling on school transport unaccompanied

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in section 3 – 'Travel Implications' in the list of issues raised in the Consultation Report.

Issues were also raised regarding the extra-curricular opportunities that would be available to pupils should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close. These included:

- As the number of pupils in the school is small, all pupils can take part in activities
- Wide range of clubs and lessons available to pupils e.g. breakfast club, piano lessons, trumpet lessons, eco club, eisteddfod club, football club, gardening club
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in many activities such as the play held at the Albert Hall, Llandrindod at Christmas, Llandrindod Children's Eisteddfod
- Less extra-curricular activities available at Crossgates CP School
- Pupils won't be able to take part in as many activities as there are more pupils at Crossgates CP School

All issues raised, along with the local authority's response, are listed in the section 8.5 and section 10.8 in the list of issues raised in the Consultation Report

2.7 Conclusion

The authority acknowledges that the closure of any school will have a detrimental impact on the community. However, the village of Dolau has a community hall located on the site of the school. The draft recommendation in relation to Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School does not propose any changes to this hall, therefore this facility would continue to be available to the community. However, the

authority acknowledges the concerns raised during the consultation period in relation to the impact closure of the school would have on the community hall.

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to pupils at both Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and at the proposed receiving school. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School close, it would be more difficult for pupils to access activities held after school due to their reliance on home to school transport. Should the school close, the authority would work with and support the receiving school and any other school to which pupils may transfer to maximise the access to extra-curricular activities for all pupils. The authority acknowledges the comments received during the consultation which referred to the extensive range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School.

The authority also acknowledges that closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School would lead to an increase in travel for those pupils for whom this is currently the closest school. The issues raised in relation to additional travel are summarised above, and are listed in the consultation report.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit incorporating Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation. **Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Ian Roberts	Strategic Director	Jeremy Patterson	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Arwel Jones
Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	School Transformation Policy						
Outline Summary							
This Impact Assessment relates to a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, with Crossgates C.P. School to be named as the receiving school. The Council has carried out consultation on this proposal in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013)							

1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Sarah Astley	Project Manager, Schools Transformation	12/09/16

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How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's strategic vision?

Council Priority	How does the policy / change objective impact on this priority?	Inherent Judgement Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	Residual Judgement Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives	<p>Although there would be no education provision in Dolau, provision would be available in Crossgates CP School and other local schools. These schools are larger and more viable, and will ensure a greater level of stability and resilience in terms of the provision of primary education.</p> <p>There is a community hall in Dolau, and whilst the proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, concern has been expressed about the potential impact of</p>	Poor		Poor	Consultation Report

	closure of the school on the community hall, in particular the financial impact. Concern has also been expressed about the impact closure of the school could have on other organisations and activities that take place in Dolau, and the possibility that closure of the school would lead to rural isolation.				
Developing the economy	<p>Concern has been expressed that the lack of a school in Dolau will have an impact on job opportunities in the village, and that lack of rural employment would be exacerbated by closure of the school. It has been stated that the school employs local people, therefore closure of the school would impact on incomes. However, should the school close, people from the village would be able to seek employment elsewhere.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	Consultation Report
Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage	<p>The proposal aims to ensure that high quality education is accessible to all, and that it is affordable and sustainable with a focus on high quality leadership, teaching and learning.</p> <p>All children and young people (including those in receipt of free school meals and with additional learning needs) will be supported to achieve their full potential at the named receiving school or any other school pupils might wish to transfer to.</p> <p>Concern has been expressed that closure of</p>	Neutral	Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, transition plans would be put in place to support pupils with their move to alternative provision, to ensure that disruption is minimised and to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.	Good	Consultation Report, ERW School Improvement Strategy, One Powys Plan

	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would have a negative impact on learner outcome, however the authority's view is that the proposal would maintain or improve learner outcomes.				
Remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>The proposal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reduce overall surplus capacity ii) Deliver a more cost-effective delivery of learning iii) Provide an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges 	Good		Good	Consultation Report

3. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the Welsh Assembly's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does the policy / change objective contribute this goal?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
<p>A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	Good		Good	Consultation report

<p>A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>Both Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School were graded B for sustainability in the Welsh Government Survey carried out in 2009.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	
<p>A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the well-being of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School due to the proposed change of school and the additional travel that would be required.</p>	Poor	<p>Full support will be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to limit the impact on pupil well-being.</p> <p>The authority notes the concern in relation to the additional travel,</p>	Neutral	Consultation report

			however travel times would be within the authority's suggested maximum journey time.		
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the community of Dolau, the community hall, community organisations and community activities in the area.	Poor		Poor	Consultation report
A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.	<p>Both Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and Crossgates C.P. School were graded B for sustainability in the Welsh Government Survey carried out in 2009.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p>	Neutral	Full support would be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to ensure the well-being of all pupils.	Good	Consultation report

	<p>The proposal seeks to improve the learning opportunities and outcomes for all children, and has the best interests of the child at heart. However, concern was expressed during the consultation period about the proposal's impact on pupil well-being, and on the well-being of the community of Dolau.</p>				
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A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</i>	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore the proposal will not impact on pupils' ability to access to Welsh-medium education.	Neutral	N/A	Neutral	
<i>Treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	As above	Good	N/A	Good	
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	As above	Good	N/A	Good	
<i>Welsh Language impact on staff</i>	N/A	Good	N/A	Good	

<p><i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i></p>	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. school offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities which provide opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and recreation.</p> <p>A wide range of activities are also provided at the named receiving school, however information received during the consultation period suggested that the opportunities provided at Crossgates C.P. School were not as extensive as those provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>In addition, concern was expressed that the larger number of pupils at Crossgates C.P. School would mean that not all pupils would be able to take part in all activities.</p> <p>Concern has also been expressed that children currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would be unable to access activities provided after school due to their reliance on home to school transport.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the named receiving school and other schools pupils may wish to transfer to, to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Community Impact Assessment, Consultation Report</p>
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<p>A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>					
<p><i>Age</i></p>	<p>Please see separate Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p><i>Disability</i></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p><i>Gender reassignment</i></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p><i>Marriage or civil partnership</i></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p><i>Race</i></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	

<i>Religion or belief</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Sex</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
<i>Equality Impact on PCC Staff</i>	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

4. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

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Principle	How does the policy / change objective impact on this principle?	Inherent Judgement Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	Residual Judgement Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Sustainable Development Principle					
<i>Long Term: The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</i>	<p>The School Transformation Programme considers the general long term forecasts for the Powys population, where it is identified that the population figures for school aged children will continue to fall.</p> <p>This proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to neighbouring larger schools where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	Good		Good	

<p>Collaboration: <i>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>The named receiving school will continue to work in collaboration with other schools in the cluster and regionally, and with other partners, to ensure that every pupil is fully supported.</p>	Neutral		Neutral	
<p>Involvement: <i>The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</i></p> <p>Communication and Engagement</p>	<p>A number of meetings took place with the governing body of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School when determining the proposal to close the school. Consultation on the proposal has taken place in accordance with the School Organisation Code, which included consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents / community, as well as a meeting with the school council.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Dolau, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for parents and others to engage with the school.</p>	Poor	<p>If the proposal is implemented, there will be an opportunity for any parent to seek election to the governing body of Crossgates CP School in the future, and there will be an opportunity for all parents to continue to engage with the school and governing body.</p> <p>Crossgates CP School already serves a rural catchment area, therefore has experience of engaging with parents of pupils who do not live in the village of Crossgates itself.</p>	Neutral	
<p>Prevention: <i>How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.</i></p>	<p>The reasons for the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has had fewer than 50 pupils on roll for the three previous years and numbers are not projected to increase to above 50 - The funding per pupil is more than 120% of the council's average <p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education.</p>	Good		Good	

<p>Integration: <i>Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</i></p>	<p>Most of the issues raised during the consultation exercise were not supportive of the proposal.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>If the proposal is implemented, the authority will support the receiving school and any other school pupils may wish to transfer to, to support those parents and their children to become fully integrated in the school community.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Preventing Poverty: Prevention, including helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty.</p>	<p>Should the school close, free transport would be provided to all qualifying pupils. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils on low incomes for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the named receiving school and other schools pupils may wish to transfer to, to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners and their families.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
<p>Safeguarding: Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</p>	<p>Safeguarding is of the utmost importance and safeguarding measures are in place in the named receiving school and any other school pupils may wish to transfer to.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Corporate Parenting: Enabling our looked after children to fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>The named receiving school has experience of meeting the needs of looked after children, therefore the authority would have no major concerns about looked after children moving to this school.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Impact on Workforce</p>	<p>Staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would be adversely affected by the proposal.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Staff with 2 years or more continuous service would be entitled to a redundancy payment. The authority will also attempt to identify alternative employment for staff through the redeployment process.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	

5. Achievability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Impact on Service / Council	Deliverability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget	Inherent Risk
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	Saving	
Low	Low	Low

6. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Description of risks			
Parents choose for their children to attend a school other than Crossgates C.P. School			
Increase in demand for education in the Dolau area in the future			
Judgement (to be included in service risk register)			
Very High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
			X
Mitigating Actions			Residual Risk
N/A			Choose an item.
			Choose an item.
			Choose an item.
Does the Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving have potential to impact on another service area?			
No			

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Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
It is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on the community of Dolau due to the loss of primary provision in the village, however good quality primary provision would continue to be provided to pupils at neighbouring schools, and free transport would be provided to eligible pupils. During the consultation period, concern was expressed in relation to the possible impact on the community should the school close. Whilst the proposal does not propose any changes to the community hall, concerns were expressed during the consultation period that closure of the school would have an impact on the viability of the community hall. However, the authority's view is that the proposal would provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education. Concern was also expressed about the impact of additional travel on pupil well-being.	

8. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
Consultation responses, consultation report

9. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The School Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the modernisation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.

Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.

The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

If it is decided to proceed with the publication of Statutory Notices in respect of closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, the Impact Assessment will be reviewed when considering the Objection Report in order to make a final decision on the proposal.

10. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Service Manager:	Marianne Evans	Marianne Evans	16/09/2016
Head of Service:	Ian Roberts	Ian Roberts	16/09/2016
Strategic Director:	Jeremy Patterson	Jeremy Patterson	20/09/2016
Portfolio Holder:	Arwel Jones	Arwel Jones	20/09/2016

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APPENDIX I

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

Llanbister CP School

The Portfolio Holder for Education advised that following consultation he was proposing to abandon his recommendation to Cabinet that Llanbister CP School close and would instead come back to Cabinet with draft recommendations by November 2016. In doing so he had taken into account a projected significant rise in pupil numbers and the significant travel time for some pupils.

County Councillor John Brunt spoke as the local member to welcome the new recommendation and to pay tribute to the governors, staff and parents. He urged Council to support the recommendation.

County Councillor Gary Price asked why Opinion Research Services had not produced a consultation analysis. He was advised that they had been engaged to produce consultation analyses on the high schools as it had been anticipated that this would be where the greatest number of comments were received. He asked which school Llanbister would amalgamate or federate with and was advised that no decision had been taken yet.

County Councillor Aled Davies asked about the timescale as it was important that uncertainty was ended. He was advised that a paper would be brought to Cabinet in November 2016 but that consultation on any proposals would not start until January 2017 at the earliest.

County Councillor Gibson-Watt asked if the new proposals would come back to full Council before Cabinet and the Portfolio Holder confirmed that they would after consultation and that the status quo was amongst the options that would be considered. The Solicitor to the Council advised that the intention was not to come back to Council at every stage but before a final decision was taken.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

The Portfolio Holder for Education advised that following consultation he was not proposing to change his recommendation to Cabinet that the school be closed with effect from 31st December 2016 with Crossgates CP School named as the receiving school.

County Councillor Hywel Lewis speaking as the local member noted the comments from Estyn on how impressed they had been by the improvements made at the school. He pointed to the willingness shown by the school to work with other schools, sharing a head with Llanelwedd Church in Wales School and he argued that this model of co-operation should be encouraged. He also advised that the school had approached the diocese with a view to becoming a Church in Wales school.

County Councillor Gary Price asked if the Portfolio Holder had seen an email from the Chair of Governors and the Portfolio Holder confirmed that he had and that it would be considered along with all the other representations received.

Councillor Price asked about single year group classes and was advised that Crossgates CP School did not have single year group classes. He also asked whether mobile classrooms were used at Crossgates and was advised that they were not currently used but that no guarantees could be given whether they would be in the future. The Portfolio Holder agreed that it was good to share resources. Councillor Price asked how the closure of the school would contribute to the Council's motto of strong communities in the green heart of Wales. The Portfolio Holder noted that other communities had survived the closure of their schools. He argued that having three or four year groups in the same class was not a good learning environment.

County Councillor Gwilym Williams advised that there were currently 16 children in the playgroup and asked if the projected pupil numbers were wrong and therefore the recommendation should be changed. Officers advised that pupil numbers were projected to be 33 in January 2017 and 34 in January 2021. Councillor Williams disputed this saying that there would be 37 pupils by December. Officers said that their figures were based on the number of places that had been applied for.

County Councillor Gibson-Watt called on the Cabinet to defer a decision to wait for the Rural Schools Policy being developed by Welsh Government.

County Councillor Alexander challenged the notion that small schools were poor schools. She argued that good leadership and partnership was what was needed and that in rural areas there were never going to be large numbers of pupils.

County Councillor Graham Jones asked about the plans for the provision for places for three year olds and was advised that the schools service was confident that there would be enough capacity.

County Councillor David Evans objected to the proposed closure of both Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School and Nantmel CP School arguing that the primary schools policy had never been placed before Council so didn't have the support of Council.

County Councillor William Powell asked if the Council had been in touch with Welsh Government over their rural schools policy and was advised that whilst officers had been in discussions with Welsh Government officials there had been no information on the policy.

County Councillor Aled Davies asked how many hours provision would be made for 3 year olds and was advised that currently 10 hours were being provided and that the council was proposing increasing this to 12½ hours. The 30 hours early years pre-school provision being talked about by the government was specifically for families where both parents worked. Councillor Davies said that it was important that this provision was close to where children lived and that local primary schools helped provide the service. Officers advised that there was a mixture of provision with some in schools and some independent of schools. Officers confirmed that an exercise mapping provision was close to completion and would be shared with the Portfolio Holder.

County Councillor Huw Williams noted that when proposals to close 11 primary schools in the Ystradgynlais area and replace them with 4 new schools there had

not been this level of debate in Council. At the time he had opposed the closures but now thought the new area schools were very successful.

County Councillor Hywel Lewis advised that there were currently 33 pupils at the school with another 4 due to join in January. The nursery was currently full with a waiting list of 4. He noted that many new houses were planned for Crossgates with young couples settling in the area. He noted that the average cost per pupil was £4,410 and that with the additional pupils this would come down to £3,694 which was in line with the Council average.

Councillor Lewis moved that Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School be allowed to federate with Llanfihangel Church in Wales School or a similar school. County Councillor Garry Banks seconded the proposal.

The proposal was put to the vote. The Solicitor to the Council reminded Members that the vote would be a recommendation to the Cabinet and would not be binding on them. He also reminded Members that the Cabinet would not be voting as they did not wish to be seen to have predetermined the issue.

The proposal was passed by 27 votes to 1 with 5 abstentions.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School be allowed to federate with Llanelwedd Church in Wales School or a similar school.

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C180- 2016

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

27th September 2016

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Arwel Jones
Portfolio Holder for Education

SUBJECT: Secondary School Reorganisation Programme
- Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary

1. Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 23rd February 2016, the Authority has carried out formal consultation on the following proposal:
 - **To close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new dual-stream 11 - 18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017 (“the New School”)**
2. The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and Responses, and to receive the Portfolio Holder’s recommendations.
3. At a meeting of the full County Council that was held on the 8th September 2016, all members had an opportunity to discuss the Portfolio Holder’s draft recommendations – the relevant extract from the minutes of the meeting are attached as Appendix E.
4. The report is supported by the following appendices:
 - Appendix A – Consultation Report
 - Appendix B – Consultation Report – Responses
 - Appendix C – Impact Assessments
 - Appendix D – Final Welsh Language Impact Assessment South & Mid Powys
 - Appendix E – Copy from Minutes of Council meeting on 8.9.16
 - Appendix F – Copy of further Estyn comments received 20.9.16

Background

5. On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal outlined above. The consultation period commenced on the 6th April 2016, and ended on the 1st June 2016.
6. The Consultation Document was available on the Council’s website throughout the consultation period. The Document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2013).

7. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.
8. A total of 996 questionnaires were analysed, of which 182 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 735 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 79 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.
9. 21 written submissions were received concerning the proposals for Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. These were from professional, political, interest and community groups as well as from individual residents.
10. During the consultation period, meetings were also held with the following:
 - School Councils and other pupils of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools
 - School Councils and other pupils of all primary schools in both catchment areas
 - Staff of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools
 - Governors of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools
 - Parents / community of both schools
 - Protected Characteristics Group
11. ORS have prepared a Consultation Report, attached as Appendix A, which outlines all the issues raised, along with the Authority's response (Appendix B) to these issues.
12. On the 8th September 2016, the draft proposals were considered by full Council and the relevant extract from the minutes of that meeting are found at Appendix E. At that meeting, an alternative proposal as follows:

‘To recommend to the Cabinet that the proposals for Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High school be abandoned for a period of up to 2 years to allow the leadership teams of both schools to work together on joint proposals to raise standards’

That proposal was passed by 32 votes to 9, with 3 abstentions.

Recommendations

13. Having considered the issues raised in the Consultation Report, the Authority's response to those issues, and the alternative proposal put forward at Council on the 8th September, the following is recommended:
 - To publish a statutory notice for:
 - i) the closure of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools on the 31st August 2018;and

- ii) to establish a new dual-sited dual-stream 11 - 18 school that will operate on the current campuses of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools with effect from 1st September 2018;

Options Considered/Available

14. The options available were
- To publish the Proposal as consulted on with any appropriate modifications;
 - To abandon the Proposal;
 - To significantly recast the Proposals and re-consult
 - 'For the current Proposal for Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High to be abandoned for a period of up to 2 years to allow the leadership teams of both schools to work together on joint proposals to raise standards' (Full Council 8.9.16).

Preferred Choice and Reasons

15. The preferred choice is to publish a statutory notice to establish a new dual-sited school that will operate on the current sites of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools but to change the implementation date to **September 2018**.
16. The alternative proposal put forward by Council has not been taken forward because it doesn't address the issues facing both schools which are outlined in the consultation document:
- Impact of falling pupil numbers over the last few years;
 - Reductions in funding;
 - Impact on curriculum choice and standards;
 - Limited choice of subjects at post-16;
17. As stated in the Consultation Document, collaboration (formal or informal), clustering or federation were not considered practicable as they did not provide a solution to the challenges outlined above, and there is already a degree of collaboration between the schools for the last five years at 14 – 19 but these issues still remain.
18. The Portfolio Holder is of the view that this Proposal outlined in paragraph it would lead to an improvement in the quality of education – both schools are currently in Special Measures. The Proposal aims to establish a sustainable model of secondary provision, which can deliver high-quality education.

The benefits of the Proposal are as follows:

- *Improved leadership at all levels: When streamlining the leadership structure following the joining of two schools into one split site secondary school, the newly appointed governing body are able to place the strongest leaders in each position within the new leadership structure. This means we can have the strongest governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and pastoral leaders – those who have the best track record of securing high outcomes and delivering the highest level of care - leading school improvement across the two sites. The joining of two schools represents an opportunity for a step change improvement in the quality and capacity of leadership at all levels.*

- *Improved leadership leads to improved teaching: Professor David Reynolds has stated: ‘we know that effective leadership of a school from the Headteacher and through to other ‘middle leadership’ positions is important in its own right and important in generating...high quality classroom teaching’ (WG PDG guidance 2013-15). Leadership and teaching quality are linked. The research is clear, by securing a step change improvement in leadership, we are able to secure a step change improvement in teaching quality.*
 - *Improved coaching and mentoring support opportunities for staff: It is essential that time is allocated to enable the best teaching staff in different subject areas to travel between sites (or communicate regularly via video conferencing arrangements) in order to provide mentoring/coaching/resources for their colleagues on the other campus. This ongoing mentoring support and training can have a considerable impact on teaching quality. One there is a world of difference between the potential impact of loose school-to-school collaboration between separate schools, and the level of collaboration and support in a single school with split sites. The extent to which leaders are willing to invest finite time into engaging in mentoring, coaching and training of staff on the second campus of a single school is considerably higher if leaders are going to be held to account for standards and provision on both sites.*
 - *Economies of scale leads to greater investment in teaching and learning: By having a single leader of each curriculum area across the two school sites and a more streamlined senior leadership structure, savings can be generated over time. The new leadership team would be able to invest these savings in whatever way they believe would make the greatest impact on standards.*
 - *The Authority has established a school across two sites. Newtown High School now includes the John Beddoes Campus in Presteigne. Standards have improved on both sites, but in particular at the John Beddoes campus. In 2015, 62.4% of pupils at Newtown HS achieved the L2+ indicator which was a 7.6 percentage point improvement on the previous year.*
 - *Whilst it will be the decision of the new governing body how it wishes to deliver post-16 education, the Proposal does provide an opportunity to establish a critical mass of post-16 learners, should the new governing body wish to establish one sixth form centre. At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.*
 - *The school would be categorised as a bilingual (dual-stream) school with the Welsh-medium provision delivered from the Builth Wells site.*
19. However, if the Proposal is implemented, there is a significant amount of work required to establish a shadow governing body, recruit a headteacher and

establish a new staffing structure. In order to give governors and staff appropriate time to engage in the process, it is recommended that the New School is established from September 2018.

20. **Revenue Savings.** The funding formula has been rerun for the 2016/17 financial year and the updated savings are £123k. This has reduced from the previous reported savings of £133k in the main due to a reduction in the small schools allowance reducing from £58k (15/16) to £47k (16/17).
21. The figures included in the report have been based on the current fair funding formula with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on leadership scale point 12. These changes are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.
22. Estyn provided a response to the Proposal – however, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from the response as it is not clear whether it is based on the Proposal that was consulted upon. . However, the School Organisation Code requires that Consultation Reports must set out Estyn’s view (as provided in the consultation response) on the overall merits of the Proposal. The following is a summary of Estyn’s original response (which can be found in the Consultation Report at Appendix 1):

‘The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal to close both schools and establish a new English-medium 11-16 school, operating on a single site at Builth Wells.

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards or provision or the impact on teaching and curricular arrangements or the leadership and management of the new school. In addition it does not consider fully all the risks involved in the proposal and the consideration of both the longer-term vision and interim solution does not aid the proposal’s clarity.

As a result, it is Estyn’s opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposal.’

23. On the 20th September 2016, the Authority received a further response from Estyn which is attached as Appendix F. The following is a summary of Estyn’s further response:

...

Summary/ Conclusion

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal.

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards or provision or the impact on teaching and curricular arrangements or the leadership and management of the new school. In addition it does not

consider fully all the risks involved in the proposal and the consideration of both the longer-term vision and interim solution does not aid the proposal's clarity.

As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposal'

One Powys Plan

'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan. Within this priority, the Plan states that *'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'*

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

A Single Integrated Impact Assessment has been produced in respect of this Proposal which concluded: *'On completion of this single integrated impact assessment, the judgement is that the Proposal has many potential benefits and does not provide a high level of risk to the Council.'*

The Equality Impact Assessment, Community Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (South and Mid Powys) in respect of this proposal have been updated following the consultation period.

Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The Authority's Schools Transformation Programme is intended to improve educational outcomes for children and young people. This aligns with the aspiration to improve safeguarding and well-being for children and young people.

Local Member(s)

Cllr. Keith Tampin: 'My specific concerns regarding the report are in relation to point 18 under Preferred Choice and Reasons and the quotes in relation to Estyn and standards in that part of the report.

With regard to Estyn and considering its view, I cannot see how the matter can be taken forward in the absence of it given that you have clearly stated that it's a requirement for the view to be provided and considered. To me this opens the Council up to challenge in relation to its processes. Perhaps it would be better to wait until the view has been confirmed so that it can be considered.

Regarding the statement 'it is Estyn's opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposal' this is the most worrying part of the report to me. Any potential for standards to drop must be of concern and not being able to establish that they will be 'at least maintained by the proposal' does not fill me with confidence. Surely we should be considering options that will look to provide a better education for

our young people and look to raise achievements. It is my opinion that we cannot take a decision to change and accept that the change might not address such an important issue for our young people.

I understand that Cabinet members recently visited the sites of Builth and Llandrindod High Schools and were of the opinion that both sites were in a good condition. I would, therefore, welcome a commitment from Cabinet that they would not enter into any agreement to commit to a new build in Builth Wells.

Finally, and this is more of a general point, I don't feel that the best interests of English and Welsh learners in Powys are being truly considered when arriving at options for organising learning across the county.'

Cllr Gary Price: 'It was clear from the recent Full Council meeting that Councillors disagreed with the draft proposals and overwhelmingly supported an alternative proposal. Whilst the recommendation goes some way by extending the implementation date to September 2018 it has no reference to the abandoning of the proposals and allowing Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells High Schools a period of time in discussing a way that the Schools can work closely for the benefit of the pupils without the uncertainty and unnecessary disruption.

I feel the alternative proposal of Full Council should therefore be implemented in full.'

Other Front Line Services

N/A

Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

Legal: The recommendations can be supported from a legal point of view.

The Finance Business Partner comments: "The funding formula has been rerun for the 2016/17 financial year and the updated savings are £123k. This has reduced from the previous reported savings of £133k in the main due to a reduction in the small schools allowance for both schools reducing from £58k (15/16) to £47k (16/17).

The figures included in the report have been based on the current fair funding formula with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on leadership scale point 12. These changes are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.

The current forecasted financial position submitted by Builth High School for the 2018/19 financial year projects a cumulative surplus of £12k.

The current forecasted financial position submitted by Llandrindod High School for the 2018/19 financial year projects a cumulative surplus of £75k.

Finance will continue to support the schools in managing any changes required in order to comply with the Scheme for Financing schools.”

HR: ‘Any implication on staffing will be managed by school governors in line with Human Resource policies and in consultation with the recognised trade unions’

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

N/A

Corporate Communications

Communications Comment: “This issue is of significant public interest and Cabinet’s decision should be publicised widely by press release and through all the council’s social media channels.”

Statutory Officers

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report

The **Strategic Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)** notes the comments of the Finance Business Partner.

Members’ Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the Consultation Report and Responses Report; • To publish a statutory notice for <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the closure of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools on the 31st August 2018;and 2. to establish a new dual-sited dual-stream 11 - 18 school that will operate on the current campuses of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools with effect from 1st September 2018; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the issues raised during consultation; • To establish a sustainable model of secondary education, which can deliver high-quality education. • To provide sufficient time to establish the new school.

Relevant Policy (ies):	School Transformation Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	
----------------------------------	--

Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Marianne Evans
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	September 2016

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Marianne Evans	01597 826155	N/A	Marianne.evans@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:

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Consultation Report on the Future of Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School



Report of Findings for



Opinion Research Services
August 2016





The Future of Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School



A Report of the Consultation Findings

Opinion Research Services

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As with all our studies, findings from this survey are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this survey requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

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Acknowledgements

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is pleased to have worked with Powys County Council (PCC) on the important consultation regarding the future of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools.

We hope this report of the consultations will contribute to the County Council's thinking; and we hope the ORS contribution has been constructive and instrumental in ensuring that the views of the people of Powys are captured and considered as part of the overall consultation.

We are grateful to Powys County Council's managers for their helpful and positive liaison throughout the detailed preparation and management of the consultation. ORS' status as an independent social research organisation was respected throughout.

We also thank the members of the public, professionals and representatives of political, interest, voluntary and community groups who took part in the consultation; participants shared their views and took a full part in the process.

1. Background

^{1.1} On the 11th November 2014, Powys County Council Cabinet approved a School Transformation Policy, which set out the Council's vision and process for the transformation of primary and secondary schools in the county. The Policy includes:

- a range of criteria to be used to determine which schools would be reviewed
- the establishment of a School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) to carry out reviews of schools
- the establishment of a School Review Process to be used to review schools

^{1.2} On 24th March 2015, Cabinet approved 'the commencement of formal consultation to close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School by August 2017 and open a new English-medium 11 – 16 dual-sited school on the current sites of both schools by September 2017, and also the commencement of formal consultation to withdraw Welsh-medium provision from Brecon High School from September 2016'. However, following procedural errors which were challenged in a Judicial Review, the process was stopped. The School Review Process as outlined within the School Transformation Policy 2014 was restarted in September 2015. The stages of the Process are outlined below:

- An Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with Stage 1 of the School Review Process was carried out, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were considered against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy. As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of the two schools.
- Dialogue took place with the governing bodies, head teachers and local members during 2015 and 2016 in accordance with Stage 2 of the School Review Process as described in the School Transformation Policy, as follows:
 - Initial meetings held on 21st September 2015 to agree data in respect of the school and to discuss future options relating to the school;
 - An opportunity for the governing bodies to provide feedback on the options presented to them;
- Following the initial meetings with governing bodies, head teachers and local members, the Council carried out a review of secondary education across South and Mid Powys, and developed a business case which considered the case for change in both areas, assessed and costed a range of options and included recommendations relating to the secondary schools under review.
- The business case and its recommendations were considered by the SORP on the 20th January 2016, and the SORP agreed draft recommendations in respect of the all schools under review.
- Feedback meetings were held with the governing bodies, local members and the head teachers on the 27th January 2016 to discuss the SORP's draft recommendations and to give the governing bodies a further opportunity to present additional evidence.

- On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet considered the SORP's recommendations, together with the business case and additional evidence presented by the governing bodies following the feedback meeting. Cabinet resolved to commence formal consultation on the following Proposal:

To close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new dual-stream 11 - 18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017

This proposal is the first stage of a potential wider plan which aims to establish the school on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells.

- 1.3 Powys County Council set out reasons for change in the County in the consultation document which in brief are repeated below:

Falling pupil numbers year on year

Continued reductions in Welsh Government funding

Budgetary problems, leading to staff reductions and increased class sizes

Poor quality of education and learning outcomes in some schools and an unacceptable Estyn profile across the secondary sector as a whole

Too many surplus places in schools

Old school buildings which are of poor quality and an associated backlog of maintenance

Most sixth forms in Powys are small, making it difficult to provide a broad range of subjects

Year-on-year reduction in funding for Post-16 provision means that the number of subjects offered is also reducing. Pupils currently have to travel between existing school sites to access a broad range of academic and vocational (post 16) courses during the school day, with associated costs.

- 1.4 Reasons for change to Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School were also given:

Falling pupil numbers over the last five years at both schools although numbers are projected to increase slightly

Low numbers in some year groups making it difficult to provide the full curriculum

Too many surplus places in schools (17% in both schools) which Welsh Government believes leads to inefficiencies that impact on quality of education

Old school buildings which are of poor or bad quality and an associated backlog of maintenance. Llandrindod High School has been categorised as a Condition C building, which is defined as 'Poor'. Exhibiting major defects and/or not operating as intended'. Builth Wells High School is a Condition B school.

Small sixth forms at both schools. Year-on-year reduction in funding for Post-16 provision means that the number of subjects offered is also reducing. Pupils currently have to travel between existing school sites to access a broad range of academic and vocational courses during the school day, with associated costs;

Limited choice of subjects at post 16, meaning that some pupils travel to colleges or sixth forms outside of Powys – around 601 pupils from South and Mid Powys attend post-16 provision outside the county;

Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High Schools were judged by Estyn to have ‘unsatisfactory performance’ and ‘unsatisfactory prospects for improvement’ in their last Estyn inspections in 2015 and 2014, respectively;

As a result, both schools were placed in ‘Special Measures’ by Estyn;

Llandrindod High School is forecasting a significant cumulative deficit budget of £312,260 by 2018/19, unless action is taken.

Limited post 16 education meaning that some pupils need to travel outside of Powys;

Difficult to provide an equitable range of subjects through the medium of Welsh at each key stage of education and the situation varies greatly between different schools;

The Consultation

- 1.5 Powys County Council commenced an eight week consultation period on 6 April 2016 on its proposed changes to high schools in Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells and through engagement with members of the public and other stakeholders, including pupils, staff, Governors and community organisations. The consultation formally ended on 23 May 2016, although paper copies of the questionnaire were accepted for a further week to allow time for receipt by second class post. During this period, stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through:
- » A consultation questionnaire: paper questionnaires were widely circulated and the questionnaire was also available online;
 - » Meetings with School Governors
 - » Meetings with School Staff
 - » Workshops with Secondary School Pupils
 - » Workshops with Primary School Pupils
 - » Public meetings
 - » Written submissions: stakeholders had the opportunity to provide their views by writing to Powys County Council or directly to ORS
- 1.6 Comprehensive notes were taken by ORS for each of these meetings and workshops. These notes form the basis of the findings in this report.
- 1.7 In addition, social media sites were reviewed by ORS for comments on the proposal.
- 1.8 Opinion Research Services (ORS), a spin-out company from Swansea University with a UK-wide reputation for social research and major statutory consultations, was appointed by Powys County Council to facilitate aspects of the consultation process and to provide an independent report of the formal consultation programme.

¹ Includes all six schools in the South Powys Post-16 Partnership

Nature of Consultation

Accountability

- ^{1.9} Consultation should promote accountability and assist decision making: public bodies should give an account of their plans or proposals and they should ensure that all responses are taken into account in order to:
- » Be informed of any issues, viewpoints, implications or options that might have been overlooked;
 - » Re-evaluate matters already known; and
 - » Review priorities and principles.
- ^{1.10} Nevertheless, a consultation is not a vote; and influencing public policy through consultation is not simply a 'numbers game' in which the loudest voices or the greatest numbers automatically determine the outcome, since all of the various consultation methods have to be assessed.
- ^{1.11} All types of consultation responses are important: as part of Powys County Council's consultation on secondary school transformation we received a range of responses from individuals and organisations as a result of the following activities:
- » The open consultation questionnaire;
 - » School Governors' Meetings;
 - » School Staff Meetings;
 - » Secondary School Pupils Meetings;
 - » Primary School Pupils Meetings;
 - » Focus Groups with Special Needs
 - » Public Meeting
 - » Public meeting;
 - » Written responses and submissions;
 - » Responses via Social Media.
- ^{1.12} This report identifies where strength of feeling may be particularly intense while recognising that interpreting consultation is not simply a matter of counting responses.

Interpreting Outcomes

- ^{1.13} Importantly, the different consultation methods cannot just be combined to yield a single course of action that reconciles everyone's differences and is acceptable to the whole of the local population – for two main reasons:
- » First, the various consultation methods differ in their nature and their outcomes cannot be just aggregated into a single result
 - » Second, the populations in different areas will inevitably have different perspectives on the reconfiguration options and in our experience there is no formula in any consultation process that can reconcile everyone's differences in a single way forward.

- ^{1.14} It is also important to recognise that the outcomes of the consultation process will need to be considered alongside other information available about the likely impact of the proposed option. Whilst the consultation process highlights aspects of this information that stakeholders consider to be important, Powys County Council will need to consider the appropriate emphasis to be placed on each element. In this sense there can be no single 'right' interpretation of all the consultation elements and other information available to Powys County Council in its decision-making process. ORS is clear that its role is to analyse and explain the opinions and arguments of those who have responded to the consultation, but not to recommend any option or variant.
- ^{1.15} Whilst this report brings together a wide range of evidence for Powys County Council to consider, it does not provide a single answer for the future (whether short- or long-term) of secondary education in South Powys. It is for the Cabinet to take high-level policy decisions based on their understanding of the services for which they are responsible and other relevant considerations, including equalities. In their deliberations, the members of Powys County Council will review the evidence and considerations that have emerged during consultation while also taking account of all the other relevant evidence.

Report of Consultation Outcomes

- ^{1.16} This full report of the consultation outcomes considers the feedback received through each of the different elements of the consultation process and provides a comprehensive evidence base to help inform the decision-making process for the Council. The report traverses public, professional and stakeholder opinions and feelings in considerable detail to achieve a comprehensive understanding – and it is the journey, as well as the destination, that will matter to those wishing to understand the assumptions, arguments, conclusions and feelings about current and future secondary education provision in Powys. Verbatim quotations are used not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of view. ORS does not endorse the statements made, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly.
- ^{1.17} We recognise that considering the feedback from each element of the consultation in turn can at times be repetitive given that similar issues often emerged across the different strands – but it is important that this full report provides an accurate reflection of all of the feedback received. However, the executive summary concisely reviews the full range of feedback received, and brings together the overall perspectives and the common themes that have emerged fairly quickly. We trust that the summary is a sound guide to the consultation outcomes and how they might be interpreted, and that both the summary and full reports will be helpful to all concerned.

2. Executive Summary

Summary of Main Findings

^{2.1} We trust that this executive summary is a sound guide to the consultation outcomes and how they might be interpreted, but readers are encouraged to read the full document for detailed insights. The full report traverses public, professional and stakeholder opinions and feelings in considerable detail to achieve a comprehensive understanding and it is the journey, as well as the destination, that will matter to those wishing to understand the assumptions, arguments, conclusions and feelings about changes to secondary schools in South Powys. We trust that the summary and full report will be helpful to all concerned.

Consultation Process

^{2.2} The consultation comprised a number of elements intended to provide several opportunities for residents and stakeholders to become involved and to share their opinions on the proposals. These elements are outlined below.

The Open Consultation Questionnaires

^{2.3} A consultation document covering the proposed changes was made publicly available on the Council's dedicated website. The website also included links to other detailed information including the communities, equalities and Welsh language impact assessments.

^{2.4} The Main, Young Persons' and Primary consultation questionnaires included relevant summaries of background information on the Council's Case for Change and each of the main proposals for English and Welsh medium education, including post-16 education. The following key topics were covered in the consultation questionnaires:

- » English Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For English Medium Education
- » Welsh Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For Welsh Medium Education
- » Considering Equalities
- » Information About Respondents

^{2.5} The questionnaires were available online through the Council's dedicated website and the URL was also printed on the paper copies. Paper copies were made available in local libraries, leisure facilities, County Hall and all affected Primary and Secondary schools. Respondents had the option to submit their completed questionnaire directly to ORS via a freepost mailing address or to the Council.

Questionnaire responses

- ^{2.6} All questionnaire responses in which at least one of the consultation questions was answered and received by ORS by the close of the consultation period were included in the analysis. One additional week was given for submissions sent by second class post or returned directly to PCC contact points.
- ^{2.7} A total of 996 questionnaires were analysed, of which 182 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 735 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 79 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.
- ^{2.8} Of the total number of questionnaires received, 4 indicated that they were representing organisations or groups.

Meetings and Workshops

- ^{2.9} Each meeting or workshop received a standard presentation from Powys County Council on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers.
- **Governors Meetings** at Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School involved around 20 Governors over the two sessions
 - **Meetings of School Staff** at Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School involved around 56 staff over the two sessions
 - **Secondary School Pupil Workshops:** Both secondary schools were invited to select a number of children aged 11 to 18 years to participate in deliberative workshops. Three sessions were held in each school for groups of pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5. Around 126 pupils attended over the six sessions.
 - **Primary School Pupil Workshops:** All feeder primary schools to Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools were invited to select a number of children aged between six and 11 to attend deliberative workshops – one workshop for each High School. About 100 children participated.
 - **Public Meetings** were held at the Sports Hall, Leisure Centre, Builth Wells and at The Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells. Around 275 people attended over the two sessions.

Submissions and Social Media

- During the consultation period 21 **written submissions** were received concerning the proposals for Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. These were from individual residents and from professional, political interest and community groups.
- Three **social media** (Facebook) pages contained updates, comments or tweets referring to PCC's proposal and/or its perceived impacts, and this report presents content posted during the consultation period.

Main Issues Raised

The Case for Change

The Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.10 When asked to agree or disagree with the Council's case for change, more than two thirds of respondents who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (81% [9/11]), respondents who are parents, carers or guardians of Builth Wells High School or Builth Wells feeder primary school pupils (71%), those who work for Powys County Council (not in the education system) (71%), and governors of Powys schools (68%) agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues. More than half of respondents who are parents, carers or guardians of Llandrindod High School or Llandrindod feeder primary school pupils (52%) or of other/unknown schools (56%) also agreed with this.
- 2.11 However, just less than half of members of staff at a school or within the education system in Powys (48%) and 'other residents' not covered by other stakeholder groups (48%) agreed that the Council is right to make changes.
- 2.12 Support for the proposal was generally lower. The highest levels of support were from those who work for Powys County Council (not in the education system) (44%), and parents, carers or guardians of Llandrindod High School/associated feeder school pupils (43%), while a third of parents, carers or guardians of Builth Wells High School/feeder school pupils (33%) and members of staff in a school or within the education system in Powys (33%) agreed. Just less than a third of other residents (32%), school governors in Powys (30%), and those who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (30% [3/10]) agreed with the proposal.
- 2.13 Less than a fifth (18%) of pupils and parents of pupils of other/unknown schools agreed with the proposal.
- 2.14 Main reasons given for disagreeing with the proposals were a desire to maintain the schools as they are; that the savings would be insufficient to justify the negative impacts on children's education and wellbeing and that standards would not be improved.

The Young Person's Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.15 Respondents were asked to agree or disagree that their education was suffering in relation to a number of factors.
- 2.16 Not having enough different subjects available at KS4 and post 16: Two thirds (66%) of respondents who attend Builth Wells High School agreed with this statement and 4 in 10 (39%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students.
- 2.17 Education is suffering because class sizes are either too big or too small: Nearly 4 in 10 (38%) students that attend Builth Wells High School agreed with this statement compared with a quarter (26%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students.
- 2.18 Education is suffering because of problems due to the quality of school buildings. Less than two fifths (37%) of respondents from Builth Wells High School agreed. By comparison, less than a fifth (17%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students agreed.

- 2.19 Education is suffering because of disruption caused by having to travel between sites for lessons during the day. Around 3 in 10 (28%) Builth Wells High School students agreed and around a fifth (18%) of students from Llandrindod High School/feeder schools agreed.
- 2.20 Education is suffering from not having enough up-to-date IT equipment. Three fifths (58%) of Builth Wells High School students agreed compared with around 3 in 10 (31%) Llandrindod High School/feeder school students.
- 2.21 Education is suffering due to not having enough school equipment such as text books, laboratory or PE equipment. Half of Builth Wells High School students (50%) agreed with this statement and only a quarter (26%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students.
- 2.22 Respondents were asked to agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to a number of issues in relation to English medium education. Half (51%) of Builth Wells High School respondents and, conversely, over half (55%) of those at Llandrindod High School/feeder schools disagreed.
- 2.23 Respondents were asked: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites?'
- 2.24 Nearly 4 in 10 (37%) respondents from Builth Wells High School agree with the proposal, while 70% of those in Llandrindod High Schools/feeder schools disagree; 49% disagree strongly.

Primary Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.25 Around half (55%) of respondents from Llandrindod feeder schools and half (50%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues it has identified in English medium education.
- 2.26 Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents Llandrindod feeder schools disagree with the proposed change, while nearly three fifths (57%) disagreed from Builth Wells feeder schools.

Quality of Education

Governors

- 2.27 Both sets of Governors suggested how the proposals should change to bring tangible improvements in teaching and learning whilst at the same time resolving the underlying funding issues. Governors at Builth suggested a single school on a single site as soon as possible whilst Governors at Llandrindod want to see each site maintained as a distinct language centre with Llandrindod designated as the dedicated English medium 11-16 site and Builth as the centre for Welsh Medium and sixth form provision.
- 2.28 Governors also highlighted the need for more specialist teachers at KS3 and KS4 and raised concerns over the implications for educational standards without Estyn inspections for two years if the current proposals are implemented.

Staff

- 2.29 Staff called for evidence to support the case for a larger school; pointed out that curriculum managers would have a higher workload in monitoring standards on two sites; queried the feasibility of running a

broader curriculum without co-locating courses and highlighted the need for a skills audit to determine appropriate staffing levels.

Secondary School Pupils

^{2.30} Pupils from both Builth Wells and Llandrindod recognised that the teaching quality in their respective schools needed to be improved and a high proportion of Builth Wells pupils accepted the proposals, mainly because they hoped it would improve the quality of teaching and range of subjects available. Pupils at Llandrindod were concerned about overreliance on supply teachers and a lack of specialist teachers in certain core subjects at KS3 and KS4. There was, however, more concern and opposition among the Llandrindod groups.

Primary School Pupils

^{2.31} Although some pupils identified with Powys County Council's objective of improving education, many rejected the case for change because they felt the main focus was upon saving money, along with the belief that there is little wrong with either school. However, a minority of pupils felt that the two schools would be 'stronger' together, provide a better quality of education and make savings from having fewer staff.

Public Meetings

^{2.32} Participants believed that the current proposals are driven by money saving and the removal of special measures rather than by a drive to solve the underlying quality issues and raise standards at the schools. Some suggested that the proposals would actually exacerbate the pressure on the schools since in their current form they are not deliverable or sustainable but simply a precursor to a single site new build school. Moreover, they believed that the proposed savings would be insufficient to invest in additional staff.

Submissions

^{2.33} Nearly all respondents opposed the current proposal. They questioned how it would make a positive change to current teaching and learning and how it would lead to the recruitment of more specialist teaching staff and create a 'critical mass' of students with the same school buildings and class sizes. They were also concerned over the continuing arrangements with Estyn.

^{2.34} However, respondents were more concerned with the longer term 'aspiration' by PCC for a single site school in Builth Wells and there were many submissions in support of the model proposed by the Governors of Llandrindod High School for one dual stream 11-18 Secondary School operating from two sites: the Builth Wells site to accommodate the Welsh Medium provision and a Sixth Form Centre and the Llandrindod Wells site to accommodate English medium students age 11-16. Respondents believed this would enable an increase in the GCSE offer, strengthen provision overall and deploy subject specialists.

^{2.35} Estyn's response stated that the consultation document does not offer enough evidence to support PCC's conclusion that the proposal would improve educational quality and standards. They are also of the view that neither the possibility of the new school failing to improve standards, nor the risks involved with opening a single site school have been considered appropriately.

Social Media

- ^{2.36} Many social media users suggested that Llandrindod High School has improved its standards and provides a good education, referring to good GCSE and A level results and a high level of university acceptances. A minority, though, argued that standards at the school are relatively poor and that its 'special measures' status is deserved for reasons other than examination pass rates.
- ^{2.37} Some commented on the positive impact on educational standards of being placed in Estyn special measures and that their removal would compromise current educational quality. Furthermore – and in relation to the longer term aspiration of PCC - a 'shiny' new school building would not tackle the root causes of problems at the two schools that led to their being placed in special measures.

Transport and Travel

Governors

- ^{2.38} Governors wanted to know whether PCC would pay for transport costs for students and staff between school sites and if potential additional travel for teachers and pupils had been costed and factored into the savings cited in The Case for Change. They asked why, according to PCC estimates, transport to Builth would cost less than to Llandrindod and generally wanted more detailed information and evidence about travel and its costs to support the claims made by PCC.

Staff

- ^{2.39} Teachers at Builth were concerned over how any possible travel between school sites would impact on their preparation and management time.

Secondary School Pupils

- ^{2.40} Llandrindod pupils were concerned about the proposal being a precursor to closing their High School in the future and the additional daily travel that this would involve.

Primary School Pupils

- ^{2.41} Pupils in Llandrindod were concerned about an increase in travel should their school be closed and a new single site school be built in Builth Wells.

Public Meetings

- ^{2.42} Concerns were raised around the potential negative impacts on educational standards if pupils are taught across two sites and have to travel between sites during the school day – particularly at key stages 3 and 4. Travel between the sites by teaching staff was also considered to risk the current quality of education and likely to demotivate teachers.

Submissions

- ^{2.43} Respondents were concerned over the impact on educational standards of teachers travelling between sites.
- ^{2.44} They were also concerned over the length of time that students would travel and the increased travel costs from the County's budget should the one site, one school model be implemented.

Social Media

- 2.45 Increased travel times and travel costs for Llandrindod pupils were concerns for the longer term aspiration of PCC for one school, one site.

Finance and Funding

Governors

- 2.46 Governors at both meetings wanted to know the source for additional funding to enable the new school to offer a broader curriculum, particularly around growth in Welsh Medium subjects and A-levels. In particular, where would the additional and specialist staff come from and how would the current recruiting difficulties be overcome? They asserted that any savings made from the closures would not meet the cost of addressing these issues and would instead put additional pressure on existing staff.
- 2.47 Llandrindod Governors wanted clarification around the impacts of protected salaries on the specific cost savings assumptions set out in the consultation document. They also argued that in their preferred model the costs would be reduced through the better deployment of staff and a reduced senior leadership team.

Staff

- 2.48 Teaching staff argued that without additional funding the proposals would do nothing to tackle the underlying funding challenges and were concerned that in their current form the proposals might put jobs, pay and conditions at risk.
- 2.49 Staff in Llandrindod criticised the inaccurate, misleading and out of date budget figures for Llandrindod High School which were used to cast the school in a poor light and to support the current proposal.

Public Meetings

- 2.50 Attendees at both meetings argued that any potential savings would not be a lasting solution to the underlying financial issues affecting the schools. Some concluded that the new school would not be financially sustainable, thus demonstrating that this is an interim step before a new school is built using capital funds.

Submissions

- 2.51 Respondents expressed doubt and confusion over the financial reasoning underlying the proposals and some highlighted what they considered to be oversights or inaccuracies in PCC's financial statistics and arguments. They asked for clarity on budget forecasts and current facts and figures in relation to the two existing schools. They also criticised PCC for prioritising financial considerations over education and asked whether a change in Government would affect the availability of funding for a new one sited school.
- 2.52 Estyn stated that the impact of the new school's reduced budget had not been considered or addressed, given that Llandrindod is projecting a significant budget deficit over the next three years.

Buildings and Estates

Governors

2.53 Governors said that the proposals leave the school buildings in a state of limbo and queried whether new money would be available to address the current poor conditions and maintenance backlog.

Public Meetings

2.54 Attendees wanted to know how Powys County Council aims to sustain the current buildings on both sites if there are no funds currently available. On the other hand, if funds are available why they have not been spent so far on maintaining the school buildings. Attendees also asked whether the rumours were true that a site had been found in Builth Wells for a new school.

Submissions

2.55 Questions were raised over a new site in Builth Wells mainly concerning how the funds would be found; how the site would be identified and when the plans would proceed. Respondents also suggested that the existing buildings at Llandrindod High School were ideally suited for expansion without incurring the congestion and costs involved in building a new school on a green field site in Builth Wells.

Governance and Staffing of a New School

Governors

2.56 Governors asked whether new contracts would be offered to teachers and if negotiations had started with the unions. They highlighted that the proposal and continuing uncertainty about the future of the schools exacerbates the current challenges around the recruitment and retention of teachers.

2.57 They wanted to know the process for selecting a new Governing Body and for PCC to recognise the challenges faced by any new set of Governors in implementing the far-reaching changes within a tight timeframe.

Staff

2.58 Staff wanted greater clarity about the constituency and timeframe for establishing the Shadow Governing Body.

Secondary School Pupils

2.59 Pupils from both schools were sceptical about whether just one head teacher and senior leadership team would be either practical or beneficial. They felt that the uncertainty and potential changes would be harmful to staff retention and the recruitment drive.

Public Meetings

2.60 Attendees wanted greater clarity around the staff and governance structure of the new school and to know how a new Governing Body would be supported by Powys County Council to deliver better outcomes for pupils across the two sites.

Submissions

2.61 Respondents were concerned over the impacts of the proposal on Governors, school leaders and teachers. They felt that the extra workload would affect individual wellbeing and questioned whether

the Council would take a proper duty of care over staff. They also asked how the head teacher would be appointed.

- 2.62 Respondents felt that the period of uncertainty over whether or not a new school would be created would impact negatively on teachers and pupils and would make it more difficult to recruit teachers to the area.

Post-16 Education

Governors

- 2.63 The Llandrindod Governors wanted clarification that the Governing Body would be free to choose the structure of post 16 provision at the proposed new school.
- 2.64 Governors in Builth were more certain that locating A- level provision on a single site would create a viable critical mass to improve subject choice; attract students who presently travel to England; be more cost effective and eliminate the cost of student transport between the two sites.
- 2.65 Most agreed that continued uncertainty around the future of post-16 education would lead to increased migration of learners out of mid-Powys to schools and colleges elsewhere.

Staff

- 2.66 Participants recognised the challenge of delivering the Learning Skills Measure in rural Wales with a backdrop of reducing budgets and relatively small numbers of learners. Llandrindod staff challenged the assumptions within the Measure that greater choice of A-levels is desirable and argued for a narrower range of A level subjects in rural areas to achieve quality outcomes for students.

Secondary School Students

- 2.67 Pupils in both of the schools generally supported the potential for a single-site sixth form centre, citing the benefits as wider subject choice, better facilities and a greater potential to attract good quality teachers. However, Llandrindod pupils raised some concerns over travel.

Public Meetings

- 2.68 Attendees suggested that sixth form provision should be a priority and sought clarity over whether it would be delivered in both schools or at a sixth form centre at one of them. Some suggested that a single site would create a critical mass of students and might be the most viable option if Powys is to meet the Welsh Government's Learning and Skills Measure.

Submissions

- 2.69 Estyn did not consider that adequate evidence had been provided to support the claim that an eight mile travel distance between the two schools for sixth form pupils (if the decision is taken to retain the sixth forms on both of the sites) was acceptable.

Welsh Medium Education

The Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.70 When asked if they agree or disagree that changes are needed to Welsh medium education, more than half of respondents (55%) who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agreed along

with 4 in 10 Governors of schools in Powys (43%); 38% of parents/carers/guardians of pupils in Powys and a third of members of staff in Powys school/education system (34%).

- 2.71 7 in 10 parents/carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils (71%) agreed and over half (54%) of those in Llandrindod.
- 2.72 Around half or more of other residents in Powys (53%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (49%) and members of staff in Powys school/education system (49%) disagreed. 4 in 10 pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils (40%) and Governors of schools in Powys (39%) also disagreed.
- 2.73 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream.
- 2.74 Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (48%) and around 4 in 10 Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed with the proposal. More than a third (35%) of pupils, parents, carers or guardians of Powys pupils also agreed.
- 2.75 Around three fifths of parents, carers and guardians of Llandrindod HS/feeder (62%) and Builth Wells (57%) HS/feeder school pupils agree with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream.
- 2.76 At least two fifths of each respondent group disagreed: three fifths of other residents in Powys (59%), and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (58%), while around half of members of staff in Powys school/education system (50%) disagreed.
- 2.77 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.
- 2.78 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (54%) agreed with the proposal. Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (49%) and members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) also agreed.
- 2.79 At least a quarter of respondents in 8 of 9 sub-groups disagreed with this proposal. Those particularly likely to disagree were other residents (45%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (39%) and employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (36%).
- 2.80 Three fifths of parents/carers/guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils (60%) agreed with this element of the proposal compared to over two fifths of those with children in Llandrindod HS/feeder schools (44%).
- 2.81 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at Builth Wells.
- 2.82 Around a third of employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (35%), members of staff in the Powys schools/education system (30%) and Governors of schools in Powys (30%) agreed with this element of the proposal.
- 2.83 Other residents (62%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (60%) and Governors of schools in Powys (57%) were particularly likely to disagree.
- 2.84 Over three fifths (64%) of parents, carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils agreed with the proposal, while two fifths (40%) of those with children in Llandrindod HS/feeder agreed.

- 2.85 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.
- 2.86 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (57%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education) (56%) and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (51%) agreed with this element of the proposal. Nearly half of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) and pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils (45%) also agreed.
- 2.87 Nearly two thirds (65%) of parents, carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils agreed, as did around half (47%) of those in Llandrindod.
- 2.88 A third (35%) of other residents disagreed. Around a quarter of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (28%) and pupils/parents/carers or guardians of Powys pupils (25%) also disagreed.

Young Person's Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.89 Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree that the Council is right to respond to issues raised about Welsh medium education. Over half (52%) of young people in Builth Wells High School agreed compared with less than a quarter (22%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students.
- 2.90 They were then asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with elements of the proposal.
- 2.91 Over half (56%) of young people in Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single stream in South/Mid Powys. 3 in 10 (29%) of those in Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed.
- 2.92 Nearly two thirds (63%) of respondents in Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school; 3 in 10 (30%) young people in Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed.
- 2.93 Three fifths (60%) of respondents in Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school. Only a quarter (26%) of those at Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed with this proposal.
- 2.94 More than half (55%) of respondents attending Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh compared with less than a quarter (23%) attending Llandrindod High School/feeder school.

Primary Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.95 Half (50%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools agreed that the Council is right to make changes to Welsh medium education compared with less than a third (28%) of respondents from Llandrindod feeder schools
- 2.96 More than two fifths of respondents from Builth Wells (43%) and Llandrindod (45%) feeder schools agreed with the proposal to situate a new Welsh medium school in Builth Wells due to its central location and wider range of subjects available.
- 2.97 Just over half (54%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools and three fifths (60%) from Llandrindod feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to increase the number of different subjects available to pupils 16+ taught in Welsh.

Governors

- 2.98 Governors at Builth were concerned that the proposals for a dual stream site might diminish the long-term aspiration for a fully bilingual 2A school at Builth Wells. Governors at Llandrindod would also prefer establishing single language centres at each site (Welsh at Builth and English at Llandrindod). Both sets of Governors called for a more realistic assessment of the likely numbers of pupils, costs and resources needed to make Builth Wells a viable option for a bilingual school.
- 2.99 Governors argued that a separate unit for the Welsh medium would lead to more use of Welsh between lessons and improve the uptake of Welsh medium secondary provision in Mid Powys.

Staff

- 2.100 Builth Wells High School staff sought clarity about the linguistic status of the proposed new school, specifically around a bilingual curriculum on both sites and whether offering Welsh medium only at a single site would be open to legal challenge.

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.101 Pupils at Builth Wells felt that their High School was the most appropriate site at which to improve Welsh provision in the area.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.102 A few pupils in the Builth catchment workshop were concerned over the travel distance to Builth for pupils transferring from Brecon and that there would be too many pupils in the school if Welsh medium pupils transfer from Brecon High School.

Public Meetings

- 2.103 There was some support for strengthening Welsh provision at Builth but doubts were raised around the predicted numbers of Welsh medium pupils for 2017. Assurances over the number of Welsh medium courses available is needed soon to enable parents - particularly those in South Powys –to make informed decisions about schools for their children.

Submissions

- 2.104 Estyn accepted that increasing the number of pupils at Builth would allow the school to offer a more comprehensive curriculum to Welsh medium pupils. However, it also held the view that there is insufficient evidence that 'setting' pupils would improve Welsh medium educational standards. In addition, it claimed that PCC had not adequately explained how they intended to address access issues to after school activities for Brecon pupils travelling to Builth.

Other Pupil Impacts

Governors

- 2.105 Governors underlined the potentially negative impacts on pupil attainment caused by changed teacher/pupil relationships; travelling between sites and the upheavals of transition.

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.106 Many Llandrindod pupils felt unsettled by the uncertain future for their school and suspicious that the current proposal was leading to one large school in the future which they strongly opposed in favour of a permanent new school across the two existing sites.

2.107 Some participants were concerned over the impact of these changes on special needs students.

Primary School Pupils

2.108 Some of the pupils said they felt stressed and unsettled about the consultation and the associated uncertainty around high school provision.

2.109 Pupils from both catchment areas felt the class sizes would be too big and that bullying would increase in a large, single site school.

Public Meetings

2.110 Attendees at the Builth Wells meeting were concerned about the impact of any changes on pupils taking GCSE and A level examinations in terms of subject choice and wanted reassurances that there would be smooth transitions for affected pupils.

Submissions

2.111 Respondents were concerned that access to out-of-school activities would be adversely affected, particularly for disadvantaged children living in the north ward of Llandrindod Wells, should the single site school model be implemented.

Social Media

2.112 There was significant concern about the potential for disruption and uncertainty for pupils and their families in the current proposal.

2.113 For the longer term, users of social media felt that a new larger school would not provide the current standards of pastoral care to pupils.

Other Staff Impacts

Governors

2.114 Governors highlighted that any improvements in quality rely on addressing the excessive workloads faced by teaching staff.

Staff

2.115 Teachers at Builth were concerned about job security, retention and recruitment of staff as well as how any possible travel between school sites would impact on their preparation and management time. In Llandrindod staff contracts and the ring-fencing of teaching posts were the main areas of concern.

Public Meetings

2.116 Attendees at Llandrindod Wells said that the consultation process and uncertainty around the future of the schools was already negatively impacting on staff retention and recruitment and ultimately, therefore, the quality of children's education.

Community Impacts

Secondary School Pupils

^{2.117} Llandrindod pupils were concerned for their community should their school be closed and highlighted some unwelcome consequences including social and business impacts; families not moving to the area and an uncertain future for the leisure centre.

Public Meetings

^{2.118} Participants in the Llandrindod Wells meeting were highly concerned over the long term economic future of the town should the high school close. Concerns were raised over a potential downturn in economic development and investment; demographic change in favour of older residents and the loss of a school which attracts business interests to the area. The proposal for a single school over two sites has done little to reassure the community about the long-term future of the school and the aspiration of Powys County Council for a new build school at Builth to serve both communities. Attendees also criticised the Council for the lingering uncertainties over future plans. They also asked if PCC had considered the option to co-locate language streams and/or sixth form as proposed by the Governors of the two schools.

Submissions

^{2.119} By far the largest number of comments and issues were raised by respondents concerned over the longer term quality of life for residents of Llandrindod Wells without its secondary school. General comments highlighted the negative social, economic, business and educational impacts. Respondents were concerned that without a secondary school families and businesses would be discouraged from locating in the town. The closure of the sports centre, which is part of the school, would also negatively impact on community groups and local residents more generally.

^{2.120} Estyn also criticised the consultation document for not including a community impact assessment based on its longer-term vision of a one site school at Builth.

Social Media

^{2.121} Llandrindod Wells was described by social media users as a 'ghost town' and a 'dying town', a decline people felt would be exacerbated if Llandrindod High School were to close in future. They raised particular concerns around the potential impacts on local businesses as people would be deterred from moving to the area.

The Consultation

Governors

^{2.122} The Llandrindod Governors raised a number of objections to specific evidence and assumptions underpinning the case for change. They criticised a general lack of detail in the consultation document; pupil number projections and capacity and estimated cost savings from the proposals.

Staff

^{2.123} A number of apparent inaccuracies in the consultation document were identified by staff at Llandrindod leading to accusations of predetermination. They criticised, in particular, that the scoring system was in error leading to the wrong overall priority being identified.

2.124 Staff noted an apparent shift in position by PCC around their proposals for a single site school in the Builth Wells area: that a new-build site has become an 'aspiration' and not an intention. Attendees suggested that the consultation document sends mixed messages to parents and the community about the long term future for the schools.

Secondary School Pupils

2.125 There was no strong opposition to the aspiration for a single site school in Builth Wells from Builth pupils, a minority of Llandrindod pupils and KS3 pupils. However, many Llandrindod pupils felt unsettled by the uncertain future for their school and suspicious that the current proposal was leading to one large school in the future which they strongly opposed in favour of a permanent new school across the two existing sites.

Primary School Pupils

2.126 The main concern for pupils in both catchment areas was the possible future plans for a single school in the Builth Wells area.

Public Meetings

2.127 Attendees highlighted a need for clarity and better evidence concerning pupil numbers and surplus places in the case for change.

2.128 Attendees wanted the decision making process to be opened up to the wider elected members and were concerned that the future of the community was being put in the hands of Cabinet members who do not live in the communities affected by these proposals.

Submissions

2.129 A few respondents outlined their frustration with the whole process and were especially critical that only one option had been offered for consultation.

2.130 The consultation document was also criticised for inaccuracies, misleading statements and insufficient explanations.

2.131 Respondents criticised some aspects of the actual process of consultation including the lack of response from cabinet members at the Llandrindod Wells meeting and the primary school consultation at Cefnlllys School which did not allow sufficient time for children's questions. The youth and public questionnaires were also considered to restrict or to lead responses.

2.132 Respondents also suggested that the final decision over the proposal should be made by the full Council rather than the Cabinet alone but in any case suspected that the Council had decided that the proposal would be implemented regardless of the outcomes of the consultation process.

2.133 The Governors of Llandrindod High School criticised the options evaluation procedure for erroneously allocating scores between the original options for change. This had led to the selection of the current proposal over one preferred by Llandrindod High School Governors (outlined earlier in this summary).

2.134 Respondents were more concerned about the longer term prospect of closing Llandrindod High School altogether and transporting pupils to a new 'super school' in Builth Wells. The Governors of Llandrindod High School questioned the underlying statistics and information used to justify this model. They also highlighted the fact that not all pupils from Llandrindod High School would necessarily transfer to a new school in Builth owing to the relative proximity of other schools and that this would adversely affect the

viability of this new school. Some also felt that in this context the future of Llanidloes High School should have been considered at the same time as these proposals.

Social Media

- ^{2.135} Social media users described the decision as a ‘fait accompli’, a ‘done deal’ and the consultation as a ‘tick-box exercise’. They criticised the fact that the ultimate decision to approve or reject the proposal would be taken by the PCC Cabinet instead of the whole Council and considered this to be undemocratic.
- ^{2.136} The consultation document was criticised for being poorly written, confusing and biased; the main questionnaire for being leading; the young persons’ questionnaire for being inaccessible and the Community Impact Assessment for being biased. Some were unhappy with the conduct of the Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting and particularly with the answers (or perceived lack thereof) provided by the panel to questions from the floor.

Overall Comments

- ^{2.1} While there was some recognition that change was necessary many were sceptical over whether the current proposal would deliver the improvements in quality and cost savings presented in the consultation document. There was some concern that teachers, the leadership team and the new Governing Body would have higher workloads affecting their wellbeing and ultimately impacting negatively on quality and pastoral support for students, particularly if they have to travel between sites for lessons.
- ^{2.2} There was some support for a single sixth form centre and for increased Welsh medium provision in Builth. However, very many people involved in the consultation would prefer the model for secondary school education which would see Welsh medium provision and a sixth form centre in Builth and English medium education in Llandrindod.
- ^{2.3} By far the highest level of concern was raised in relation to the longer term aspiration for a single site school on a new site in Builth Wells and the closure of the High School in Llandrindod Wells. Many felt that the current proposal was merely a precursor to this happening and were deeply concerned over the negative social, economic and demographic impacts on Llandrindod Wells. Meanwhile, uncertainties over the future of the schools were considered to be impacting on the ability to retain and recruit quality specialist teaching staff to the area.
- ^{2.4} The reasons underpinning these views have been fully recorded both in the summary of findings above and in the detailed chapters that follow.
- ^{2.5} Moving forward, interpreting the overall ‘meaning’ of the consultation outcomes is neither straightforward nor just ‘numerical’ - for the different methods, groups and outcomes have to be respected and cannot be simply ‘summed’ into an unambiguous consensus.
- ^{2.6} It is also worth reiterating that consultation is not a ‘numbers game’ - and that the key issue is not whether most people agree or disagree with the proposals but whether the reasons for their popularity or unpopularity are rational and convincing. People’s reasoning has been well documented throughout this report, and it is this that the PCC Cabinet will primarily wish to consider when making its judgements.

^{2.7} In this context, it is not the role of ORS to make policy recommendations or to go beyond the fact-based interpretation above. In the light of the evidence presented, the PCC Cabinet will consider all the consultation outcomes, alongside all the other evidence, in order to make its decisions. Ultimately, an overall interpretation of the consultation will depend upon the Cabinet itself: its members will consider all elements and determine which seem the most telling, by considering the relative merits of the various opinions as the basis for public policy.

3. The Open Consultation Questionnaires

Foreword

3.1 This chapter concerns the Main, Young Persons' and Primary School Consultation Questionnaires. These were designed by ORS in partnership with the Council and were available for completion by any interested stakeholders through paper copies as well as online.

Overview

3.2 A consultation document covering the proposed changes was produced and made publicly available on the Council's dedicated website. The website also included links to detailed information about the processes undertaken by the Council so far, including communities, equalities and Welsh language impact assessments.

3.3 The Main, Young Persons' and Primary consultation questionnaires were developed to include relevant summaries of background information on the Council's Case for Change and each of the main proposals for English and Welsh medium education, including post-16 education. The following key topics were covered in the consultation questionnaires:

- » English Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For English Medium Education
- » Welsh Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For Welsh Medium Education
- » Considering Equalities
- » Information About Respondents

3.4 The questionnaires were available online through the Council's dedicated website and the URL was also printed on the paper copies. Paper copies were made available in locations identified as relevant, including local libraries, leisure facilities, County Hall and all affected Primary and Secondary schools. Respondents had the option to submit their completed questionnaire directly to ORS via a freepost mailing address or to the Council.

3.5 This chapter details the methodologies and responses to all the consultation questionnaires. Questionnaires can provide considerable information about the views of particular groups and individuals at local levels. However, it is important to note that it was open to any interested stakeholders, individuals or organisations both within and outside of Powys regardless of their affiliation with, or usage of education services.

3.6 The results, therefore, are not representative of any particular population, including that of the Council's authority area. However, within the context of the consultation it provides an appropriate and important opportunity for the public to provide their opinions.

3.7 Of course, it is for Powys County Council to determine what appropriate emphasis to be given to different elements within the consultation, while bearing in mind that the outcome of the consultation

should not be just a 'numbers' game. In other words, the question is not '*Which findings should determine our decision?*' but '*What evidence or considerations have emerged that should influence our deliberations about the future reorganisation of schools in mid and south Powys?*'

Questionnaire responses

- 3.8 All questionnaire responses in which at least one of the consultation questions was answered and received by ORS by the close of the consultation period were included in the analysis. One additional week was given for submissions sent by second class post or returned directly to PCC contact points.
- 3.9 A total of 996 questionnaires were analysed, of which 182 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 735 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 79 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.
- 3.10 Of the total number of questionnaires received, 4 indicated that they were representing organisations or groups.

Findings of the Main Consultation Questionnaire

Respondent Profile of Consultation Questionnaire

- 3.11 Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the respondent profile from the 178 individuals who responded either online or by post to the main open consultation questionnaire. Figures for Powys's population are also outlined for comparison.
- 3.12 Figures for Powys's population are based on ONS 2015 Mid-Year Population Estimates (for age and gender) and Census 2011 data (for ethnicity and disability). ORS prefers to report ONS Mid-Year population estimates (over Census 2011 data) where possible as we believe this more accurately reflects the current state of the population. Where this is not possible due to data being unavailable (e.g. for ethnicity and disability data), Census 2011 data has been used as an alternative. As a result, the total number of occurrences in the population across the two data sources will not match exactly.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics for the main consultation questionnaire and Powys's population
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic	All Responses		Powys population 16+		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	Number of occurrences	% of population	
BY AGE	Under 25	3	2.2%	12,372	11.1%
	25 to 34	20	14.9%	12,230	11.0%
	35 to 44	52	38.8%	13,538	12.2%
	45 to 54	48	35.8%	19,506	17.6%
	55 to 64	9	6.7%	19,238	17.3%
	65 to 84	1	0.7%	29,611	26.7%
	85+	1	0.7%	4,547	4.1%
	Total valid responses	134	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	44	-	-	-	
BY GENDER	Male	29	20.7%	54,573	49.1%
	Female	111	79.3%	56,469	50.9%
	Total valid responses	140	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	38	-	-	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	135	98.5%	108,539	98.6%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic	1	0.7%	453	0.4%
	Asian or Asian British	0	0.0%	890	0.8%
	Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	1	0.7%	109	0.1%
	Any other ethnic group	0	0.0%	92	0.1%
	Total valid responses	137	100%	110,083	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	41	-	-	-	
BY DISABILITY	With disability	6	4.4%	26,357	24.3%
	No disability	131	95.6%	81,971	75.7%
	Total valid responses	137	100.0%	108,328	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	38	-	-	-

Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL, NURSERY OR COLLEGE IN POWYS	Has children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	124	86.1%
	No children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	20	13.9%
	Total valid responses	144	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	34	-
BY CHILDREN ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Has children entitled to free school meals	7	6.1%
	No children entitled to free school meals	108	93.9%
	Total valid responses	115	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	20	-
	<i>Not known</i>	43	-
BY CHILDREN HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	Has children with SEN	14	12.1%
	No children with SEN	102	87.9%
	Total valid responses	116	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	20	-
	<i>Not known</i>	42	-
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY RECEIVING A WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION	Has children receiving Welsh medium education	27	22.9%
	No children receiving Welsh medium education	91	77.1%
	Total valid responses	118	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	20	-
	<i>Not known</i>	40	-
BY WELSH SPEAKER	Speaks Welsh	46	34.3%
	Does not speak Welsh	88	65.7%
	Total valid responses	134	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	44	-

Interpretation of the Data

- 3.13 The results for the Consultation Questionnaire are presented in a largely graphical format. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of respondents making relevant responses.
- 3.14 Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with a ‘traffic light’ system in which green shades represent positive responses, red shades represent negative responses, and beige and purple shades represent neither positive nor negative responses. The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the ‘extremes’, for example, strongly agree or strongly disagree.
- 3.15 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the volume an asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half of one per cent. In some cases figures of 2% or below have been excluded from graphs to avoid potential identification of individual responses.

- 3.16 The number of valid responses recorded for each question (base size), are reported throughout. As not all respondents answered every question, these base sizes vary between questions. Every response to every question has been taken into consideration.
- 3.17 Where there are low response rates among stakeholder groups for particular questions, results have been displayed as a number, rather than (or in addition to) a percentage in the text.
- 3.18 All open-ended responses have been classified using a standardised code frame. This approach helps ensure consistency when classifying different comments and the resulting codes represent themes that have been repeatedly mentioned in a more quantifiable manner. The various comments provided by a respondent to any single text question may present a number of different points or arguments, therefore in many cases the overall number of coded comments counted in a particular question can actually be higher than the number of people responding to that open-ended question.

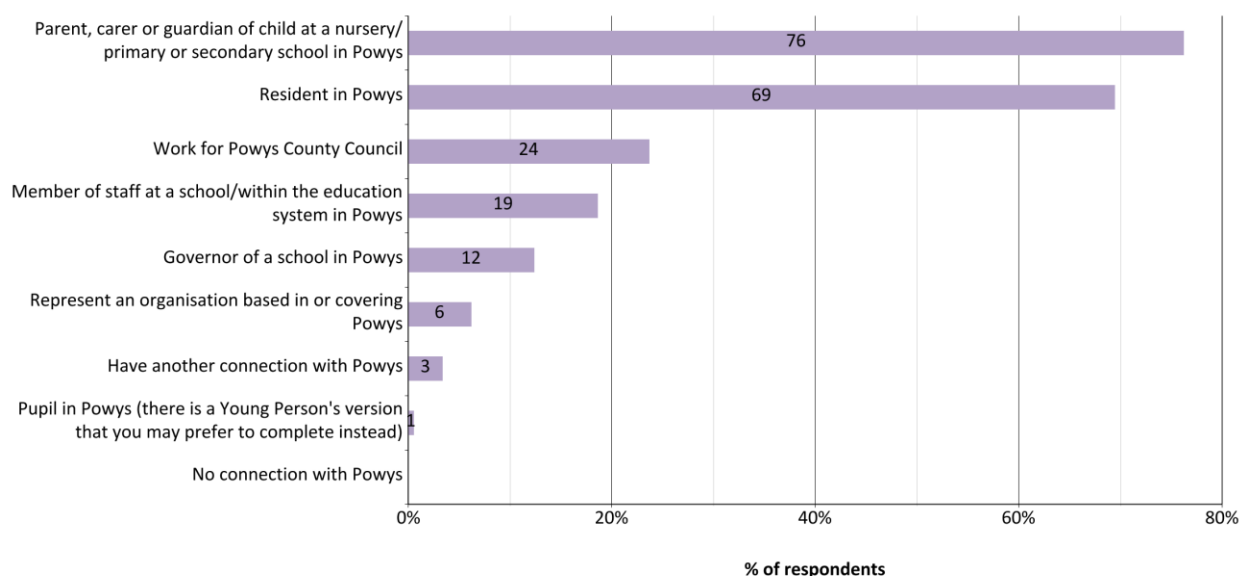
Further analysis by sub-groups

- 3.19 For some questions, further analysis revealed differences in responses by key demographic and other variables e.g. respondents' local authority. Such analysis highlights how sub-groups within key variables (e.g. within 'age', those aged 35-44) provided different answers compared to the overall average.
- 3.20 Where results are particularly higher or particularly lower for certain sub-groups, in comparison to the overall score they are further discussed in commentary text.

English Medium Education

Which of the following apply to you?

Figure 1: Types of respondent



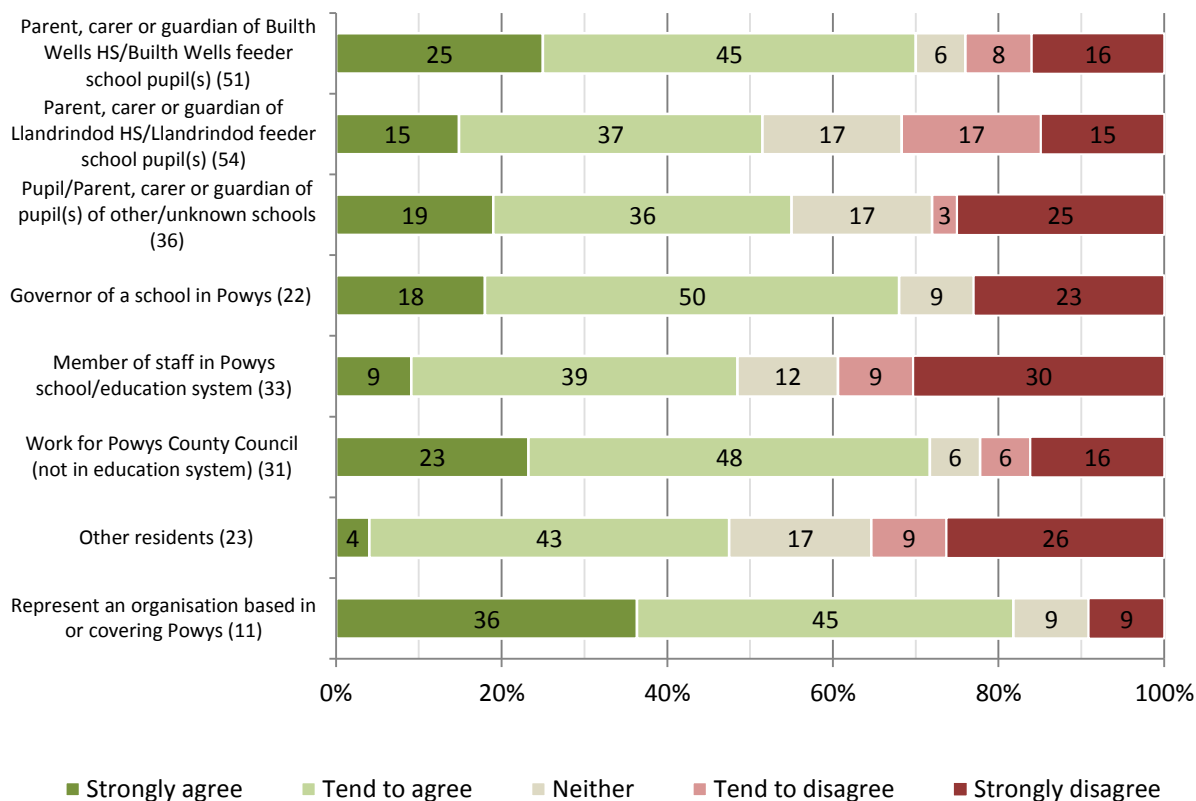
Base: All Individuals (177)

- 3.21 Around three quarters (76%) of those responding the main consultation questionnaire are parents, carers or guardians of a child or children at nurseries/primary or secondary schools in Powys. A similar proportion of respondents are residents who are living in Powys.

- 3.22 Just less than a quarter (24%) of respondents work for Powys County Council, while around a fifth (19%) are members of staff at a school or within the education system in Powys. Around 1 in 10 respondents are governors of a school in Powys (12%), while less than 1 in 10 represents an organisation based in or covering Powys (6%) or have another connection with Powys not covered by the above list (3%). Only 1 pupil in Powys (1%) chose to complete the main version of the consultation questionnaire, rather than the Young Persons' or Primary School questionnaires.
- 3.23 Because of the differences in the proportions of these stakeholder groups, results have not been combined to produce "overall" findings. It is not appropriate to report overall figures because the stakeholder groups with a greater number of responses will have a larger influence on the overall average, and potentially conceal the difference of opinions between stakeholder groups. Consequently, the results to the closed questions of the questionnaire overleaf have been reported separately by stakeholder groups.
- 3.24 It is also not appropriate to report results quantitatively where the rate of response is especially low. Consequently, where this appears and is appropriate to do so, some stakeholders have been grouped together.
- 3.25 Views from parents, carers or guardians of children vary depending on whether their child or children attend Builth Wells High School/associated feeder primary school, Llandrindod High School/associated feeder school or an 'other/unknown' school, and so these results have been displayed separately.
- 3.26 Almost all school age respondents responded to the separate Young Persons' consultation questionnaire. The single Powys school pupil who responded to the main consultation was from an unknown school, and so their responses have been grouped with parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other/unknown schools.
- 3.27 Those who reported that they were residents in Powys, and were not members of any other stakeholder group, have been combined with those who have 'no connection with Powys's and those who 'have another connection with Powys's into the group 'Other residents'.

In the context of the problems outlined above, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 2: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues.



Base:

All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.28 Respondents were given a short description of the Council’s case for change, including an explanation of general and post-16 specific issues that the Council had identified in Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. These issues included falling pupil numbers, leading to empty school places in both schools; poor quality of buildings with costly maintenance at Llandrindod; quality of education and Estyn monitoring at both schools, and considerations around the financial situation of Llandrindod High School. Post-16 issues included a narrow choice of subjects in the 6th forms at both schools; learners travelling between sites during the school day to access subjects; a reduction in the Welsh Government grant funding post-16 provision and learners going outside the county for their education, providing less money to fund post-16 subjects.

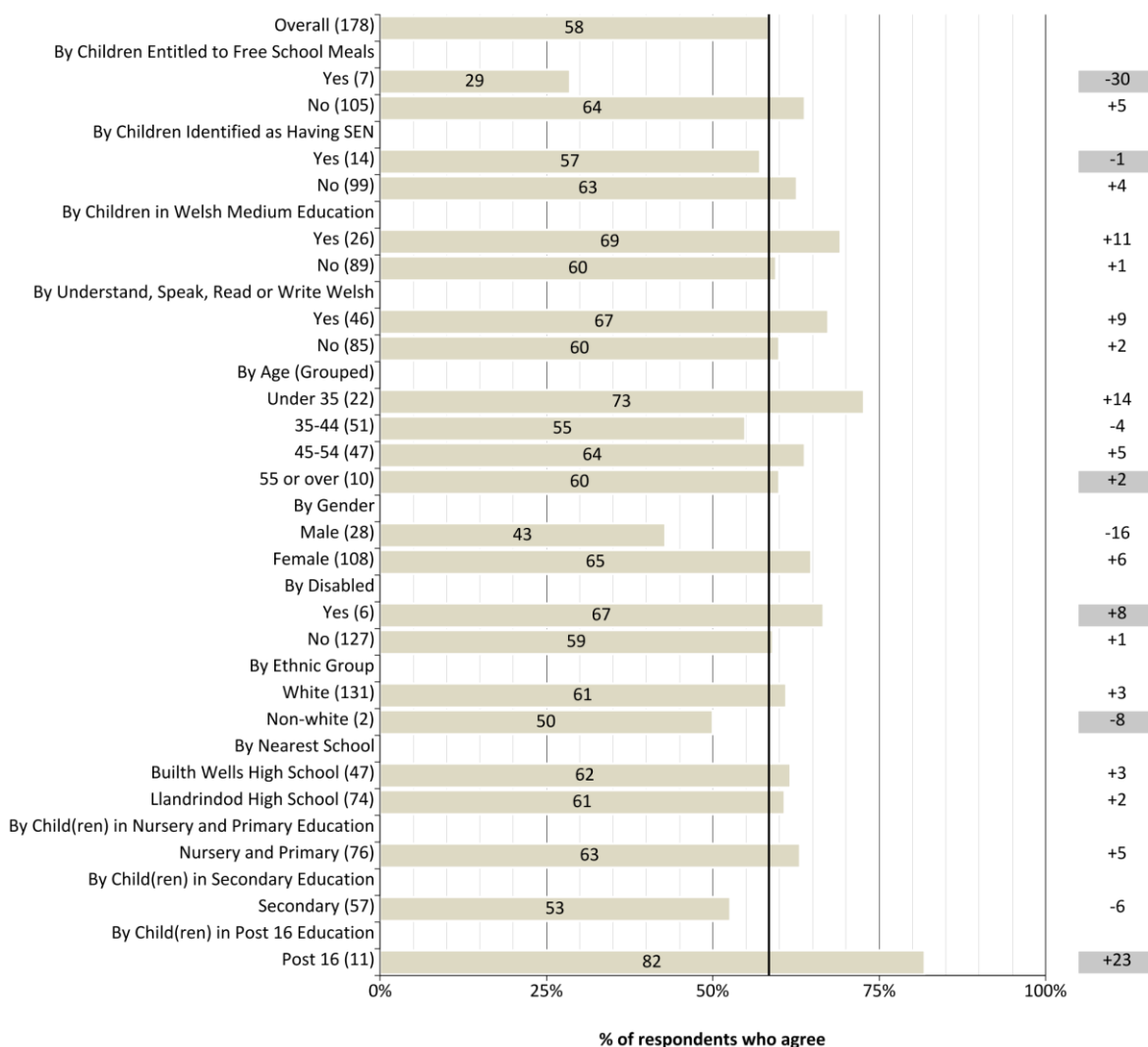
3.29 Having been given this explanation, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified.

3.30 More than two thirds of respondents who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (81% [9/11]), respondents who are parents, carers or guardians of Builth Wells High School or Builth Wells feeder primary school pupils (71%), those who work for Powys County Council (not in the education system) (71%), and governors of Powys schools (68%) agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues. More than half of respondents who are parents, carers or guardians of

Llandrindod High School or Llandrindod feeder primary school pupils (52%) or of other/unknown schools (56%) also agreed with this.

3.31 However, just less than half of members of staff at a school or within the education system in Powys (48%) and ‘other residents’ not covered by other stakeholder groups (48%) agreed that the Council is right to make changes.

Figure 3: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues. (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

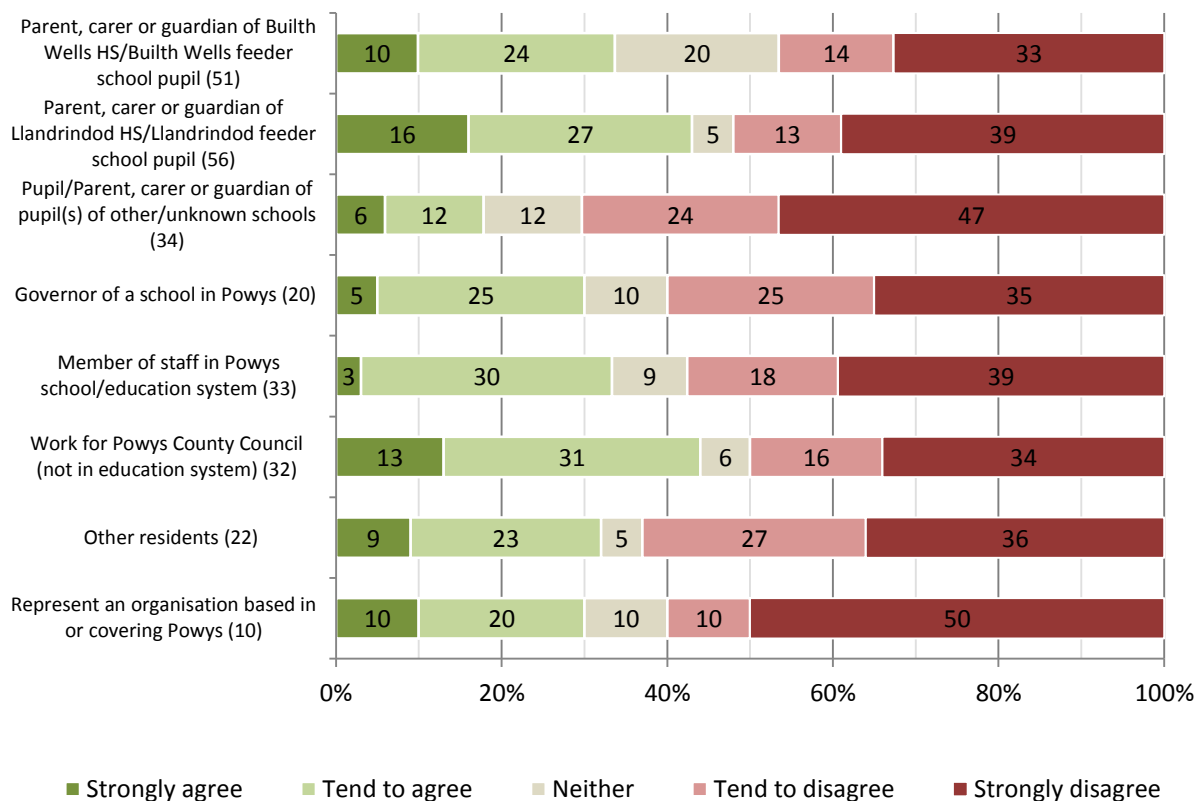
3.32 This chart shows how the responses for this score vary across different sub-groups of respondents for those who agree. Results highlighted in grey should be treated with caution, due to a low number of responses from that particular sub-group.

3.33 Respondents aged under 35 (73%) and parents, carers or guardians of children in Welsh medium education (69%) and those who can understand, speak, read or write Welsh (67%) are particularly likely to agree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in English medium education.

3.34 Male respondents (43%) are particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites?

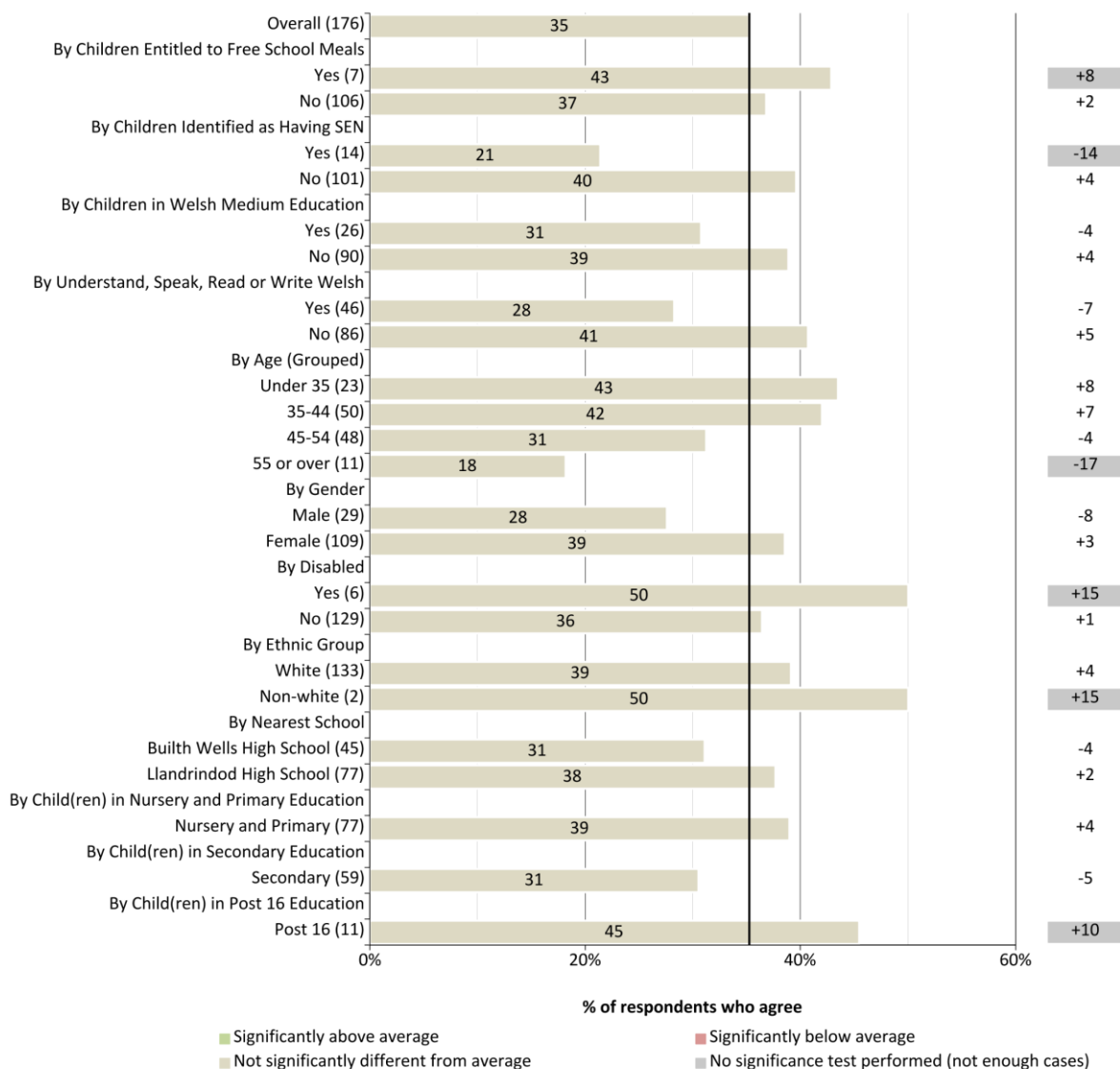
Figure 4: Support and opposition for the proposal



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.35 Respondents were then provided with a description of the Council's proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, as well as an explanation of how the Council believed the proposal would address the issues identified in the previous section.
- 3.36 Support for the specific proposal was lower generally than the level of agreement that the Council is right to make changes. The highest levels of support were found among those who work for Powys County Council (not in the education system) (44%), and parents, carers or guardians of Llandrindod High School/associated feeder school pupils (43%), while a third of parents, carers or guardians of Builth Wells High School/feeder school pupils (33%) and members of staff in a school or within the education system in Powys (33%) agreed. Just less than a third of other residents (32%), school governors in Powys (30%), and those who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (30% [3/10]) agreed with the proposal.
- 3.37 Less than a fifth (18%) of pupils and parents of pupils of other/unknown schools agreed with the proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools.

Figure 5: Support and opposition for the proposal (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.38 Respondents aged under 35 (43%) or 35-44 (42%) are particularly likely to agree with the proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. Respondents with children entitled to free school meals (43%) are also particularly likely to agree.
- 3.39 Respondents who are closer to Builth Wells HS (31%), and those with children in Welsh Medium Education (31%) or Secondary Education (31%) are particularly less likely to agree, as well as those who understand, speak, read or write Welsh (28%) and those with children identified as having Special Education Needs (21%).
- 3.40 Respondents aged 45-54 (31%) or 55 or over (18%) are also particularly less likely to agree.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal, please explain why.

- 3.41 Respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposal were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.42 All responses provided to the open-ended questions have been read, and then classified (coded) using a standardised approach (code frame). This approach helps ensure consistency when classifying different comments and the resulting codes represent themes that have been repeatedly mentioned in a quantifiable manner. The responses provided by a resident to a single text question may present a number of different points or arguments, therefore in many cases the overall number of coded comments counted in a particular question can actually be higher than the number of people responding to that open-ended question (i.e. each resident may have made comments about two or more different topics).
- 3.43 Of the 79 respondents who gave a response to this question, 283 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 6: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	35%	28
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	33%	26
Proposals will not work/disagree that proposals will improve standards	30%	24
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	23%	18
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	22%	17
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	14%	11
Proposals will lead to too much strain/workload for one leadership team/head teacher	14%	11
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	11%	9
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	10%	8
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	9%	7
Merging schools/staff structures will only cause confusion	9%	7
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	8%	6
Happy for the Sixth Form to be on one site	6%	5
Proposals will cost money that the council doesn't have/won't have in the future	6%	5
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	5%	4
Llandrindod is in good condition/doesn't need any changes or improvements (contrary to what the proposal says)	5%	4
Proposals will cause teachers/head teachers/staff to lose their jobs/happy with/need to maintain current provision of staff	4%	3
Proposals will lead to an increase in bullying/violence/arguments between pupils	4%	3
Proposals will lead to less new families moving to the area	4%	3
Proposals will result in less students attending Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools/pupils will switch schools/be home-schooled instead	4%	3
Llandrindod is a better site for the super school due to better land/facilities, etc.	4%	3
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negatively impact pupils' social lives	3%	2
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after school activities/extra-curricular activities	3%	2

Proposals will cause issues for parents/negatively affect parents (non-specific)	1%	1
Proposals will negatively affect Sixth Formers/will lead to less options for Post-16	1%	1
Concerns about a new uniform/don't want a new uniform/new uniforms will cost money	1%	1
Disagree with claims about Llandrindod's finances/Builth Wells is the school with the budget deficit	1%	1
Proposals will have a negative effect on the environment/extra travelling will be detrimental to the environment	1%	1
Other	59%	47

3.44 Of those who responded to this question, over a third (35%) made comments generally disagreeing with the proposals or expressing a desire to maintain the current provision of schools. Typical examples of such comments are below:

Best leave the two schools alone and put the money from merging them into each school itself.

What a waste of money building a brand new school.

I'm totally against any changes being made and think that Powys should leave our schools alone, give the Head teachers the money and resources to employ better teachers or train our current ones up to a better standard.

3.45 33% of respondents said that they the 'proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal'. Typically, respondents compared the savings unfavourably against the negative impact of making the changes to children's education and wellbeing.

The saving of £133,000 is nothing compared to the disruption this would cause to our children's education and subsequently our communities.

The amount saved hardly justifies such a major upheaval.

The saving of £133,000 from the total Powys education budget is a minimal saving, and provides no guarantee of improved standards, better teaching quality or increased choice for post 16 education.

3.46 30% of respondents said that the proposals either would not work or that they would not improve standards.

The merging of two schools is only going to make organisation more problematic and is hardly likely to lead to improvements. It makes more sense for each school to concentrate on their own pupils to improve standards.

There is no evidence that this proposal will increase the standard of education [...] How do PCC think they are helping anyone with the current disruption to education and the doubts they are giving pupils about [their] future education?

I can't actually see how improvements are going to be made.

Welsh Medium Education

- 3.1 As the proposed changes to Welsh medium education would affect stakeholders from across South/Mid Powys, respondents to the main Brecon and Gwernyfed consultation and Builth and Llandrindod consultation were asked identical questions regarding the proposals for Welsh medium education. Because of this, ORS has merged responses to questions regarding the Welsh medium proposals from both questionnaires into one all-inclusive dataset.
- 3.2 There is an additional break down by parents, carers and guardians of pupils who attend Builth Wells High School/associated feeder school, Llandrindod High School/associated feeder school, and pupils and parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other/unknown schools (not including Brecon High School/feeder schools or Gwernyfed High School/feeder schools).
- 3.3 Table 2 below provides a breakdown of the respondent profile from the 796 individuals who responded either online or by post to the main open consultation questionnaire. Figures for Powys's population are also outlined for comparison.

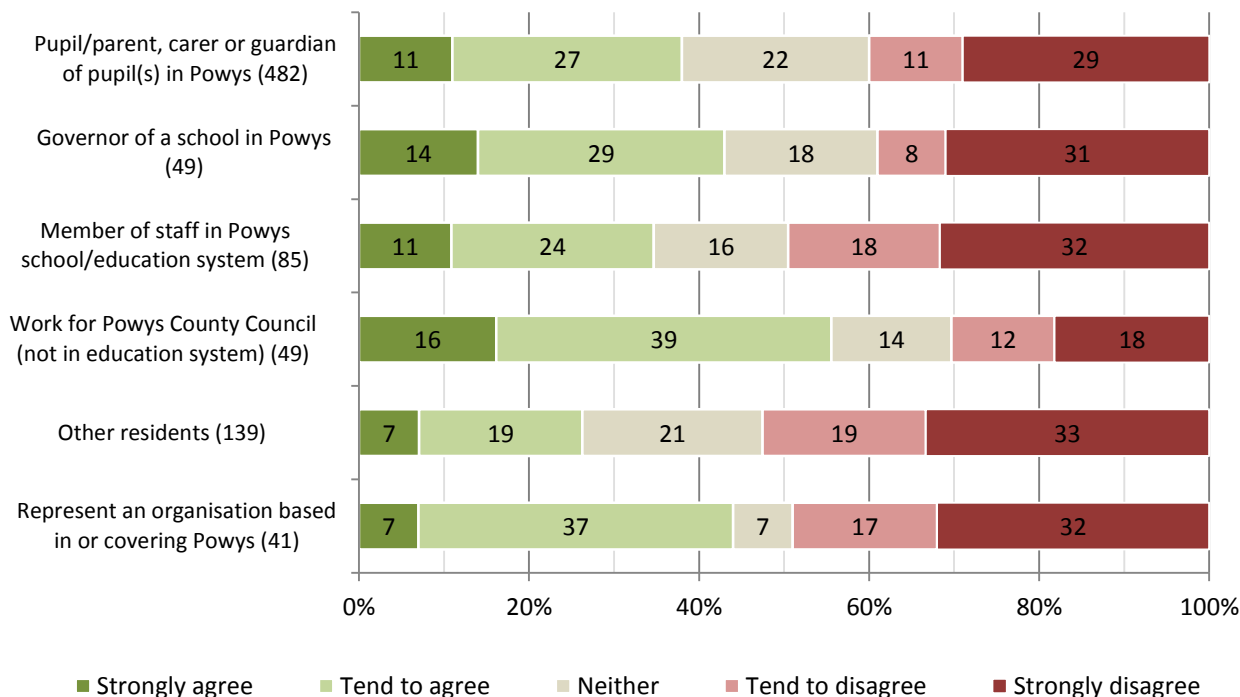
Table 2: Socio-demographic characteristics for the main consultation questionnaire and Powys's population
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic	All Responses		Powys population 16+		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	Number of occurrences	% of population	
BY AGE	Under 25	30	4.9%	12,372	11.1%
	25 to 34	76	12.4%	12,230	11.0%
	35 to 44	197	32.1%	13,538	12.2%
	45 to 54	207	33.7%	19,506	17.6%
	55 to 64	67	10.9%	19,238	17.3%
	65 to 84	36	5.9%	29,611	26.7%
	85+	1	0.2%	4,547	4.1%
	Total valid responses	614	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	182	-	-	-	
BY GENDER	Male	155	24.9%	54,573	49.1%
	Female	468	75.1%	56,469	50.9%
	Total valid responses	623	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	173	-	-	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	589	98.0%	108,539	98.6%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic	6	1.0%	453	0.4%
	Asian or Asian British	4	0.7%	890	0.8%
	Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	1	0.2%	109	0.1%
	Any other ethnic group	1	0.2%	92	0.1%
	Total valid responses	601	100%	110,083	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	195	-	-	-	
BY DISABILITY	With disability	22	3.6%	26,357	24.3%
	No disability	596	96.4%	81,971	75.7%
	Total valid responses	618	100.0%	108,328	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	178	-	-	-

Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL, NURSERY OR COLLEGE IN POWYS	Has children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	478	75.6%
	No children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	154	24.4%
	Total valid responses	632	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	164	-
BY CHILDREN ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Has children entitled to free school meals	22	4.9%
	No children entitled to free school meals	426	95.1%
	Total valid responses	448	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	-
	<i>Not known</i>	195	-
BY CHILDREN HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	Has children with SEN	41	9.1%
	No children with SEN	410	90.9%
	Total valid responses	451	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	
	<i>Not known</i>	192	-
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY RECEIVING A WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION	Has children receiving Welsh medium education	72	15.9%
	No children receiving Welsh medium education	380	84.1%
	Total valid responses	452	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	
	<i>Not known</i>	191	-
BY WELSH SPEAKER	Speaks Welsh	210	35.5%
	Does not speak Welsh	382	64.5%
	Total valid responses	592	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	204	

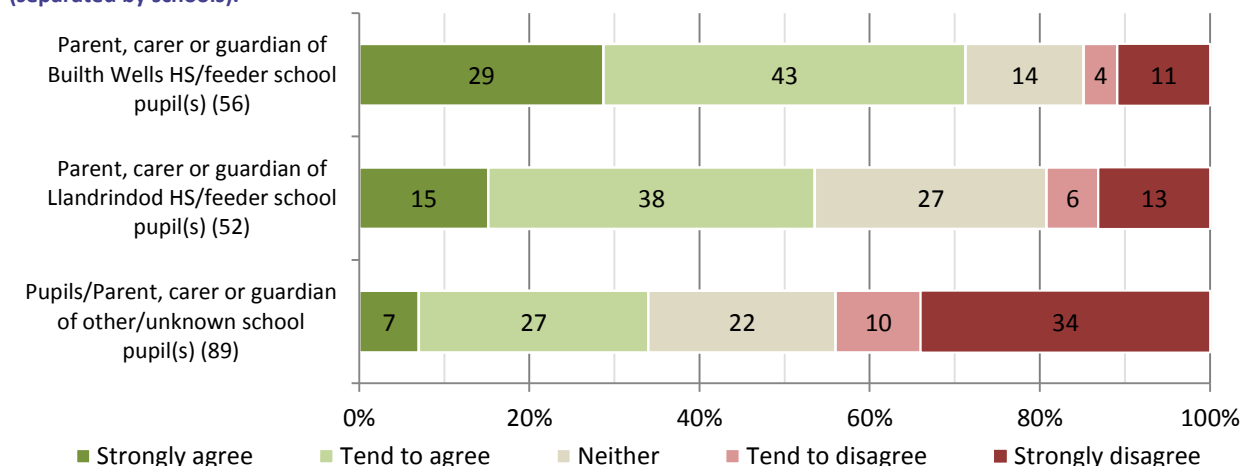
In the context of the problems outlined above, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 7: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 8: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues (separated by schools).

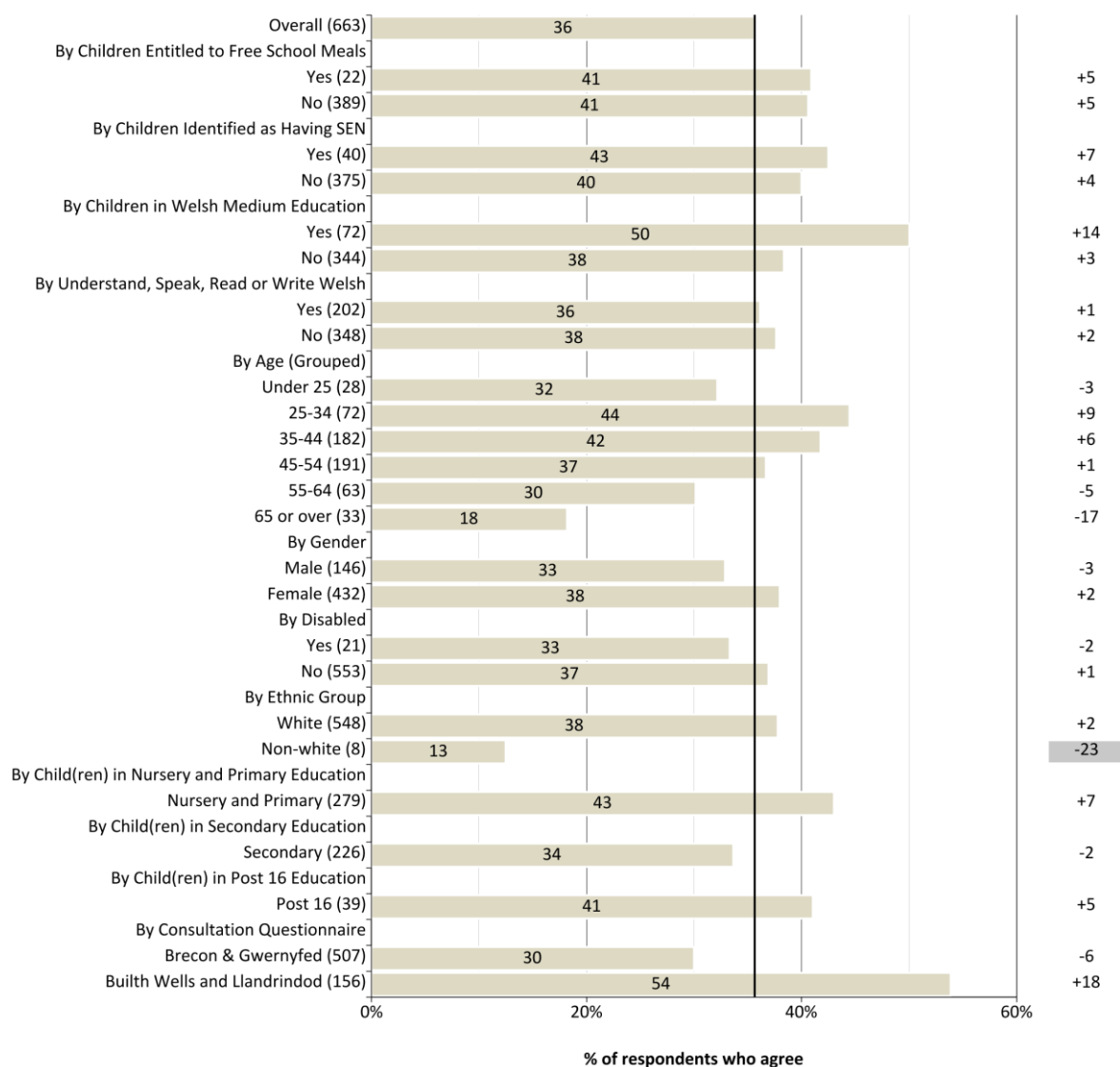


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.4 More than half of respondents (55%) who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in Welsh education. Around 4 in 10 Governors of schools in Powys (43%) and parents/carers/guardians of pupils in Powys (38%) agreed, while around a third of members of staff in Powys school/education system agreed (34%).

- 3.5 While 38% of parents, carers and guardians of pupils in Powys agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified in Welsh education overall, around 7 in 10 parents, carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils (71%) specifically agreed. Over half (54%) of parents, carers and guardians of Llandrindod HS/feeder school pupils also agreed.
- 3.6 Around half or more of other residents in Powys (53%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (49%) and members of staff in Powys school/education system (49%) disagreed with this, as well as more than 4 two fifths (44%) of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of other/unknown school pupils.

Figure 9: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues (Demographic subgroup analysis).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.7 This chart shows how the responses for this score vary across different sub-groups of respondents for those who *agreed*. Results highlighted in grey should be treated with caution, due to a low number of responses from that particular sub-group.
- 3.8 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (54%) and respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (50%) are particularly likely to have agreed that the Council is

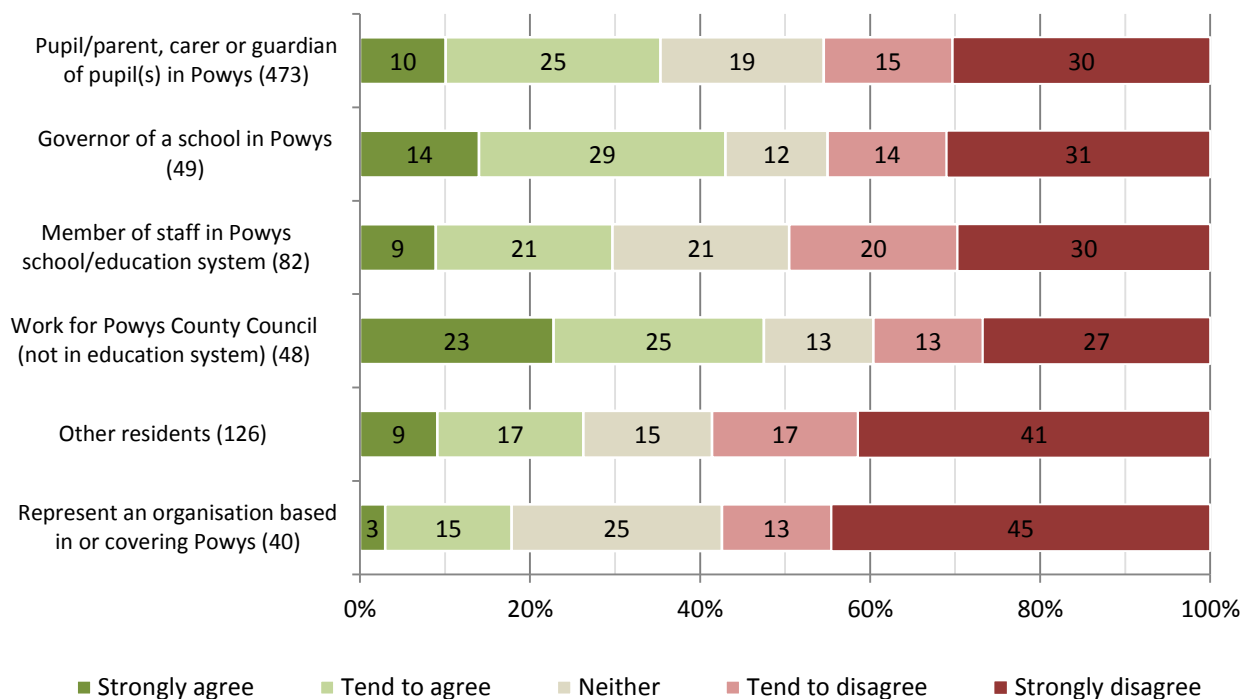
right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in Welsh education. Respondents aged 25-34 (44%), 35-44 (42%) and respondents with children in Nursery and Primary Education (43%) were also particularly likely to agree.

3.9 Respondents aged 65 or over (18%) were particularly less likely to agree, as were respondents to the Brecon & Gwernyfed Consultation Questionnaire (30%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

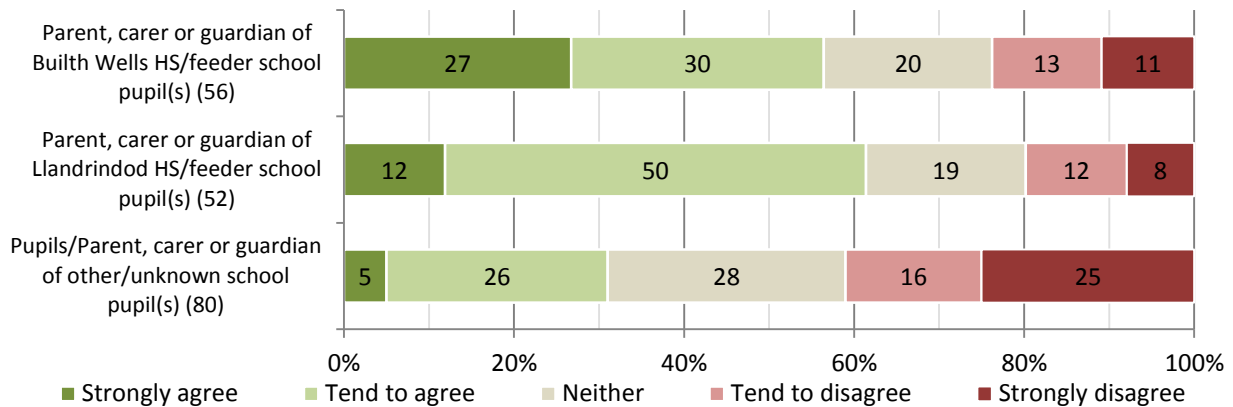
To consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys to enable a wider range of subjects and a better learning and linguistic experience.

Figure 10: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

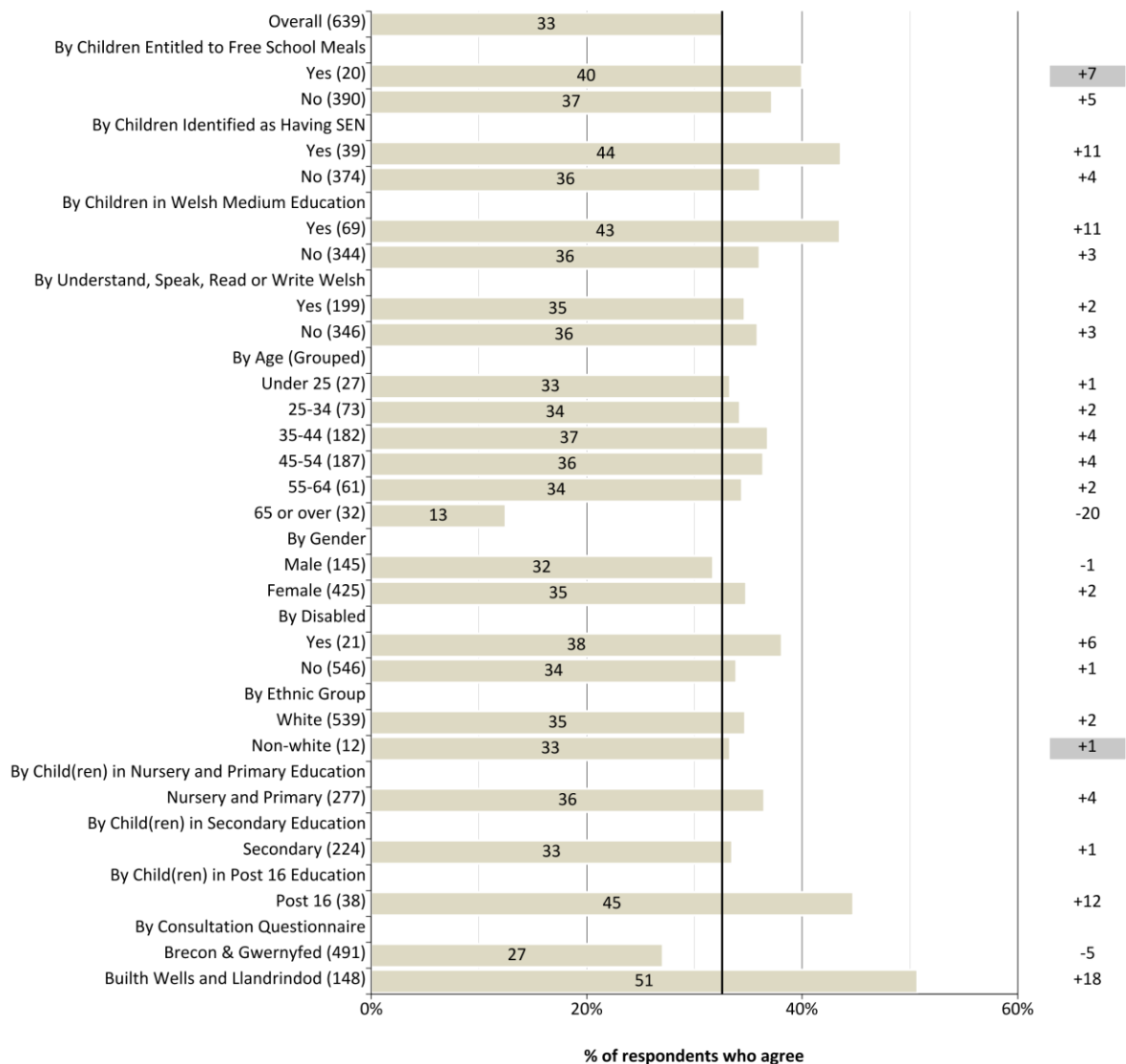
Figure 11: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys (separated by schools).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.10 Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (48%) and around 4 in 10 Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream in South/Mid Powys.
- 3.11 More than a third (35%) of pupils, parents, carers or guardians of Powys pupils also agreed with this proposal. However, around three fifths of parents, carers and guardians of Llandrindod HS/feeder school pupils (62%) and Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils (57%) agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream.
- 3.12 Three fifths of other residents in Powys (59%), and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (58%), while around half of members of staff in Powys school/education system (50%) disagreed, as well as two fifths (41%) of pupils and parents, carers and guardians of other or unknown school pupils disagreed.

Figure 12: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys (Demographic subgroup analysis).



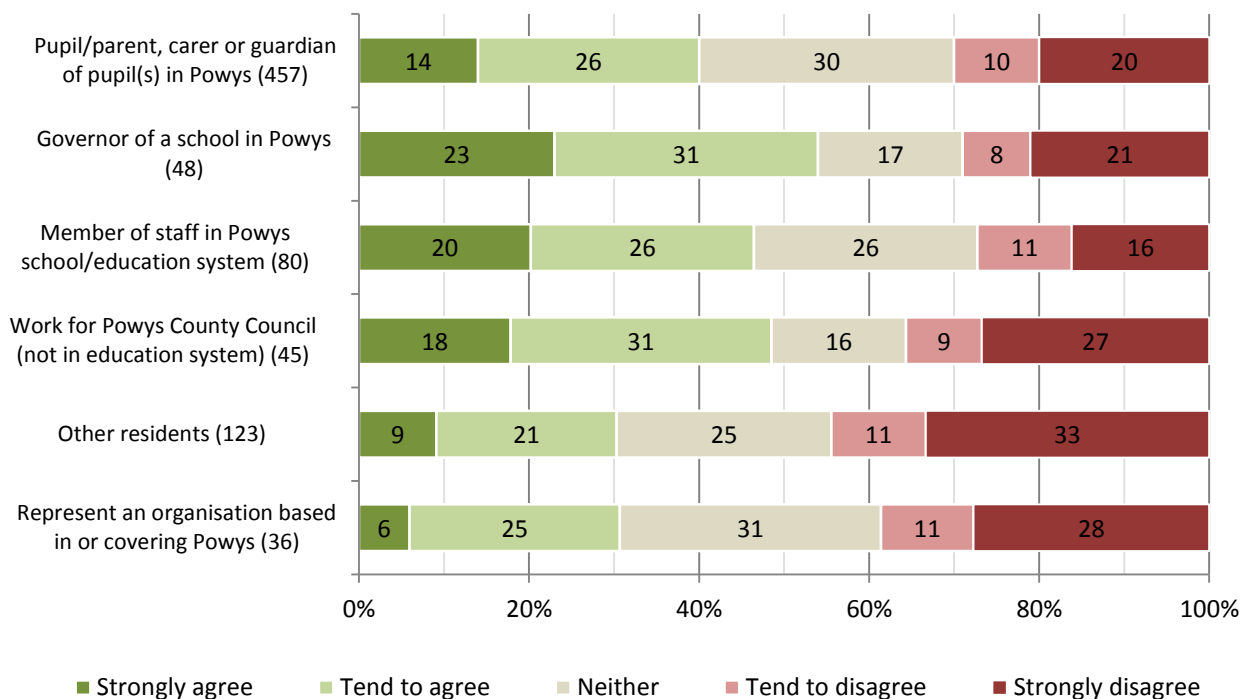
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.13 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (51%) and respondents with children in Post 16 Education (45%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys. Respondents with children identified as having Special Educational Needs (44%) or with children in Welsh Medium education (43%) were also particularly likely to agree.
- 3.14 Respondents aged 65 or over (13%) were particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

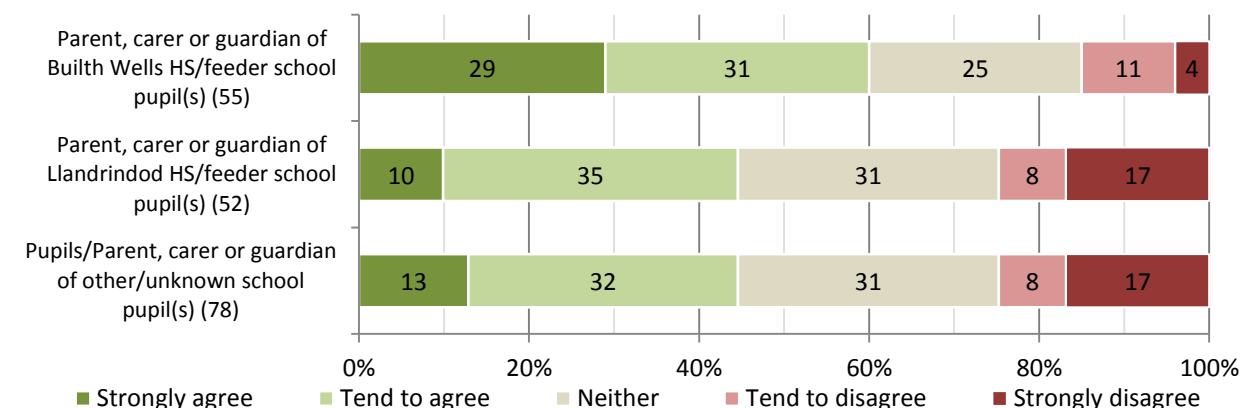
To provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.

Figure 13: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 14: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school (separated by schools).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

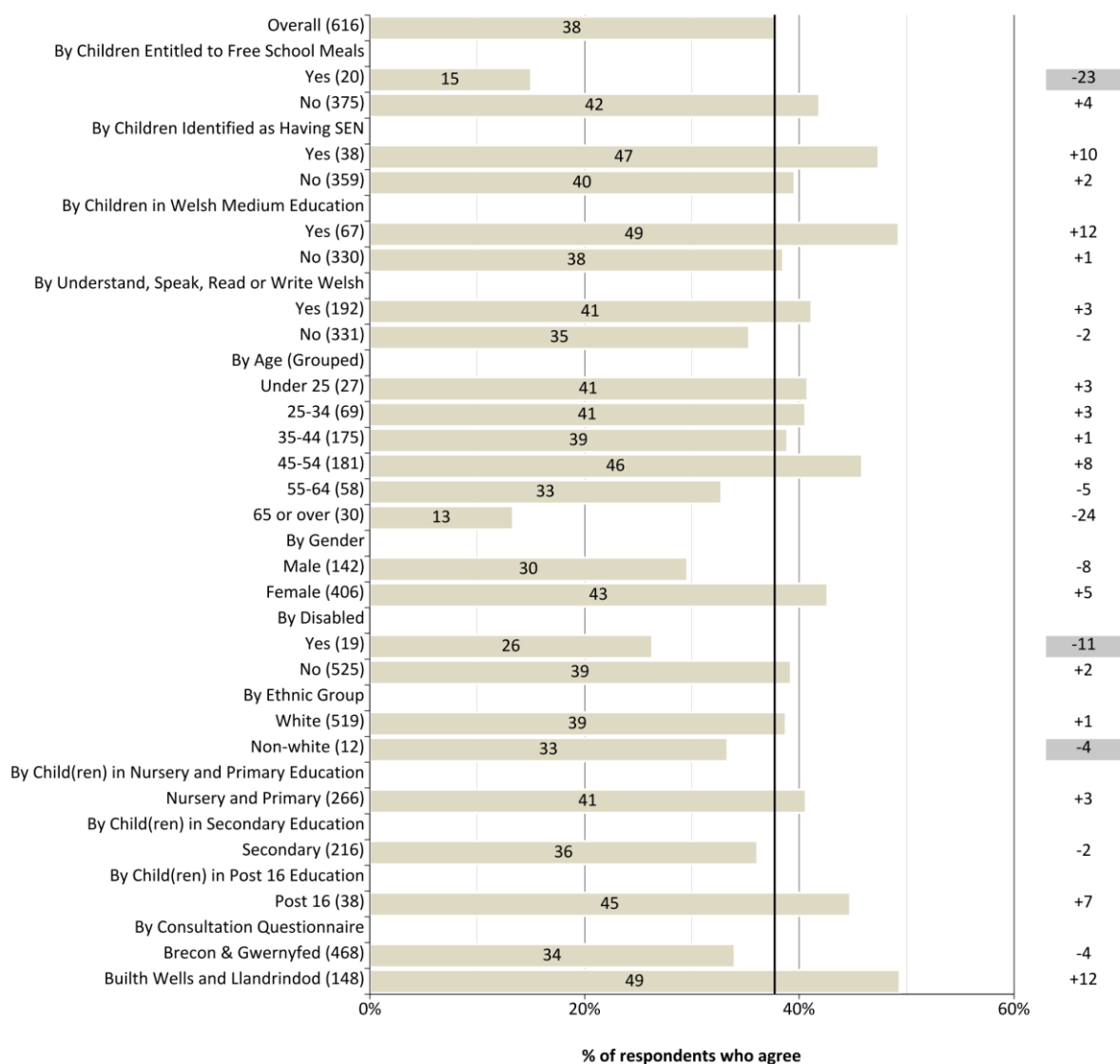
3.16 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (54%) agreed with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C dual stream school. Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (49%) and members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) also agreed.

3.17 Three fifths of parents/carers/guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils (60%) agreed with this element of the proposal compared to over two fifths of those with children in Llandrindod HS/feeder

schools (44%) and pupils and parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other or unknown schools (45%).

- 3.18 Other residents (45%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (39%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (36%) were particularly likely to disagree with this element of the proposal.

Figure 15: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school (Demographic subgroup analysis).



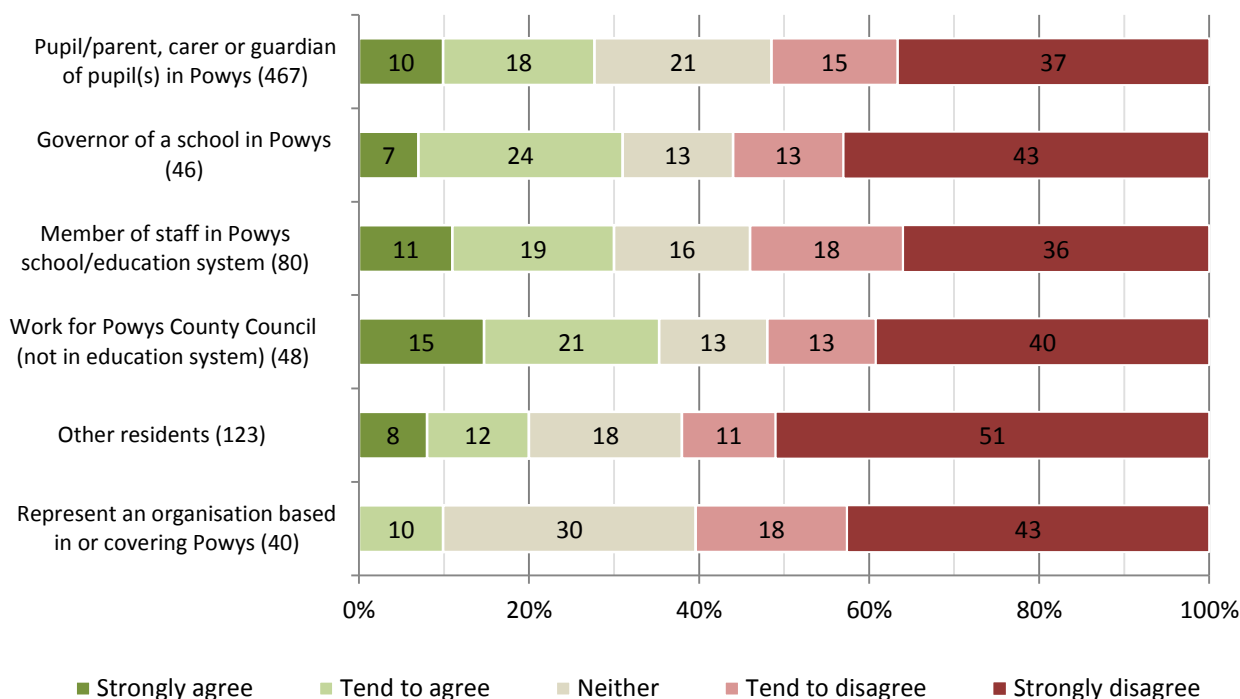
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.19 Again, respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (49%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school. Respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (49%) or identified as having Special Educational Needs (47%) were also particularly likely to agree, along with respondents aged 45-54 (46%) and respondents with children in Post 16 Education (45%).
- 3.20 Male respondents (30%) and respondents aged 65 or over (13%) were particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

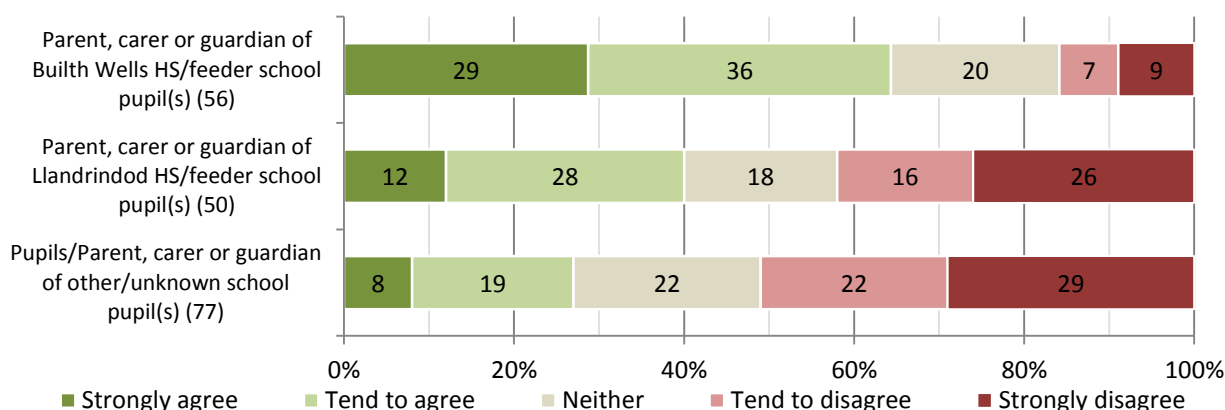
To locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school due to its central location and enhanced Welsh medium provision.

Figure 16: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 17: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (separated by school).

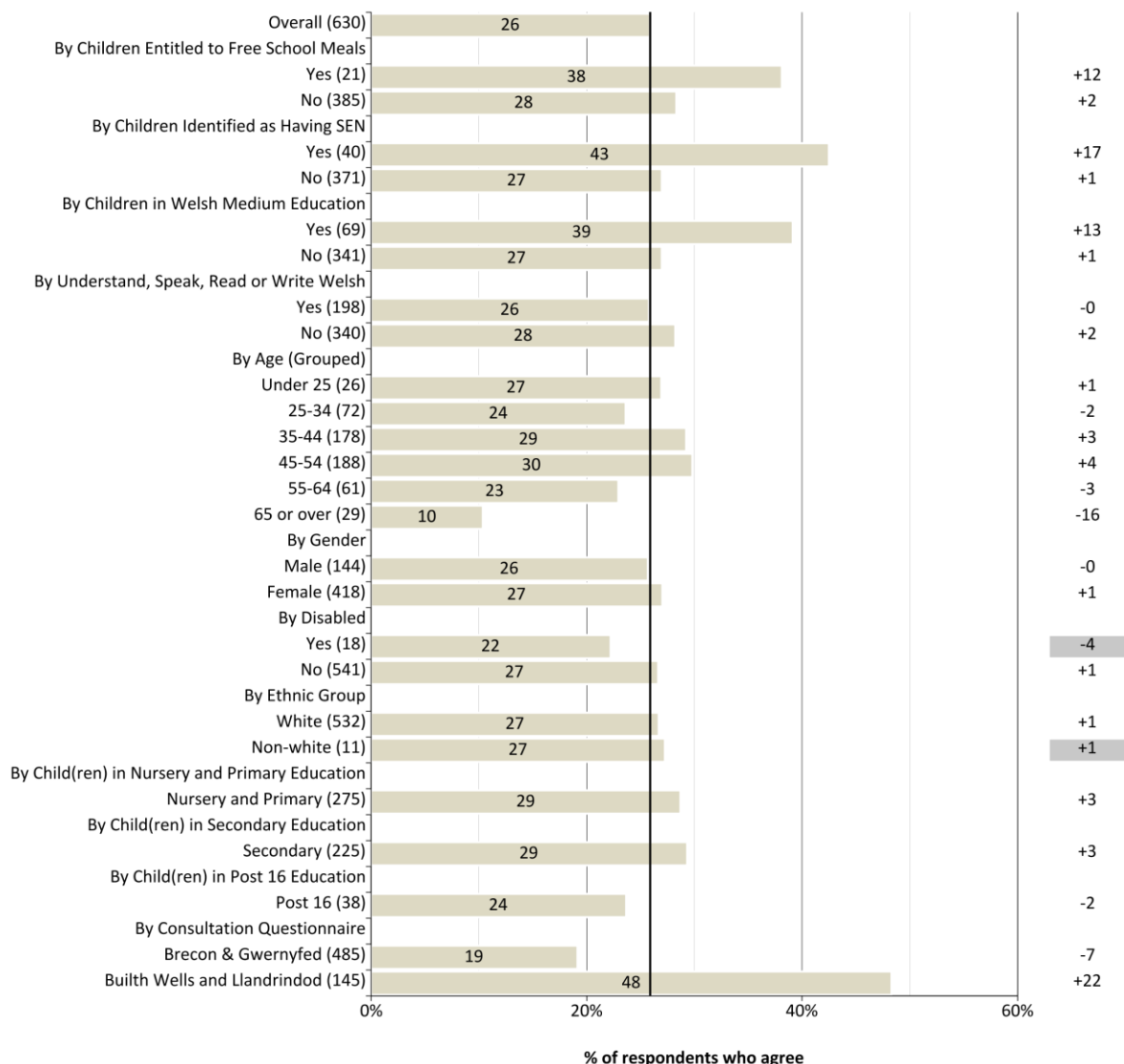


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.21 Around a third of employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (35%), members of staff in the Powys schools/education system (30%) and Governors of schools in Powys (30%) agreed with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school.

- 3.22 Over three fifths (64%) of parents, carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils agreed with the proposal. While two fifths (40%) of those with children in Llandrindod HS/feeder agreed, just over two fifths (42%) disagreed.
- 3.23 Other residents (62%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (60%) and Governors of schools in Powys (57%) were particularly likely to disagree. Over half (51%) of pupils/parents/carers/guardians of other or unknown school pupils also disagreed.

Figure 18: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (Demographic subgroup analysis).



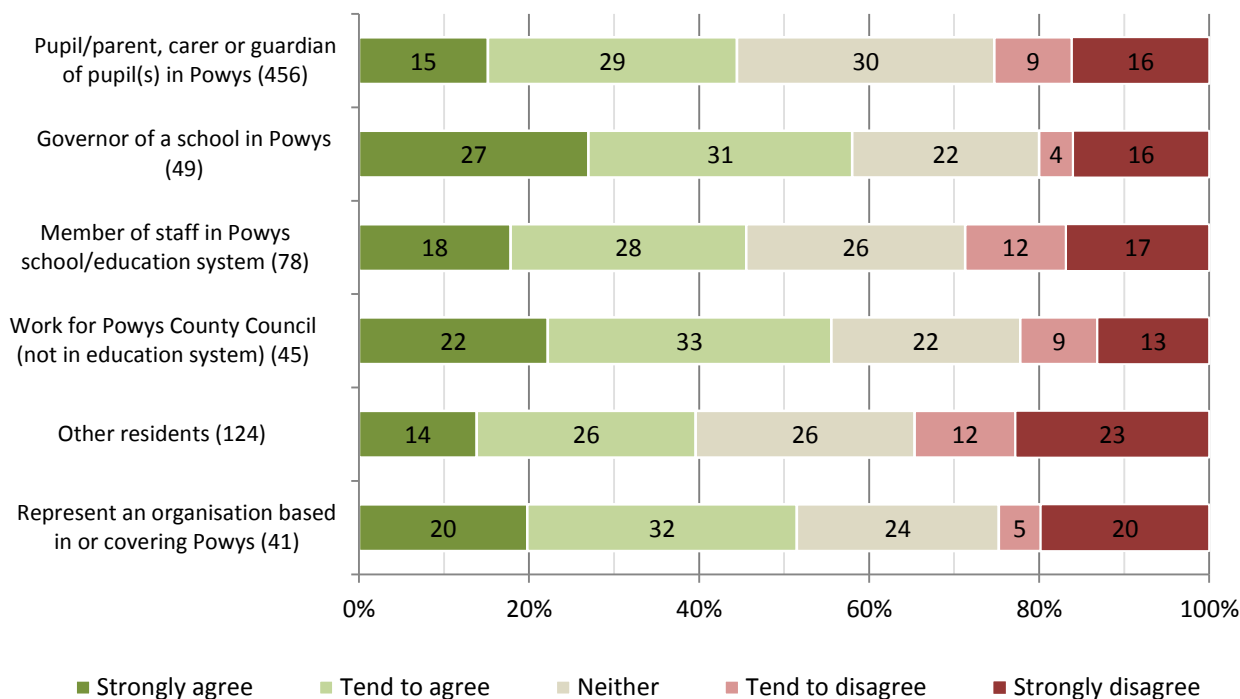
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.24 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (48%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school. Respondents with children identified as having Special Education Needs (43%), in Welsh Medium Education (39%) or entitled to free school meals (38%) were also particularly like to agree.
- 3.25 Respondents aged 65 or over (10%) and those who responded to the Brecon & Gwernyfed Consultation Questionnaire (19%) were particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

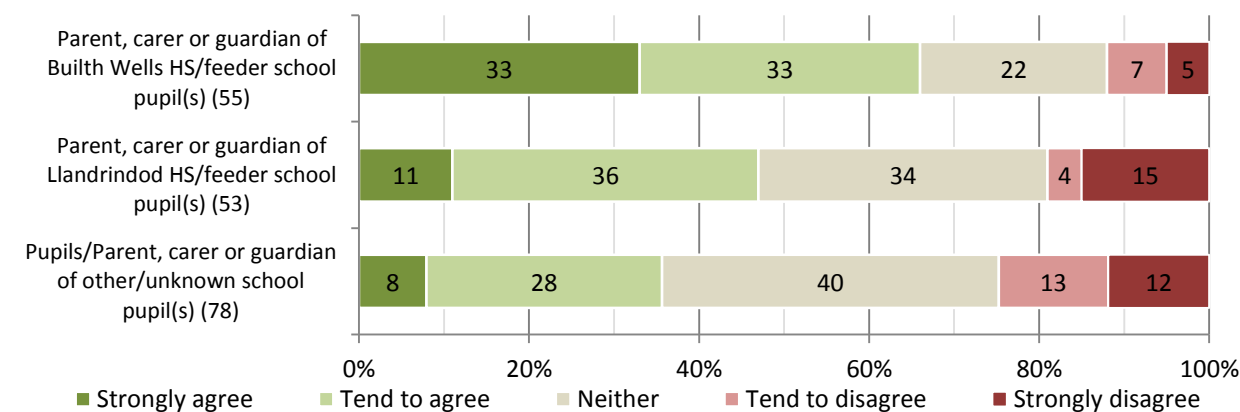
To increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.

Figure 19: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 20: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh (separated by school).



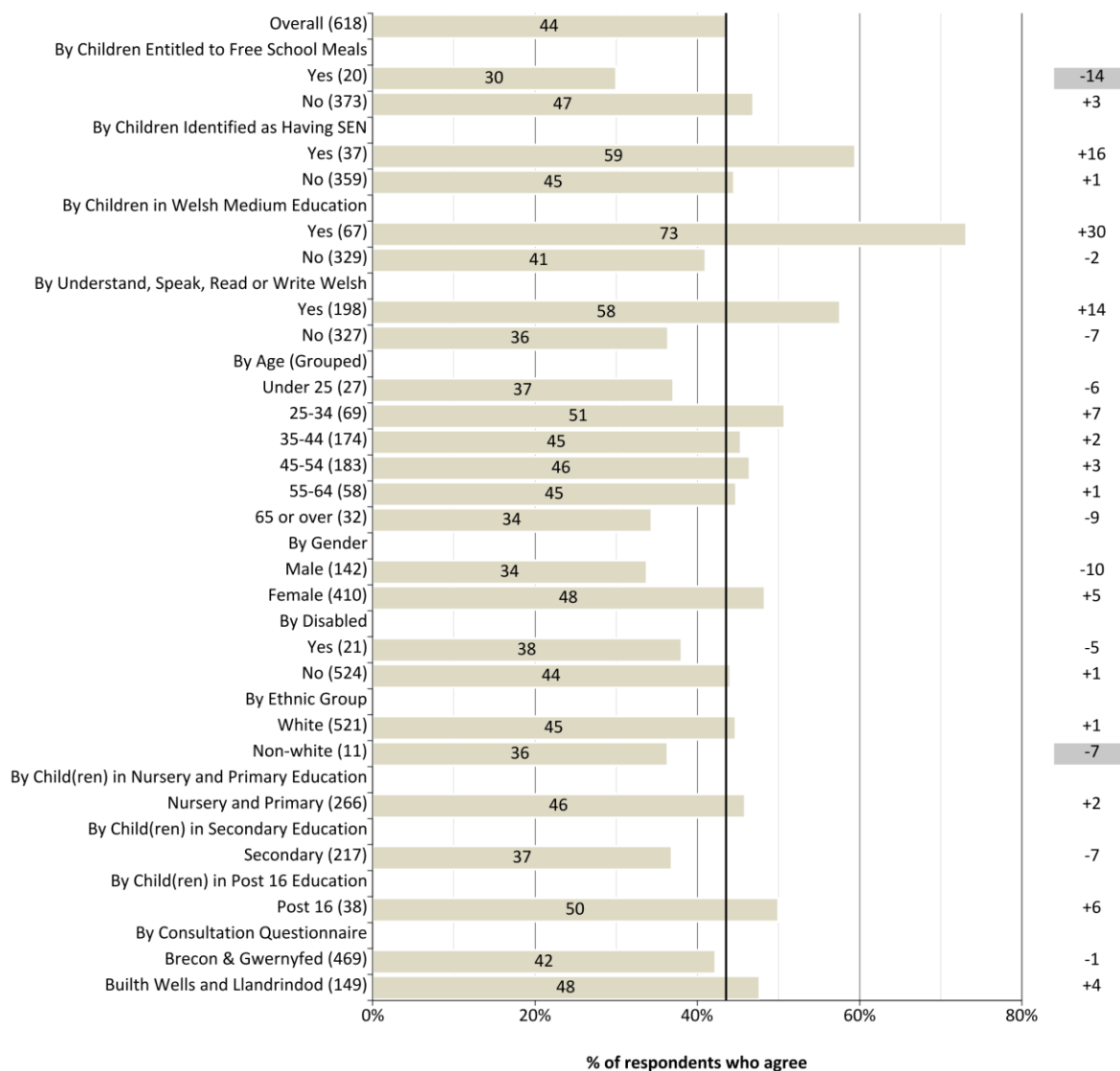
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.26 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (57%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education) (56%) and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (51%) agreed with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Nearly half of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) and pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils (45%) also agreed.

3.27 Nearly two thirds (65%) of parents, carers and guardians of Builth Wells HS/feeder school pupils agreed, as did around half (47%) of parents, carers and guardians of Llandrindod HS/feeder school pupils.

3.28 A third (35%) of other residents disagreed with this element of the proposal. Around a quarter of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (28%) and pupils/parents/carers or guardians of Powys pupils (25%) also disagreed.

Figure 21: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh (Demographic subgroup analysis).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.29 Respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (73%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Respondents with children identified having Special Educational Needs (59%) and those who understand, speak, read or write Welsh (58%) are also particularly likely to have agreed.

3.30 Respondents with children entitled to free school meals (30%), male respondents (34%) and those aged 65 or over (34%) were least likely to agree.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal for Welsh medium education, please explain why.

- 3.31 Respondents who expressed disagreement with any elements of the proposal were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.32 Responses to this question have been filtered by consultation; only comments made by individuals in response to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools Consultation Questionnaire appear in the table below.
- 3.33 Of the 50 respondents who answered this question, 101 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 22: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
English is most pupils' first language/most people need to speak English	22%	11
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	20%	10
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	20%	10
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	12%	6
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speakers' educations will suffer	10%	5
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	8%	4
Proposals will negatively affect pupils who go on to study at University/higher levels	6%	3
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	4%	2
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	4%	2
Proposals will negatively affect the free time of students/time for extra-curricular activities	4%	2
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	2%	1
Other	90%	45

- 3.34 11 respondents disagreed because 'English is most pupils' first language/most people need to speak English'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

I don't see the point of providing Welsh medium education at huge cost in an almost exclusively English speaking area of Powys.

Mid Wales has lowest numbers of first language Welsh speakers in Powys - artificially creating a centre based on economics and distances travelled, not actual demand.

- 3.35 10 respondents 'disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh'; for example:

I don't believe that there is beneficial for students to only learn in Welsh language. as we live in a society that becomes more and more English language oriented, students need to be able to study any subject in either Welsh or English, whatever they consider easier for them.

It is the right of every pupil to learn Welsh as a spoken language, but it is not a requirement that it becomes the only language - therefore other subjects can and should be taught in English (in order to reach the greater amount of students). Even though we live in Wales, it does not mean that we should be forced to speak Welsh.

- 3.36 A further 10 respondents disagreed with the proposals stating that 'proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Children shouldn't have to travel extra to receive Welsh education.

[Pupils] will have to travel (for some over 1 hour) to receive a Welsh education in our County.

- 3.37 6 of the 50 respondents argued that 'Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils'. Examples of these comments are as follows:

It is the right of every pupil to learn Welsh as a spoken language.

By removing the Welsh streams from Brecon, or other schools, you are effectively going against the Welsh Government of promoting the Welsh language for all.

- 3.38 A large majority (90%) of respondents made 'Other comments'. Some of these note the importance of freedom of choice, and the difficulties of studying particular subjects in Welsh. Others argued that consolidating Welsh education in Builth Wells risks more pupils travelling out of county for schooling, or note a perceived lack of demand for Welsh education in South Powys.

Freedom of choice – Brecon should retain a Welsh unit.

Depends on the subject, science for example is mainly in English – [Academic] Journals etc.

South Breconshire is more of a Welsh speaking area. By moving the Welsh stream to Builth there is a high risk that more pupils will travel out of county i.e. to Ysgol Gyfun Ystralyfera.

Lack of demand. You over estimate the demand for Welsh medium education. Pure politics and pandering to a tiny [number of Welsh speakers].

My fear is that the proposal is a gateway to have a Welsh medium school in Builth, forcing the majority of English speaking pupils to move from their hometown. Builth may well be central, but it is most definitely not a Welsh speaking area.

Equalities

*Are there any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that you believe that the County Council should take into account in the decision making process?
If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?*

- 3.39 Respondents were asked whether there were positive or negative impacts relating to equalities were then asked if they had any supporting evidence or suggestions to reduce negative impacts or increase positive impacts.
- 3.40 All 45 responses were classified using a standardised code frame, eliciting 67 separate comments. Once classified, only a small number of comments for this question were applicable to impacts relating to equalities, and codes raised from these comments have been presented below. Comments which did not relate to the question have been separated into an 'other/comments not relating to equalities' category.

Figure 23: Impacts relating to equalities

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Schools should be equal for English and Welsh speakers/shouldn't be biased towards English or Welsh speakers	20%	9
Proposals will segregate societies/divide communities	16%	7
Proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account	9%	4
Proposals will lead to increased travel times/costs	9%	4
Children have the right to quality education in their local area i.e. in the language they wish to learn	7%	3
Generally disagree with proposals/maintain current provision	4%	2
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negative impact on social life	2%	1
'Other/comments not relating to equalities'	82%	37

- 3.41 9 of the 45 respondents to this question said that 'schools should be equal for English and Welsh speakers/shouldn't be biased towards English or Welsh speakers'. Typical examples of such comments are as follows:

[...] Also I think that English and Welsh pupils should be funded and treated equally, because English speaking Welsh people should be equal to Welsh speaking Welsh people. This is no less valid than discriminating on the grounds of gender, age, disability, etc.

By following this proposal Powys county council will be going against the equality act 2010 because it is only taking into account the needs of the welsh learners, of which there are less than in the English stream.

- 3.42 7 argued that the 'proposals will segregate societies/divide communities'. Typical examples of such comments are as follows:

You are creating a split in the community by giving the local Welsh speaking children priority.

[The proposal] will also be, and has, pitted town against town, school against school and before long welsh against English.

- 3.43 4 respondents stated that the 'proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account'. Typical examples of such comments are as follows:

There could be some negative impact on pupils who currently access the ASD unit at Llandrindod Wells. If they were looking to stay on at sixth form, and the sixth form was at Builth Wells High School, they would be quite anxious about this, and there would need to be extra time and consideration given to their needs regarding familiarisation of the site, teachers, etc. Parents of AS pupils at Llandrindod Wells should be involved in discussions, if this were to be the case, so as to contribute to their children's needs.

Children with additional needs are not going to be able to cope with larger schools - even just the sites and travelling will be problematic. Failing them by going down the 'academy' route, via the back door.

- 3.44 A further 4 respondents were concerned that 'proposals will lead to increased travel times/costs'. Typical examples of such comments are as follows:

Children with anxieties or generally unable to travel. Children unable to do after school clubs or socialise with their friends locally. Poor parents unable to drive or have access to a car. Parents unable to support their children's school locally. Parents unable to travel to meetings or shows sports days etc. due to reduced public transport.

The extra travel time for my children would make them not want to go to school, and I will not force them to go if they are unhappy with travelling.

Further comments

Are there any further comments that you would like to make, or any alternative proposals you feel the Council should consider?

^{3.45} Those responding to the questionnaire by post had the opportunity to enclose additional comments on separate sheets of paper. However, people responding online were limited in their responses to the open textboxes in the questionnaire. In order to give those responding online the opportunity to submit any additional comments, a 'further comments' question was included. Additional comments received by post tended to be longer and more comprehensive than those received online and they have been included in the 'Written Submissions' chapter of the report. Those received online are reported below. 50 respondents gave additional comments, from which 108 separate comments were coded.

Figure 24: Further comments

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	34%	17
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	26%	13
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	16%	8
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	12%	6
Powys County Council need to support the schools more/fund the schools better	12%	6
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	10%	5
Other	70%	35

^{3.46} 17 respondents used this opportunity to reiterate their disagreement with the proposals or their desire to maintain the current provision of schools.

There is a significant shortage of money in the public purse - these proposals are not the answer. The problems of education in Powys are deeper and lie within the dirigisme of the education dept of Powys and ERW.

There is no suitable site in Builth to build a new school. The existing school is in great condition. The newly appointed head is fantastic. Allow teachers to teach and do what they do best. The regulatory regime along with your meddling are ruining education!

Leave our education system alone, leave our schools alone, employ better headteachers and allow them to manage the schools without interference from Powys. By constantly changes things and always having the threat of losing an English school in Builth you are upsetting our kids' education and causing a lot of angst in the community.

^{3.47} 13 respondents raised the potential negative impacts the proposals could have on their respective communities, or highlighted the important role that schools play as part of the community.

I am also very concerned about the impact of the long term plan on the local communities in Builth and Llandrindod and the effect on pupils and families who live within the North ward of Llandrindod, which ignores the requirements of Welsh government in terms of considering the effect on disadvantaged groups.

I believe the past few months has been hugely damaging to the schools and wider community and what in theory should have been a once in a generation opportunity to build a positive vision of the future for education in the Builth and Llandrindod area has been poorly executed.

Where is the community impact statement on closing Llandrindod Wells High School and its effects upon the local community? As Regeneration is part of the remit of a Council do they think that closing a school in a major town in Powys meeting its objectives? The uncertainty within the school services would be a factor in determining location in Wales for individuals and businesses - please would you determine this matter quickly.

- 3.48 Similarly to other open text questions in the questionnaire, concerns over travel times also appeared in the further comments section, raised by 8 respondents.

Anyone with any intelligence knows the cost of transport and yet that is the one element that hasn't been costed! I don't want my child travelling backwards and forwards between towns when they should be in a classroom learning!

- 3.49 6 respondents indicated their dissatisfaction with the consultation itself, highlighting problems with the consultation process or information provided by the Council, or suggesting that the consultation was biased.

Although I agree with the need to make changes and the proposal to create a single dual stream school I do not agree with all of the data in the consultation document as it is flawed and incomplete. It also seems biased to justify the ultimate aim to place a new school in Builth Wells. If these figures are wrong then how much of the rest of the document is to be believed, particularly in respect of the projected costs of a new school in the vicinity of Builth Wells. As a governor of Llandrindod High School I know that our points have been well made as part of the governing body's response so I do not propose to repeat them all again here. However I do wish to reiterate that the plan we have proposed as a governing body makes more sense in terms of delivering real improvement in standards in the short and long term. I fear that the current proposal from Powys CC will do little or nothing to achieve any improvement which will be an injustice for pupils of both schools and will also then be used as justification to move to the one site plan.

In theory I see the need for change but the plans as relayed to governors are ill conceived, ill thought out and badly costed. You rely on the Estyn reports for these two schools and yet the areas where both school 'failed' was relatively small to the whole picture. It seems as if the education dept is using this to justify a badly thought out, badly costed proposal. (The figures for transport and central administration costs have been challenged and not responded to by the Education dept and therefore there are no true figures available in terms of cost. The original proposal talked of building a single school in due course but this seems to have disappeared so I assume that there is either no money to build a school or they want the governors of any new school to make the decision to build (because of the increasing costs of managing two sites against a background of reducing budgets) and thereby absolving the council of any responsibility to making that highly politically charged decision.

Findings of the Young Persons' Consultation Questionnaire

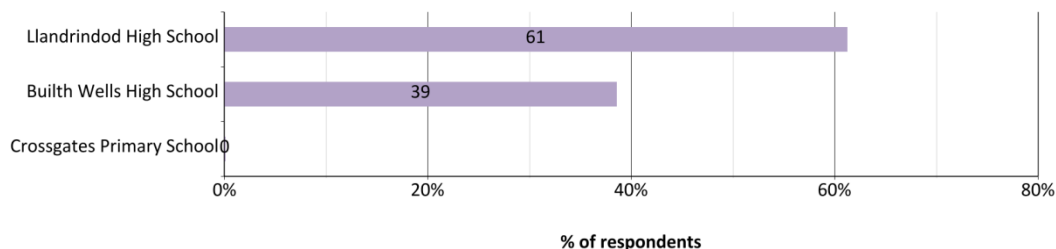
Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics for the young persons' consultation questionnaire
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY KEY STAGE	Key Stage 2	1	0.1%
	Key Stage 3	474	64.8%
	Key Stage 4	203	27.8%
	Key Stage 5	53	7.3%
	Total valid responses	731	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	4	-
BY GENDER	Male	307	47.3%
	Female	342	52.7%
	Total valid responses	649	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	86	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	604	93.1%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	17	2.6%
	Asian or Asian British	17	2.6%
	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	9	1.4%
	Any other ethnic group	2	0.3%
	Total valid responses	649	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	86	-
BY DISABILITY	With disability	31	4.7%
	No disability	627	95.3%
	Total valid responses	658	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	77	-
BY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	With SEN	81	12.6%
	No SEN	564	87.4%
	Total valid responses	645	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	90	-
BY ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Eligible to receive free school meals	64	10.0%
	Not eligible to receive free school meals	578	90.0%
	Total valid responses	642	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	93	-

About Your Education

Which school do you currently go to?

Figure 25: Which school do you currently go to?



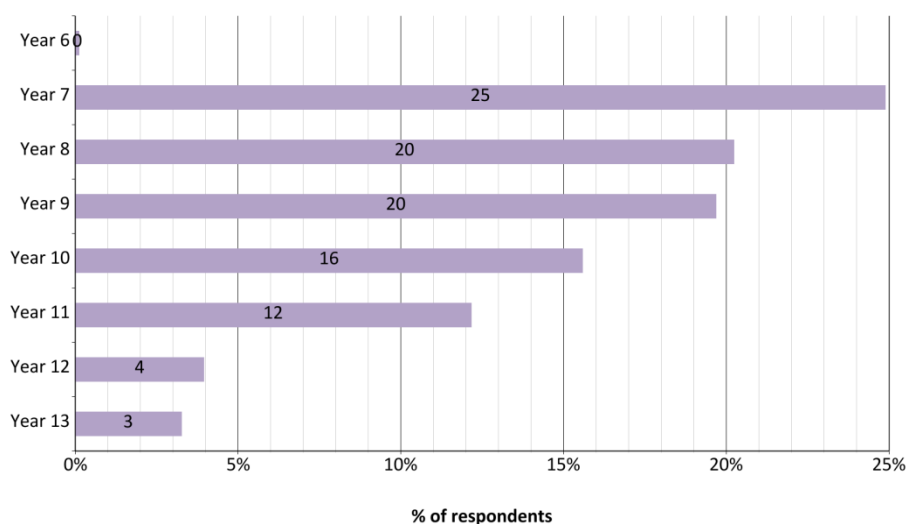
Base: All Individuals (733)

3.50 Around three fifths (61%) of respondents to the Young Persons' consultation questionnaire were attending Llandrindod High School, while around two fifths (39%) were attending Builth Wells. 1 respondent was from Crossgates Primary School, a feeder school of Llandrindod High School. As a result, this student's responses have been merged with responses from Llandrindod High School when cross-tabulating questionnaire results from the different schools.

3.51 Two individuals did not specify which school they attended, and for reporting purposes have been included in the sub-group "other/unknown" when cross-tabulating results by school.

What year group are you currently in?

Figure 26: What year group are you currently in?

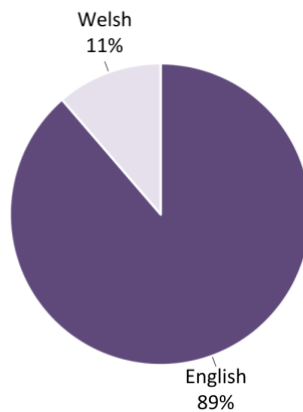


Base: All Individuals (731)

3.52 A quarter (25%) of respondents were Year 7 pupils, while a fifth of respondents were from Year 8 (20%) and Year 9 (20%). 16% of responses were from Year 10, and just over 1 in 10 (12%) were students in Year 11. Less than 1 in 20 (4%) of respondents were from Year 12 (4%) and 13 (3%), while 1 response was from a Year 6 student.

Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

Figure 27: Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

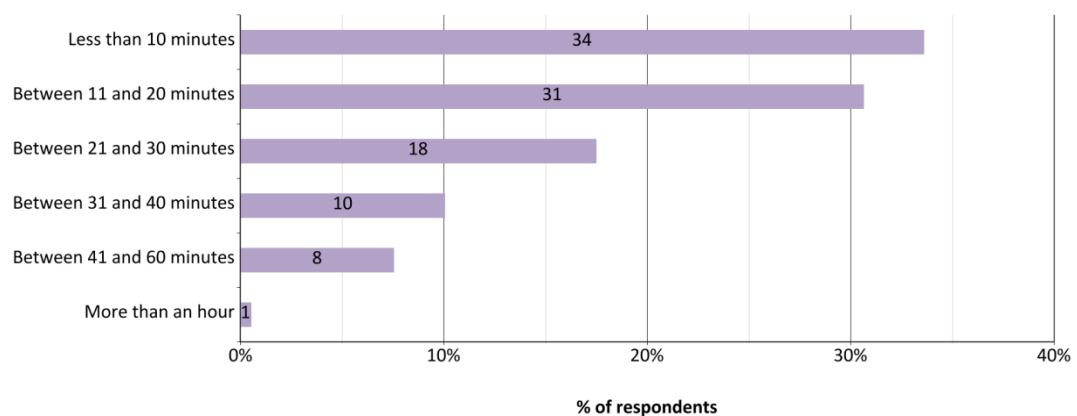


Base: All Individuals (142)

3.53 Around 1 in 10 (11%) of respondents to the Builth Wells/Llandrindod Young Persons' consultation received their lessons mainly in Welsh, while around 9 in 10 (89%) had lessons mainly in English.

How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?

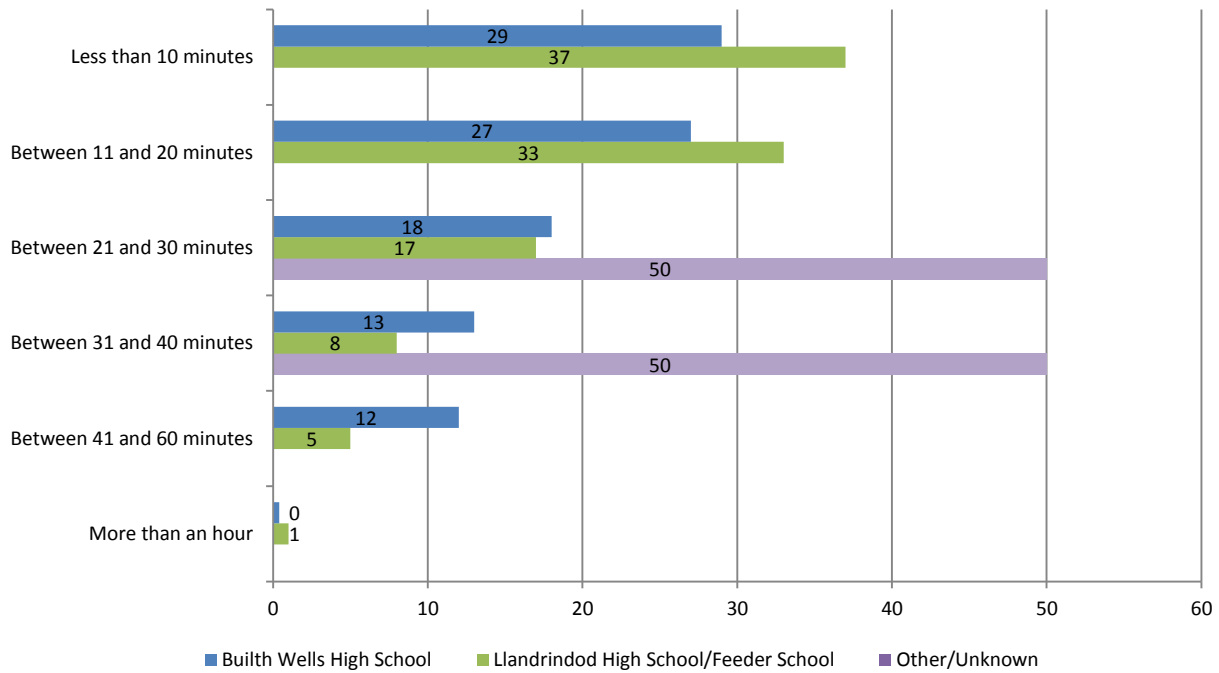
Figure 28: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?



Base: All Individuals (714)

3.54 Around a third (34%) of respondents' journeys between school and home are less than 10 minutes in duration, while nearly two thirds (64%) are less than 20 minutes. Around four fifths (82%) of journeys last under half an hour, while 1 in 10 (10%) are between half an hour and an hour, and 1% of respondents spend more than 1 hour going to and from school (one way).

Figure 29: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)? Results by school

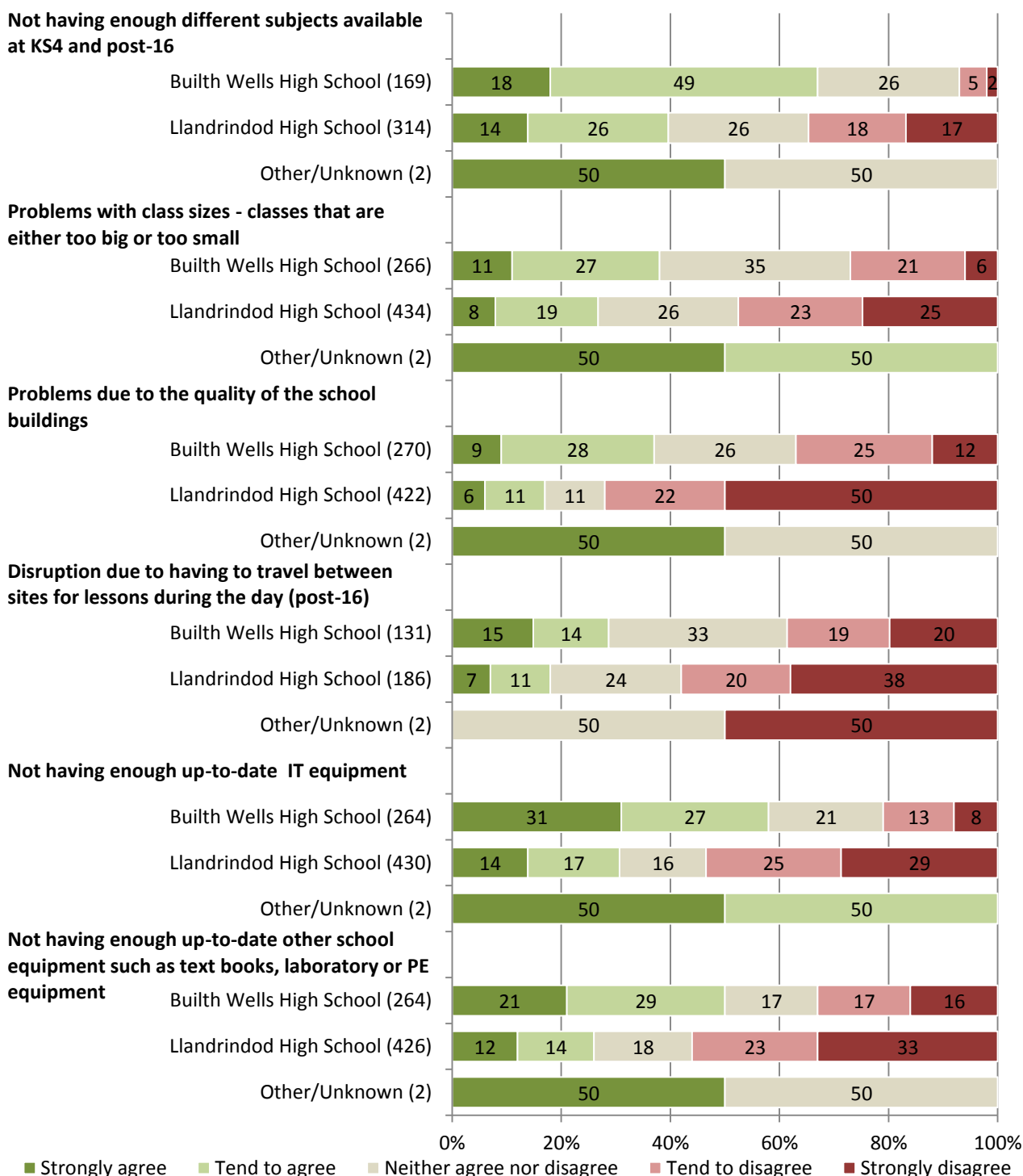


Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.55 Respondents who currently go to Builth Wells are typically more likely to travel over 30 minutes to and from school (one way), while respondents attending Llandrindod High School/feeder are particularly more likely to travel for less than 20 minutes to and from school.

Do you agree or disagree that your education is suffering because of any of the following?

Figure 30: Issues affecting education



Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

^{3.56} The questions above were intended to identify whether students from Builth Wells or Llandrindod High Schools felt that their education was suffering due to any of the issues identified by the Council. The one respondent that stated that they were in a Llandrindod feeder school did not answer any of these questions, and so the chart (and text below) illustrates responses from students of Builth Wells/Llandrindod High Schools or other/unknown schools only.

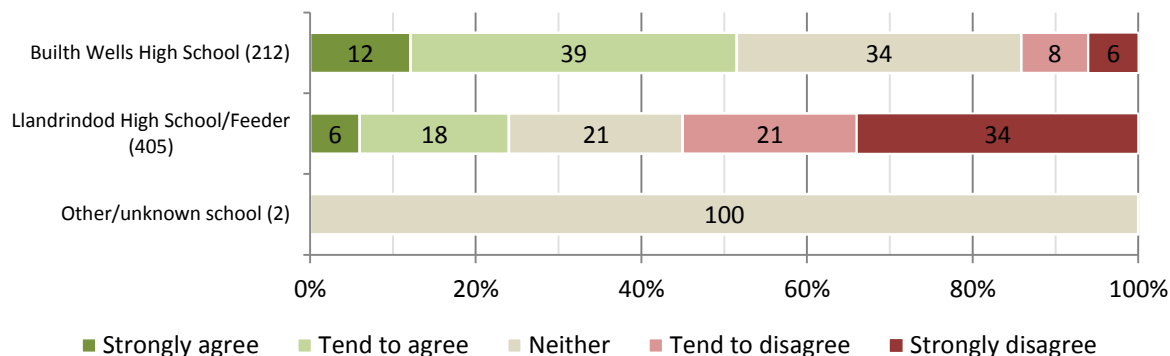
- 3.57 Two thirds (66%) of respondents who attend Builth Wells High School agreed that their education is suffering from not having enough different subjects available at KS4 and post-16, while 8% disagreed. Around 4 in 10 (39%) Llandrindod High School students agreed that their education is suffering because of a lack of different subjects available at KS4 and post-16; 35% disagreed.
- 3.58 Nearly 4 in 10 (38%) students that attend Builth Wells High School agreed that their education is suffering because class sizes are either too big or too small; more than a quarter (27%) disagreed. This compares to a quarter (26%) of Llandrindod High School students that agreed that their education suffers due to problems with class sizes, while approximately half (48%) disagree.
- 3.59 Less than two fifths (37%) of respondents from Builth Wells High School agreed that their education is suffering because of problems due to the quality of school buildings. The same proportion (37%) disagreed, while a quarter (26%) neither agreed nor disagreed. By comparison, less than a fifth (17%) of Llandrindod High School students agreed that their education is suffering because of problems due to the quality of school buildings. Nearly three quarters (72%) disagreed.
- 3.60 Around 3 in 10 (28%) Builth Wells High School students agreed that their education is suffering because of disruption caused by having to travel between sites for lessons during the day. Two fifths (39%) disagreed. Around a fifth (18%) of students from Llandrindod High School agreed that disruption due to travelling between sites for lessons during the day causes their education to suffer, while around three fifths (58%) disagreed.
- 3.61 Nearly three fifths (58%) of Builth Wells High School students agreed that their education is suffering from not having enough up-to-date IT equipment. Around 3 in 10 (31%) Llandrindod High School students agreed that their education is suffering due to a lack of up-to-date IT equipment. Over half (53%) disagreed.
- 3.62 Half of Builth Wells High School students (50%) agreed that their education is suffering due to not having enough school equipment such as text books, laboratory or PE equipment. Only around a quarter (26%) of Llandrindod High School students agreed that this is the case, while over half (56%) disagreed.

English Medium Education

In the context of the problems outlined on the previous pages, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 31: In the context of the problems outlined on the previous pages, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

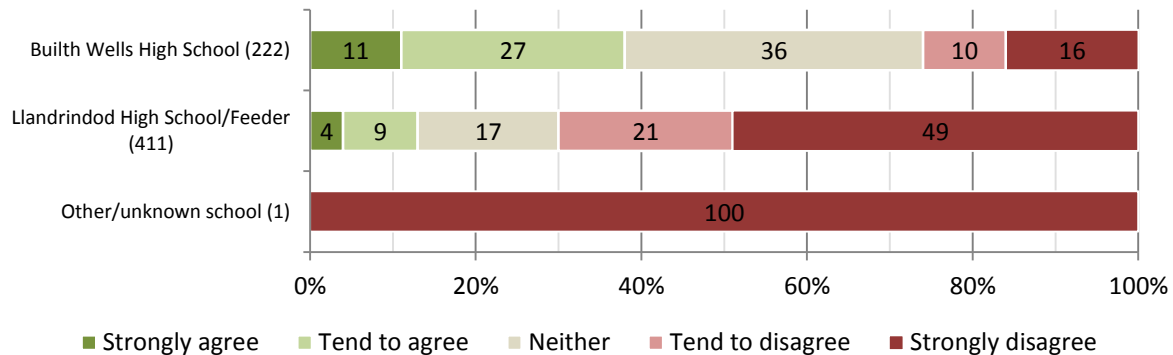


Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- ^{3.63} As in the main questionnaire, respondents to the Young Persons' questionnaire were given a short explanation of some of the general and post-16 specific issues that the Council had identified as affecting English medium secondary education in Brecon and Gwernyfed schools. Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified.
- ^{3.64} Around half (51%) of Builth Wells High School respondents felt that the Council is right to make changes in response to the issues with English medium education that it has identified. Conversely, over half (55%) of those at Llandrindod High School/feeder schools disagreed with this, with just less than a quarter (24%) agreeing that the Council is right to make changes.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites?

Figure 32: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites?



Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- 3.65 Respondents to the Young Persons' questionnaire were given a short explanation of the proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites. Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal.
- 3.66 Nearly 4 in 10 (37%) respondents from Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal, compared to just 13% of those from Llandrindod High Schools/feeder schools. More than two thirds (70%) of those in Llandrindod High Schools/feeder school disagreed, including 49% who disagreed strongly.

If you disagree with the Proposal, please explain why.

- 3.67 Respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposal were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.68 As responses differed between those who attended Builth Wells or Llandrindod High School/feeder, these coded responses have been reported separately. The results below show the 116 coded comments from the 53 respondents attending Builth Wells High school.

Figure 33: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Builth Wells HS

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	68%	36
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	15%	8
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	11%	6
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	11%	6
Proposals will not work/disagree that proposals will improve standards	11%	6
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	9%	5
Merging schools/staff structures will only cause confusion	8%	4
Concerns about a new uniform/don't want a new uniform/new uniforms will cost money	8%	4
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	8%	4
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	6%	3
Proposals will cause teachers/head teachers/staff to lose their jobs/happy with/need to maintain current provision of staff	6%	3
Proposals will lead to an increase in bullying/violence/arguments between pupils	6%	3
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after school activities/extra-curricular activities	6%	3
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	4%	2
Proposals will lead to too much strain/workload for one leadership team/head teacher	4%	2
'Other'	36%	19

- 3.69 More than two thirds (68%) of young people who go to Builth Wells said that they 'disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools'.

I don't think they should change anything because it is fine the way it is.

The move would disrupt our education during our important GCSEs and A-levels, which means we are less likely to get the grades we want, whereas I think my progress is satisfactory at the current school.

- 3.70 15% of young people in Builth Wells High School disagree with the proposals because they think the savings made would be inadequate.

The overall profit is minimum so it is not worth it (as buses cost more the profit is less)

If the amount of money saved was around £133,000 wouldn't they have to spend it on travel for the 6th form?

It would cost so much to build a new super school it would just be easier to spend on money on both to improve.

- 3.71 11% of respondents that attend Builth Wells High School 'disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances'.

The increased travelling of students would be disruptive to classes and would make the buses more expensive.

I disagree with the proposal because it means more money will be spent on transport.

- 3.72 A further 11% of respondents in Builth Wells High School suggest that educational standards will worsen if the proposed changes are adopted.

I don't think this is a good idea in any way because I think it will affect our education and make things more complicated by doing this. I think the problems are more aimed at [Llandrindod] High School, whereas Builth is doing better and will cause more complications. I also think you should just focus on landed to get the quality of their building better. I think it would be better to keep our schools independent, not joined.

3.73 The results below are from the 267 respondents who attend Llandrindod High school/feeder school. From these responses, 983 separate comments have been coded.

Figure 34: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Llandrindod HS/Feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	45%	119
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	34%	91
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	27%	73
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	22%	58
Proposals will not work/disagree that proposals will improve standards	19%	50
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	16%	42
Proposals will cause teachers/head teachers/staff to lose their jobs/happy with/need to maintain current provision of staff	15%	41
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	14%	38
Concerns about a new uniform/don't want a new uniform/new uniforms will cost money	14%	37
Llandrindod is in good condition/doesn't need any changes or improvements (contrary to what the proposal says)	14%	37
Proposals will lead to an increase in bullying/violence/arguments between pupils	10%	27
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	9%	24
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	8%	22
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	8%	22
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negatively impact pupils' social lives	7%	20
Proposals will result in less students attending Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools/pupils will switch schools/be	7%	20
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after school activities/extra-curricular activities	7%	19
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	7%	19
Proposals will negatively affect Sixth Formers/will lead to less options for Post-16	6%	17
Disagree with claims about Llandrindod's finances/Builth Wells is the school with the budget deficit	6%	17
Proposals will lead to less new families moving to the area	6%	15
Merging schools/staff structures will only cause confusion	6%	15
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	5%	14
Proposals will have a negative effect on the environment/extra travelling will be detrimental to the environment	4%	11
Proposals will cost money that the council doesn't have/won't have in the future	4%	10
Proposals cannot be trusted due to errors in the document e.g. Llandrindod High School is not called Llandrindod Wells	3%	9
Proposals will cause issues for parents/negatively affect parents (non-specific)	3%	9
Proposals will lead to too much strain/workload for one leadership team/head teacher	3%	8
Llandrindod is a better site for the super school due to better land/facilities, etc.	2%	6
Council could have saved money by not printing and issuing so many questionnaires	2%	5
Happy for the Sixth Form to be on one site	<1%	1
'Other'	27%	72

- 3.74 The most frequent comments (45%) from those who attend Llandrindod/the Llandrindod feeder school expressed a disagreement generally with the proposals or a desire for current provision to be maintained.

I disagree with the proposals because both schools are doing great, students are having/getting good grades. It would also be an average of 30 pupils per form in each year. This would make all classed cramped and loud. It would also cause a lot of problems because people have moved from Builth to Llandod for getting bullied and vice versa. This means many student will get bullied again. This will cause fights which cause distractions during lessons and throughout school.

Both schools are doing great and students are enjoying their time in High School.

- 3.75 The second most frequent response among Llandrindod High School/feeder school pupils involved concerns about increased travel times/distances. Some of these comments appear to relate to the possibility of an eventual change to a single school site.

The school should be in between both the schools because it's equal travel.

I would have to travel longer and it might affect my home lift. It is going to impact the environment.

I don't want to travel any further as it means I have to get up earlier. I already have to catch 2 buses to get to school.

Students will have to travel further to school and spend more time on a bus too, if they already have to travel a bit to get to school.

- 3.76 More than a quarter (27%) of Llandrindod HS/feeder school respondents felt that the proposals would have an impact on the standard of education.

How would having more pupils make it easier to deliver the curriculum? I always found smaller classes were better, more 1 on 1 with the teacher etc. I agree bigger classes would save money but saying it will improve outcomes is wrong in terms of results.

The proposals are not improving the conditions of the schools and having a joint school system seems like teachers and head teachers will be stretched and maybe stressed. I definitely believe this will affect the education of the pupils.

Having more students in a single school will cause the education to suffer because teaching in large groups is in general a poor concept.

If the schools merge it will mess up people's GCSEs meaning we won't get the grades we need to get into university. We may lose some of our teachers meaning we'll have to adapt to new teachers so our education will suffer.

- 3.77 Often linked to concerns about educational standards, around a fifth (22%) of respondents felt that the proposals would result in overcrowding.

There will be bigger year groups so the teachers will not know you.

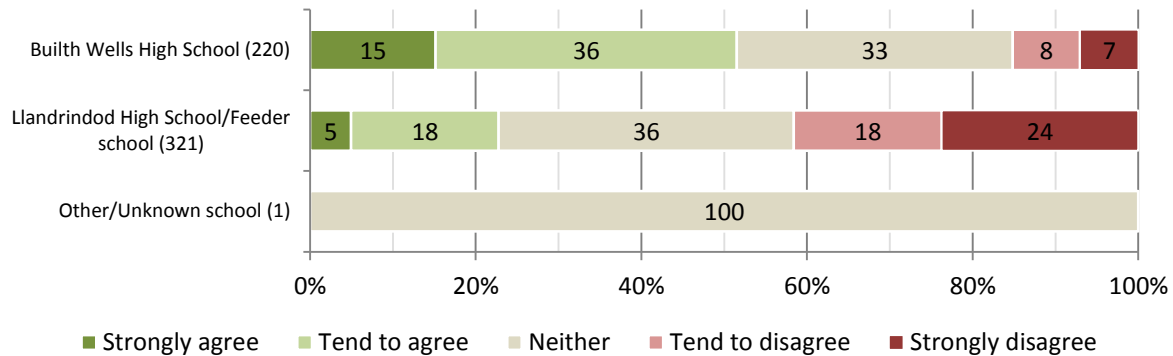
I don't want bigger classes.

Welsh Medium Education

In the context of the problems outlined on the previous page, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 35: In the context of the problems outlined on the previous page, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

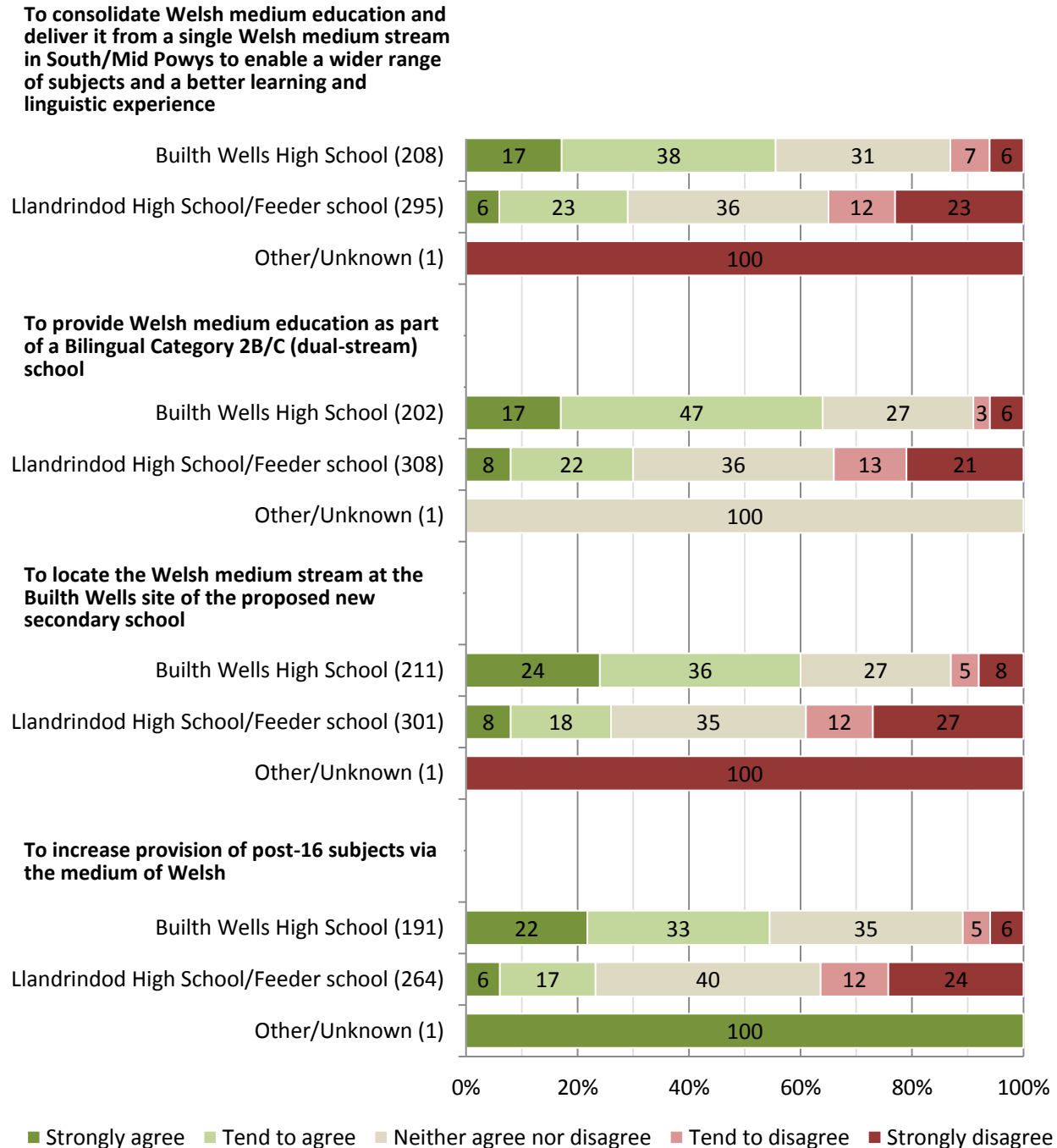


Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- 3.78 Over half (52%) of young people in Builth Wells High School agreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues they have identified with Welsh medium education. Less than a quarter (22%) of Llandrindod High School/feeder school students agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

Figure 36: Levels of agreement with various elements of the proposal



Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.79 Over half (56%) of young people in Builth Wells High School agree with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single stream in South/Mid Powys. Around 3 in 10 (29%) of those in Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed, while just more than a third (34%) disagreed.

3.80 Nearly two thirds (63%) of respondents in Builth Wells High School agree with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school; 1 in 10 (10%)

disagree. 3 in 10 (30%) young people in Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed, while a slightly higher proportion (34%) disagreed with this proposal.

- 3.81 Three fifths (60%) of respondents currently in Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school. Only around a quarter (26%) of those at Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed with this proposal. Around two fifths (39%) disagreed.
- 3.82 More than half (55%) of respondents attending Builth Wells High School agreed with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Only 1 in 10 (10%) disagreed. However, less than a quarter (23%) of respondents attending Llandrindod High School/feeder school agreed, while more than a third (36%) disagreed.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal for Welsh medium education, please explain why.

Figure 37: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Builth Wells HS

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	38%	10
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	23%	6
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	8%	2
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	8%	2
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	4%	1
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	4%	1
'Other'	46%	12

- 3.83 10 respondents from Builth Wells High School disagreed with being taught just in Welsh, or expressed that they didn't want to be taught in Welsh.

I don't think we should have to speak Welsh

There is already favouritism toward the Welsh Unit, I don't want the school to be any more Welsh.

I believe that subjects should be taught in English with the exception of the subject Welsh.

- 3.84 6 students indicated that they disagreed with any school closures, or the proposals more generally and wanted to maintain current provision.

The schools don't need to be merged to be improved.

I chose that I disagree with the Welsh medium stream in Builth because I already think that there [are] enough people in our school already.

- 3.85 However, some of these responses suggested that there were students that opposed changes who thought that the Council was proposing to have a school providing only Welsh stream education.

I think they should keep it as it is. They shouldn't have just a Welsh school. Someone might love Welsh but have best friends in English stream so they shouldn't be separated.

Figure 38: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Llandrindod HS/Feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	26%	31
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	24%	28
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	20%	23
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	10%	12
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	9%	10
Schools are too close to the English border/don't need to learn Welsh due to proximity to English border	9%	10
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	2%	2
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	2%	2
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	1%	1
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	1%	1
'Other'	41%	47

3.86 More than a quarter of respondents (26%) said that 'English is most pupils' first language/most people need to speak English'.

English is our first language

We should focus on the English language first

It's more important to have a wide range of A level subjects in English first

3.87 Just less than a quarter (24%) expressed disagreement with the prospect of being taught just in Welsh.

Not all people want to be in a Welsh school, so Builth should carry on with the welsh unit and if people want to go to a Welsh school it's their choice to travel.

3.88 A fifth (20%) of respondents argued that current provision should be maintained, or that they otherwise disagreed with the proposals.

The streams should be should be left split. Llandrindod should have the English stream and Builth have the Welsh.

I disagree with the Welsh coming up to one school and making us go to Builth.

Equalities

*Are there any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that you believe that the County Council should take into account in the decision making process?
If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?*

- 3.89 Due to the low number of responses to this question, all coded responses to this question have been reported combined. 104 respondents to the Young Persons' questionnaire gave a response when asked whether they believe that there are any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that the Council should take into account in the decision making process.
- 3.90 Comments which did not relate to the question have been separated into an 'other/comments not relating to equalities' category.

Figure 39: Impacts relating to equalities – All coded responses

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Schools should be equal for English and Welsh speakers/shouldn't be biased towards English or Welsh speakers	22%	23
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negative impact on social life	21%	22
Proposals will result in pupils losing time with family/negative impact on home life	18%	19
Generally disagree with proposals/maintain current provision	13%	14
Proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account	13%	13
Proposals will lead to increased travel times/costs	5%	5
Children have the right to quality education in their local area i.e. in the language they wish to learn	1%	1
'Other/comments not relating to equalities'	58%	60

- 3.91 Of the 104 respondents to this question, the most frequent coded responses refer to a need for equal consideration of both English and Welsh speakers.

As previously stated the Welsh language is trumping the needs and wishes of the vast majority (a ratio of about 9:1) of English speakers (who see themselves as equally Welsh)

There should be full and equal provision for every child that wants Welsh medium education in Powys

Too much change is taking place for Welsh speakers and English speakers should be equal.

- 3.92 Similar proportions of students indicated that the proposals would have a negative impact on their social lives (21%) and home lives (e.g. spending time with their family) (18%). Many students wrote variations of the same concerns.

I disagree with merging the school because I will lose some of my friends and I would not see my family as much. There would be too much change in my life.

Further comments

^{3.93} Three students from the Young Persons' consultation made further comments about the proposals. All three comments expressed disagreement with the proposed changes or requested that current provision be maintained. Additionally, one of the respondents suggested that what they had heard was bias towards Builth High School, and reiterated the negative consequences they felt the changes would have to the community of Llandrindod Wells.

Findings of the Primary Consultation Questionnaire

^{3.94} In addition to the Main and Young Persons' consultation questionnaires, a questionnaire was developed with simplified questions and explanations that were more appropriate for Primary School children.

Table 4: Socio-demographic characteristics for the primary consultation questionnaire
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

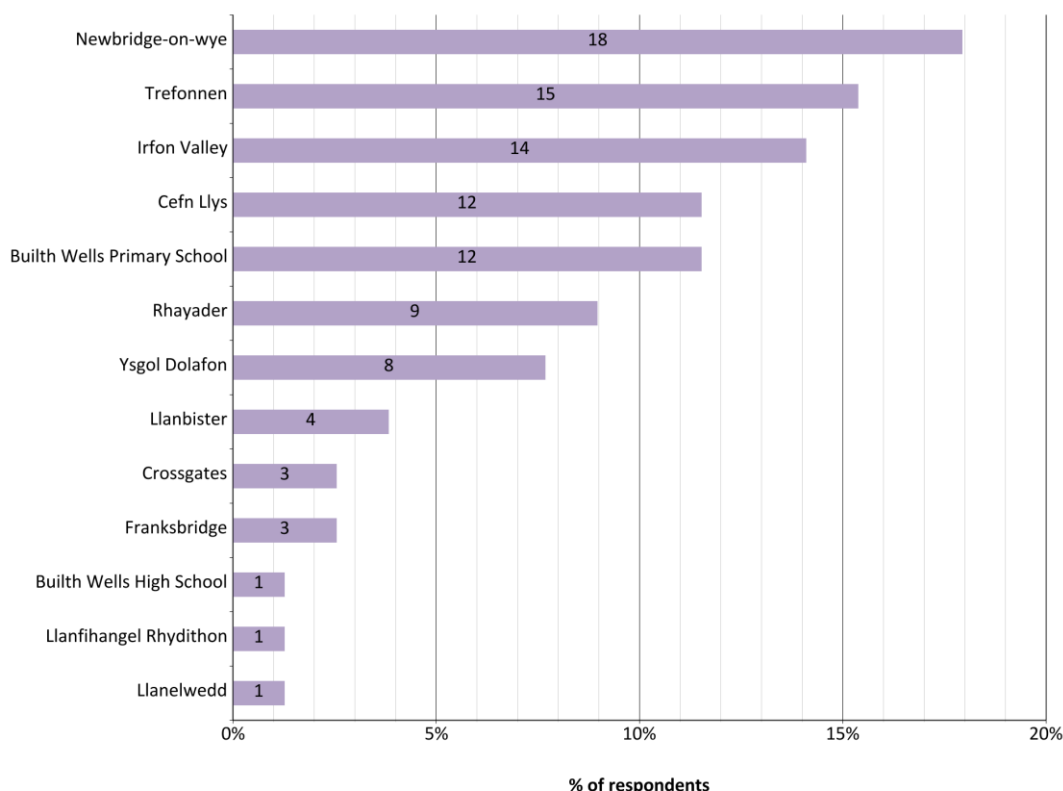
Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY KEY STAGE	Nursery/reception	4	5.3%
	Key Stage 1	17	22.7%
	Key Stage 2	53	70.7%
	Key Stage 3	0	0.0%
	Key Stage 4	1	1.3%
	Total valid responses	75	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	4	-
BY GENDER	Male	37	48.6%
	Female	39	51.3%
	Total valid responses	76	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	3	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	71	97.3%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1	1.4%
	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	1	1.4%
	Total valid responses	73	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	6	-
BY DISABILITY	With disability	1	1.3%
	No disability	76	98.7%
	Total valid responses	77	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	2	-
BY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	With SEN	4	5.2%
	No SEN	73	94.8%
	Total valid responses	77	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	2	-
BY ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Eligible to receive free school meals	6	8.0%
	Not eligible to receive free school meals	69	92.0%
	Total valid responses	75	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	4	-

^{3.95} It is worth noting that many of the responses to the primary consultation questionnaire appear to have been completed by parents of primary school children. Some of these were giving answers on behalf of their primary school age child, but others voiced their own concerns as parents. ORS identified as many as 23 responses where this appeared to be the case, although in reality this number may be higher. These responses have been included in the analysis.

About Your Education

Which school do you currently go to?

Figure 40: Which school do you currently go to?



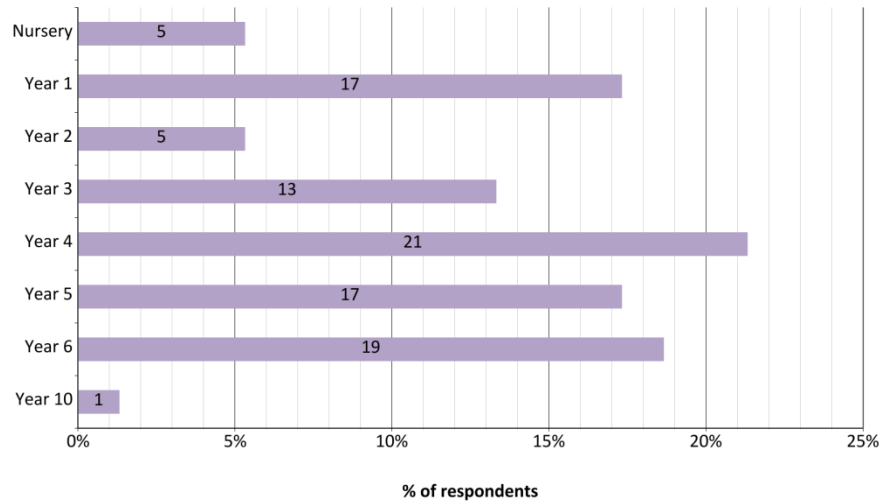
Base: All Respondents (78)

^{3.96} Around 1 in 5 (18%) of respondents to the Primary Pupil consultation questionnaire were currently attending Newbridge-on-wye, while more than 1 in 10 respondents currently attend Trefonnen (15%), Irfon Valley (14%), Builth Wells Primary (13%) and Cefn Llys (12%). Fewer than 1 in 10 respondents attend Rhayader (9%) and Ysgol Dolafon (8%). 3 respondents attend Llanbister, while 2 respondents each attend Crossgates and Franksbridge. ORS also received one response each from Llanfihangel Rhydithon, Builth Wells High School and Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary.

^{3.97} One individual did not answer this question.

What year group are you currently in?

Figure 41: What year group are you currently in?



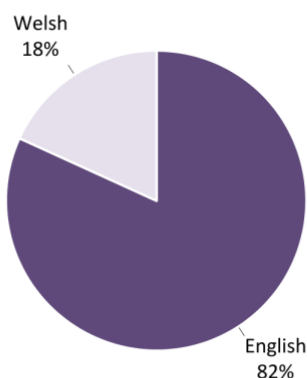
Base:

All Respondents (74)

^{3.98} Around a fifth of respondents were from Year 4 (21%), Year 6 (19%), Year 5 (17%) or Year 1 (17%). More than 1 in 10 respondents were from Year 3 (13%), while 1 in 20 respondents were from Year 2 (5%) or in Nursery (5%). ORS received one response from a Year 10 student.

Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

Figure 42: Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

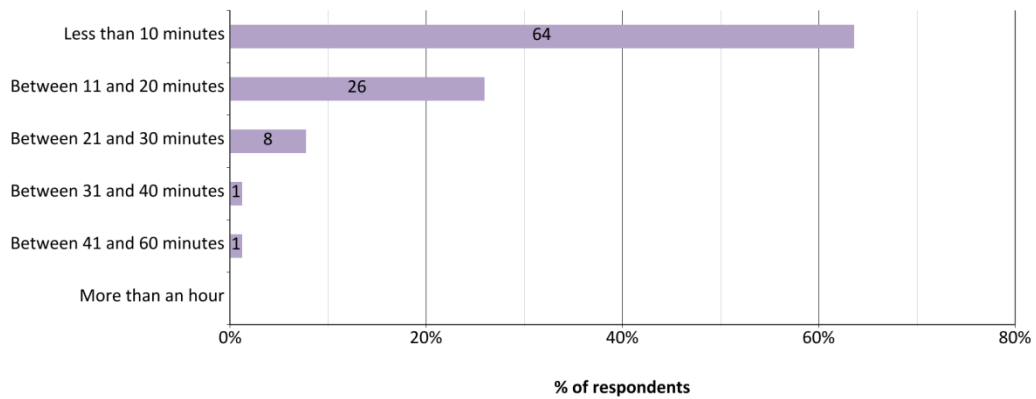


Base: All Respondents (77)

^{3.99} Over four fifths (82%) of respondents are taught mainly in English, while 18% of respondents are taught mainly in Welsh.

How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?

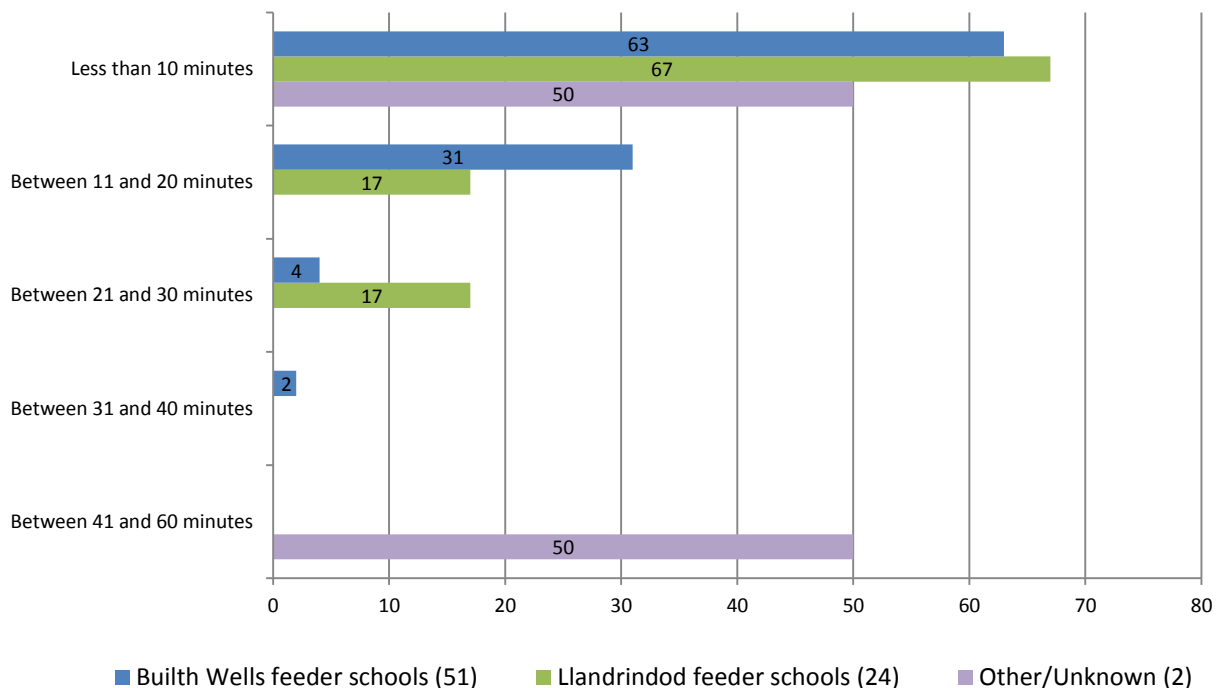
Figure 43: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?



Base: All Respondents (77)

^{3.100} Nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents said that it takes them less than 10 minutes to travel between school and home (one way). 9 in 10 respondents (90%) said that their journey between home and school took 20 minutes or less. Only just less than 1 in 10 (8%) said that it normally takes between 21 and 30 minutes. One respondent each said that it takes between 31 and 40 minutes and between 41 and 60 minutes. No respondents to the primary school consultation questionnaire said that they travel for over an hour between home and school.

Figure 44: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)? Results by school



Base: All Respondents (77)

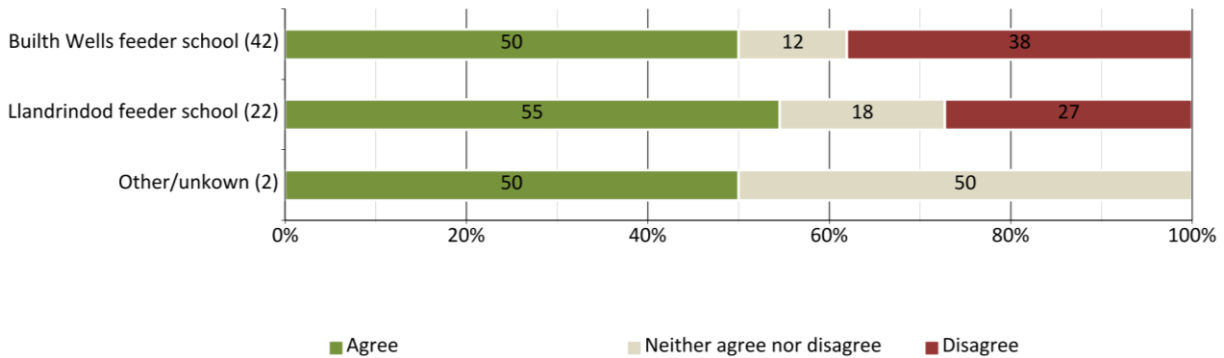
^{3.101} Around two thirds of those in Builth Wells (63%) and Llandrindod (67%) feeder schools travel less than 10 minutes to/from school (one way).

English Medium Education

Thinking about the problems on the previous page, the Council believes a number of changes are needed.

Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?

Figure 45: Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?

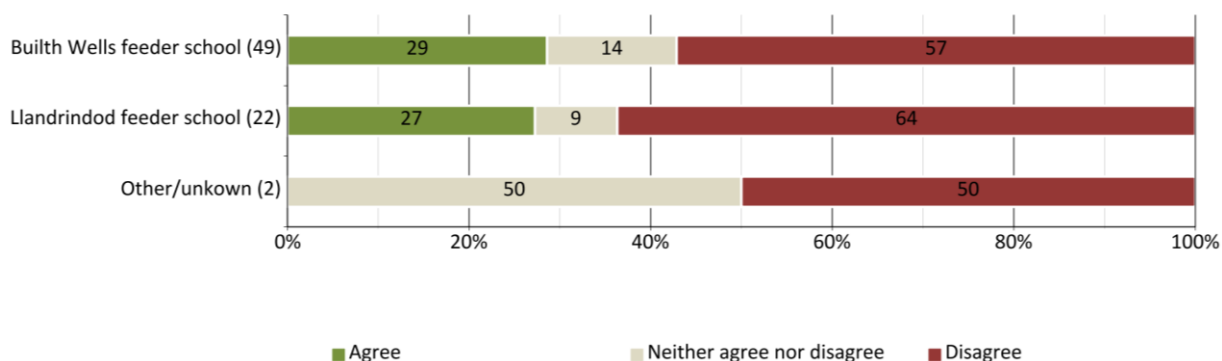


Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- 3.102 Respondents were given a short list of current problems with English medium education in Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, and were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems.
- 3.103 Due to differences in response rates between pupils attending schools which act as feeder schools to Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, these results have been reported separately. Two responses to the primary school consultation did not fall into these categories, and so have also been reported separately as 'other/unknown' responses. Due to the low level of response from this 'other/unknown' category, these results should be treated with caution, and these have been reported as numbers, rather than percentages, in the text.
- 3.104 Similar proportions of Builth and Llandrindod feeder school pupils agreed with the proposals. Around half (55%) of respondents from Llandrindod feeder schools and half (50%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues it has identified.
- 3.105 1 pupil from an 'other/unknown' school agreed with this proposal, while 1 neither agreed nor disagreed.

Do you agree or disagree with the proposed change to create a new secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate from the two existing school buildings?

Figure 46: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed change to create a new secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate from the two existing school buildings?



Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- 3.106 Respondents were then given a brief description of the proposed change to create a new secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, with an 'eventual' ambition to build a new school building in Builth. It was stated that, as no land has been identified yet, the school would continue to run over both Llandrindod and Builth Wells school sites.
- 3.107 Again, similar levels of agreement were found from both Builth Wells and Llandrindod feeder school pupils. More than a quarter of respondents from Builth Wells (29%) and Llandrindod feeder schools (27%) agreed with the Council's proposal to create a new secondary school operating over both sites.
- 3.108 Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents Llandrindod feeder schools disagree with this proposed change, while nearly three fifths (57%) disagreed from Builth Wells feeder schools.
- 3.109 Neither respondent from the 'other/unknown' school agreed with the proposal; 1 respondent disagreed while the other gave a neutral answer.

If you disagree with any of the proposed changes, please explain why.

- 3.110 Respondents who disagreed with the proposed changes were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.111 As in the Main and Young Persons' consultation chapters, all responses provided to the open-ended questions have been read, and then classified (coded) using a standardised approach (code frame).
- 3.112 Of the 38 respondents who were asked this question, 86 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 47: Reasons for opposition to the proposed English medium changes

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	34%	13
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	24%	9
Proposals will lead to too much strain/workload for one leadership team/head teacher	24%	9
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	21%	8
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	18%	7
Proposals will not work/disagree that proposals will improve standards	13%	5
Proposals will cost money that the council doesn't have/won't have in the future	11%	4
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	8%	3
Proposals will lead to less new families moving to the area	5%	2
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	3%	1
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	3%	1
Proposals will cause issues for parents/negatively affect parents (non-specific)	3%	1
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negatively impact pupils' social lives	3%	1
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after school activities/extra-curricular activities	3%	1
Proposals will have a negative effect on the environment/extra travelling will be detrimental to the environment	3%	1
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	3%	1
More information needed	3%	1
'Other'	47%	18

^{3.113} 13 of the 38 respondents who gave an explanation of their reasons for disagreement expressed a preference for the current provision of school services, or more generally disagreed with changes from the status quo. Examples include:

Both schools should be left alone.

The pupils are fine with the schools.

I live in Llandrindod and my parents are local people who also attended Llandrindod High School, so I would not be expected to go to another school in a different town. I think Builth would not be appropriate to build a new school as it floods a lot and children who live outside the town would not be able to get there. [...] I think the two schools should remain as they are.

^{3.114} 9 respondents said that they disagreed with proposals due concerns surrounding increased travel times/distances. Typical examples of comments include:

How would Builth cope with the traffic in the main street?

Easier for me to get to Llandrindod

I like cycling to school and can't cycle to Builth. I don't like sitting still so wouldn't like to sit on a bus. Longer bus journeys [are] bad for the environment. Mum and Dad can't afford diesel.

^{3.115} There were 9 respondents that had concerns with the proposals for a single leadership team/head teacher, voicing considerations involving workloads, additional costs involved with a single

management team and the availability of the head teacher at both sites. Some examples include the following:

I do not think it is good to only have 1 head teacher for both schools.

A single leadership team will not cost less because the single school will be bigger and so the leadership team will have to be paid more for their time and transport costs to move between the two sites.

Why have one headteacher over 2 sites? What if he/she is need[ed] and can't be at the other site?

^{3.116} 7 respondents said that the 'Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal'. As mentioned above, some of these comments over savings related to the management team, while others were concerned with the costs of running a larger school or the loss of money that has already been invested in schools no longer to be used. Typical examples of such comments include:

I don't really think it will save much money.

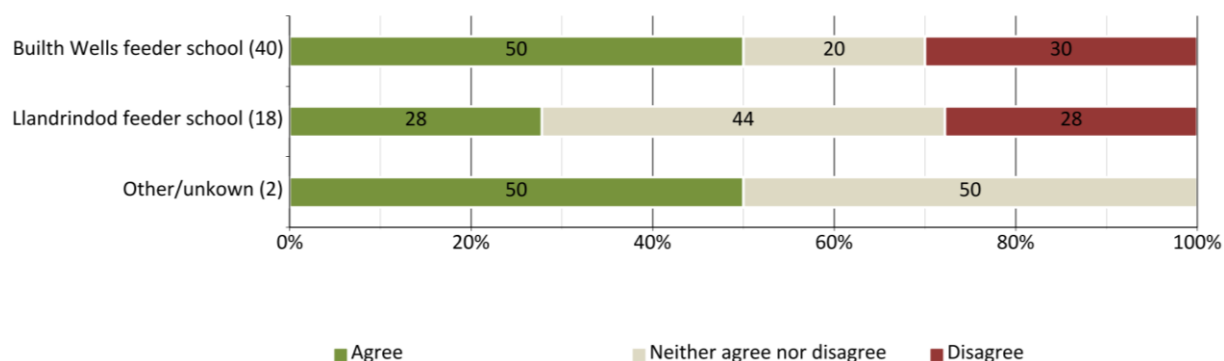
I think you shouldn't build a new school because you don't get money for the ones you knock down and it will cost more money to run one big school.

Welsh Medium Education

Thinking about the above problems, the Council believes a number of changes are needed.

Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?

Figure 48: Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?



Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

^{3.117} Respondents were given a short list of current problems with Welsh education across mid and south Powys. Respondents were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems.

^{3.118} While half (50%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools agreed, less than a third (28%) of respondents from Llandrindod feeder schools agreed that the Council is right to make changes.

^{3.119} 1 respondent from other/unknown schools agreed, while 1 respondent gave a neutral response.

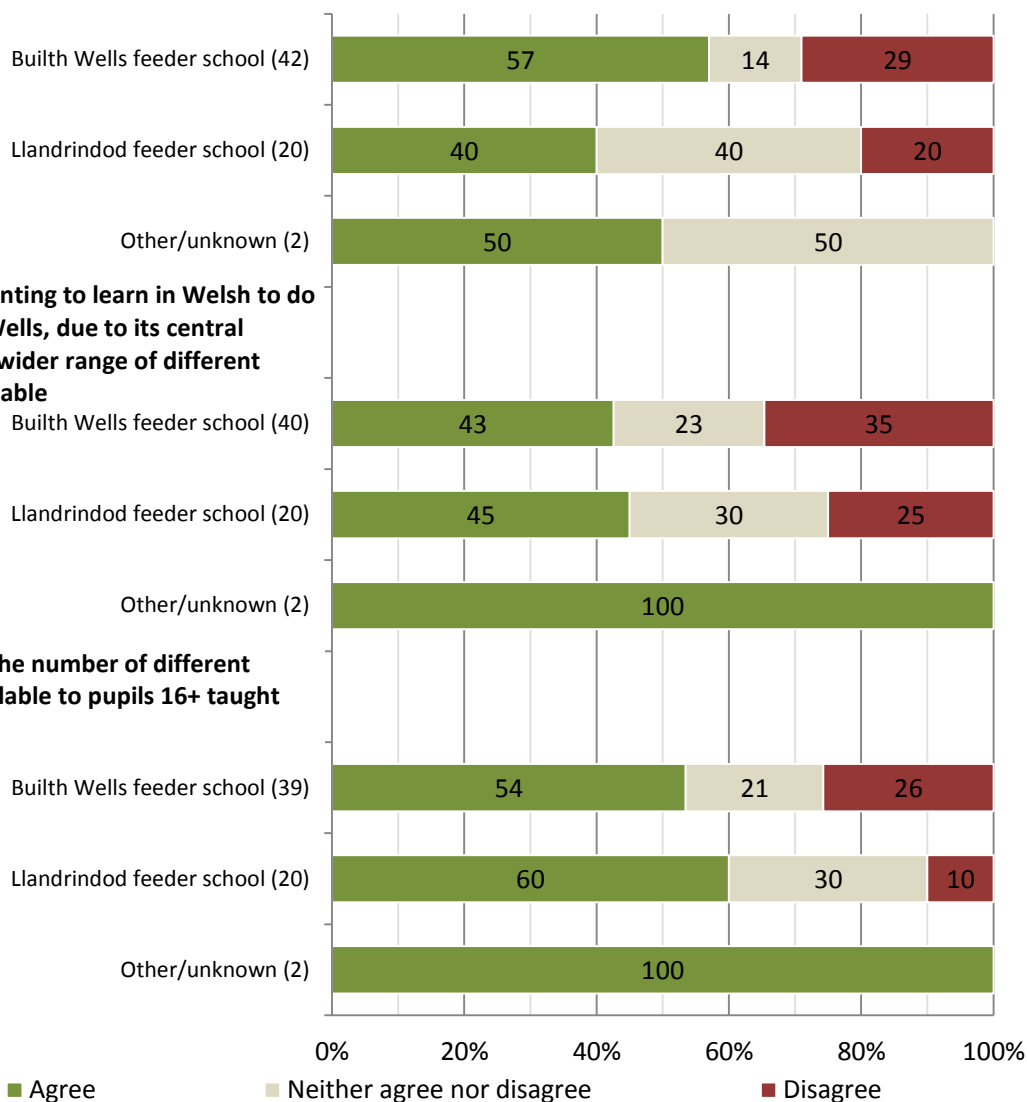
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

Figure 49: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

To teach pupils wanting to learn in Welsh from a single school to allow a wider range of difference subjects

For pupils wanting to learn in Welsh to do so in Builth Wells, due to its central location and wider range of different subjects available

To increase the number of different subjects available to pupils 16+ taught in Welsh



Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.120 Respondents were then given a brief description of the proposed changes to Welsh education, and were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each proposed change.

3.121 Almost three fifths (57%) of respondents from Builth Wells feeder schools agreed with teaching pupils wanting to learn Welsh from a single school, compared to two fifths (40%) from Llandrindod feeder schools.

3.122 More than two fifths of respondents from Builth Wells (43%) and Llandrindod (45%) feeder schools agreed with the proposal to situate Welsh learners in Builth Wells due to its central location and wider range of subjects available.

- 3.123 Just over half (54%) of those from Builth Wells feeder schools and three fifths (60%) of respondents from Llandrindod feeder schools agree with the proposed change to increase the number of different subjects available to pupils 16+ taught in Welsh.
- 3.124 Of the responses from other/unknown schools, 1 respondent agreed with teaching Welsh from a single school, while the other respondent gave a neutral answer, and both respondents agreed with the proposal to situate Welsh medium education in Builth and to increase the post 16 subjects available in Welsh.

If you disagree with any elements of the proposed changes, please explain why.

- 3.125 Of the respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposed changes to Welsh medium education, 21 respondents gave an explanation as to why they disagreed. From these respondents, 43 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 50: Reasons for opposition to the proposed Welsh medium changes

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	29%	6
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	24%	5
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	19%	4
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	19%	4
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	14%	3
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	14%	3
Proposals will negatively affect the free time of students/time for extra-curricular activities	10%	2
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	10%	2
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	5%	1
More information needed	5%	1
'Other'	57%	12

- 3.126 6 of the 21 respondents to this question said that 'proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs':

The travel time for pupils outweighs the benefits of more subjects.

Llandrindod [...] would be a journey of over an hour each day way too much and I may not go to school with people from my village and if I want to play sport how do I get back home.

- 3.127 5 respondents said that they 'disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh. It is worth noting that at least two of these responses appeared to object to Welsh only education, possibly suggesting that some respondents believed that Builth Wells High School would become a category 2A school. Typical examples of comments include:

I don't want to be taught in Welsh that means that I would have to go to Llandrindod.

I agree that a certain degree of Welsh should be taught, but this can easily be done in an English stream. Extra savings could be made, and thus an enhancement of education, if Welsh was not a priority. Many choose the Welsh unit due to transport concerns.

3.128 4 respondents also said that the ‘pupils are entitled to a school within their local community’; for example:

Welsh should be available within pupils’ areas

By separating the Welsh speaking pupils and the English speaking pupils is a form of racism to me. The schools have been running for many years. Every child should have the right to be taught in their local school.

I want to go to my local school; Llandrindod High School. It is NOT a poor school, as you seem to say.

3.129 A further 4 respondents say that ‘Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils’. Typical examples of such comments include:

I would like to learn Welsh more in my school.

Further comments

3.130 Two primary school children gave further comments about the proposals. One pupil expressed the importance of maintaining dual stream provision to give pupils greater choice of English and Welsh subjects and to maintain friendship groups. The other pupil responding to this question queried why a proposed single new school site would have to be built in Builth.

Suggested Alternative Proposals

3.131 The open questionnaires received a number of alternative proposals to those put forward by the Council among the responses to open response questions, the details of which are outlined below.

3.132 Regarding the English medium proposals, many alternatives that were suggested by respondents from the main consultation were made with a view to maintain school provision in both Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, many of which explicitly objecting to the possibility of Llandrindod being closed in the future.

3.133 One respondent suggested a reduction in ‘back office staff’ to increase savings, and an investment in teaching staff as an alternative method to improve standards.

This to me seems to miss the point - how will re-jigging the structure help in a way that couldn't be sorted now? SURELY if PCC pay the wages of all of these staff, then PCC could split full time posts into part time at each school to increase the number of subjects. How on earth is it going to be easier for the two heads of failing schools to merge into one management team of one larger school split between two sites? Surely that would just have a management team failing in one larger school? If these staff members aren't able to deliver good education now, how on earth is it going to be any easier between two sites, both with their distinct characteristics? To me it is very obvious - all the studies around the world have come to the same conclusion that good teaching is about good teachers - end of. If we train our teachers well and stop making them do all the monitoring etc that they tell us they hate and detracts from their teaching, then we might have good teachers. Then we will have good education for our pupils. I wish that Powys CC would stop thinking that if they restructure things then they become better. Train your staff, expect good things from them, then let them deliver. My child will start at high school in September, and I can see that this is going to dog her whole high school career - and is it

really worth doing this for a measly £130,000? We KNOW that things will go over budget as they ALWAYS do - someone will decide it's a good thing to pay a consultant for something and BANG budget gone. We do have money - we just choose to spend it on a HUGE raft of back room staff that don't actually have any link to the children - and it's NOT WORKING! We have so many failing schools - primary and high school - in Powys, and it's time that we looked at the back room staff - all the monitors, the restructures, the highly paid people who pop into schools every six weeks to "see how things are going". If my child needs to learn how to do quadratic equations, they are not going to find out from someone sat in County Hall trying to work out a way we can raise absenteeism from 90% to 90.5% or whatever. We do not have the money to tinker with minutiae, we need to spend that money on teachers and training for teachers and let them do the job they're paid to do.

- 3.134 Other proposals from the main consultation also prioritised teaching standards over other issues raised by the Council. One proposal suggested combining sixth forms to meet the Council's aim of increasing the number of subjects at a post-16 level, and working to update and reduce the size of the existing sites, while another suggested that the replacement of low quality teachers would improve standards.

I believe the 'building' does not bear on teaching standards. Yes, I agree that something needs to be done but closing schools and opening another one (at great cost!) would benefit no-one! Sort our teaching standards in existing schools, combine both 6th forms to offer varied curriculum and use the money you can obviously find (for your proposed new school) to update and make smaller the existing sites. A response from the Young Persons' consultation discussed a focus on new teaching staff could improve standards without the need for a new school.

If 'high quality' staff is expected to be employed in the new school, why not replace existing teachers not deemed to be of high quality instead. This should lead to improved teaching without the need for an entire new school to be built. 120 pupils is not a large increase on the existing approximately 100 pupils per year group in Llandrindod.

- 3.135 There were suggestions from both the Main and Young Persons' questionnaires to just create a new school on a single site instead of over both Builth and Llandrindod.

I feel strongly that the opening of the 'New School' should not take place until a NEW one site School Building is provided. Closing of the existing schools but reopening on the same site in a new name does NOT address the issues of poor facilities, poor morale, poor leadership or poor standards. All it does is remove the Estyn 'special measures status' - which takes away all the checks and support available to failing schools. A new building will help to attract quality teachers and leaders - it will give staff [and] pupils a morale boost helping to increase in pride which will be beneficial in meeting the Council's aim of increasing standards in the high Schools.

The council should build a new school, with new staff offering the best resources.

It would be better to make Builth and Llandrindod into one school on one site.

Set up a school half way between Llandrindod and Builth e.g. new bridge so then there's no complaints.

- 3.136 The creation of a dual site school was suggested for Llandrindod and Pretiegne, with collaboration with a College for post-16 provision.

Dual site school for Llandrindod/Preteigne - kept within Radnor? Work with the Coleg to restore post 16 choices for mid Powys.

- 3.137 Regarding Welsh medium provision, three respondents from the main consultation and a respondent from the Young Persons' questionnaire suggested a need for a category 2a Welsh Medium school. These respondents proposed that this would encourage greater access to Welsh education.

I feel there should be a category 2a welsh medium school in south / mid Powys. This should be based at Builth Wells. For children to be truly bilingual - all subjects should be offered through the medium of Welsh. People will feel happier sending their children further away for a completely Welsh medium school.

Welsh medium education needs to be consolidated in a dedicated school at best and a dedicated campus at worst. Any other arrangement will lead to the marginalisation of the language within a (large) majority English-speaking school and furthermore will not provide enough of a draw to pupils travelling long distances (from Brecon, North and East Radnorshire). This is the reason that the Welsh stream in Brecon has withered on the vine, and it will happen again in Builth.

Considering the financial situation it is sensible and realistic to try and centralise welsh medium provision. But in terms of the welsh language, it is terrible that Brecon is losing its high school welsh stream. In terms of location, Builth is reasonable but, in terms of expecting Brecon pupils to travel and in terms of securing the survival of Ysgol y Bannau then it has to be a welsh medium school in Builth not a bilingual school. Notwithstanding finances, equal access to welsh education in the county is a right

I feel that making Builth HS a dual stream school for pre-16 education is a poor idea, as it would still not have a critical mass of students. It would be better to have a Welsh medium school in Builth and an English medium school in Llandrindod. That way there is a critical mass of English stream students in one location, and the Welsh stream could be far more concentrated in the other location. There would be no need for staff or students to travel between the sites. The sixth form provision would be better suited to be located at one site, and that could be at Builth. This could be both English and Welsh streams.

- 3.138 There were also other suggestions among some Young Persons' consultation respondents to separate Welsh and English provision.

I think the Welsh should go in one school and English in the other.

Builth should be just a Welsh school

- 3.139 A Main consultation questionnaire respondent queried whether Welsh medium education could be delivered in Llandrindod, rather than at Builth Wells.

Welsh medium education stream could be delivered from Llandrindod wells, the site does not need to be Builth Wells.

- 3.140 Meanwhile, another respondent suggested that Welsh provision should be provided from a separate, smaller site altogether.

A bilingual schools efforts would be split across both streams (assuming the focus is equal) do it would make more sense (due to the smaller number of Welsh stream pupils) to convert a smaller school into a solely Welsh medium school in the interests of both the Welsh and English stream pupils.

- 3.141 Regarding post-16 education specifically, some suggested that a 6th form should be provided on the Llandrindod site due to its capacity and accessibility.

Any decision made by the Council should take in to consideration the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The sixth form should be based in Llandrindod Wells. The site has the capacity to accommodate a large sixth form, and a full range of subjects will attract pupils from outside the catchment, e.g. east Radnorshire, south Montgomeryshire. Llandrindod has good travel links, which will make the educational commute easier for sixth form pupils.

Make education stream 11-16 and provide this solely in Builth wells - provide 6th form college status in Llandrindod - providing both academic and technical/apprenticeships for young people up to age of 21.

- 3.142 Another respondent suggested a continued focus on partnership working.

Continue with partnership working of schools to achieve pupil numbers post 16.

- 3.143 More generally, one respondent suggested a better use of school buildings for after school activities to make both school sites staying open financially viable.

Both schools need to consider more fully how they can use their buildings outside of school hours and promote community cohesion and raise income via things like lifelong learning opportunities (Builth does do Welsh lessons on a Tuesday night) but there must be scope for lots of other things - dance classes, yoga, lectures, family maths sessions, art after school etc. etc. If there was a small charge the school would generate income and the community would connect better and perhaps offer support re- Friends of the Schools or fundraise for equipment etc.. The bigger picture though for Powys is that we have falling pupil numbers because families are not attracted to living here. We have to tackle the economic issues and not just focus on the effect. The cause is something that can be tackled and should be tackled in my view.

- 3.144 Finally, one respondent suggested working Welsh Assembly members to improve funding and collaborating with colleges to provide more courses within Powys.

As I have already said, PCC should be working with Kirsty Williams to improve the funding arrangements for pupils in rural schools - something she has already said publicly that she agrees with. Powys should be helping all its schools and supporting them, not just trying to close them. Also, it was made clear at the meetings that the merger of Newtown and Presteigne schools was not working as well as had been hoped, so why put more schools in this position? If our schools had a better funding arrangement and PCC committed itself to working with and supporting the schools, rather than blaming everything on Governors and staff, our schools could improve. [...] Another option to be considered are colleges which teach our students the courses they need in farming, forestry and environmental skills - currently, many go to England for this training when we should offer it in Powys.

Organisation Responses

3.145 Each response from an organisation typically represents the views of many individuals, and feedback from these organisations has therefore been reported separately in this report.

Overview

3.146 Organisations that responded were informed on the questionnaire that their views may be published, and were asked to provide further details about their organisation, including what the organisation represents, the specific group or department, the area the organisation covers and how the views of members were gathered. Not all organisations supplied this information, but the names of organisations have been included in the report where provided.

3.147 Results for the closed questions have been presented below to provide a contrast between views from organisations and individuals. As it is not appropriate to report percentages where the sample size is so small, responses from organisations have been summarised to provide an outline of their views and feedback, and counts – rather than percentages – of responses to the closed questions of the consultation questionnaire are provided below.

Builth and Llandrindod Organisation Responses

3.148 Of the 182 responses to the main Builth and Llandrindod open consultation questionnaire, 4 indicated that they had been submitted on behalf of an organisation.

3.149 1 out of the 4 organisations responding to the consultations agrees that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues with English medium education.

3.150 2 of 4 agree with the proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school for pupils aged 11-18 to replace Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools from August 2017, that would continue to operate from the two existing sites.

3.151 Regarding the issues identified with Welsh medium education, 3 of 4 organisations agree that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to the problems identified.

3.152 2 of 4 organisations agree with the delivery of Welsh medium education through a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys.

3.153 The proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school is agreed with by all 4 of the organisations responding to the consultation.

3.154 Additionally, locating the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (subject to separate consultation) was also supported by all 4 organisations.

3.155 Finally, all 4 organisations agree with the proposed increased provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.

English Medium Education

Financial savings

It was also duly noted in the consultation that buildings assets in Llandrindod Wells HS were poor which reflects the poor investment from PCC over sustained years and will impact on budgetary costs in the future if the potential of one school on two sites goes ahead.

The Friends of Builth Wells High School

The prospective financial benefits for the potential changes were stated at the consultation meetings as being approx. 130K, the friends of BWHS believe this is not a significant saving and is very minimal when considering the total cost of the education budget for PCC. The potential costings as reported to the consultation are not seen as significant cost saving when considering the negative financial, social and psychological impact these changes have to the Builth Wells community. The cost of re-branding of the schools will swallow the cost savings that has been reported by the consultation process and the financial cost to families will also have a further negative social/financial impact.

The Friends of Builth Wells High School

Welsh Medium Education

Predetermination

The friends of BWH School believe that regardless of the consultation process that PCC have already manufactured the proposed changes without consultation to the public. There seems to be an irony that this proposal should be consulted on when PCC threatened to close WM education in Brecon and therefore there has already been an on mass exodus of families having to move pupils to ensure consistency and maintenance of welsh medium education for their children.

The Friends of Builth Wells High School

Equalities

Reduced transportation costs

The proposal to set up a dual site school will have less negative impact on the pupils of both Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High School. This proposal would lead to a reduction in transportation costs and disruption for pupils.

Llandrindod Wells Town Council

Special Educational Needs

How will special needs education be affected?

The Friends of Builth Wells High School

Additional Comment

One school on two sites impacts on equity of fund raising by specific community groups for specific projects or equipment. The present friends of BWHS will have to be dissolved along with the funds collected.

The Friends of Builth Wells High School

4. Governors' Meetings

Main issues and themes from the Governors' meetings

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 4.1 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the Governors' meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.
- 4.2 The Governors meetings were held at Llandrindod High School on 11 April 2016 and at Builth Wells High School on 28 April 2016. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers. Around 20 Governors attended over the two sessions.

Main Themes Raised at the Governors Meetings

Transport Costs

- 4.3 Participants asked questions around travel between the two school sites: whether or not potential additional travel requirements had been costed and factored into the savings cited in the case for change document; whether student travel would be funded; how teachers' transport would be funded and how this would affect their contracts and insurance arrangements:

Transport costs and savings from the proposed changes

Is the funding formula risk assessed - are the calculations based on the single school on two sites? (Llandrindod Governors)

Where does the £133,000 saving come from? Does it include transport provision costs? (Builth Governors)

Funding for students moving between sites

A new set of Governors might think it would be better that some subjects and or post 16 might be better centralised on one site and if so, would you support transporting those kids to that site? (Builth Governors)

Would Powys be willing to fund the travel for students? Which budget would this come from? (Llandrindod Governors)

It defies logic to say that to transport all pupils to Builth would cost less than to transport them to Llandrindod. Where do you get the figures? (Llandrindod Governors)

Teachers travelling between sites

Using the precedent of John Beddoes School, how many new staff were appointed and how many old staff claim travel and what is the cost? (Llandrindod Governors)

When you have a school across sites – you then have a cost of staff travel - middle managers and teachers ... This participant also asked about how this would affect their private vehicle insurance (Llandrindod Governors)

How many of the old staff will be able to claim travel and how much will that cost? (Llandrindod Governors)

Travel and teachers' contracts

If schools are going to close, have the authority looked at new contracts to be offered to the teachers; have negotiations started with unions? There may be conditions about staff having to travel (Llandrindod Governors)

Other Finance and Funding

- 4.4 Governors at both meetings wanted to know where additional funding would come from to enable the new school to offer the broader curriculum that PCC expects to see, particularly around growth in Welsh Medium subjects. They wanted to know how the additional and specialist staff would be provided and how to overcome the current recruiting difficulties. They asserted that any savings made from the closures would not be enough to meet the cost of addressing the issues and would put additional pressure on the existing staff to deliver more. Governors at Llandrindod wanted some clarification around the impacts of protected salaries on the specific cost savings assumptions set out in the consultation document:

Funding for additional teachers to deliver the wider range of courses

The class size problem does not go away – there will still be the same teachers teaching the same pupils. The savings are management costs but teaching costs will remain; projected savings will still be inadequate (Llandrindod Governors)

Surely more A levels will add pressure on our staff. We used to have a communications A level, for example, but we've been cutting back ... where will the money come from for all these teachers to run the courses? (Builth Governors)

You talked about A levels and funding not being increased across the schools, but we need to be clever how we cut the cake. We need more money if we're going to provide the staff to provide A levels in Welsh and a broader range of A levels. How will we recruit with our staff already under pressure? (Builth Governors)

Savings from staff restructuring

You won't find these savings through cutting middle management but will it fund enough to provide these extra courses and staff. Where will the money come from to expand Welsh medium provision at A level (Builth Governors)

If you keep pupils in the same location, you have the same teachers teaching the same pupils. Potential savings are management only. Agreed that management costs will be a saving. Can you make savings by structuring differently? (Llandrindod Governors)

New funding or protected budgets

Where is the money coming from for this additional funding for the proposed new school? There are no more learners. Surely you'll just still have the same pot of money to spend across the two sites ... rationalising staff and duplications of roles to save money - can this make up the shortfall to increase the breadth of courses the school can offer? (Builth Governors)

Thinking about the challenges faced by the local authority, is this the thin end of the wedge and will it be a salami slicing exercise and will it (funding) keep going down? Are these just about finance and efficiencies and not about quality? We know the challenge Powys faces and will the combined budget of the new school be enough and is the proposed £133,000 enough to go toward improving quality? (Builth Governors)

Another aspect to the funding is that education is a large budget, so once this is protected, other services suffer but it does show the council's commitment to education (Builth Governors)

Staff salary cost assumptions - protected salary arrangements

Can I return to £134k? It hasn't built in the fact that it doesn't account for people who have protected salaries. (In the consultation document it says that the) Council 'believes' rather than you 'know'. It needs to be costed more. Hasn't looked at staff losing jobs and having to reapply (Llandrindod Governors)

Bearing in mind that there will be savings, what happens if one TLR is taken away in the new structure? You are protected for three years. Will that still apply? (Llandrindod Governors)

Then there will be no saving for three years, as pay will be maintained because of cover for teachers' pay. If the proposal is that 11 to 16s in Llandrindod and Builth, timetabling and VCing will be continued, the only saving being made is the leadership team ignoring redundancy costs? (Llandrindod Governors)

Quality of Education

- ^{4.5} Both sets of Governors wanted clarification on how the current proposals would lead to tangible improvements in teaching and learning and suggested that the current proposal does not go far enough. Governors at Builth suggested that the only way to tackle the underlying funding issues impacting on quality is to form a single school on a single site as soon as possible. Governors at Llandrindod conceded that they are not against any merger per se but would like to see each site maintained as a distinct language centre with Llandrindod designated as the dedicated English medium 11-16 site and Builth as Welsh Medium. A number of additional issues were raised in relation to quality of education and these are presented below:

More evidence needed of how the proposal will lead to improving quality

How will the quality of teaching be improved? Will the same teachers and classes be in place? How is this going to improve teaching for children? (Llandrindod Governors)

Is there any other strategy than management change to improve learning in the new school? (Llandrindod Governors)

A need for specialist teachers

We need more specialists at KS3/KS4 (Builth Governors)

KS3 seem to get the raw end of the deal and we want the new proposal to tackle quality of provision 11-16 too or it feeds into poor post 16 (Builth Governors)

Inspection arrangements for the new school

When will there be another inspection from Estyn after the two schools are joined and special measures cease to exist? (Llandrindod Governors)

How is this going to improve the quality of teaching if we don't have an inspection for two years? (Llandrindod Governors)

'Interim' proposal doesn't tackle problems

The end game is to have a single site isn't it? ... Might it be better to wait until you have a firm proposal for a single school on one site rather than delivering in two phases? The risk is the second phase is left alone and forgotten about (Builth Governors)

There's so much talk about the new school that this interim proposal feels like a let-down. People feel like we're the winners in this process but I'm not sure it is unless we get a single sited school. We all agree that single site school has more benefits especially about quality of education (Builth Governors)

Desire for a dedicated English language site at Llandrindod

If this interim Governing Body is put together and decides that the only way they can deliver 11-16 English medium is on one site – what happens? (Llandrindod Governors)

As a Governing Body we are not against the merger. But we don't think your proposal goes far enough ... should split into two according to medium e.g. Welsh and English 11-16 on two separate sites (Llandrindod Governors)

Buildings and Maintenance

^{4.6} Given the challenges identified in the case for change, participants said that the proposals leave the schools buildings in a state of limbo. Governors remain unconvinced that there would be new money to address the current conditions of the buildings and the maintenance backlog:

Should it go through, will there be capital investment across both sites? What's on the maintenance backlog? (Builth Governors)

I think the one site model delivers the full benefit but one school on two sites doesn't solve surplus places or maintenance backlog issues (Builth Governors)

If we're still on two sites ... how to make the buildings fit for purpose? How will the state of buildings change? Where does the money come from? (Llandrindod Governors)

Governance of the new school

- 4.7 Governors wanted to know how the process for selecting a new Governing Body would unfold and were keen for PCC to recognise the challenges faced by any 'new' set of Governors in implementing the far-reaching changes to a challenging timeframe:

Will the Governing Body be made from the two existing Governors? We need a high quality body - how do we choose the best people to deliver and face those challenges rather than ducking them? There's a risk that it is the longest serving that are thought of as the best (Builth Governors)

I am getting worried about the Governing Body and the workload to be undertaken in the coming months (Llandrindod Governors)

The timescale is also very challenging for HR and recruitment into the new school entity. The timetable is very challenging to make this work. So my point is that the interim step doesn't bring any of the benefits PCC wants to see; a single site does (Builth Governors)

- 4.8 They also wanted to know whether the Governing Body would be responsible for appointing staff to the new school:

Will you change the middle management or is it is the Governing Body of the school that appoints middle management with the support of the local authority – through teaching and HR? (Llandrindod Governors)

Impact on Students

- 4.9 Governors again underlined the potentially negative impacts that change would have on pupil attainment and particularly in regard to pupil/staff relationships and the impacts of extra travel and upheavals implicit in the proposals:

Working the strengths of the two schools is where certain subjects and specialisms are developed but will this degrade the personal relationship with pupils? (Builth Governors)

Travel time for GCSE will be an issue if there is one site per subject. I am worried about pupils having to travel back and forth between sites (Llandrindod Governors)

Current pupils are at risk of not achieving their full potential during the upheaval (Llandrindod Governors)

Impact on Teachers

- 4.10 Attendees highlighted that any improvements in quality rely on addressing the excessive workloads faced by teaching staff. They also argued that the proposal and continuing uncertainty around the future of the school exacerbates the current challenges around recruitment and retention of teachers.

How will we recruit with our staff already under pressure? Surely more A levels will add pressure on our staff (Builth Governors)

Teachers have low morale. They're being 'being kicked in the teeth' (Llandrindod Governors)

We have the same number of class rooms and teaching staff so how does the proposal for one school on two sites help with resilience? (Llandrindod Governors)

Recruitment to a school going to close is dangerous; people are unlikely to apply to a closing school (Llandrindod Governors)

Post 16 Education

- 4.11 Governors in the Llandrindod meeting wanted clarification over whether the Governing Body would be free to choose the structure of post 16 provision at the proposed new school. Governors in Builth are more certain that co-locating A levels on a single site would create a viable critical mass for a sixth form. Most agreed, however, that continued uncertainty around the future of post 16 provision would lead to increased migration of post 16 learners out of mid-Powys:

Concerns over increased migration for post 16 education

Will this consultation drive people out of county for post 16 provision? Until we have the ultimate vision for a new school with a brilliant sixth form, are we damaging the prospects by this interim recommendation for a new school on two sites? Why can't we shoot for the stars and make a proposal for a new school? (Builth Governors)

Won't the post 16 plans for the Brecon learning campus just take post 16 learners from this area? (Builth Governors)

Comments on the range of post 16 choices

Reason for change- talks about difficulty providing a full curriculum and providing a legal minimum through post 16 collaboration- is the school barely achieving this legal minimum at present (Builth Governors)

But some of those subjects will be the same subjects. I want to know about the breadth and width of the subjects (Llandrindod Governors)

Clarity is needed on how the location of the sixth form will be decided upon

How will post 16 education be arranged across the two sites? (The consultation document) states that the new Governing Body will be encouraged to run the sixth form from one site. Does that mean that the Governing Body can also decide to run the sixth form from both sites? (Llandrindod Governors)

How long would it take for sixth form provision to be established? I know three young people who intend to travel to Hereford (Llandrindod Governors)

A single dedicated site for Post 16

The opportunity to develop the post 16 is not something that is coming out strongly enough in these proposals and maybe not being sold to the public as well as it could be. We need a clearer vision of a brand like a sixth form science or arts academy on the sites- somewhere parents and pupils would want to go (Builth Governors)

Can't we create a stand-alone sixth form institution on one site and leave the current under 11-16 provisions alone? (Builth Governors)

Part of the issue here is transport across more than one site ... so the preference is to have one sixth form site on either here or Builth ... This single sixth form on one of the sites will mitigate against people leaving the area for post 16 provision and there is support for centralising sixth form provision on one of the sites (Llandrindod Governors)

Do we attract any post 16 from other areas into mid-Powys? A central sixth form provision may be an incentive for pupils to come into this catchment to study - notwithstanding Welsh medium provision (Builth Governors)

Can't we create a stand-alone sixth form institution on one site and leave the current under 11-16 provisions alone? Can staff have dual contracts to work across two schools? We need to clarify how staff structure will work across the two schools (Builth Governors)

Welsh Medium Education

- 4.12 Governors at Builth are concerned that the proposals for a dual stream site at Builth might diminish the long-term aspiration of establishing a fully bilingual 2A school at Builth Wells. Governors at Llandrindod would also prefer the establishment of single language centres at each site (Welsh at Builth and English at Llandrindod):

I'm worried about our status as a bilingual school if we merge with an English school. What will be the effect of injecting more English medium pupils into the school by a merger? Will this diminish the vision to become a fully bilingual school in mid Wales? (Builth Governors)

It is essential to create the draw from the Brecon area by growing the Welsh ethos here; we can't risk that by marginalising the Welsh stream by merging with an English school (Builth Governors)

Class sizes and financial difficulties can be got over by ... having schools on one site - merge English medium on one site and Welsh and sixth form on the other site to minimise transport and staff (Llandrindod Governors)

- 4.13 Both sets of Governors called for a more realistic assessment of the likely numbers of pupils, costs and resources needed to make Builth Wells a viable option for a bilingual school. There were concerns about the assumptions made in the consultation document over the numbers transferring to Builth Wells High School from the Brecon area and other areas within the County or choosing in favour of an English medium education to avoid travelling to school:

Let's say that after the consultation in Brecon the Welsh medium students won't go to Builth, what change will be made to the proposals? (Llandrindod Governors)

The problem is that there's a small cohort of Welsh learners across the County and the figures are based on the South only. Surely it should be looking at the whole picture including the North ... which areas are feeding to Builth currently. Why are you not looking at Brecon and Newtown centres as they have the biggest number of learners? (Llandrindod Governors)

But you built a Welsh medium primary in Newtown. If you are saying Rhayader is one of the feeder schools why doesn't it go to Newtown? (Llandrindod Governors)

Remember Builth, Llandod and Rhayader are not Welsh speaking towns. The reason there are more learners in Builth is that they are bussed in (Llandrindod Governors)

You don't know what the effect later will be on people having to travel and wanting to do Welsh medium secondary education. Less people may be willing to learn Welsh because of travel (Llandrindod Governors)

- 4.14 One Governor pointed out that current staffing provision would not allow Welsh medium capacity to grow quickly:

Every teacher who can teach through Welsh already has a full timetable - they can't deliver more overnight. This change and expansion would have to be gradual so there won't be an overnight big increase in Welsh language provision (Builth Governors)

Lack of evidence within Consultation Document

- 4.15 Governors at Llandrindod queried many of the assumptions underpinning the case for change and asked for more evidence for statements made throughout the Consultation Document:

This document isn't very smart and doesn't give a clear understanding of what will be done and when. How will the state of buildings change? Where does the money come from? (Llandrindod Governors)

How valid and how robust is the evidence? Has it been independently evaluated? You've got correlations but you haven't got the cause. You've got no causal link. No proof to support it (Llandrindod Governors)

Coming back to 130k saving, how has this been come to? It has not been built in that some people will still have protected salaries and redundancies? 'The council believes' isn't a very strong statement and 130k is just looking at removing one set of management and not people losing jobs (Llandrindod Governors)

Other issues and sub themes

- 4.1 A number of individual sub themes and comments emerged from the Governors meetings and are listed below for brevity.

Figure 51: Summary of Other themes raised in the Governors meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Future funding assumptions-clarification-staffing	<i>Looking at the numbers and modelling, is their organigram for staffing structure cost modelled? (Builth Governors)</i>
Parental choice of site	<i>If it became one school, will pupils be able to choose and be transported to their preferred site? Otherwise it seems like it will be no change to how it is now (Builth Governors)</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
Avoid children travelling between sites for lessons during a single day	<i>Children prefer only one journey a day and not travelling across different sites to access courses (Builth Governors)</i>
Process might have been sold better by not branding as 'closures'	<i>Could this be achieved without talking about closing schools? Think about the impact of this process. Could it have been achieved through, for example, federation and through contracts and management changes without talking about closing? Can't you create a new organisation through changing the contracts of teachers without closing anything? Is there a sense of brand loyalty to a school? Is it a shame that one school on one site and closing schools was ever mentioned? Closure is a negative word- the language and the terms used have set things up in a negative frame whereas a rebrand can be a positive thing (Builth Governors)</i>
Cost implications of additional lunch time activities to cater for learners from South Powys	<i>Have all these extra curriculum activities been costed into the proposals and is lunch time enough to provide all the clubs and activities kids need? [Point related to impact on after school activities offered to Welsh medium learners travelling to Builth from Brecon/Sennybridge area.] (Builth Governors)</i>

5. Staff Meetings

Main issues and themes from the Staff meetings

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 5.1 This chapter is in two parts: the first is overview of the staff meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.
- 5.2 The staff meetings were held at Builth Wells High School on 28 April 2016 and at Llandrindod High School on 14 April 2016. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of Powys County Council officers. Around 56 staff attended over the two sessions.

Main Themes Raised at the Staff Meetings

Finance and Funding

- 5.3 Teaching staff argued that the proposals do nothing to tackle the underlying funding challenges facing the schools, given that the Powys budget is currently lower than elsewhere in Wales and that more funds will not be forthcoming. They are concerned that the proposals in their current form may be unworkable without reducing the timetable to five lessons and putting jobs, pay and conditions at risk:

The only way you can do all this within budget is compress the six lessons in Llandrindod to five to save the staffing costs which you can then use to fund the additional courses or free up middle managers – which then will mean that teachers will lose their jobs. Without any additional money you are hard pressed to raise standards by adding additionality or extra training – we seem to be trying to rob Peter to pay Paul (Builth Wells Staff)

But if you have 35 lessons a week instead of 30 lessons a week you need more teachers. When we went from a six to a five period timetable we lost staff (Builth Wells Staff)

Money in this area is a lot less than other areas in Wales ... Is it actually in that respect going to benefit? It's not a level playing field compared with South Wales schools (Builth Wells Staff)

Being at the chalk face and being a head of department, I'm finding it difficult to understand how we can improve those when you say your funding will go down ... This participant questioned the figure of £123 less per pupil. (Llandrindod Staff)

- 5.4 Staff pointed out that any savings through redundancies would be delayed by a number of years and questioned, therefore, whether the upheaval was justified. They also pointed out that there would be a cost of transporting pupils and staff between sites and whether this had been accounted for in the savings estimate of £133,000.

If you've got two heads of faculty which will end up being advertised as one then the person that loses their role will still be entitled to their pay for up to three years. And then all the TLR holders will get an increment because they'll have more teaching responsibilities. Everybody's wages would go up – so it seems that it will take quite a long time for savings to be made. It seems quite a lot of heartache for what will take a long time to make any savings. (Llandrindod Staff)

There may well be travelling involved for students and staff. Would that be able to be costed within the £133,000 – would that be enough and if no, what is the point of all this to save £133,000? (Llandrindod Staff)

Quality of Education

- 5.5 Participants remain to be convinced that the proposals for a larger school on two sites would improve educational standards, choice and outcomes for pupils.

My son's 11 – he isn't going to know that the head of department or the teaching is different. How is his education going to be different from his older brother? How is he going to get more GCSE choice? (Llandrindod Staff)

The aim of this evening was to convince me that the new proposals would improve standards. I'm afraid you have failed miserably. It seems to me it's a financial exercise (Llandrindod Staff)

I understand the financial pressures and I understand that Estyn aren't terribly happy with us – I don't understand how saving £133,000 and a massive upheaval improves the experience of our pupils (Llandrindod Staff)

Apart from increasing subjects, how will it increase quality of education? (Builth Wells Staff)

- 5.6 They also called for evidence that larger schools create better outcomes for pupils or that having non-specialists affects standards:

Where is the evidence that an average year group of 120 pupils would lead to better outcomes than a group of 100 which is roughly what we have ... the council believes a new school with a minimum of 600 pupils in KS3 and KS4 would help to maximise the curriculum benefits. But there's no evidence that would lead to better outcomes is there? If you could say to me that ... if you get to 120 in a year group they statistically do better than kids with 100 in a year group, I would shut up (Llandrindod Staff)

I would also argue that having non-specialists ... it hasn't affected our standards at KS3 (Llandrindod Staff)

- 5.7 Staff were also somewhat sceptical over the feasibility of running a broader curriculum without co-locating courses:

I want to query how having one school over two sites will benefit up to KS4 with a mind to increasing the number of options. Unless you have students and staff travelling between two sites, you are not going to be able to offer additional GCSEs. It's likely we can offer the GCSEs on this site and similar GCSEs on the other site but if you want to include more GCSEs and you only

have a take-up of three on one site and four on the other, that's not going to be feasible (Llandrindod Staff)

Going back to the question of efficiencies for A level – you said that music, for example – there are small numbers at Llandod. What number would be considered to be efficient? What would the average five year value of pupils in a lesson be? (Builth Wells Staff)

- 5.8 A skills audit was also suggested as a way of rationalising the subject specialisms of the two schools:

I understand the theory and I even accept that we have non-specialists teaching subjects. Knowing our school and Builth – I know a lot of the staff there. I don't know how having more of the same ... has a skills audit been carried out? It might improve that KS3. I'm not convinced you'll have the specialist subjects at post 16. So it might cause a little bit of improvement in some places (Llandrindod Staff)

Impact on Teachers

- 5.9 Teachers at Builth are concerned about job security, retention and recruitment of staff as well as how any possible travel between sites would impact on their preparation and management time; whether they would have to sacrifice their lunchtimes for travel and how the travel costs would be covered. In Llandrindod, the implications for staff contracts and ring fencing of teaching posts dominated the discussions, with some suggesting that the post of head teacher should be subject to open recruitment if standards in the combined school are to be improved:

Contracts and travel time

Would our place of employment change? If A level goes up to Llandod (the two full time teachers here) would have significant gaps in our timetable. However, Llandod has two [subject] teachers as well so if the Governors decided that four is too many there would be one redundancy but then there would be a gap in Llandod to be filled. Where would our place of employment be? Would we be expected to travel and how would that be reflected in the cost for staff? Where would we stand in terms of time for travel? (Builth Wells Staff)

Extra management demands, logistical management challenges and impact on quality

At the moment I have two hours management a fortnight to oversee the department which is easy enough to do. However, timetable-wise it's easy enough to see when you'd need to be in Builth or Llandod but in that management time to try to oversee colleagues on the other campus could be a logistical nightmare (Builth Wells Staff)

When you're looking at curriculum managers' quality assuring the departments and monitoring what's going on, on two sites, this is going to increase their workload and make life extremely challenging for them (Llandrindod Staff)

Myself and a lot of people in my department are currently teaching eight different subjects. If we were on a new school site, I can see how we could have new teachers for one subject but I don't see it improving the quality ... Would I be just the textile teacher for Builth or would I be travelling back and forth? My friends, back where I live, have to do that and travel in their dinner hours ... my concern is not having the time to do all that travelling (Builth Wells Staff)

Job insecurity, retention and recruitment

If the School Governing Body isn't going to let us know until next April then we might be out of a job by then ... it's going to be a problem for a lot of staff who are set up here to then go looking for jobs elsewhere ... You could end up with people deciding to jump ship and leave and that means it's going to be a problem for the area. It would be my worry that I'm not going to have a job full stop. Most of us have got mortgages and families (Builth Wells Staff)

If your post 16 budget is going to be reduced how are you going to offer so many more A levels and where are you going to get the staff from to teach them – and also you're going to have to pay those staff (Builth Wells Staff)

Ring-fencing posts

Going back to the ring fencing, can you elaborate? If there are two heads of a subject – there will be one in the new school. What exactly is ring fenced? There will be 'a job' but not 'the job' or salary as now? (Llandrindod Staff)

So it's the new Governing Body that does the ring-fencing and the ring-fencing is about all the jobs and not the individual roles. Would a maths teacher be able to go for a science job if they weren't qualified or only the type of job they had before? (Llandrindod Staff)

Why is there an option to ring fence the head teacher post? It seems obvious to put out an open advertisement if you want to improve standards (Llandrindod Staff)

Changes in contractual terms and conditions

You said that there will be new contracts. I had my permanent contract 20 years ago. Does my contract differ from somebody who was given a contract last year regards retirement age and if this is so, would my new contract under a new school change my terms and conditions, for example on things like retirement date? (Llandrindod Staff)

Governance

- 5.10 The constituency and timeframe for establishing a Shadow Governing Body was something staff wanted greater clarity about.

I would like to know if we do go ahead, how would the interim Governing Body be put together. Can we guarantee that there will be equal numbers across the two schools? (Builth Wells Staff)

Is there any guideline for the Governing Body and the new structure? (Builth Wells Staff)

Single site - mixed Messages

- 5.11 Participants cited an apparent shift in position by PCC around their proposals for a single site school in the Builth Wells area; namely that a new build site has become an 'aspiration' and not an intention. They suggested that the consultation document now sends mixed messages to parents and the community about the long term future of the schools.

The word 'objective' implies something we'd like to happen. It says parents in Llandrindod may choose their children to attend other schools due to the long-term 'objective' to establish a new school in the Builth Wells area (Llandrindod Staff)

Mixed messages are being given ... What I would like to happen now is that any reference to a single site be removed from this document. If it's not part of the consultation now, it shouldn't be in the documentation (Llandrindod Staff)

I really want to get behind the process for change but it's very hard for us to get behind the process for change when you're giving us mixed messages. I think you need to work with the community – if you'd like us to get on board with change, you have to meet us half way (Llandrindod Staff)

Inaccuracies in Consultation Document

- ^{5.12} A number of apparent inaccuracies in the consultation document were raised by staff at Llandrindod, leading to accusations of predetermination in relation to the one school, one site 'aspiration' since they appear to unfairly cast Llandrindod High School in a bad light compared with Builth Wells High School. In particular, they highlighted unfair and inaccurate reporting of the Llandrindod budget and inaccurate scoring which led to the current option being selected over an option preferred by the Governors and staff of Llandrindod School:

Inaccuracies and predetermination

My blood was boiling at the things that are wrong; that were stated about our school that weren't true. If you want us to get involved and be part of it, it has to be right or you get our backs up because it makes us feel you have already made your decision. And it says that your preferred option is the one for the single school – and that made me feel very angry and I'm sure it made others very angry and that there is a hidden agenda –the decision's already been made (Llandrindod Staff)

It's not that we're against change. We want the best for our pupils but we want something presented to us that is factually correct, balanced ... That is really important (Llandrindod Staff)

I have got concerns – this is a document that parents and staff are having and you are asking for a consultation and this has to be accurate. It is not fair on staff, pupils, parents, community. I only sat there for a couple of hours and immediately spotted inaccuracies (Llandrindod Staff)

Out of date, inaccurate, unfair budget figures are misleading

To write in there a statement that makes it look like we are rubbish at managing our budget and to put nothing about the fact that they (another school in the consultation process) have had to have a loan to get out of their problem really, really angers me (Llandrindod Staff)

That budget that I sent out was the first draft and I was asked for it by the Governing Body ... In fact we have saved money in the last year - we are in surplus for this year. Next year we'll be in surplus. For the following year we'll be in surplus ... It's another example of inaccuracies. Why is there no mention of the budget deficit that has been in Builth Wells High School for several years? Many other schools in Powys are operating on deficit ... I also manage the buildings. I

don't know where the figure of £3.6m comes from. We've maintained those buildings. We have not been told there is anything insufficient in it ... Builth recently had £2m spent on their new canteen ... Our buildings are a lot older. Nobody has come to me and said we think this needs doing – to work with us on it. I think it's very unfair (Llandrindod Staff)

I think it's very unfair ... We weren't at any time told that that first draft would be used for this consultation ... I think it was very unfair to use the work in progress rather than the final budget and not do the same for Builth Wells. Why not admit that Builth has been in financial difficulties. By implication it is saying that this school is not able to manage its financial affairs (Llandrindod Staff)

Option appraisal process was flawed

The overall conclusion says that following this assessment it is clear that the option that scores highest is Option 3A. Well, that scores 14. Option 5 scores 15. That is important because Option 5 is a strong argument for English medium education remaining in Llandrindod High School ... that is factually incorrect and you make a conclusion that is incorrect (Llandrindod Staff)

Post 16 Education

- 5.13 Participants recognise the challenge of delivering the Learning Skills Measure in rural Wales with a backdrop of reducing budgets and relatively small numbers of learners. Those at Llandrindod challenged the assumption that greater choice of A-levels is necessarily better, and argued that improved quality in a narrower range of A level subjects is a more realistic ambition in rural areas:

What really should be happening is that local authorities should be in a position to turn round to Welsh Government and say because of the rurality of our situation, we do not have the money to provide the best education service for our pupils ... the financial side is driving the proposal ... the original aims of improving standards and getting the best education gets pushed aside by the need to save money (Llandrindod Staff)

There are people in Welsh Government possibly starting to question the Skills Measure ... The Russell Group identifies (in their document 'Informed Choices') a list of facilitating subjects – 'choosing these at advanced level leaves open a wide range of options for university studies' They list eight or nine core 'facilitating subjects'... It says 'if you don't know what you want to study at University by taking two facilitating subjects will leave a wide range of degree subjects open to you'. It asks students, 'if you are not taking the core subjects, are you avoiding the challenge?' So my question to you is are we trying to avoid the challenge by not supporting small schools, small sixth forms ... For A levels we have the second best average for A to B and we're third best in the County for A* to C. We have plenty of students going through to the best universities. I think there is a huge flaw in the argument about size of sixth form ... our concern is that this is based on a policy that is going to be overturned in the future (Llandrindod Staff)*

- 5.14 A participant highlighted a particular difficulty regarding current science facilities in Builth Wells High School that would be too small for the numbers in a larger, merged sixth form as suggested under the current proposals:

I teach biology A level and if I have, say, doubling up to 25 I haven't sufficient equipment here – I can see that could be quite difficult with teaching allocations (Builth Wells Staff)

Welsh Medium Education

- 5.15 Builth Wells High School staff wanted clarity about the linguistic status of the proposed new school; specifically around duplication of the bilingual curriculum on both sites and whether offering Welsh medium only at a single site is open to legal challenge:

So it won't be that it will be all Welsh in Builth, so, for instance every single English lesson will be taught in Llandrindod? It will still be like it is now – English and Welsh? (Builth Wells Staff)

Is Powys open to a legal challenge if parents want to send their children to the Llandrindod site for full Welsh medium teaching? Some don't come to Builth because of siblings and peer pressure and staying locally is more important (Builth Wells Staff)

Other comments/sub themes

- 5.16 A number of individual sub themes and comments emerged from the staff meetings and are listed below for brevity. They cover a range of issues raised by individual members of staff including negative impacts of closing Llandrindod High School on the local community; details of travel arrangements and paying for pupil travel; whether the Estyn FSM league for Builth Wells is appropriate; the negative impact of a harmonised timetable between schools on staff numbers; whether lessons from the merger of John Beddoes and Newtown High Schools have been considered in this proposal and whether the new head teacher would be a Welsh speaker.

Figure 52: Summary of Other themes raised in the School Staff meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Long term aspiration for single site would damage Llandrindod Community	<i>The fifth proposal down says no negative impact on community but there is an objective, something to aim for, which is a new school. As a member of the community that is a huge concern (Llandrindod Staff)</i>
Travel for out of catchment pupils to the new, two site high school	<i>My daughter is coming up to high school in September – lives out of catchment, so obviously because I work here she's coming here – she'll travel down with me. However, if we become one school does she then become liable to be transported and if so, to which campus? (Llandrindod Staff)</i> <i>From Rhyader the Welsh medium obviously get bussed down to Builth, but the English medium don't. But what if we were one school? (Llandrindod Staff)</i>
Quality and Estyn inspection cross-school comparators – are they fair/valid?	<i>If we are comparing like with like as regards schools in South Powys, then we are a bilingual school. We are also in a different FSM league compared with other schools in South Powys. Therefore, you could compare Swansea FC or Chelsea with Macclesfield Town. Would that be a valid comparison? ... We could go down the road of how we got into that league - no point about rurality and that is how Powys is disadvantaged in many ways (Builth Wells Staff)</i>
Harmonised timetable across two sites will lead to redundancies	<i>We'd have to have synchronisation of timetables. At the moment they (LHS) have six lessons; we currently have five – presumably there will have to be parity between the two sites. Obviously if we go to the 50 minute timetable ... somewhere there's going to be an increase in redundancies (Builth Wells Staff)</i>
A Welsh speaker as head teacher?	<i>Will that person (new head teacher) be a Welsh speaker (has heard anecdotally that assurance has been given about this)? (Llandrindod Staff)</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
Welsh medium pupil numbers are growing	<i>I wouldn't say cohorts are small. There are smaller cohorts in Powys. Our cohort here is growing. I heard from Builth Wells Primary School this morning and they're almost 50:50 there in regards to who's in English medium and Welsh medium. To say small cohorts; I would say 'smaller' would be better (Builth Wells Staff)</i>
Lack of confidence in PCC to deliver change	<i>Some years ago Powys put money into consultation reorganisation and nothing has happened. Is this the same on this occasion? (Builth Wells Staff)</i>
Definition of 'interim' period	<i>I'd like some clarification with some of the terminology. An 'interim period' means something else will happen? (Llandrindod Staff)</i>
Migration of pupils out of county as a consequence of proposal	<i>There is evidence for pupils leaving merged schools in Powys ... Some go over the border into other counties (Llandrindod Staff)</i>
Evidence of good practice and lessons learned from John Beddoes/Newtown school merger?	<i>A precedent has been set of merging schools in Powys ... Have you gone into speak with middle managers there to see if that has led to an improved range of subjects? If so are there any documents so we can read that please? Because it seems obvious that you would do that first before presenting that model to us (Llandrindod Staff)</i>

6. Secondary School Workshops

Main issues and themes from secondary school pupils

Introduction

Overview of Workshops

6.1 ORS facilitated and reported discussion sessions with Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School pupils aged between 11 and 18 (key stages 3 to 5; year groups 7 to 13). All year groups were invited to nominate a number of pupils to attend. The point or purpose of these workshops was to allow PCC to engage with, and listen to, existing pupils - and to elicit their opinions, queries and concerns on the proposed changes. They also offered the pupils an opportunity to become more informed about the consultation process, the case for change and the proposals themselves.

6.2 The workshops were held and attended as follows:

Figure 53: Details of the Secondary School pupil workshops

Location	Date	Approx. no. of attendees
Builth Wells High School	Friday 8th April 2016	66
Llandrindod High School	Monday 18th April 2016	60

1.1 ORS worked in collaboration with PCC to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meeting, which covered the following topics:

- Awareness of the consultation;
- Opinion on the case for change;
- Views on proposals; and
- Alternative options

1.2 The participants were encouraged to ask questions throughout.

Reporting

1.3 This section of the report presents the main themes and key points arising from the workshops held at Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. The opinions expressed were not always unanimous and we have endeavoured to reflect the range of views expressed. Some important common themes emerged from discussions across the workshops and these are reported below; but issues relating to a particular school or key stage have been highlighted. Many quotations have been used, not because we wish to endorse any views, but in order to illustrate some of the more common and important themes and issues.

Awareness of Consultation and Proposals

1.4 The majority of the pupils across all of the workshops were aware of at least some of the proposals - particularly the plans to establish a new dual-stream secondary school operating across the two sites, including the appointment of a new head teacher, senior leadership team and a new Governing Body. There was also knowledge of possible changes for Welsh medium education, although some pupils were not entirely sure of the details of the proposal, or had made/heard incorrect assumptions such as: *'Builth will become a totally Welsh school and this one would be the English school for the area'* (KS3, Llandrindod High School).

1.5 Furthermore, there was confusion and uncertainty more generally among a few of the pupils:

There has been a lot of discussion and debate over the years; one minute there's this and one minute there's that ... it's confusing (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

We're not 100% on anything, it's all very uncertain and we're worried (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

1.6 There was a lack of trust in PCC among some Llandrindod High School pupils, who accused the Council of being biased, mainly due to the alleged inaccuracies within the consultation document. They also criticised the fact that the cabinet would make the final decision rather than the whole county:

There are errors in the consultation document in terms of numbers not adding up ... it does feel very biased towards a school at Builth (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

There are so many mistakes in the document that it seems not much effort has been put into something really important. This is our education we're talking about (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

Who makes the ultimate decision – is it Cabinet or the Council members? All of the Council members are elected and are in good spread, they are not all from Montgomeryshire as the Cabinet seem to be. Also, the Cabinet all seem to be for these proposals anyway, which doesn't seem fair (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

Main Findings

Views on the Case for Change

1.7 The participating pupils at Builth Wells High School, especially those in the Key Stage 3 workshop, generally accepted that changes to the delivery of secondary school education were necessary; they especially recognised the issues within their own school as well as the need to improve the quality of education across Powys:

At the moment we have two teachers sharing a room (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

We need to change something to get good teaching quality provided to everyone (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

1.8 Opinion was more mixed among the Llandrindod High School workshops. Those who rejected the case for change argued that their school was *'fine as it is'* and delivered *'some of the best A Level and GCSE results around'*. Others questioned whether the school's unsatisfactory performance was due to *'a blip*

with certain pupils' or 'a small minority of children who don't strive to learn' rather than long-term issues. PCC was also accused of focussing on money rather than education.

- 1.9 Others were sceptical that the proposals would have any positive impact on education or saving money, and felt that they were merely a means for PCC to appear to be proactive:

It feels like we're being messed around just so that PCC can 'do something'. People in the school and the community can't really see how it will change anything or save money, but feel that it's just change for the sake of change (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

How many pupils' education will have to be played with before we get a genuine outcome that makes a genuine difference? (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.10 The consultation itself was blamed creating uncertainty and thereby exacerbating the issues with teaching quality by discouraging new teachers to the school:

People thinking that this school is under threat is actually affecting the teaching here and puts teachers off coming here (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.11 Nevertheless, a large proportion of pupils identified and discussed the poor quality of education and teaching within their school which they felt needed to be improved, such as:

The shortage of permanent teachers and the over-reliance on supply staff

The supply teachers are different each time and it's not really their subject. They do their best but they don't really know how we've been learning (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

We've had six ICT teachers this year because they keep leaving (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

The SEN (Special Educational Needs) provision at Llandrindod is short staffed (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

The lack of specialist teachers

The school needs to change slightly ... teachers are teaching outside of their specialisms which is an issue (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

We had a science lesson where we knew more than the teacher because it wasn't her subject! (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

There's a pretty poor standard of teaching here. In maths we don't learn anything because the teacher is pretty bad because she's not a specialist maths teacher (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

The lack of subject choices for GCSE and A Level

We would like more choice at GCSE (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

One of my friends wanted to do music at GCSE but because there wasn't much demand they had to merge it with drama to make 'performing arts' which is not good for her (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

They (both schools) can't offer people the choices they would have at a bigger school; at GCSE and A Level people are stuck with qualifications they don't want (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

1.12 Issues with the school's facilities were also mentioned:

Our sixth form common room is tiny; we can't study there because it is too small and there is no ICT that works (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

The toilets need improving (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

We've got no rugby pitch although we have a rugby team; there are no posts or proper white lines or anything (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

There are a few places in the school that need a bit of structural work; in our form water drips on us from the skylight if it's raining heavily (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

1.13 A member of the school council supported the need to change by reasoning, *'If we don't change anything how will it improve?'*

Proposal for a new dual-stream medium secondary school

Questions and queries

1.14 Students asked many questions about the proposal to establish a new dual-stream secondary school across the current two sites, which were focused around the following:

How the new school would be funded; the amount of savings that would arise from the merger; how the savings would be made and how they would be re-invested;

The benefits for pupils of one school over two sites compared with the current set-up;

Whether the schools would be brought out of special measures;

How the changes might affect education and the curriculum;

Whether teachers would lose their jobs, have to re-apply, or be required to travel between the two schools;

Who the new head teacher would be and what would happen if no one applied for job. A Builth pupil also suggested that a *'professional business manager'* would be better suited to the role than someone from a teaching background;

Whether the timetables of the two sites would be synchronised in terms of the start/finish times and number of lessons per day;

Whether the schools' current name, uniform and number of pupils would be change;

Whether the current school rules would change, for example: *'In Llandrindod we can't have phones on site but in Builth they are on allowed on break and at lunch; would rules like that change?'* (KS3, Llandrindod High School);

Whether the current school councils would remain separate or be required to merge; and

How sports events would be handled, such as competitions and sports days.

Concerns

- 1.15 Pupils in both schools were sceptical as to whether one head teacher and senior leadership team across two sites would benefit pupils or teachers. Concerns included:

The additional work the teachers would be required to take on might increase stress levels and reduce the amount of time, support and guidance for pupils; larger workloads would warrant larger salaries, this impacting on the aspirations to save money from the proposals

The heads of departments and specialist teachers will have more to do because they have more pupils and thus they will have more stress. This could result in sickness and people leaving which again will mean less consistency for pupils (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

One head teacher spread between two sites doesn't really sound better to me; they will be spread too thinly and won't be able to dedicate enough time either (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

Wouldn't that be cause for an increase in their salaries because of the increased stress? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

In a school of 1,000 plus pupils, how will you make sure they have access to adequate and through support at all levels? (KS4, Builth Wells High School)

The head teacher and leadership team not being at a school site when needed

If you needed to go and see the head teacher with your parents, they may need to take time off work to go to the Builth site as it would be further away (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

If there is a head of department shared between sites, pupils won't as easily be able to go and see them. That could affect standards of education if you need help there and then (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

What would happen if something kicked off on site and the senior staff were all at the other? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Whether heads of department on the senior leadership team would spend more time on management and administration than teaching – this is considered to be waste of specialist teachers.

- 1.16 The additional travel which might be required between the two sites and the negative impact this would have on recruitment, current staff and pupils were discussed. Concerns included:

Travelling between sites would lessen the time for learning or require a longer school day.

Travelling takes time away from lessons, will more travelling happen? (KS4, Builth Wells High School)

How would transportation between the two sites be arranged and would it detract from lessons in any way? Would you have to lengthen the school day to make sure this doesn't have an effect? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Students would further suffer if staff - especially specialist teachers - spent more time travelling and less time in the classroom.

If specialist teachers are having to travel more between sites, aren't we taking away from people's education because they are having to wait for the teacher to arrive from the other sites? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

You wouldn't have as close connections with teachers if they are split over two sites (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

If required to travel between sites potential new staff may be put off of coming to the school, thus hindering PCC's aim to encourage specialist, good quality teaching to the area.

Who is going to come to work in a school where staff are having to move from one site to another? (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

Families might also be discouraged from moving to the area.

What families would move to an area where pupils would have to move from one site to another? (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

The cost of travel for both pupils and staff would undermine PCC's plan to save money.

Have you taken into account the teachers' fuel to travel between sites and buses for pupils as well if there is one school? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Transportation of pupils between the two sites should not be put on parents – the school should be providing it but that would be the extra cost? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.17 Another worry, identified particularly by Llandrindod pupils, was the extent to which the proposals would affect staff. While some were concerned about teachers losing their jobs and how this uncertainty in itself might affect teaching quality, others felt unsettled about having different teachers. Overall pupils argued that being taught by their current teachers, who they 'know well' was important, providing consistency that they valued:

Will our current teachers have to re-apply for their jobs? That will increase insecurity which could affect our education going forward (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

Would we have some of the teachers from Builth coming here? How would that affect our GCSEs? Because we would have to get used to the teachers we don't know (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

I think if the schools merge and we have different teachers it will be the same situation but worse because we will have to get used to a whole new set of staff who will all have different ways of teaching and won't know what we're used to (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.18 Additional, specific concerns raised about the two schools merging into one were as follows:

How having a larger school with more pupils would impact on: classroom sizes, which some felt would become too big and impact on both learning and bonding with fellow students; more children 'slipping through the net'; and too many students for the availability of places on school trips and similar opportunities;

Whether the support currently provided at Llandrindod High School for pupils with autism and additional learning needs would be impacted. Concern that special educational needs students might struggle with the changes more than others was also highlighted

Some of the SEN pupils will struggle with the change and it will be quite hard for them to deal with (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

What about autistic spectrum support? How will it be affected? The support I received has impacted hugely on me in the way that I have developed my life and I would like to know that it will not be negatively impacted on. It is also especially important to support people on the autistic spectrum through the process of change as it is very difficult for them (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

We have an additional learning needs department here – will there be one across both sites in the future? If they have to travel across both sites then you could disadvantage some of our most vulnerable pupils (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

Creating a united school may be problematic because pupils from the two schools have ‘rivalries’ and ‘do not get on well’

Whether pupils who technically live closer to one of the schools, but currently attend the other would be required to move sites;

The ‘individuality’ of the schools would be lost; and

The cost of a new uniform if parents were expected to pay for it.

- 1.19 The negative influence of the consultation and uncertain future on staff recruitment was also raised; pupils also feared that specialist and good quality teachers would not be attracted to the school:

If you’re saying you want the best staff, this will probably mean recruiting some new people. Who would want to come to a school that is going through a significant transition process and potentially going to close? (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

I read somewhere that under the proposals a shuffle of the senior leadership would enable more specialist teachers to be appointed at both sites, but how is this possible? Wouldn’t people be less likely to apply for a job here due to the instability? (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

Would the instability created by a reshuffle make the situation worse? It could cause people to leave or make it difficult to attract some good new staff (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.20 Others in the Llandrindod workshops could not understand how bringing two schools together - both of them in special measures - could possibly improve anything. Furthermore, they said that ‘Builth and Llandrindod already work closely together, so is there any point implementing these proposals?’

Considering both sites are in special measures, aren’t you just bringing two bad things together if you merge the governing bodies? You haven’t got one that’s better than the other (like Newton and John Beddoes) that can drag the other one up. And if they can’t work well in a small environment, how will you do it in a bigger place? (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

You could have the best leadership team in the world but it’s all down to the kids. There is an issue with discipline here but only with a small minority. If the schools are merged we’ll still be in special measures so what would be the point? It has to result in an improvement (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Support

- 1.21 Pupils in the Builth Wells workshops were generally quite accepting and positive about the plans, and one student reasoned:

Personally I think it's a good idea to put the two schools together – controversial but good. If it means schooling is going to improve, surely it's a good thing? (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

- 1.22 Some in Llandrindod Wells viewed the proposals as a compromise position for not completely closing their school, whilst others (particularly in Key Stage 3) acknowledged some potential benefits of the proposal. Some discussed current issues with their education which they hoped would improve under the new school such as:

An improvement in teaching standards with staff re-applying for their jobs and ensuring teaching their specialist subjects

We've got teachers teaching subjects they're not qualified in at the moment. If we merged would specialist teachers be able to move across both sites to make sure we're taught by people who know what they're talking about? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

The one good thing about teachers having to re-apply for their jobs again is that we would end up with the best teachers in this area (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

I think a major benefit of one school across two sites would be the process of reappointing the staff. People at the end of their teaching career who aren't performing as well as they should might be encouraged to leave (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

A better range of subject availability for GCSE and A-Level

We were wondering how GCSEs would be affected if this did happen; would we have more choice about what subjects we could take? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

It would be nice to have another language to take; we only have French but Spanish or something would be good (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Would we get a greater range of pre A Level college courses as well as a greater range of GCSEs if we merge, such as fashion courses etc. rather than just mechanics, business, construction and agriculture? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Improvements to parts of the school which were in a poor condition as well as facilities and technology

Would the money saved be spent on new facilities and on improving new buildings? We're apparently a bit behind on technology here and some parts of the school are run down (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

The possibility of a single secondary school site in the Builth Wells area

- 1.23 Pupils put various questions to PCC about their aspiration for a single school: the location; when it would be built; the costs involved and how it would be funded and what would happen to the original school sites:

Where would you get the money from for a new school? (KS3, Builth Wells High School)

What would happen to this building if it did close? (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

Is there any chance of it being built here? If not, what will happen to the Builth/Llandrindod sites? (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

If we become a 'super school', when are they thinking of building it? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Where is the ideal proposed site? (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

How many new pupils would be in a new school? (KS4, Builth Wells High School)

- 1.24 There was no strong opposition to this possible future outcome from pupils in Builth Wells High School; furthermore Key Stage 3 pupils thought that having a new school was a good idea. This was also the case for a minority of Llandrindod pupils:

I would prefer to go to a brand new school (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

If they did build a new school teachers would be attracted there because they know they'll have a stable job (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.25 However, many pupils in the Llandrindod workshops felt unsettled by the uncertain future for their school; that it was unfair that despite the current proposal for the school to stay open, *'the possible closure in a few years is still floating about, which is really affecting the views of the community here.'* Some believed that the proposal was *'just a precursor to one larger school in the future'*. As such, one pupil described the students as *'feeling like guinea pigs that are being tested on just to see if things work.'*

- 1.26 Unsurprisingly then, there was a strong preference among the Llandrindod sessions for a permanent new school across the two sites. The main concern about a single site school – which was also raised by a few pupils in the Builth Wells sessions – was the extra travel involved:

Other people will be travelling from all over Powys if you make it central here on one single site (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

Will some students eventually have to travel further for school? (KS4, Builth Wells High School)

I don't think closure is necessary – I wouldn't want to be going all the way to Builth every day and it would be a longer school day (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

If pupils have to go to Builth it's an extra 20 minutes on the bus and so there's less spare time (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Wherever you put a single school would be to the detriment of some pupils from one of the areas (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.27 Pupils were also concerned that the closure of Llandrindod High School would negatively impact on the local area; they felt that families would be discouraged from moving to Llandrindod, affecting primary school numbers, businesses and the 'community feel'. Whether or not the leisure centre would continue was also questioned:

It wouldn't be very good for the area if the school was to close. Young families wouldn't come here to live and then all the primary schools would have to close because there would be less

and less pupils. It would also affect all the other community facilities in the area (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Most people think that if the school is merged and then a new one is built on one site it will negatively affect the town (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

Will the leisure centre be able to run without the school? (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.28 Some argued that the uncertainty around the future of Llandrindod High School would further hinder the recruitment of good quality teachers or lead to the overall loss of teaching jobs in the area:

If you say you want the best staff, that will probably mean recruiting some new people; but who would want to come to a school that will potentially close in the future? (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

If they built one big school some of the teachers might not get a job there and they would have to move away (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.29 Pupils also explained that depending on where they lived, some pupils might not attend a secondary school in Builth and go to Llanbister or to other schools instead:

Would the people in Llanbister have to go to Newtown if they closed Llandrindod because that would be closer than Builth? (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

If there was only one site in Builth they wouldn't be using it to their full capacity because people to the north of Llandrindod would be going to schools in North Powys because they're closer (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

The future of post-16 education

Support for a single sixth form centre

- 1.30 Builth Wells pupils recognised the limited range of subjects and facilities available for post-16 education at their school; accepted that changes needed to be made and generally supported having a single sixth form:

The sixth form issues such as the courses and the travelling definitely need to be dealt with (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

We're quite limited with the space we have in the sixth form study room; we get kicked out if a class comes in and we only have seven computers for all of sixth form (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

I currently travel to Carmarthenshire for one subject and it takes about an hour (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

I do definitely feel it should be one sixth form (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

One of my essay subjects is not available in the county. It would definitely be an advantage to expand the number of courses; it's very important to a lot of people (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

Although I'm quite happy with the sixth form as it is, I would like to take Spanish, which I'm not sure I can take there at the moment (KS3, Builth Wells High School)

- 1.31 Furthermore, despite the general opposition to a single-site secondary school for years 7 to 11, many of the Llandrindod pupils agreed that there were potential advantages of a single-site sixth form, such as a wider choice of subjects, better facilities and more flexibility. It was hoped that these improvements would attract more pupils and good quality teachers:

There is a need to make changes within the schools like having a sixth form on one site (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

There would be a benefit to having A Levels on one site to consolidate subjects and teachers there – that would attract good teachers and pupils. But you don't need one big school for that, just use one of the existing sites (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

If you provided sixth form in one area you could provide more subjects there and have a critical mass of pupils (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

If there was a larger sixth form they could organise the option blocks so that people can do what they want (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.32 The possibility of travelling to Builth was not considered to be an issue for one pupil from Llandrindod, while another explained that the discussions between the pupils and PCC during the workshop had made them feel much more reassured about a single-site sixth form centre:

I don't think going to Builth for A Levels is much of an issue because some people are already travelling to Hereford (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

Before I came here I did strongly disagree with the idea because I thought it would be a disadvantage for sixth form, but I've changed my mind a bit (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.33 However, a current Key Stage 4 Llandrindod pupil felt frustrated that any changes would not come into effect for a few years yet, which 'won't positively benefit me going into sixth form in September this year - I won't get any of the extra options will I?'

Further Suggestions

- 1.34 Continuing their discussions about a single sixth form centre, pupils in the Llandrindod workshops debated whether a single site would be best placed within a school or college environment. Some talked about how impressed they were with Hereford College and how a college would attract more pupils from further afield:

We could offer something like Hereford around here; it would be much better and would be a completely 'sixth form atmosphere' (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

When I went to Hereford open day and it felt a lot more independent and had much more of a 'college feel' (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

It makes sense to me to build a sixth form college in the area; people from other areas like Brecon and Gwernyfed would come (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.35 On the other hand, some argued that a school-based sixth form (located at Llandrindod) would allow students to continue to be taught by teachers with whom they have built relationships over the years, which would be beneficial:

(Post 16 education) should be linked to the school because I like how my teachers at GCSE teach me now; I prefer being taught by people who have taught me throughout my education (School Council, Llandrindod High School)

College-based provision is great but there is a benefit of having some school-based sixth form provision because we can be taught by the same teachers who know us well (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

Maybe some smaller study areas around the school (based on subject area) would be best (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

Concerns about a single sixth form centre

- 1.36 Despite many of pupils being positive about a single sixth form centre, some queried or were cautious about its location and a main concern was having to travel further to study and the costs involved:

A lot of friends have to travel – is the sixth form going to be central? (KS5, Builth Wells High School)

Will we be required to travel to Llandrindod? (KS4, Builth Wells High School)

If we have to travel, it's education time on the road (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

I travel to Builth and it's much easier now I can drive, but it was hard in year 12 (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

If you had the sixth form in one place you would have to ship everyone from here to Builth; wouldn't that be a cost in terms of transporting pupils down there? (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.37 Some also stated how unsettled they felt about the uncertain future for post-16 education; one student had been so affected they had decided on Hereford College instead of Llandrindod High School:

It's really concerning because we don't know if we're going to have an education here (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

We in year 11 are concerned that we would be starting sixth form in Llandrindod and would then have to move to Builth once the proposals are implemented (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

I'm going to Hereford College. What you're doing now seems beneficial to years 7, 8 and 9, but the uncertainty for older pupils means it isn't worth staying. I am going to study something I could easily do here, but the uncertainty around where I would have to do it and who would be delivering means it just isn't worth it (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.38 In addition, a few Builth Wells pupils queried whether or not any changes would affect the entry requirements for sixth form and if class sizes would increase.

Support for retaining the sixth forms over two sites

- 1.39 One Llandrindod pupil argued that providing sixth form over two sites would offer more flexibility for students who were interested in studying a diverse range of subjects whilst another suggested that the streams could be split so that Llandrindod would provide post-16 English medium education and Builth Wells would provide the Welsh medium education:

If a student wants to take the core subjects they could be blocked together so they can take humanities in one school and the more mathematical, science-based subjects in the other (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

We have no Welsh unit here and I know a lot of the sixth form travel to Builth anyway. So you could have just A-Level Welsh subjects at Builth and all A-Level English pupils could come here; that would make both sites more sustainable (KS3, Llandrindod High School)

- 1.40 A few Llandrindod pupils did not agree that the schools were not offering a sufficient range of subjects and felt it was most important for a sixth form school to offer the 'core subjects' recognised for university entry, and for college to provide vocational subjects:

Sixth form has been so diversified and in some ways I feel it just needs to offer the core subjects. A college is there to provide the other more vocational and 'different' ones (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

The current system may not provide as wide a range of vocational studies as Powys would like, but it does provide the subjects the Russell Group universities ask for (KS4, Llandrindod High School)

Proposal for Welsh Medium Education

- 1.41 Some Builth Wells pupils in the Key Stage 3 workshop felt that there were issues with the current provision of Welsh stream education and that their high school was the most appropriate site to improve quality:

Welsh education needs to be improved and Builth is the right place to build on it (KS3, Builth Wells High School)

I came here from Brecon because there weren't many lessons available in Welsh; there weren't many of us and it was the same teacher teaching lots of things. I've seen an improvement since I came here (KS3, Builth Wells High School)

- 1.42 Furthermore, one of the pupils who moved from Brecon to Builth Wells High School for Welsh medium education said that their travel time 'was about the same' as before.

- 1.43 However, a pupil from Llandrindod High School felt that additional travel from the Brecon area would ultimately put students off continuing with their Welsh medium education, resulting in a further reduction of Welsh medium pupils, bearing in mind PCC's aim to increase numbers:

How many people do you know will be able to travel from Brecon to Builth for the Welsh-stream? It may also be a less popular option for people if it isn't offered in as many places; it seems counter-productive if you're trying to boost the numbers of Welsh-medium pupils at Powys schools (KS5, Llandrindod High School)

7. Primary School Workshops

Main issues and themes from primary school pupils

Overview of Workshops

7.1 ORS facilitated and reported on the findings of deliberative workshops with primary school children aged between six and 11 from each of the affected catchment areas (some of whom were members of their school councils). All feeder primary schools were invited to nominate a number of children to attend. The point or purpose of these workshops was to allow PCC to engage with, and listen to, children who will be beginning their secondary school education in the next one to five years – and to elicit their opinions, queries and concerns on the proposed changes. They also offered the children an opportunity to become more informed about the consultation process, the case for change and the proposals themselves.

7.2 The workshops were held and attended as follows:

Figure 54: Details of the Primary School workshops

Catchment Area	Location and Date	Schools Attended	Approx. no. of attendees
Builth	Builth Wells Primary School Thursday 12 th May 2016	Builth Wells Primary School Ysgol Dolafon Franksbridge County Primary School Irfon Valley Community Primary School Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School Newbridge-On-Wye Primary School	45
Llandrindod	Llandrindod Wells Primary School - Cefnlllys Monday 16 th May 2016	Llandrindod Wells Primary School – Cefnlllys Crossgates County Primary School Dolau Primary School Trefonen Church of England Primary School	50

- 1.1 Throughout this chapter, quotations have been attributed to the primary school that made the comment, as well as the catchment area of the meeting as appropriate. Some of the comments are direct quotations, while others are taken from the summarised accounts of the main issues made by ORS staff and posters created by the pupils.
- 1.2 As well as confirming that the overall workshops programme was conscientious and comprehensive, ORS can certify that the main issues were presented fairly and clearly at the four sessions we facilitated.
- 1.3 The workshops were held at convenient times during the children’s school day. The schools which held the sessions were carefully chosen to have sufficient capacity; to be accessible in every sense; and to be accessible for all primary schools within the catchment area.

Discussion agenda

1.4 ORS worked in collaboration with PCC to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meetings, which covered the following topics and activities:

What the participants know about the consultation;

The case for change;

The proposals;

Comments and questions;

Poster making activity and presentation of views; and

Questions and answers

1.5 The pupils were encouraged to ask questions throughout the sessions.

Reporting

1.6 This section of the report presents the main themes and key points arising from the Builth and Llandrindod catchment workshops. The opinions expressed were not always unanimous, but we have endeavoured to reflect the range of views expressed. Some important common themes emerged from discussions across both of the workshops and these are reported below; but issues relating to a particular catchment area or school have been highlighted. Many quotations have been used, not because we wish to endorse any views, but in order to illustrate some of the more common and important themes and issues.

Awareness of Consultation and Proposals

1.7 Most of the pupils, if not all, had heard about the consultation and had received a questionnaire to complete. They also had some knowledge about the proposals to close Builth and Llandrindod High Schools and establish a new dual-stream secondary school (over two sites) to replace them; have one head teacher over both sites and to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from the Builth Wells site. They were also aware of the possible future plan for a single site school in the Builth Wells area.

1.8 However, a minority were unsure about the finer details of proposals and incorrectly thought that the plans included Welsh-stream education being discontinued in their primary school; Welsh-stream education being provided over two sites and splitting the year groups so that year 8 pupils go to the Builth site and Year 9 pupils to Llandrindod. In addition, a pupil felt that the questionnaire was '*too complicated for a six year old*' to complete, despite a 'primary' version being available.

Main Findings

Views on the Case for Change

1.9 Pupils were asked why they thought PCC was considering changes to the delivery of secondary education in Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools. In response, pupils across all of the workshops identified the need to save money and improve education as the main reasons. However, despite understanding some of the issues, many pupils urged PCC to keep the two schools as they are; to '*put pupils before money*' and to '*stop interfering*' with their education:

The schools are fine as they are! (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

Keep it the same; we don't want it to change (Cefnlllys Primary School, Llandrindod)

It's our future you're interfering with (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

Proposal for a new dual-stream secondary school

1.10 Having one head teacher and senior leadership team to cover the two sites was a main issue for many of the pupils, who had specific concerns which included:

The task of managing two schools would be burdensome and extra hard work, resulting in tiredness and stress which could affect performance

It's a big responsibility for one head teacher (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

One person cannot be in two places at the same time – what if something happens? This will put a lot of pressure on whoever becomes head teacher (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

It will be tiring for the new head teacher going from one school to another. A tired head teacher will not set a good example to pupils (Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, Builth)

Whether it is possible to manage both schools properly

If the head teacher and one of the deputies are both in a meeting how would this be managed? (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

We could get sent to the head teacher's office and they'd be in another school! (Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, Builth)

How would having one head teacher improve quality of education?

If the grades are falling and you say (the changes) are for education, what is one head teacher going to do to make it better? (Trefonen Church of England Primary School, Llandrindod)

How would having one head teacher for two schools benefit our learning? (Dolau Primary School, Llandrindod)

Pupils were sceptical over how much money would be saved, especially once travel costs for staff are taken into account

How much money will having just one head teacher save? I think it will save a bit, but probably not enough to make a big difference (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

They said that there will be two deputies but what's the point? Isn't that just more expense? (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

If they have two schools and one head teacher, who will be paying for the fuel traveling back and forth? (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

1.11 Pupils were also concerned about the detrimental effect the consultation and proposed changes could have:

Whether primary school funding would be affected by changes to secondary schools:

Lots of money seems to be going on secondary schools. Will there be enough for primary schools as well? (Irfon Valley Community Primary School, Builth)

Sometimes Builth High School helps out the primary schools but the plans may change this (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

Does the money that goes towards primary schools affect what's happening in the secondary schools? (Irfon Valley Community Primary School, Builth)

Many of the pupils felt unsettled and stressed about the future and lack of decision. They felt this would affect their performance

Why are there so many proposals and nothing actually happening? (Newbridge-On-Wye Primary School, Builth)

If the Council do not decide by the time I get to secondary school it will be really unsettling for the children (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

I feel stressed, uncertain and unprepared (Trefonen Church of England Primary School, Llandrindod)

If there are children doing exams they will be worried; their grades will go down (Cefnlllys Primary School, Llandrindod)

Uncertainties around job security might affect the quality of teaching

Teachers will be worrying about the changes which may affect their performance (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

Teachers may lose their jobs (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

The teachers may not be teaching their best because of worrying (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

Pupils said that parents had found the proposals 'worrying', 'confusing' and 'annoying'.

- 1.12 Pupils said that buying a new school uniform and learning new school rules were a waste of money and time. Some pupils also observed that their siblings were currently attending the secondary schools and they would no longer be able to 'give advice' if the schools were closed.
- 1.13 Specific queries about the plans included: where large school events involving both schools (such as concerts) would be located; how exactly the teachers were expected to raise standards; whether pupils would be required to travel between the two sites for different subjects; what the new school name would be and what the new badge would look like.
- 1.14 Despite the general opposition and concern about the plans, some of the pupils from Llanelwedd and Trefonnen Primary Schools believed that the two schools would be 'stronger' together, provide a better quality of education and make much needed savings from fewer staff:

One head teacher saves money (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

We'd have better education bringing everyone together (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

Two high schools could bring more strength (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

Less money will be spent on less staff (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

The possibility of a single site high school in the Builth Wells area

1.15 Many of the pupils in both the Builth and Llandrindod catchment areas were largely opposed to and worried about the possible future plans for a single school in the Builth Wells area, which many referred to as a ‘super school’:

Save our school! We are worried about the future of both schools and don't want a new one (Cefnlllys Primary School, Llandrindod)

They are both good schools already, so if the Council do close them down they won't save money (Cefnlllys Primary School, Llandrindod)

We don't want a 'super school' (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

Stop closing smaller schools (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

1.16 Pupils in the Llandrindod catchment area were particularly concerned about the implications of not having a local high school; they felt that a single school would have a detrimental impact on education, quality of life, local communities and relations with fellow pupils:

The increase in travel impacting on pupils' quality of life. Crossgates primary school suggested that a new school could be located somewhere between the existing two sites

People will have to travel even further than they do already (Irfon Valley Community Primary School, Builth)

We don't want to travel because it wastes our time (Dolau Primary School, Llandrindod)

If the school wasn't in Builth it would affect us – we would have to get up earlier and get the bus. Most children can walk to school (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

You should not be getting up at 6am to get to school; it's too early and people would be really tired (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

Not having a local high school would cause some families to leave the area and discourage new ones from moving in - impacting negatively on communities, businesses and existing school clubs

If there was no school in Llandrindod nobody would want to live there (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

If there was a new secondary school and it wasn't in our area we wouldn't want to travel so we'd move out of the area (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

Our sports will get ruined (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

It will affect our clubs (Llandrindod catchment area)

A larger school may result in more bullying and conflict between children

Would bullying be worse? (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

We need to go to school to get a better education but you are always scared of going to a new school – there could be more bullies at bigger schools (Crossgates County Primary School, Llandrindod)

There will be more bullies and less friendship. (Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, Builth)

The class sizes would be too big, impacting on the quality of learning and teaching - GCSE and A-Level students would suffer most. Whether more supervision would be required was also discussed

The class sizes will be too big (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

There will be too many pupils for one teacher to cope with (Newbridge-On-Wye Primary School, Builth)

A 'super school' will affect those doing A Levels and GCSEs because there will be too many pupils (Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, Builth)

Will more supervision be needed for a super school? (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

We would get less help and support (Llandrindod catchment area)

There would be too many pupils to share the resources and facilities on offer

There won't be enough space, especially in the dining hall (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

The toilets would be an issue! (Newbridge-On-Wye Primary School, Builth)

Additional concerns about attending a larger school such as not knowing the teachers and getting lost

Recruitment could be an issue due to the lack of available teachers in one area, and many would not want to travel

There are not enough teachers in the area; some teacher won't want to travel further (Newbridge-On-Wye Primary School, Builth)

- 1.17 Pupils also asked why a new building would be an improvement, how long it would take to build and why the current buildings could not be updated instead:

How do you know that a new building would be better? How is it fair to local people? (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

Would a new building fix all of the issues? (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

How long would a new school take to build? (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

Why can't the current buildings be made better? (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

Why not just do the repairs? (Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, Builth)

- 1.18 The cost of building a new school and how it would be funded was discussed among the Franksbridge and Ifron Valley pupils:

Where would all the money come from to carry out these changes? (Franksbridge County Primary School, Builth)

It will cost too much to build a new school (Irfon Valley Community Primary School, Builth)

Proposal for Welsh-medium education

1.19 The plans to continue Welsh-medium education in Builth Wells High school but not Brecon met with some criticism from pupils in Builth catchment area schools, the reasons for which included:

The travel distance to Builth High School for Welsh speaking pupils from Brecon was considered to be too far. Pupils were also concerned about being far from home should they become ill at school. Some were also sceptical about how much money would be saved under this plan bearing in mind the increased transport costs

The costs of the additional buses they will have to put on will be high (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

Pupils from Brecon will have to travel very far (Builth Wells Primary School, Builth)

There would be too many Welsh-stream pupils in Builth Wells High School, resulting in it becoming too crowded

There won't be enough room; when Brecon come in there will be issues with providing school dinners (Builth Wells Primary School)

Will there be enough space for everyone in the school yard? (Builth Wells Primary School)

There will be a lot of people in the Welsh unit (Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary School, Builth)

It will be too busy in Builth if Brecon come (Irfon Valley Community Primary School, Builth)

English and Welsh speaking friends who had both attended Brecon High School would be separated

We are worried about splitting Welsh and English pupils (Ysgol Dolafon, Builth)

1.20 Some pupils from Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School suggested an alternative of introducing Welsh-stream education on the Llandrindod site as well and two head teachers – one for each language.

8. Public Meetings

Main issues and themes from the public meetings

- 8.1 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the public meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.
- 8.2 The public meetings were held at the Sports Hall, Leisure Centre, Builth Wells on 13 April 2016 and at The Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells on 14 April 2016. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC staff. Around 175 people attended over the two sessions.

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 8.3 Public meetings in Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells formed an important part of the consultation arranged by PCC. Meetings were chaired by ORS as an independent of PCC.
- 8.4 In order to report the issues raised at the meetings a senior ORS staff member took detailed notes. Summary reports were then produced from these notes together with the recordings of the meetings. These reports form the basis of this combined summary chapter.
- 8.5 Throughout this chapter, quotations have been attributed to the location of the meeting. Some of the comments are direct quotations, and others are taken from the summarised accounts of the main issues recorded.
- 8.6 As well as confirming that the overall meetings programme was conscientious and comprehensive, ORS can certify that the main issues were presented fairly and clearly at the meetings we attended.
- 8.7 Public meetings were held during the evening and due to the high demand for spaces there was a pre-register so that spaces could be allocated on a first come first served basis. Where pre-registration demonstrated need, PCC organised additional spaces and locations to be linked into the main meeting space through the use of audio and visual links. The venues were carefully chosen to be local, have sufficient capacity and to be accessible in every sense.

Main Themes Raised at the Public Meetings

Community Impacts

- 8.8 The community in Llandrindod is very concerned about the long term economic future of the town if the high school were to close now or in the future. The proposals for a single school over two sites have done little to reassure the community about the long-term future of the school because of the PCC aspiration to locate a new build school at Builth. The main issues of concern are presented below:

The prospect of a downturn in economic development and investment in the town

The thing you should be getting from this meeting this evening is you cannot close Builth. You cannot close Llandrindod – you will ruin the towns. You will ruin parents’ access to the schools. Your vision is to keep those two schools open. (Public Meeting Llandrindod)

For a county town, with a county hall where all the council works – it needs a school. Because without the school you will not have jobs; without jobs the children will have no need to learn because they won’t want to live here – I have a 13 year old who wants to go abroad and work as a carpenter because the work in the area is drying up – he can go out of county and earn £10 - £15 per hour more for the same job. But if investment came into the town, that’s going to help it grow - when people look at the area and see it’s got a good school and good leisure facilities. These are all linked and all marry together. Without a school there will be no community. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

Economic challenges will be amplified and accelerated by changes to the High Schools

What has happened is you haven’t got young families in Builth, Rhayader, Llandrindod, Presteigne. We haven’t had economic development to bring them. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

One of the businesses we did bring here was ... supported by the Welsh Assembly – came over with a number of young families and brought new technology of carbon fibre cars ... One of the really strong things that encouraged them to come to Llandod was the High School ... We’ve got to make sure that Powys CC who wants to attract an awful lot of business rates appreciates the fact that in the real world money talks ... you’re chasing the money from the Welsh Assembly not necessarily what’s best for our kids’ education. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

What you need to do is try and attract some teachers to the area. But you can’t attract them here – there are no jobs. If Mr and Mrs Jones are in Birmingham and there’s a job in Llandod High School, they are not going to come for Mrs Jones to teach in Llandod because there’s no job for Mr Jones to do. So you’re just going to keep failing the children of this area. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

You are accountable. Taxpayers pay your wages. Now, the only way the schools are going to thrive and continue to develop and deliver an even standard of education across the county is by having a measured service – that we’re only going to get by attracting investment not just in terms of jobs but in terms of teaching ... when teachers come to an area the last thing they want is to come to a school which has just come out of special measures, is about to be married to another school which has just come out of special measures where the surrounding community schools you are trying to close ... I choose to run (my business) from here because it’s my home town, I was born here and it’s a lovely place to live but it’s slowly dying because of ... the decisions they (Powys CC) make for the town (Public meeting Llandrindod)

Current proposals are leading up to closing the high school in Llandrindod

The concern of this community is that this is a prerequisite to losing their high school. It is inconceivable for this town not to have this school. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

We have a business here in town and one of the big concerns we have ... it is already very difficult to get the staff ... I’m very sorry but the decision you make about closing Llandrindod

school will have no effect on your life at all but it will on everybody in this room (Public meeting Llandrindod)

Lingering uncertainty around the future

For parents with young children, you want to know if there's going to be a school. This participant questions the term 'foreseeable future'. If you're only saving £133k per year and the buildings (in the current proposal) ... it doesn't make sense. (Public meeting Llandrindod)

So that means you would be closing the Llandrindod site? I haven't been reassured tonight. How many members of the panel have children affected by these proposals? It's easy to make these decisions ... (Public meeting Llandrindod)

Quality of Education

- 8.9 The general mood at the meetings was that PCC's current proposals are driven by money saving and removing special measures status rather than providing a solution to the underlying quality issues or raising standards at the schools. Some suggested that the proposals in their current form would actually exacerbate existing pressure on the schools as they are not deliverable but simply a precursor to a single site new build school. Attendees queried how ring fencing teaching posts would raise quality; why the local authority school improvement officers had not achieved improvements in standards; how teachers having less contact time with pupils would drive an improvement in standards and generally asked for fuller explanations of how the proposal would achieve higher quality of teaching and learning. A number of key points were raised as follows:

Further explanations are needed for how the current proposals will lead to improvements in quality given that the same staff would be in post teaching the same classes:

You mentioned about providing different courses and how are we going to do that given that the staff are going to be the same? ... My question is what plans the County Council has to ensure standards continue to rise in future? ... Students travelling from place to place I don't think will improve standards; breadth of choice I don't think will improve standards; having increased class sizes I don't think will improve standards. ... I want you to tell us what difference we will see in the way our children are taught and the provision for the children – not what the organising bodies do. ... It will be the same teachers as you point at as being demotivated as a risk in this document. (Public Meeting Llandrindod)

When you open the new school in September 17 you will have an English medium site at Llandrindod; an English medium site at Builth; a Welsh medium site at Builth and a sixth form site in Builth and a sixth form site in Llandrindod – so you'll still be covering the two sites – exactly the same thing with a different teaching structure ... So how does that impact on current learners? (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

If you are ring fencing all of those staff - good and bad – you're not going to help to raise standards. And I think it's very irresponsible of Powys to have the special measures wiped out by the new school. (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

Under the proposals teachers would have less contact time with pupils

... Currently the head of maths is the best teacher and the one that parents want their children to have when they come to their GCSEs or A levels. So if they're not teaching it can only impact on the quality of the education. (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

I don't see how the proposals will improve the situation. How is education going to be magically bettered just because you have one head of two schools and how having staff travel between schools using up their precious time – travelling rather than making lesson plans and marking (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

Why would there be suddenly specialist teachers if they are still on the two sites? (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

The proposals are regarded as a diversion and will not tackle the underlying quality issues – support the schools as they are now to achieve the standards required; to get them out of special measures and continue to collaborate between schools without changing the structure. Also consider a wider, more strategic approach to improving schools:

This (proposal) is a diversion from what we should be doing and that is supporting those schools to get out of special measures as quickly as they can ... There are opportunities for greater collaboration, cooperation. That's what happens now. We don't need structural change to allow good practice to spread across the schools. And if we are looking at improving and changing our practice, may I humbly suggest that changes in the curricula focus on collaboration between the primary and secondary sectors would actually bring bigger dividends in terms of educational outcomes for our children (Public Meeting Llandrindod)

The Estyn report for both schools is not as it should be – is it not putting extra pressure on the education if reorganisation goes ahead? They are trying really hard to up the quality now (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

I think it's very irresponsible of Powys to have the special measures wiped out by the new school (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

Are the potential benefits to learning really worth this disruption? Shouldn't we have evidence of how this will improve standards? (Public Meeting Builth Wells)

Given the confusion over the current schools modernisation programme, should a line be drawn where we start afresh with a mid-Powys plan taking in Newtown, John Beddoes, Builth, Llandrindod, Gwernyfed and Brecon – looking at delivering an improved 21st century plan to inspire, improve and excite our young people for many years to come and parents, teachers, Governors can fully get behind instead of pitting communities against each other? Having worked with former heads of education at no time have their past or future ideas ever considered shutting Llandrindod – they had visionary plans for the school. It needs looking at together. (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

There will be insufficient funding to make the changes in quality and standards

I wonder if this new proposal is a poisoned chalice for the new Governing Body and they wouldn't actually be able to supply teachers to essentially speaking three different sites: a Welsh medium in Builth, an English medium in Builth and an English medium in Llandrindod to all the subjects from year 7 to 11 and having a subject specialist teacher in each of those classes.

I just don't think it would work. One of the problems now is the falling roles so it's going to get even worse... (Llandrindod Public Meeting)

Transport and Travel

- 8.10 Concerns are raised around the potential impacts on educational standards if pupils are taught across two sites – particularly at key stage 3 and 4. Moreover, attendees wanted clarification around whether or not pupils would have to travel between sites during the school day which could impact on their learning. A number of concerns were raised in relation to travel:

The case for changes is contradictory: increased travel for pupils seems to go against the intention to improve quality and there is uncertainty over whether pre-16 pupils would need to travel between sites:

So if you have a school on two sites and you want to increase the number of subjects at GCSE, we are going to have to accept that our pupils in year 10 and year 11 are going to have to travel between sites to do that. That completely contradicts your concerns. What would be the travel policy for this? Where would the money come from? Would the school pay for the transport to enable those children to access the wide range at KS4? ... So you'd be happy for KS4 pupils to travel to access their curriculum, whereas for KS5 pupils it is considered to be detrimental to their education? (Llandrindod Public meeting)

Pre 16 can you guarantee that the children won't be moved or transported to bigger size classes from each of the schools? (Builth Wells Public meeting)

You cannot move children between schools. It's impossible. (Llandrindod Public meeting)

Travel between sites by teachers will not improve the current quality of education

Having staff travel between schools using up their precious time – travelling rather than making lesson plans and marking ... you're still going to have a relatively small sixth form – so you'll still have issues with choice – so they'll have to travel (Llandrindod Public meeting)

There's no way you can talk in terms of split site school. If you wish to destroy the teachers' attitude to school and their job, get them travelling between schools (Llandrindod Public meeting)

Has the Council considered the option proposed by the Llandrindod High School Governing Body to co-locate language streams and/or sixth form?

The High School had a meeting where the Governors made a proposal to PCC to put Welsh medium and provision for 16 to 18 year olds in Builth and the 11-16 year olds in Llandod. Has this been addressed – has anyone considered that proposal? (Llandrindod Public meeting)

- 8.11 Should the Council's aspiration for a single school site come to pass, Llandrindod parents would be concerned over the time spent by their children on the daily journey to school and back:

You've made comments in your opening statements where you said you think it's unacceptable for these children to be on the road. If the proposals go ahead my children will need to travel over an hour and a half to go to High School if the proposals eventually get where they're going to be in Builth Wells (Llandrindod Public meeting)

Finance and Funding

- 8.12 A number of attendees at both meetings argued that any potential savings from the proposed reorganisation would not be a solution to the underlying financial issues affecting the schools; that the new school would not be financially sustainable, demonstrating that this is an interim proposal before a new school is built from capital funds:

So you say I will have the same staff, the pupils would stay on the same sites. But yet just from having one head and one senior leadership team, that's enough money that you will save to risk the education of 1,112 students plus the ones in the future which are growing ... Everyone keeps saying

A lot of what you've said so far seems to relate back to finances. There seems to be a current estimate of backlog maintenance costs in excess of £5.3m across both sites should things go to the proposed plan – what is the expected timeframe for that single school on two sites to be running? Is this an intermediary measure until something more permanent can get worked up and Government funding or whatever is provided to the Council to allow them to do so? (Builth Wells Public meeting)

It says about Llandrindod that their budget forecast will be in deficit in future years but it doesn't actually say about Builth, so it would be nice to know if Builth is in the same situation. And if finance is a problem how is £133k actually going to impact and actually make a difference between the two schools? (Builth Wells Public meeting)

All the disruption we've talked about in terms of the leadership, very stressed teachers – is this worth it bearing in mind that in a few years we might be going through a similar process if we're talking about closing one of the sites. So are there other reasons for doing this? If we were to remodel Llandrindod rather than close it, would we get the funding from Welsh Government? (Builth Wells Public meeting)

- 8.13 Specific questions were also asked about the budget figures in the consultation document for Llandrindod High School and the overall budget allocation for Powys:

It says in there (financial statement) that you are concerned about the financial liabilities of Llandrindod High School. Having seen their financial statements I can't quite see where you see that. Can you explain why you feel Llandrindod High School is in financial problems? (Llandrindod Public Meeting)

I know that Powys schools are the worst funded in Wales. Are Powys looking at the Funding Formula and bringing them in line with other Welsh schools? (Builth Wells Public meeting)

Building and Maintenance

- 8.14 Attendees wanted to know how PCC aims to sustain the current buildings across the two sites when there are apparently no funds available for maintenance at the moment; alternatively, if funds are available, why they have not been spent so far:

Doing what you are proposing to do may ease some of the financial pressures but there is still a significant deficit of maintenance required today – it's not even looking forward to future maintenance that may be required and I would just like to understand the timeframes to bring the schools up to a standard fabric which makes it presentable to the kids – because there are

two aspects to children's learning – the quality of the teaching and the quality of the environment in which they're learning. (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

We've got buildings in this town that date back to Victorian days and they're still repairable, still manageable. These buildings only go back to the 50s and 60s so they can be maintained (Llandrindod Public Meeting)

- 8.15 Rumours that a new site had already been identified in Builth Wells were mentioned and attendees sought answers about this from the panel:

We live in a small area and rumours abound about where a new school will be built. Can I ask you please, has any landowner been asked already about the possibility of building a school on their site? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

This week on the grapevine I hear that people living in Builth Wells are hearing about a new school site on the young people's village. Can you confirm it or deny it please? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

- 8.16 A question was also asked about whether revenue funding for maintenance would be held back for the one site school:

The outstanding maintenance costs of both schools has been mentioned. The council in its capital programme has set aside a figure of £17.62 k and that money exceeds our figure for the maintenance costs of the two schools so it is my assumption that that money is available for a new school on one site. Maybe you can confirm or deny that (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

Impacts on Pupils

- 8.17 Attendees at the Builth wells public meeting were concerned about the impact of any changes on pupils taking GCSE and A-level in terms of subject choice and transitional arrangements:

How is this going to affect the children's education in terms of the transition? My daughter will be studying for her GCSEs at the time (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

There is a requirement for a new head teacher and the School Governing Body to put in place a curriculum. Just by the nature of the timing of that, with it being right at the start of the academic year, will that impact the subject choice of children that have had to make the choice in advance of that time? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

I'm going to assume that any new curriculum would not be started till the summer of 2018 because that way the children would not be impacted by any decisions to change the range of subjects (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

A number of attendees questioned how pupils would be supported through the transitional period by teaching staff who would themselves be subject to uncertainty and whether in the longer term staff would have less time to support pupils because they have more management responsibilities or need to spend time travelling between the sites:

I am confused. You said that the same teachers will be helping the children through this transition stage. Yet you also said that the teachers would have to apply for their jobs so they

will not be supplying the same level of support to the children as they normally would (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

I rely heavily on the knowledge of the senior leadership team and the information they provide me – and I just worry that having just one senior leadership team across two schools how that's going to affect their knowledge of families and the children.

Some specific issues were also raised about supporting pupils in a dual site school - whether pupils would be able to change the site at which they are based and not being able to make a fresh start by changing site:

If a young person wasn't happy in Builth, would they be able to transfer to the Llandod site with it being one school? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

When children are having difficulties in a school and request a managed move it's quite often because they want a fresh start to try and re-invent themselves. With the teachers moving across the sites, they're not possibly getting the opportunity of that fresh start in that school (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Impacts on Staff

- 8.18 Attendees at Llandrindod raised a number of concerns about the retention of existing staff and recruitment of new staff. They suggested the consultation process and uncertainty around the future of the schools is already affecting staff retention and recruitment and ultimately the quality of children's education:

We've spoken a lot about bringing teachers to the area. What about retaining the teachers that are here? ... What's to say if the proposal doesn't succeed; that it goes to an amended timescale - which you haven't given us - half the teachers in Llandod might leave for jobs elsewhere. Where is the policy for the retention of the existing staff to ensure the present quality of education? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

We've got teachers in these schools who deliver standards. Yes, there might be the odd teacher who might not achieve it – the problem you're going to have is that who in their right mind will come to these schools when they're failing – we need - not just as a community but the Council needs - to get behind the schools and say we are investing £x million over the next five years (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

Management and Governance

- 8.19 Attendees at the meetings wanted greater clarity around the staff and governance structure of the new school and how a new Governing Body would be supported by PCC to deliver better outcomes for pupils across the two sites:

Questions around the structure of the new school

What's going to be any different – two sites, two schools. What experience for children. Travelling? More children in the school – are class sizes going to be bigger? We need more information and detail (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

I'm confused by that – still two schools running with all the subjects on both sites (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Questions around the formation of and support for the Shadow Governing Body

How will it be formulated? Would it be better to have additional members to help the Governing Body and stop them walking away because they can't cope? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

You haven't mentioned how you are going to formulate picking those members because I understand that the Shadow Governing Body may well have a say where the sixth form might be in the future (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

Support is needed for the New Governing Body

It's taken me over four and a half years as a Governor to get anywhere near understanding the depth and the level of what's required ... we work very, very hard to try and achieve something for nothing. We don't get paid expenses for meetings. We get put on a cross if we're wrong ... I just take a little bit of personal umbrage over these statements against Governing Bodies (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

The Consultation Process

^{8.20} Attendees wanted the decision making process to be opened up to the wider elected membership rather than the Cabinet members alone and some complained that the future of the community is in the hands of the Cabinet, all the members of which live in other areas of Powys. A question was also raised over whether this consultation should have started after an enquiry into spending at another Powys school had been completed:

I take an interest in other counties, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire – school reorganisation - decisions are taken by the full council not just the cabinet. Could this council move to this? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

Would it have to be a full cabinet decision; would we have the same rights of objection to the proposals or is it easier for this new school to push through that closure? For the sake of our children and the future of our town we need some clarity around this please (Public meeting Llandrindod)

In the current situation Powys is made up of 73 County Councillors – the majority of those County Councillors come from Brecon and Radnor and yet we have a Cabinet that was seven from Montgomeryshire and three from Brecon and Radnorshire – so that perception is, why hasn't Montgomeryshire had something like this (school closures)? ... It's recently been publicised in the local papers that [inaudible] High School which has something over 700 pupils has a budget of just under £3m where they have been using over £100k a year to increase their pupil numbers by 140 ... I understand that Cllr (name) is doing an investigation into that ... does he not feel he should have stopped this consultation until the outcome of this enquiry is made public? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

^{8.21} An attendee queried why the Council members present at the Llandrindod Wells meeting were not responding to questions from the floor:

Could I ask you, Chair, why the decision has been taken this evening that for the chair and the portfolio holder it is inappropriate for them to comment? I attended the meetings in Dolau and Llanbister schools at which the chair and the portfolio both commented on a number of points ... They were statutory meetings – exactly the same status as this meeting (Llandrindod Wells Public meeting)

8.22 Attendees believed that the decision about the outcome had already been made by the Council:

We didn't have a slide to show what would happen with the amended timescales; we didn't have a slide to say what would happen if the proposal was thrown out. So to me that seems quite final (Llandrindod Well Public meeting)

Post 16 Education

8.23 Participants suggested that sixth form provision should be a priority and wanted clarity concerning whether post 16 education would be delivered on both sites or a single site. Some suggested that a consolidated sixth form on a single site would create a critical mass of students and might be the most viable option if Powys (as a rural county) is going to continue to meet the Welsh Government's learning and skills measure:

It was my understanding as a locally elected representative that there would be post 16 education delivered by both sites. I wonder if that's correct (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Llandrindod High School has put a proposal forward and that is English should be spoken in Llandrindod High School from 11 to 16 ... giving you quite a lot of numbers in the sixth form (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

I can quite understand the dilemma you have with the sixth form. And I'm saddened that we need 30 subjects ... You could well cut down on the number of sixth form options (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

I feel the current proposal is not urgent enough ... Could we do the sixth form process quicker if we moved ahead? Could the potential process of closing Llandrindod sixth form be done quickly – there is a real urgency – we are losing kids rapidly out of county. So yes, to the Welsh medium provision and yes to the proposals for the sixth form (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

I also support post 16 on one site – anything that can be done to reduce travel between the sites is to be welcomed (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Welsh Medium Education

8.24 There is support for strengthening Welsh provision at Builth but some doubts were raised around the predicted numbers of Welsh medium pupils in 2017. Also reassurance that Welsh provision would be consolidated at Builth is needed quickly to enable parents of potential pupils (particularly those in South Powys) to make informed decisions around school choice:

I think the Welsh medium parents from South Powys need an absolute assurance very quickly if you want to concentrate the Welsh medium ... you need to be telling those parents distinctly that it will be consolidated in Builth and remain that way. You may lose some children out of Powys but the majority of children are not just being lost out of County – they're being lost to private schools or to English medium because people haven't got that assurance ... If you think

you're going to get those 30 children, you won't ... you need to encourage them very quickly
(Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Considering movement of Brecon to Builth. What are the plans for strengthening Welsh medium education at this site? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

- 8.25 Attendees also wanted detail about the numbers and travel arrangements for pupils should Builth Wells become the centre for Welsh medium education :

In terms of Welsh medium education – there are 129 pupils currently in Builth Wells - should the proposals go ahead in S Powys, and all children come from the Brecon area to receive Welsh medium education here, what would be the final number of pupils receiving Welsh medium education in this school and what would be the travelling distance time for a single pupil?
(Builth Wells Public Meeting)

If you want to strengthen the Welsh school you shouldn't just dismiss the Sennybridge children and assume they're all going to go to Ystalafera. It costs you a lot more to pay for a child out of County and if over the years you haven't paid as much transport for children to go out of County it will be more finances for our schools in Powys (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

In your report p4 – you have Builth Wells currently – Welsh speakers 129 and Brecon 30 – how many children are currently being brought in by bus from Brecon area to make up the 129?
(Builth Wells Public Meeting)

- 8.26 Some also asked about the number of Welsh medium courses that would be available at sixth form and whether this would be more than at present:

Regarding post 16 education, we know Welsh Government would like 25 + 5 courses available for each child. Following merger and assuming it's important for pupils to have equality of education through the medium of Welsh, how many courses do you expect to be provided through the medium of Welsh and medium of English? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

You'd need a sixth form of about 300 to deliver the full range. 8 or 9 Welsh medium out of 26 and the rest in English? This is not significantly more than at the moment (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

Consultation document/Facts and figures

- 8.27 Attendees highlighted a need for clarity around assumptions made about pupil numbers and surplus places in the case for change. A number of factual inaccuracies in the documentation were highlighted:

(Are there) any projections on future secondary school numbers from current cohorts coming through now? Is the decline set to continue? If the numbers increased there would be issues in the future (Builth Wells Public Meeting)

All the local schools are full so I would like to know what your estimate is for the next few years on where those numbers are going to go (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

If you close two high schools and make them into one you'll still have 17% (surplus places) - so how is that 17% going to be filled? (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

What does 17% of vacant classes mean to pupil numbers per class? (Llandrindod Public Meeting)

In terms of the documentation in front us here, there are a number of errors – some have been amended and corrected – but I just wanted to pick up one on p27 and it's for the estimated savings ... I just wanted to know what that number actually was (Llandrindod Wells Public Meeting)

Other Comments

8.28 Residents of Builth Wells in the main feel that the current proposal does not go far enough and want a new school in order to achieve quality. Llandrindod Wells residents, on the other hand, feel that the proposals could go further in keeping one school on two sites into the long term with separate roles on each of the sites (as per the Llandrindod High School Governors' proposal).

8.29 A number of individual sub themes and comments emerged from the public meetings and are listed below for brevity.

Figure 55: Summary of other themes raised in the public meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Rebranding and consultation costs	<i>The money you put to rebranding the school ... provide it to the existing schools to increase the quality of the education (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
How to spend existing PTA funds	<i>Hardworking Friends of the school. There's been a lot of fundraising for BWHS. What happens to the funds that have been raised already if the two schools merge? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)</i>
Current Estyn status and quality monitoring going forward	<i>What happens to the special measures? Do they have the same teachers? How do we know if it will be same as the old school because it won't any longer be monitored by Estyn? (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
Option to federate primary and secondary schools in the area	<i>Has it been considered to federate primary and secondary school? Because one of the biggest problems we have with education is that there is poor preparation at Junior school ... the standard is quite poor and the high schools in many cases have to start again (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
Evidence of standards in decline?	<i>When I was a teacher in Llandrindod ... the results on average of all primary schools was well above the average of the WJEC for the whole of Wales – very often it was the first. Now, what has happened? Could you elaborate on that fact? What is the evidence from Estyn on the deterioration of standards? (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
Standardised Quality measures Acknowledgement of rural deprivation	<i>...can't you appeal to Estyn? They recognise rural deprivation. Can't they, therefore, put more money on the table to make the schools more viable? Can't you appeal to them? (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
Recognising improvement trajectory	<i>The Estyn reports have been given a lot of weight in this particular meeting. And I'd like it noted that both schools – Llandod and Builth – are in special measures. I've noticed a great improvement in Llandod High School in the last year or so since [head teacher] has been there. And we look forward to things happening at Builth as I understand they are advertising for a new head teacher (Llandrindod Public Meeting)</i>
Cost of the	<i>Could someone please tell me ... how much are the authority paying of taxpayers'</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
consultation process	<i>money for the services of ORS? ... it's taxpayers money and they have a right to know (Llandrindod Wells Public meeting)</i>
Timeframe from interim proposal to long term aspirations- single site	<i>My question is by running your proposed split site schools, what period will you give before you then make a decision to either go through another consultation process to then move that school eventually to Builth Wells? (Llandrindod Wells Public meeting)</i>
Recording strength of feeling in the public meeting	<i>90% of people here will not have anything to say this evening and I hope when you are noting the points you should note when comments get widespread applause from people who are not going to say anything else. Applause is our voice (Llandrindod Wells Public meeting)</i>
Clarifying need for statutory notice	<i>You mentioned the terminology 'Statutory notice' that is obviously a legal process. Can you confirm that if the authority was to close one of the two campuses in the future we would still have the statutory notice or not (Llandrindod Well Public meeting)</i>
Reversing decisions	<i>If the cabinet decides to go ahead with the proposal and then next year at the local elections we end up with a new cabinet, could they then decide to reverse the decision? (Llandrindod Well Public meeting)</i>
Existing staff contracts	<i>Clarify what will happen about staff. Will the staff have to apply for their jobs? (Builth Wells Public Meeting)</i>
Suggested tertiary model for post 16 education	<i>I am familiar, though with what is happening in England. In the rural areas they have secondary schools 11-16 and then they have proper tertiary colleges ... My suggestion would be this ... Most schools are good enough and should be kept on their present sites. Build a proper tertiary college (which) would cater for the wide range of activities in rural areas – farming, conservation, tourism, forestry (Builth Wells Public Meeting)</i>

9. Written Submissions

Analysis of stakeholder responses

- 9.1 During the formal consultation process 21 written submissions were received concerning the proposals for Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. These were from professional, political, interest and community groups as well as from individual residents. The table below shows the breakdown of contributors by type.

Figure 56: Sources of Written Submissions

INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTS (11)	
11 individual submissions were received from residents	
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (1)/COUNTY COUNCILLORS (3)	
Chris Davies MP County Councillor David Evans	County Councillor Gary D Price County Councillor Hywel Lewis
OTHER POLITICAL GROUP	
Powys County Council Welsh Liberal Democrats Group	
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (2)	
Governing Body of Llandrindod High School	Governing Body of Llandrindod Wells County Primary School
TOWN COUNCIL	
Rhayader Town Council	
COMMUNITY ORGANISATION	
Llandrindod Wells Business Group	
STATUTORY CONSULTEE	
Her majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales-Estyn	

- 9.2 ORS has read all the written submissions and reported them in this chapter, with some detailed summaries also provided; none have been disregarded even if they are not expressed in a 'formal' way. It is a painstaking but necessary process to identify the main themes and issues raised by respondents.
- 9.3 All submissions have also been reviewed by Powys County Council; meaning that any submissions that present technical arguments that require more detailed consideration have been evaluated by appropriate members of the consultation team.
- 9.4 Submissions were initially classified on the basis of the type of individual or organisation submitting the response. They were then read in their entirety and the key themes and issues raised were collated, classified and reported using a standardised code frame.
- 9.5 Where multiple submissions present the same or very similar arguments, or refer to the same evidence or assumptions, they have been summarised collectively in the report of consultation findings without undue repetition. These summaries are presented in a thematic (tabular) format in order to identify the

range of views and issues as well as common themes. This will ensure that Powys County Council is able to consider the important issues identified.

- 9.6 In accordance with Welsh Governments' School Organisation code, her majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales' (Estyn) formal responses to this consultation is included in full in Appendix 1.
- 9.7 Finally, it is important to note that the following section is a report of the views expressed by submission contributors. In some cases, these views will not be supported by the available evidence - and while ORS has not sought to highlight or correct those that make incorrect statements or assumptions, this should be borne in mind when considering the submissions.

Main Themes Raised in Written Submissions

- 9.8 The aim of the consultation was to gather opinion and comment and to respond to questions on the proposal to close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School in August 2017 and to open a single school on both sites in September 2017. It should be stated at the outset, however, that respondents were mainly concerned about the longer term prospect of the closure of Llandrindod High School. With this in mind, the findings here are presented first for the present consultation and second for the longer-term perceived intentions of the Council for a single site, single school to serve both communities.

The Current Proposal – The Case for Change

- 9.9 Although several respondents understood that change was necessary for mainly financial and staffing reasons, the general tenor of response was negative with nearly all expressing opposition to the proposal:

As recommended by the SORP the status quo cannot continue. With falling school numbers and consequently school budgets there needs to be more innovative thinking to achieve a practical solution for Mid Powys (Resident)

We fully understand that there is a need for change. Both schools are small in pupil numbers and critical mass, both schools are in special measures, both schools struggle to fund specialist teachers (Resident)

- 9.10 A few suggested other reasons for the proposal - either to withdraw both schools quickly from special measures or to complement the changes proposed for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools:

It ... has been done to get the two schools out of special measures quickly, swiftly and without having to address the core issues and concerns raised by Estyn (Resident)

Doing this for the sake of a saving of £133K and getting out of Estyn special measures is an insult to both our learners and our teachers (Resident)

It is perfectly clear that the proposals around Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells High School stem from the change to the Brecon and Gwernyfed High School proposals that see the provision of Welsh Medium Education being provided in Builth Wells High School from 1st September 2017. (County Cllr Gary D Price)

- 9.11 Only one respondent offered clear support for the current proposal for a dual site school:

I believe it has the potential to deliver improvements in standards and management. The combined pupil numbers should make it easier to attract a quality head teacher and leadership team which as we have seen with the Newtown and John Beddoes experiment really uplifted standards in a very short period of time (County Cllr Hywel Lewis)

Concerns over the Current Proposals

Quality and Standards of Education

- 9.12 Some respondents were uncertain how the proposals would make a positive change to current teaching and learning. They challenged how the proposal would lead to the recruitment of more specialist teaching staff; were confused generally about the council's assertion that standards would improve and wanted more evidence to support the Council's claims:

How will the new school lift standards with less money (the funding being 2/3 teachers per year LESS than the two schools get at the moment)? It will mean fewer specialists in front of classes, less opportunities for the pupils, lowering standards (Resident)

The report says teachers will need to apply for their own posts and will result in high quality teachers - How? (Resident)

It provides no demonstrable prospect of an improvement in educational outcomes at either pre or post-16 levels in the catchment areas covered by both current schools, and in particular provides no significant prospect of an expansion of learning opportunities or improvement in standards at post-16 (PCC Welsh Liberal Democrats)

- 9.13 The Council's argument for a greater 'critical mass' of students was called into question:

For Pre-16 education the same number of children will be in the same school building for each school. Therefore, there will be no change in the "critical mass"(Resident)

Class sizes will remain the same meaning that the increase in critical mass of students to help fund more specialist teachers will not happen (Resident)

- 9.14 Estyn is unconvinced that the changes will improve educational standards and criticised the consultation document for its lack of evidence to support this claim. It also argues that the current standards have not been adequately reviewed or explained:

The proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards or provision...it is Estyn's opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposals (Estyn)

The proposer makes appropriate reference to the outcomes of both schools' most recent Estyn inspections. It identifies correctly that current performance and prospects for improvement at both schools were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the core inspections and that both schools are in special measures. The proposer also refers briefly to the schools' categorisation within the National School Categorisation System. However, it provides no explanation of the context or detail for these judgements (Estyn)

- 9.15 Moreover, Estyn is concerned that PCC have not given sufficient thought to the possibility of the new school failing to improve standards, along with the risks involved with opening a single site school:

There is insufficient consideration of the risk associated with its longer term vision of opening one school – one site in Builth, given that the proposal’s main benefits can only be materialised if this longer-term vision is in fact realised. Most significantly, however, it does not consider the possibility that the proposed new school will fail to improve standards, or identify any measure to address this (Estyn)

Impacts upon School Leaders and Governors

- 9.16 Respondents were concerned over the impacts of the proposal on Governors and school leaders. They felt that the extra workload would affect individual wellbeing and questioned the Council’s duty of care to staff:

Reducing the number of members of the Senior Management Teams will over-stretch already stressed and unhappy Senior Leaders, leading to increased disenchantment that will filter down through the staff body (Resident)

It WILL NOT improve standards and an already stretched Senior Management Team will NOT have time or resources to adequately support failing teachers or to follow correctly the Council’s performance capability procedure for teachers (Resident)

To close both schools and re-open them with all the same pupils will achieve nothing apart from giving more stress to a single senior leadership team and Governing Body who would be responsible for one school on two sites. Both schools are currently in special measures from Estyn and current workload issues for the senior leadership teams are already overwhelming (Resident)

We all want to improve (learning) outcomes. However, how do you do that if you leave the KS3 and KS4 learners where they are and reduce the combined Senior Leadership Team who have the responsibility for improving standards? (LHS Governors)

Where is the duty of care to the staff of the schools within this proposal? (Resident)

- 9.17 Estyn is also of the view that the impact on ‘the leadership and management of the new school’ has not been adequately considered.

Funding, costs and savings

- 9.18 Estyn is unconvinced about the new school’s budget, which it assumes will be impacted by Llandrindod’s deficit budget:

Significantly, the proposer does not consider sufficiently well the impact on provision and outcomes of a reduced budget given that one of the two schools is projecting a significant budget deficit over the next three years (Estyn)

- 9.19 Respondents expressed doubt and confusion over the financial reasons underlying the proposals and sought further explanations. Some highlighted what they considered to be oversights or inaccuracies underlying PCC’s financial arguments:

Realistically there will be no money saved. No money to use to improve standard (Resident)

Has the increased transport needed for teachers and senior leaders between campuses been taken into account in the proposal? The saving is negligible and will be sucked up in the cost of alterations needed and the increased cost of supporting two campuses (Resident)

Can you send a detailed breakdown of all the costs and savings used within the proposal? We can't see where this is explained. What is the £133,000 made up of? (Resident)

Having a school over two sites would save £133,000 but how? ... The only difference is one head teacher and I can't see a head teacher's salary being £133,000 (Resident)

If the PCC option for the new school is implemented we would suggest that the new school would have one head teacher and two deputy head teachers (one for each site). To improve standards at each site we would also suggest that to provide sufficient capacity within SLT you would need five assistant head teachers. This would be equal to the total number of SLT at both schools at present. We would therefore suggest that any savings are marginal (LHS Governors)

9.20 Respondents criticised PCC for prioritising financial considerations over education:

PCC say the decisions need to be made because the children's education is important but as far as I can see, education is at the bottom of the page and money is at the top. I do understand that money is in short supply but ... the education is taking a huge blow yet PCC high ranking officers are still enjoying their large wage packets and benefits (Resident)

Local politics and penny pinching by PCC should not penalise their (teachers') career opportunities, nor should it cause such uncertainties that people are dissuaded from sending their children to this school (Resident)

Process and Consultation – the current proposal

9.21 A few respondents outlined their frustration with the whole process and particularly criticised the fact that only one option was offered for consideration:

Can you explain why this is called a consultation period when there is no discussion, debate or negotiation? The only idea discussed is the proposal and no other ideas or proposals are able to be looked at during this period? Does the council not feel that the general public might have other relevant ideas to put forward? (Resident)

I am not happy with only being given one option to vote on. This is not a choice but an ultimatum ... There have been other proposals that have been drawn up but have been rejected out of hand. Why? (Resident)

9.22 There were several criticisms of the consultation document - inaccuracies and misleading statements were highlighted and respondents asked for clarity on a number of issues:

Budget inaccuracies and queries

... "Llandrindod High School is forecasting a significant cumulative deficit budget of £312,260 by 2018/19 unless action is taken." Since the consultation document was issued we reviewed the actions needed and have submitted a budget that shows a surplus in ALL years to 2019/20. Also there is no mention of the loan Builth Wells High School received to cover the deficit that they accumulated in prior years. Has this been repaid or will it have to be written off if Builth Wells High School is closed? (LHS Governors)

Queries over facts and figures for the two existing schools

The consultation is misleading in implying that Builth High School offers more A Level subjects than Llandrindod High School. Both schools offer 12 subjects through the medium of English. Builth High

School offers five subjects through the medium of Welsh and Art through the medium of English and Welsh. This accounts for the total of 17.5 shown for Builth but they are not additional subjects (LHS Governors)

The consultation document appears to use assumptions favourable to Builth Wells and detrimental to Llandrindod ... Appendix A Part A2 overstates the primary pupil numbers in the catchment area for Builth High School and understates those for Llandrindod as at January 2016 (LHS Governors)

Criticisms of linguistic style and insufficient explanations

The proposals are rushed and sloppy with mistakes throughout the document (Resident)

I found the document very hard going, not easy to understand and repetitive ... There is not enough information to show how one school over two sites will work. How many classes to a year? How the schools will come out of special measures? How this will affect the children's education and their emotional wellbeing. It doesn't take into account any additional needs of pupils (Resident)

- 9.23 Two parents criticised the primary school consultation at Cefnlllys School for not allowing time for children to have all their questions answered:

Our daughter ... was asked, as part of her School Council, to attend a consultation meeting ... She told us her class had worked out questions that they wished to have answered ... When I collected her from school the first thing she said to me was that it was a complete waste of time and they were treated like younger children who had no idea ... We were disgusted by this lack of care for their opinion (Resident)

How does this help our learners? Why do you feel that they should not know what the direct impact will be on their education? (Resident)

- 9.24 A few respondents criticised the public consultation meeting in Llandrindod Wells for the chairmanship and lack of response from the cabinet members present:

It was ridiculous to stop the two Council Members from speaking at Llandrindod when they commented and engaged in the process at Builth Wells (Resident)

Council members were able to comment and engage in the process in Builth but not in Llandrindod. The person leading the meeting in Llandrindod took up a large amount of time seemingly answering the questions on behalf of the panel and giving his opinion (Resident)

- 9.25 The youth and public questionnaires were criticised for restricting or leading responses:

Our daughter will not be completing the Youth Questionnaire. It is written in a deliberately confusing manner ... We feel that it is weighted to produce a positive outcome for the proposal (Resident)

Neither of our children ... feel able to give their honest opinion of what is best for their education on this form ... They are the future and yet they feel unheard, patronised and disenchanted with the whole education authority through this process. This lack of understanding of their needs and opinions is reprehensible (Resident)

The yellow questionnaire ... doesn't give you the full chance to answer the questions. I feel that the way it has been written is to only give you the option that PCC is putting forward (Resident)

- 9.26 Respondents queried whether the final decision should be made by the Cabinet or full Council:

This major life changing decision that will affect a large number of families should not be left to the small number of Councillors in the Cabinet but be debated and decided on by the whole Council (Chris Davies MP)

The present policies for the re-organisation of both primary and secondary schools in Powys have never been approved by the full Powys County Council. They have only been approved by the Cabinet. This would appear to be against County Council Policy whereby it is the full County Council which decides all policy matters. Why have these policies only been approved by the Cabinet? (County Cllr David Evans)

9.27 A participant asked how much ORS was being paid:

The question was dodged and not answered publicly although it was mentioned that the question would be answered by email only to Mr Price. Why should he know and I can't as a parent? My reasoning is that the consultation costs a lot (too much and you can't justify it, so keep it quiet) (Resident)

9.28 Respondents also suspected that the Council had decided that the proposal would be implemented regardless of the outcomes of the consultation process:

This whole consultation is clearly a tick box exercise and the decision is already made (Resident)

I am left feeling ... that this process ... won't make any difference at all (Resident)

Other Issues over the Current Proposals

9.29 The other issues raised are outlined in the table below. People were primarily concerned about how this change would impact on the wellbeing of staff; how the head teacher would be appointed; the impact on educational standards of teachers travelling between sites and how the proposals would affect student numbers. A range of less frequently mentioned concerns or comments are also listed.

Figure 57: Summary of Other Themes Raised in the submissions

Sub-Theme	Comments
Questions about Estyn monitoring	<p><i>If the schools are combined and removed from Estyn special measures what guarantees do the pupils have that their needs will be met and the new school will action the points highlighted by Estyn as they will no longer warrant monitoring on their progress? (Resident)</i></p> <p><i>Why has Estyn put Llandrindod School into special measures? What is it doing to make the school perform better? What does 'unsatisfactory prospects for improvement' exactly mean? (Resident)</i></p>
Head teachers – questions/request	<p><i>We would also request that Llandrindod High School be allowed to undergo a formal recruitment process for a permanent head teacher as Builth Wells High School was a few months ago (and not ring-fence the current incumbent) (Resident)</i></p> <p><i>What will happen with the headship if this proposal goes through? What grade will a head over two campuses be on? Will this be higher than the current grades of each head and has this been taken into account in the financial effects of the proposal? (Resident)</i></p> <p><i>Currently Builth is the only school with a permanent head teacher. Therefore, does this mean that there will be no external competition for this post? Will Llandrindod be given the support needed by the council to gain a permanent head prior to the closure? (Resident)</i></p> <p><i>Given that neither school currently has a permanent head teacher, and the time usually taken</i></p>

Sub-Theme	Comments
	<i>in recruiting head teachers in Powys, what impact will this have on the timescales? Will an 'Acting Head' be appointed?</i> (Resident)
Impacts of teachers travelling between sites	<p><i>Teachers WILL have to travel between the two sites – taking up time when they could be supporting our children in their education</i> (Resident)</p> <p><i>Has the increased transport needed for teachers and senior leaders between campuses been taken into account in the proposal? The saving is negligible and will be sucked up in the cost of alterations needed and the increased cost of supporting two campuses</i> (Resident)</p> <p><i>Ian Roberts did suggest at one of the public meetings that specialist teachers would have to move between sites but that does not help if the class sizes are small and there is no additional funding for the extra teachers required to cover the travelling</i> (LHS Governors)</p>
Student Numbers	<p><i>The current interim proposal of keeping English key stage 3, 4 and 5 spread across both sites will result in decreasing student numbers</i> (County Cllr David Evans)</p> <p><i>“The Council believes that a school with a minimum of 600 pupils in KS3 and KS4 would have average year group of 120 pupils, which would help maximise the curriculum benefits and lead to improved outcomes”. It would be difficult to improve the curriculum benefits if you did not combine KS3 and KS4 English medium students on one site</i> (LHS Governors)</p>
Sixth form model – supporting comments	<p><i>We would much prefer her to travel to Builth Wells each day than Hereford to undertake her studies. We would support this proposal put forward by the Governing Body.</i> (Resident)</p> <p><i>I would ... support the establishment of a single sixth form centre. The additional traveling in the morning and evening would be more than compensated in that there would be very little, if any, requirement for additional travel during the school day</i> (County Cllr Hywel Lewis)</p>
Sixth form – concerns	<i>It has not provided sufficient information on current school to school or home to school travel arrangements to support its conclusion that the distance of 8 miles will pose minimal problems for sixth form travel arrangements if sixth forms are maintained on both sites</i> (Estyn)
Surplus places	<i>... the only change will be Welsh stream children moving from Brecon to Builth, if the Brecon/Gwernyfed proposal goes through. So please can you explain how this proposal will directly impact on the “surplus places”?</i> (Resident)
Negative impact of change for learners	<i>To continue with these proposals at such time will in my opinion have a negative impact for those finishing off and future learners who will become part of the proposed one school system over two sites</i> (County Cllr Gary D Price)
Subject Choice	<p><i>Given that pupil numbers are projected to continue falling, how soon will it be before you once again have to start reducing the number of subjects offered?</i> (Resident)</p> <p><i>How will running the two schools on two sites enable you to offer more subjects if neither staff nor pupils are travelling between sites?</i> (Resident)</p>
Welsh Medium Education – supporting comments	<i>It considers reasonably that as larger numbers of pupils move through the school, this will improve the school’s ability to offer a more comprehensive curriculum to Welsh medium pupils</i> (Estyn)
Welsh Medium Education – opposition/ concerns	<p><i>Parents in Brecon and Sennybridge may prefer to send their children out of county for Welsh medium education. Sennybridge is closer to Ystalyfera than Builth Wells</i> (LHS Governors)</p> <p><i>The proposer suggests that the increased number of Welsh medium pupils at the Builth Wells site...would enable the school to set pupils according to ability for some subjects. The proposer argues that this could have a positive impact...however, it does not provide evidence for its view that setting improves standards</i> (Estyn)</p>

Sub-Theme	Comments
	<p><i>There remain questions about equality of opportunities for post-16 pupils choosing to study through the medium of Welsh in terms of the range of courses available to them (Estyn)</i></p> <p><i>The proposer acknowledges the increase in travel arrangements for pupils aged 11-16 who live in the Brecon catchment and who wish to attend Welsh-medium provision in Builth. However, it does not analyse the impact of the proposal on these pupils in this consultation but in its concurrent consultation on the closure of the Welsh medium stream at Brecon (Estyn)</i></p> <p><i>It does not specify clearly how it intends to address the difficulties some pupils from the Brecon area may face with accessing after school activities due to transport constraints, other than a vague reassurance that it will look into options (Estyn)</i></p>
Ring fencing	<i>Can you confirm which jobs will be ring-fenced for current teachers? (Resident)</i>
Teaching quality	<i>My big concern is that as one school Llandrindod will be forced to appoint teachers based on their ability to speak Welsh and not on their ability to teach, as happens in other areas of the Council (Resident)</i>
Integration of pupils from both schools	<i>What will be done to integrate the pupils from Builth and Llandrindod to make them feel that they do all belong to one school? (Resident)</i>
Building maintenance	<p><i>The document states that Llandrindod High School is in poor condition. Why has the building been left to get in this state? Surely the building should be maintained to an adequate standard (Resident)</i></p> <p><i>Having established one school on two sites will you now commit to carrying out the backlog of maintenance identified in the documents? (Resident)</i></p>

Concerns over any Longer-term aspirations

- 9.30 Most respondents were more concerned about the longer term prospect of closing Llandrindod High School altogether and transporting pupils to a new 'super school' in Builth Wells:

The shutting of the two campuses is ill thought out and damaging to the locality of whichever town loses secondary education (Resident)

I would ask that you reject the proposal for one school on a new site in the vicinity of Builth Wells to replace both Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools (County Cllr David Evans)

Facts and Figures

- 9.31 The Governors of Llandrindod High School queried the information used to justify any longer term intentions for developing a single 'super school' in Builth Wells:

Appendix A Part A 1 I) says of Llandrindod High School "about half the pupils coming from the towns of Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader". 53% of our pupils live within three miles of the school. If Rhayader was included and using ESTYN definitions, it would either be a majority (over 60%) or many (over 70%) (LHS Governors)

The Business Case showed that the potential pupils from new housing developments was three times as many in Llandrindod than in Builth. Given that there are already more pupils in the Llandrindod catchment area than the Builth catchment area this discrepancy can only increase. There would, therefore, appear to be more future transport costs if the new school were to be built

in the vicinity of Builth Wells rather than on the existing Llandrindod site which is already owned by PCC. How would building in Builth Wells meet the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Framework? (LHS Governors)

The Impact Assessment issued at the time of the Business Case did not include all the activities at Llandrindod High School despite being provided to PCC. There are also many activities run by Llandrindod Leisure Centre using the High School premises and grounds for which the Leisure Centre receives the income (LHS Governors)

- 9.32 The Governors also criticised the options evaluation procedure outlined in the consultation document for inaccurately prioritising the current proposal:

In comparing the options of one school in either Builth (Option 3) or Llandrindod (Option 4) how can there not be equality of ticks for both options for "To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English" and "To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education"? This would increase the ticks for Option 4 to 14 equal to Option 3 (LHS Governors)

Impacts on the Community of Llandrindod Wells

- 9.33 By far the largest number of comments and issues were raised by respondents concerned over the longer term quality of life for residents of Llandrindod Wells. Typical comments highlighting the negative social, economic and educational impacts are as follows:

The proposal does not contain information on a community impact assessment of its longer-term vision of a single school in Builth (Estyn)

I think it would be a moral and social outrage to shut Llandrindod High School. It would impact on the whole town and not just the learners (Resident)

Any available money would be much better spent investing in the existing facilities which are important hubs for educational, economic and social development in a wider number of our communities than that proposed by Powys County Council (Rhyader Town Council)

The proposal to close Llandrindod High School presents a hugely damaging impact to the social and economic well-being of Llandrindod Wells and district, which far outweighs any possible potential improvement in learning outcomes or the very modest predicted annual revenue gains (PCC Welsh Liberal Democrats)

I object to the proposals as they are now and any future proposals that will see the ceasing of a secondary educational provision in Llandrindod Wells (County Cllr Gary D Price)

In my opinion your aim needs to be how to find a solution that keeps both towns thriving whilst offering the best educational opportunities for the pupils of both towns. Not an easy task I'm sure, but one you have to find an answer to. Certainly the closure of either school in my opinion is not an option (Resident)

- 9.34 Several other points were raised in relation to impacts of school closure upon the community and these are presented in the paragraphs that follow:

Negative economic and business impacts

Who, do you suppose, is likely to move to a town with no school or sports centre? Who is likely to open their business in the town? Businesses, who are struggling at present, will lose out the 'school run' clientele; those who drop in for a quick shop or use the post office when they pick up their children (Resident)

Research will tell you that when a school is closed the area suffers a major lack of investment, with people moving away from the area and more importantly no movement or investment into the area (Resident)

Llandrindod Wells is already struggling economically ... and it would be hard to think of Llandrindod Wells as the County Town of Powys without any provision for Secondary Education (County Cllr Gary D Price)

It is a fact that a business which relocated to Llandrindod recently only did so after meeting with the Principal of Llandrindod High School. As a business group we are working with Powys County Council and the Welsh Government towards regeneration of Llandrindod Wells. The loss of our high school would be completely opposed to these aims (LW Business Group)

The future of high schools in a rurally dispersed county like Powys goes beyond the consideration of purely education matters because a high school represents wealth and growth for the communities it serves. Therefore, decisions should be based not only on educational arguments but on the wider effect those decisions have on the community (LW Business Group)

Without a school in Llandrindod Wells, fewer families would move to the town

How could Llandrindod Wells function as a County Town for Powys without even a high school? How can we encourage families with children to live in either Builth or Llandrindod with this huge question mark hanging over our high schools? (Resident)

With the prospect of the school closing, business closing in Llandrindod, Primary Schools being shut - families will not want to move to the area with no prospects (Resident)

We only have to talk to our employees to know they question their future in a town where the education of their children is being compromised. The current direction that is being proposed to cabinet ... will also discourage any parents, or prospective parents from moving to Llandrindod Wells. This would spell economic disaster for our town (LW Business Group)

Teacher recruitment and retention would become more challenging without wider economic opportunities

How do you intend to address the problem of retaining teachers when there is little or no employment for a 'non-teaching' spouse/partner in the area? (Resident)

Closure of the Llandrindod Wells sports centre would affect members of the community and clubs

If you close the Llandrindod campus, what will happen to the town? The sports centre? I would suggest many will be adversely affected (Resident)

All premises are used by various community groups - football teams, rugby teams, sports classes, art groups ... To lose these facilities will not only impact greatly on the school but their communities too ... not only would school closures harm our local economies but we would also lose the talented teachers and fantastic facilities offered by these schools (Chris Davies MP)

There would be a loss of extra opportunities for young people living in Llandrindod Wells

The Llandrindod Wells Youth Market ...has been seen as a leading example of what can be achieved in Wales when commercial ideals are developed between the community and education ... This kind of pilot scheme, which was seen as ground breaking within Wales, will simply not happen without a high school in Llandrindod Wells (LW Business Group)

Builth Wells Site

9.35 Various comments and questions were raised over a site in Builth Wells:

Funding for the new site – where would it come from?

The idea of building a new school without any firm practical or financial backing in this current era of cutbacks is, I believe, fanciful (Resident)

Both MP Chris Davies and AM Kirsty Williams state that there aren't the funds available for the build. There will also be two elections before the funds can be applied for; what is the guarantee that the current situation will still be in place following these elections? (Resident)

The additional capital required for the new building appears not to have been considered in the assessment of potential savings through the amalgamation of the two schools. A proposal that involves substantial capital expenditure in future can only be considered financially if all costs are taken into consideration (LW Business Group)

PCC has earmarked over £17,000,000 in its capital budget for a new school in the vicinity of Builth Wells. A new school would cost at least double that and the assumption must be that the additional cost will come from Welsh Government. For £8,000,000 the backlog of repairs for both the Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells sites could be funded and the schools physically brought up to 21st Century standards. This would be a financially better alternative given the very long payback taking the Business Case savings for a New School (LHS Governors)

Choosing the new site/suitability

How will a site for one school be identified if the Council proceeds to the next stage of building a new school on one site? (Resident)

(The) SWOT analysis for Option 3 (Single school in Builth) says “potential constraints of the current Builth Wells High School Site”. The constraints are not potential – they are manifest (Resident)

Impacts of an uncertain future

9.36 Several respondents felt that the period of uncertainty would impact negatively on teachers and pupils. It would also be more difficult to recruit teachers to the area:

With the wait for funding; land identification and all the building process we are many years off a new school but in the meantime we believe this proposal will lower the morale of the teaching body and leave both schools in a state of limbo. This will impact our children (Resident)

The uncertainty will lead to low morale in the teaching staff. It will be harder to recruit new staff thus lowering the standard of education being delivered. As I understand the new school could take up to 10 years to build as you do not have planning on a site or the funding. Are you willing to jeopardise a decade of learning? (Resident)

The prospect of the high school closing down has upset both my son and myself. He is very worried about the effects of this and how he will perform at school. He can currently walk to the high school which will help his independence. He doesn't feel that going to Builth High School will help him to excel (Resident)

The lack of information will lead to a reduction in education standards and the instability and uncertainty of proposals will make recruiting teachers to mid-Wales even harder than is currently the case (Rhyader Town Council)

The inability of the Schools' Service and Cabinet to currently identify a site for the new 11-18 school in Builth Wells presents an unacceptable degree of uncertainty in to the proposal, leaving it in a damaging 'limbo' (PCC Welsh Liberal Democrats)

As there is no funding for the project and it will be many years before Welsh Assembly funding can be applied for it will create massive uncertainty for students and staff at both schools in the interim (County Cllr David Evans)

Travel and transport implications

- ^{9.37} Respondents expressed concern over the length of time that students would travel and the costs involved from the County's budget:

The closure of a high school in Llandrindod would mean that my children would spend at least 45 minutes on a bus to reach their next nearest high school. This is unacceptable to our family (Resident)

I am also intrigued to know what the costings are for this proposal ... Has the transport of pupils been factored in? What are the proposed costs of transport for around 550 children from Llandrindod to Builth on a daily basis? (Resident)

Increases to the cost of transport for children who are transferring schools would put further pressures on Powys County Council's budget, along with the massive capital investment of building two new schools (refers to all proposals) (Chris Davies MP)

It does not seem credible that the extra cost to bring Builth students to Llandrindod is £306,318 but the cost of transporting Llandrindod students to Builth is only £238,366. The number of students who attend Llandrindod at no transport cost to PCC is 295; the number for Builth is just over 200 (LHS Governors)

- ^{9.38} The Governors of Llandrindod High School also highlighted the fact that not all pupils from Llandrindod High School would transfer to a new school in Builth owing to the relative proximity of other schools and that this would adversely affect the viability of this new school. They also provided evidence showing that a single site school in Llandrindod would be more viable in terms of pupil numbers than in Builth Wells.

The information on pupil travel patterns given to us last September based on PLASC 2014 data for years 7-11 was that if Llandrindod School was closed 116 pupils (23.5%) would be closer to a school other than Builth Wells. If they were to transfer, the impact on the New School would be substantial. The equivalent data for Builth Wells School is that 19 English medium pupils (5.2%) would be closer to a school other than Llandrindod Wells. There were also 81 Welsh medium pupils that would transfer to Llanidloes (28) or Brecon (53). If the New School were based in Llandrindod

the potential Llanidloes pupils would remain as would the larger part of the potential Brecon pupils (LHS Governors)

- 9.39 Moreover, Estyn reasons that PCC have not sufficiently explained how they plan to encourage these pupils to attend the new school instead, and would therefore like to see a clearer risk management strategy:

In a few instances, the proposer does not identify or discuss its risk management measures in sufficient detail. For example, although the proposer identifies the risk that some parents may arrange for their children to attend schools other than the new school, it does not identify sufficiently well how it will engage positively with parents to reduce the risk (Estyn)

- 9.40 Uncertainties in a wider context over school choice were also highlighted by respondents:

Pupils from the Rhayader and Upper Ithon Valley areas may in fact be closer to Llanidloes and Newtown High Schools respectively, yet the future of these schools is uncertain because the proposals for the North of the County haven't yet been proposed (County Cllr Gary D Price)

The Welsh Liberal Democrat Group considers it very unwise to contemplate changes in the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells High School catchments without considering the Llanidloes High School catchment at the same time (PCC Welsh Liberal Democrats)

Alternative suggestions and proposals

- 9.41 The Governors of Llandrindod High School presented their own preferred options for the future of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, which in summary are as follows:

- (Strong preference is) to continue to provide education for years 11-18 from the present school with sufficient funding to provide the range of subjects that are desirable in a modern secondary school ...
- If increased funding is not available then there should be
 - one dual stream 11-18 Secondary School operating from two sites
 - The Builth Wells site would accommodate the Welsh Medium provision and a Sixth Form Centre.
 - English medium students age 11-16 would be educated on the Llandrindod Wells site.
 - This arrangement could be made swiftly and with modest cost.
 - The buildings on the Llandrindod site will accommodate the increase in student numbers with a few additional classrooms.

- 9.42 The advantages of this model, as explained by the Governing Body, are that it would be possible to increase the GCSE offer, strengthen provision overall and deploy subject specialists. Costs would be reduced from the better deployment of staff and a reduced Senior Leadership Team. A separate unit for the Welsh medium stream would lead to more use of the Welsh language between lessons and improve the uptake of Welsh Medium secondary provision in Mid Powys to compensate for the loss of pupils transferring from Welsh Medium primary schools. A Sixth Form Centre would offer more subjects; attract students who presently travel to England; be more cost effective and eliminate the cost of student transport between the two sites.

9.43 There was overwhelming support for this proposal from many other respondents:

I strongly believe that the proposal put forward by the Governing Body of Llandrindod High School, is both pragmatic and logical ... Having a permanent solution to this situation would take away the uncertainty for all involved, not least of all for both towns (Resident)

This would be in the best interests of all students ... and could be actioned sooner rather than later, instead of some 'pie in the sky' plan to build a super high school we cannot afford and do not want (Resident)

I would ask that you instruct SORP to bring forward proposals for one school based on the two existing sites as a permanent solution ... This alternative proposal is practical, achievable, permanent and will help to raise educational standards (County Cllr David Evans)

(The Governors' proposal) gives certainty to secondary education in both towns, which removes a potential hurdle to attracting inward investment and minimises the economic impact on both towns. We would encourage you to reject the current proposal ... and proceed to an open consultation with all members of our community so a solution can be found ... that will be in the best interests of not only our community but most importantly our children and grandchildren (LW Business Group)

Rhayader Town Council objects to any closure of a secondary school in Llandrindod Wells. It implores Powys County Council to undertake further work on proposals for one school based on the two existing sites as a permanent solution (Rhayader Town Council)

9.44 Several respondents questioned why the Governors' proposal was not preferred over the current proposal by PCC:

This document clearly shows that the Council believes the best proposal is for the creation of an English medium school in Llandrindod and a Welsh medium school in Builth but because they think in years to come they might get a shiny new school building they are willing to sacrifice our current learners' education (Resident)

Why has this proposal been removed? (Resident)

The only reason for not doing this is economic but in every meeting we were told that this was not an economic decision. Why is this? (Resident)

9.45 Additional suggestions were made by others:

- *For through schools and split sites rather than leaving communities without a school in their towns (Resident)*
- *To stop the current proposal and work with both schools to raise standards and get them out of special measures in advance of a new combined school or implementing Option 5 (Two Residents)*

Other themes in relation to one site, one school

^{9.46} The table below outlines some additional issues, around the consultation process, funding, equalities and the benefits of continuing to occupy the existing sites:

Figure 58: Summary of Additional themes raised in relation to one site, one school

Sub-Theme	Comments
Process and Consultation –one school, one site – a done deal?	<i>How can you issue a statement about a preferred site for a new secondary school before consultation? This is divisive and I'm guessing a tactic to try and split the two communities (Resident)</i>
Funding queries	<i>How long do you envisage the 'status quo' of one school on two sites lasting? Is the Council still able to obtain funding for a new school given the change in the Assembly Government? (Resident)</i>
Equalities	<i>The School Organisation Code says PCC should take into account "what impact proposals will have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds". Also "how parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported". e.g. How pupils (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities". Llandrindod Wells north ward is one of the most economically deprived areas in Wales. A New School in Builth Wells would adversely impact this group (LHS Governors)</i>
Benefits of using existing buildings	<i>Existing sites already have connections to mains services and in the case of Llandrindod room to expand the number of buildings if required at some point in the future. The costs of a green field site development would be considerable in comparison. It is difficult to see where a new build school could be accommodated within Builth and how additional traffic would not further congest the streets (LW Business Group)</i>

10. Petitions

Overview of Petitions

^{10.1} One petition was organised that makes reference to the proposals affecting Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. The petition reviewed below is the only petition known by ORS and Powys County Council. We apologise if there have been other petitions of which we have no knowledge.

Summary of Petitions

Save our Schools

^{10.2} An online petition entitled 'Save our Schools' exists with 558 signatures as of 11th August 2016.. It has not been possible to determine how many signatures were gathered during the consultation period.

^{10.3} The petition is found at kirstywilliams.org.uk and includes the following preamble:

We the undersigned support Kirsty Williams AM petition calling for the Independent led Powys County Council to keep our local Schools open.

^{10.4} It is important to note that the petition is not specifically targeted towards this proposal, but instead makes mention of perceived impacts of *both* consultations involving Brecon, Gwernyfed, Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools.

11. Social Media

Main issues and themes from social media

11.1 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the method by which various social media outlets were analysed, and displays each page that was found. The second part provides a review of arguments, discussions and themes that arose around the proposal online.

Overview

11.2 A total of three social media pages were found to contain updates, comments or tweets referring specifically to the proposal or its perceived impacts. Each update, comment or tweet on each page was then analysed and a code frame was designed to capture each unique argument or theme that was discussed.

11.3 To ensure equal treatment between users of social media and all other respondents, only content that was posted during the consultation period was considered. ORS has ignored pages that exist as a response to previous consultations. Below is a summary of each page that was found.

Figure 59 – Overview of social media pages analysed

Name of page/group	Link	Likes/ followers
Powys County Council	facebook.com/powyscc/	3,395
Save Powys Schools	facebook.com/Save-Powys-Schools-1552306661705453/	2,091
Llandrindod Solutions	facebook.com/groups/234530116634949/	1,411

11.4 It is worth noting that in addition to the above, a page named ‘Save Llandrindod High School’ exists with 985 likes on Facebook. While this does show considerable support for the school, there were no updates or comments posted during the consultation period.

Main Themes Raised on Social Media

Quality of education at Llandrindod High School

11.5 Many social media users contend that Llandrindod provides a good education, with specific reference to GCSE and A-Level results. Some users provide anecdotal evidence of high educational standards, while others argue that standards at the school are relatively poor:

Quality – good

It produced the county's best GCSE results last year I believe and all accomplished by staying within the strict budget allocation unlike others (Llandrindod Solutions)

A Level results ... 94 per cent pass rate and a superb 59 per cent achieving A to B grades [in 2015]. [The] school gained its best GCSE results in the last five years. 23 students gained five or more A* or A grades and all students left with two or more GCSEs or equivalent. (Llandrindod Solutions)*

[Llandrindod] probably wouldn't be [in special measures] if the full Estyn inspection was re-done now given the huge improvement (Llandrindod Solutions)

I have three [children]. They're all doing really well and one of them has just been accepted into three universities (Llandrindod Solutions)

I've got two (extremely capable) kids at LHS ... and stats don't tell the whole story. Very easy to throw out figures - if it was simply down to percentages the school wouldn't be in special measures (Llandrindod Solutions)

Quality – bad

It's been failing kids for far too long, why save it? (Llandrindod Solutions)

Effects of proposal on Llandrindod/Builth Wells communities

- 11.6 Users of social media state that that the removal of the school could have far-reaching effects on local society. Common themes include impacts on business and demographics as people are deterred from moving to Llandrindod:

Llandrindod needs a high school otherwise no one will bring business here or move here. We are already turning into a ghost town (Llandrindod Solutions)

This affects the whole town; the whole community and sadly even though they do not realise it in the long run it will affect Builth community too as when the school is moved to outside the town, how will it affect their town centre and sports centre and all those things? (Llandrindod Solutions)

Who will move here? We already can't get professionals here so this will not help (Llandrindod Solutions)

[Having] no school will be the end of Llandrindod (Save Powys Schools)

Removal of Estyn Special Measures

- 11.7 Users commented on the importance of Estyn Special Measures at Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. Some of these suggest that the effective removal of Special Measures might compromise the quality of education on offer:

A new school will be exactly that ... New - so won't be in special measures or inspected for 2+ Years (Llandrindod Solutions)

Special measures has been the driver for improvement at Llandrindod (Llandrindod Solutions)

Currently both high schools are getting extra help and time to improve because of being in special measures so the new school would lose this help and have nobody in charge of working on the individual needs to improve for both campuses! (Llandrindod Solutions)

A new building will not help

- 11.8 Some users of social media argue that a new school building will not tackle the root causes of problems at Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools, while others say that a newer, larger school will be worse for pupils:

A new building is a temporary plaster that will look shiny and new but in the long term will still fail to address resource management issues, low teacher morale and educational standards. Aren't both schools currently in special measures at the moment? (Llandrindod Solutions)

The new school will be bigger, making it easier for more children to get missed. (Llandrindod Solutions)

Disruption to pupils

- 11.9 Social media users voiced their concern over the potential for disruption or uncertainty for pupils:

More disruption to the education of our young people (Llandrindod Solutions)

My daughter is [in] year 5 now, so will be one of the first to be used in this game when it merges. How many of her secondary years will be as a guinea pig, before the 'new school' consultation begins? (Llandrindod Solutions)

My concern is that where we live we are 0.1 of a mile closer to Newtown than Builth, so does that mean my children will have to go to Newtown? (Llandrindod Solutions)

Transport

- 11.10 Users of social media show concern about increased travel times and costs for pupils living in Llandrindod. One user asks whether parents will have to cover this cost:

Currently the school bus to Llandrindod from Llanddewi leaves the village at 8:30 and the Builth bus leaves at 7:45. An extra 45 mins just on the outward journey (Llandrindod Solutions)

Llandrindod is a county town and [has] double [the] population of Builth - it makes no sense to build [the] new school in Builth ... What about cost of bussing all Llandrindod pupils to Builth or will rules be changed so parents have to cover cost? (Llandrindod Solutions)

To close the school would not be cost effective and to transport ALL the kids to Builth will cost silly money (Llandrindod Solutions)

Consultation document/community impact assessment/questionnaire

- 11.11 Many users of social media are unhappy with documentation provided as part of the consultation process. Some state that information provided by the Council is inadequate, biased, incorrect or otherwise unfit for purpose:

Consultation document – inaccuracies leading to lack of confidence

A document full of punctuation errors, grammatical errors, spelling errors, incorrect wording, wording omitted in sentences, the same wording repeated in succession in sentences! And the list goes on! How confident am I that the data is therefore correct? Not very! (Llandrindod Solutions)

It's complete[ly] inaccessible gobbledegook. It's confusing, biased and obviously created for the purposes of manipulating the data (Llandrindod Solutions)

Community impact assessment – unfair bias in favour of Builth Wells

If you want to see how biased this whole process is in favour of Builth Wells I would ask you to look at the community impact assessment presented to council earlier this year. Compare the detail for Builth and Llandrindod (Llandrindod Solutions)

On reading [the draft community impact assessment], I have to say that it is highly biased towards Builth Wells (Llandrindod Solutions)

Questionnaires are leading and biased

What an appalling one sided leading/misleading questionnaire in favour of Builth Wells (Llandrindod Solutions)

I was just about to post pictures of the leading, biased and completely inappropriate questionnaire! (Llandrindod Solutions)

This questionnaire is quite obviously designed for the children to be funnelled towards certain answers. The language and content clearly inaccessible to young children. Seriously lacking in the full picture, details and a complete failure to propose other options (Llandrindod Solutions)

Llandrindod Wells public meeting

^{11.12} Some users were unhappy with the conduct of the Council and ORS at Llandrindod Wells consultation event on 14 April 2016. Others were not satisfied with the answers provided to questions from the floor:

Blaming Welsh Labour for political decisions taken in County Hall is a lame excuse and shows Powys can't even defend its own plan (Powys County Council)

In my opinion, Opinion Research Services were a little too opinionated at the Llandod HS consultation meeting answering on behalf of Powys council officers and cabinet members ... somewhat inappropriate! (Save Powys Schools)

We heard not a word from the portfolio holder (Llandrindod Solutions)

Shame more people didn't have a chance to voice their concerns, due to the time restraint. Well done all for your questions, even if you didn't get the answers you wanted from the panel (Llandrindod Solutions)

Consultation process

^{11.13} Social media users commented on the consultation process itself, with some suggesting that a decision had already been made by the Council:

This isn't consultation; it's dictatorship against the will of the communities they are supposed to serve. More Councillors need to stand up and say 'not in my name' (Llandrindod Solutions)

Some real changes are needed, but they require funding, knowledgeable leadership from county staff and training... We're not going to get any of that. I don't trust the decision not to have been made behind this charade (Llandrindod Solutions)

PCC have already forged ahead with their plans and these 'consultations' are merely a peacekeeping tick-box exercise (Llandrindod Solutions)

I believe the decision has been made, and soon after it's been actioned, proposals will be out for a new school (Llandrindod Solutions)

Support for the proposal

^{11.14} Some users offered their support for the proposal, making reference to the poor condition of Llandrindod school buildings and the quality of education on offer there. One comment notes the successful implementation of similar proposals elsewhere:

Llandrindod High has been failing many kids for far too long. The building is dilapidated and the refurb would cost more than a new build. Why does anyone want to save a failing school? A new school would probably be good for all the kids around this area; more facilities could be incorporated. Change is good - why not let it happen. The kids will feel better having something new (Llandrindod Solutions)

What's the big issue? Other counties have made bigger/better schools and merged two other schools into one ... why can't Powys? Pupils will get a chance to meet other kids from neighbouring towns that they may not have known otherwise. The facilities will be newer, better. So many people can't accept change but times are changing. We aren't stuck in the 80/90s anymore. Get with the times (Llandrindod Solutions)

Alternative ideas/proposals

^{11.15} Some users put forward other ideas or proposals that the Council should consider. One user stated that the County Hall in Llandrindod Wells would make a suitable school building/site and another suggested keeping both schools and investing in them, rather than building an altogether new school:

It was previously reported that PCC may get rid of county hall in Llandrindod Wells; it would make a great school! (Llandrindod Solutions)

I don't see how a new school is going to improve teaching standards. Would it not be better to keep both schools but spend the money on better training and facilities? This is our children's lives they are playing with (Llandrindod Solutions)

Other Comments

11.16 Other sub-themes and comments emerged on social media and are listed below for brevity.

Figure 60: Summary of Additional Themes Raised in relation to one site, one school

Sub-Theme	Comments
Alternative proposals?	<i>I've read through the Formal Consultation Document this morning ... the information I'd like now is what the viable alternative is to the merger/one site proposal? (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Sending children to private school	<i>Going to have to be private school I'm not sending my kids to Builth (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Proposals are purely financially motivated	<i>A sorry state of affairs when it all boils down to money, not a decent or fair education for our young people (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Comments on costs/savings	<i>How will it save 140k? Does anyone really believe that, especially as 50k or more has gone on consultants ... Offset the cost of the process, the set up costs, possible redundancies, higher salaries for management staff etc., will these be recouped for what is likely to be a short term solution? (Llandrindod Solutions)</i> <i>Just heard [ORS] are going to cost us £50k ... That's £50k that could have been spent on our High Schools (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Additional costs to parents	<i>Then there will be the added cost of new uniforms etc. which parents will have to buy (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Removal of parental choice	<i>Without [Llandrindod], parental choice [will be gone] (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
PCC at Builth Wells public meeting	<i>Very disappointed in the vagueness of answers from the panel – still need to be convinced on justification of the proposals – very sad times for our children's education (Powys County Council)</i>
New build – why in Builth Wells?	<i>Why does the school have to be built in Builth? Why can't it be in Llandod instead? Llandod is a dying town (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Llandrindod site	<i>Cynical part of me thinks ground and playing field at Llandrindod is prime development land that Powys will sell off as soon as new school in Builth built – cost of land needed will be fraction of gains from selling land (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Proposal the result of poor planning	<i>As I understand it the reason why they want to build the new school in Builth is because Builth has to retain the Welsh school at its site, due to the fact that they have already closed Brecon Welsh stream high school and Llandod is legally too far north for them to travel. So basically as usual this is the result of incredibly poor planning and leadership in Powys! (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Lack of confidence in PCC	<i>As I have said time and time again PCC is not fit for purpose and itself should be put into special measures ... Why are we paying out about £165,000 per year to a CHIEF EXEC? That money is about the [same as] they would save by closing our school. Well I for one know which one I would rather save (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Cabinet decision is undemocratic	<i>In my opinion, the way forward here is based on a perfectly reasonable expectation of a clear and transparent democratic process ... As things stand, the decision will be made by a group of councillors on whom it will have no effect. We need to change it. We need, as our democratic right, to insist that our local elected councillors are allowed a</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
	<i>vote on this. Anything else will be perceived as a stitch up by the council and its tame councillors from the north. If the decision of our councillors as a whole is to support the proposals then so be it. That is democracy. This is NOT (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>
Happy with Llandrindod school	<i>Don't they understand we are happy with our schools as they are? (Llandrindod Solutions)</i> <i>As a student of the School, I'm passionate about it and I love it along with 599 other students and 50 members of staff who also love and feel passionate about it (Llandrindod Solutions)</i>

Non-specific comments

^{11.17} A number of comments on the 'Save Powys Schools' Facebook page do not *specifically* reference the proposal, but are clearly made in response to secondary education re-organisation in South Powys. For example, comments might make reference to pupils generally, or to 'communities' or 'schools', rather than to a particular community or school affected by the proposals. These comments are listed below for brevity.

Figure 61: Other comments on social media (non-specific)

Sub-Theme	Comments
Pupils being home schooled	<i>My son gets so travel sick he has already asked if I can home school him rather than him travel the journey twice a day. So there must be others out there (Save Powys Schools)</i>
Pupil carers	<i>What about a young carer who would be significantly affected. There are several pupils who care for their parents for whom this will have really serious implications (Save Powys Schools)</i>
Consultation process	<i>Consultation is not a chance to do a tick box exercise so they can do what they like to our schools and our communities (Save Powys Schools)</i> <i>It sounds like a decision has already been made?! (Save Powys Schools)</i> <i>It seems to me that they just aren't listening (Save Powys Schools)</i>
Cabinet decision is undemocratic	<i>I don't see how cabinet can be challenged in policy at all now ... they'll do what they intend to anyway (Save Powys Schools)</i> <i>So this is what passes for local democracy. PCC pays our money to yet another consultancy firm ... then a small cabinet of people will make the final decision with no recourse to the whole council. And if we object to the decision it will go back to the same cabinet for another decision (Save Powys Schools)</i>
Alternative ideas/proposals – high schools old county towns	<i>I can see the economic argument for merging schools but to me it would make more sense to centre these on the old counties - Newtown to cover Montgomery, Llandrindod to cover Radnor and Brecon to cover Breconshire. This would ensure no student having to travel ridiculously long journeys (Save Powys Schools)</i>

Appendix 1

Forma Submission by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales

Estyn response to the proposal by Powys County Council to close Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools and open a single bilingual dual stream 11-18 school from September 2017

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

This is a consultation proposal from Powys County Council. The proposal is to:

- Close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School and establish a single bilingual category 2B/C ("dual-stream") 11-18 secondary school operating across two sites as an interim measure whilst further feasibility work is carried out to establish the viability of a new school occupying one site in Builth Wells in the future; and
- Transfer Welsh-medium education currently delivered at Brecon to the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school in mid-Powys from September 2017.

Summary/Conclusion

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal to close both schools and establish a new English-medium 11-16 school, operating on a single site at Builth Wells.

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards or provision or the impact on teaching and curricular arrangements or the leadership and management of the new school. In addition, it does not consider fully all the risks involved in the proposal and the consideration of both the longer-term vision and interim solution does not aid the proposal's clarity.

As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposal.

Description and Benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for its longer term proposal to establish a single dual stream school in Builth. The proposer appears to base its case for change primarily on the need to address the decline in pupil numbers at both schools, particularly when set in the context of the projected pupil numbers to 2021. It considers appropriately the impact of low pupil numbers on provision and the ability to provide a viable English and Welsh medium curriculum across the county, and sets out its view that a larger bilingual school in mid Powys would provide economies of scale that would effectively address these concerns.

The proposer identifies appropriately the need to raise standards at both schools and to improve the condition of school buildings at both schools. The proposer also identifies how the proposal would produce annual revenue savings.

The proposer sets out clearly the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal when compared with the current situation. The proposer sees the main benefits of the proposal accruing from a reduction in surplus places, cost effectiveness, and the ability to provide a broader curriculum range at key stage 4 and 5, with particular attention given to the potential of broadening Welsh medium provision if its plans to remove the dual stream from Brecon High School are achieved. The proposer acknowledges the disadvantages of the proposal in terms of loss of community links and increased travel times for pupils in the Llandrindod catchment area affected. However, overall, it considers that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the disadvantages it has identified.

In many respects, the proposer appears to provide a fair and balanced appraisal of the risks associated with its proposed interim solution of operating across two sites. However, in a few instances, the proposer does not identify or discuss its risk management measures in sufficient detail. For example, although the proposer identifies the risk that some parents may arrange for their children to attend schools other than the new school, it does not identify sufficiently well how it will engage positively with parents to reduce this risk.

Similarly, it does not specify clearly enough how it intends to address the difficulties some pupils from the Brecon area may face with accessing after school activities due to transport constraints, other than a vague assurance that it will look into options. Significantly, the proposer does not consider sufficiently well the impact on provision and outcomes of a reduced budget given that one of the two schools is projecting a significant budget deficit over the next three years.

Moreover, there is insufficient consideration of the risks associated with its longer term vision of opening one school – one site in Builth, given that the proposal's main benefits can only be materialised if this longer-term vision is in fact realised.

Most significantly, however, it does not consider the possibility that the proposed new school will fail to improve standards, or identify any measures to address this.

The proposer has considered in the impact of the changes on learners' travel arrangements. It correctly identifies that there will be no additional travel for pupils already at the two sites. However, it has not provided sufficient information on current school to school or home to school travel arrangements to support its conclusion that the distance of 8 miles will pose minimal problems for sixth form travel arrangements if sixth forms are maintained on both sites.

The proposer acknowledges the increase in travel arrangements for pupils aged 11-16 who live in the Brecon catchment and who wish to attend Welsh-medium provision in Builth.

However, it does not analyse the impact of the proposal on these pupils in this consultation but in its concurrent consultation on the closure of the Welsh medium stream at Brecon. Reference is made therefore to our opinion contained in our response to that proposal.

The proposer considers in suitable detail the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision within mid- and south Powys. The proposer has carried out a separate Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which clearly assesses the impact of the proposal on provision for pupils at both schools and within this area of the local authority. Given the declining and very low numbers of pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium education at Brecon High School, the proposer's view that the proposal provides benefits for the provision of Welsh-medium education and progression appears reasonable.

Educational aspects of the proposal

Overall, the proposer has not sufficiently considered the impact of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management. The proposer makes appropriate reference to the outcomes of both schools' most recent Estyn inspections. It identifies correctly that current performance and prospects for improvement at both schools were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the core inspections and that both schools are in special measures. The proposer also refers briefly to the schools' categorisation within the National School Categorisation System. However, it provides no explanation of the context or detail for these judgements.

Significantly, the proposer provides no analysis of the standards achieved by pupils at either school in terms of attainment at key stage 3, 4 or 5.

In terms of Welsh-medium provision at key stage 3 and key stage 4, the proposer suggests that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new dual-stream school in Mid-Powys would enable the school to set pupils according to ability for some subjects. The proposer argues that this could have a positive impact in terms of outcomes for Welsh-medium pupils. However, it does not provide evidence for its view that setting improves standards.

Overall, the proposer does not demonstrate how the reorganisation would have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils at any key stage.

In terms of provision, the proposer sets out reasonably that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed dual-stream school, will allow greater choice and access to the curriculum, particularly at key stage 3 and key stage 4. Similarly, the proposer's view that the proposal for post-16 education could lead to increased access for post-16 pupils to both academic and vocational subjects seems sound. However, the proposer does not demonstrate how the proposed reorganisation would lead to improved standards of teaching, or how these potential benefits would link to improved outcomes for pupils. Moreover, the proposer does not consider the impact that the reduction in overall funding to a single school will have on the school's ability to deliver its curriculum, given that Llandrindod High School is projecting significant budget deficits in the future.

The proposer identifies appropriately that the transition to the new school will provide substantial additional workload for the shadowing governing body and appointed leadership team, and how the council aims to support this process. However, the proposer is less clear about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management once the new school is established.

With regard to the new school in mid-Powys, the proposer acknowledges that the sudden increase in Welsh-medium pupils in individual year groups may cause initial difficulties for the new school, as it may require them to introduce a second Welsh-medium class in some year groups. However, it considers reasonably that as larger numbers of pupils move through the school, this will improve the school's ability to offer a more comprehensive curriculum to Welsh-medium pupils, particularly at key stage 4 and post-16.

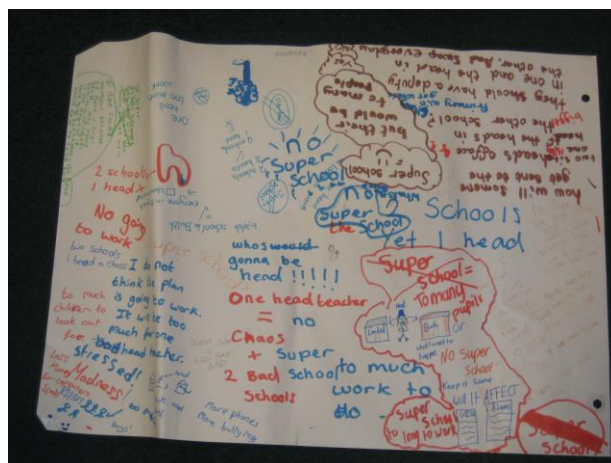
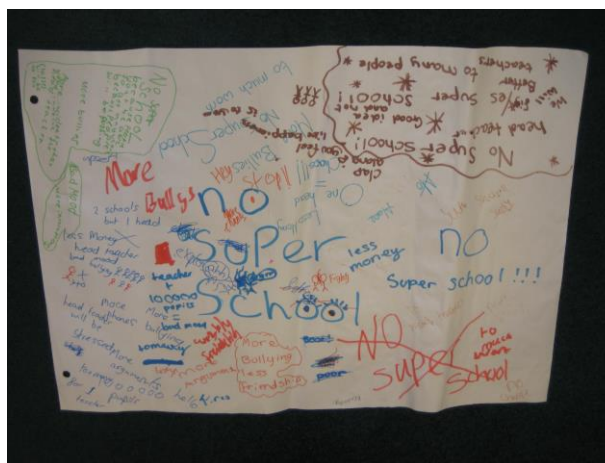
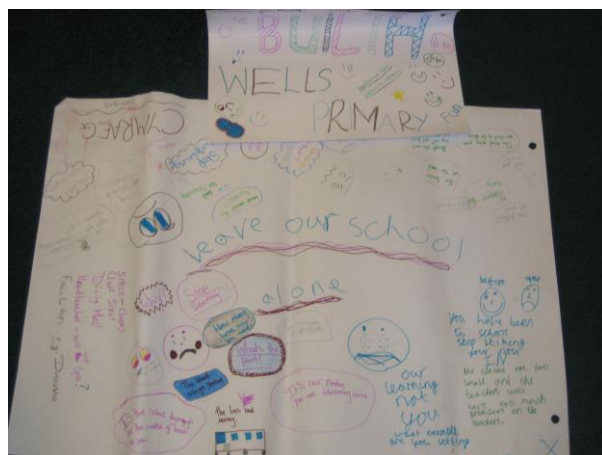
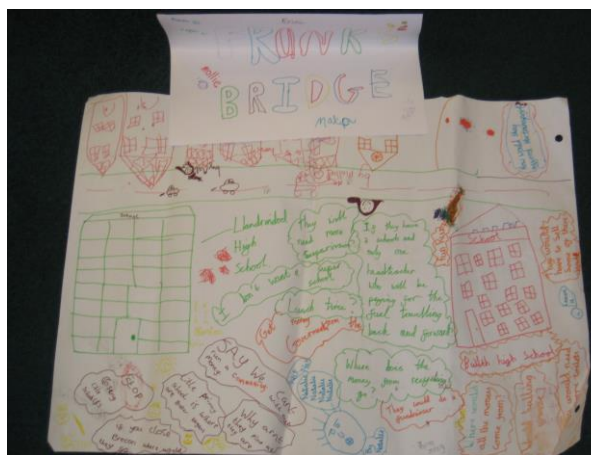
With regard to post-16 provision, the proposer asserts reasonably that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils on the Builth Wells site of the new school in mid-Powys would lead in time to an increase in the number of available subjects at the school post-16. However, there remain questions about equality of opportunities for post-16 pupils choosing to study through the medium of Welsh in terms of the range of courses available to them.

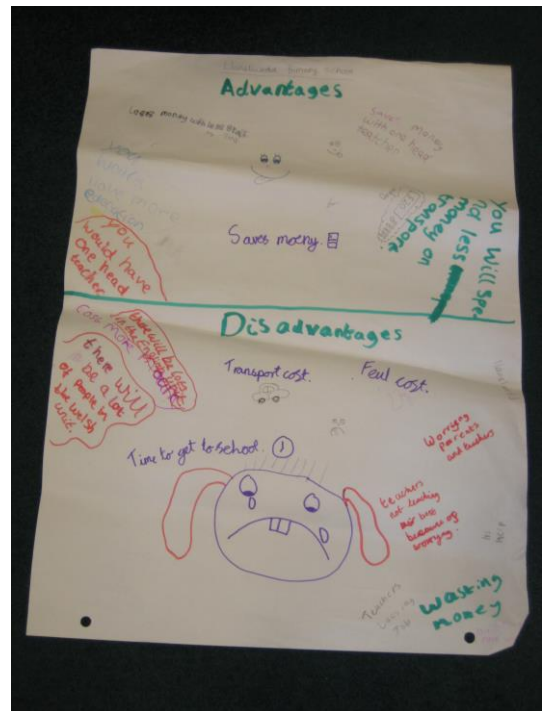
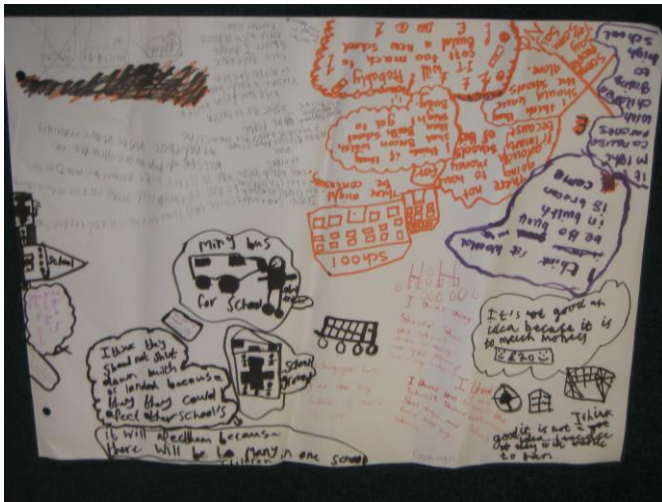
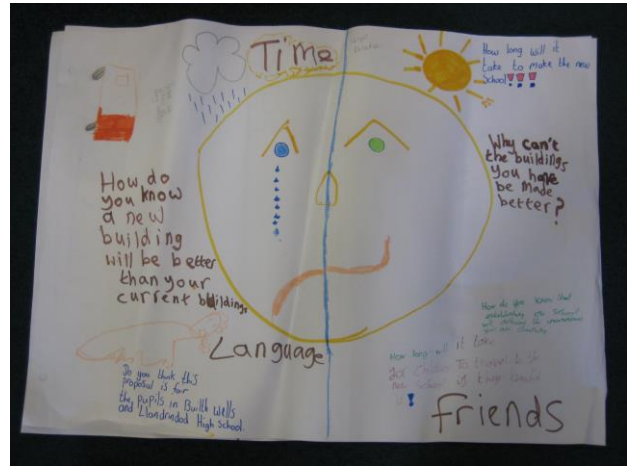
The proposer has considered fairly the likely impact of the interim proposal on a range of pupils from low-income families, Welsh-medium pupils and on the community. It identifies correctly that funding and provision to meet pupils' special educational needs will transfer to the new school and thus continue unchanged. It acknowledges appropriately that support plans will need to be put into place to support pupils to mitigate any negative impact on pupils' feelings of wellbeing. However, the proposal does not contain information on a community impact assessment of its longer term vision of a single school in Builth in this proposal.

Appendix 2

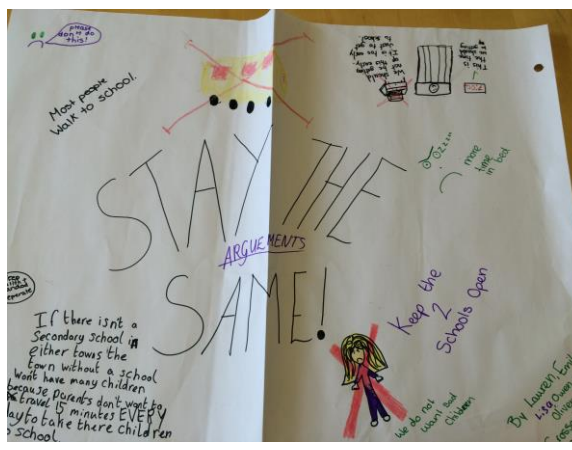
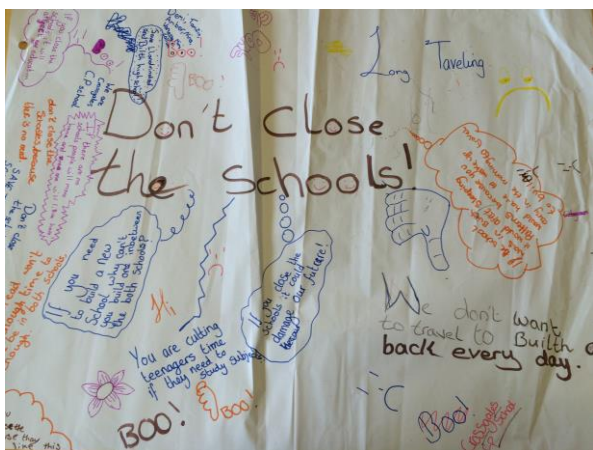
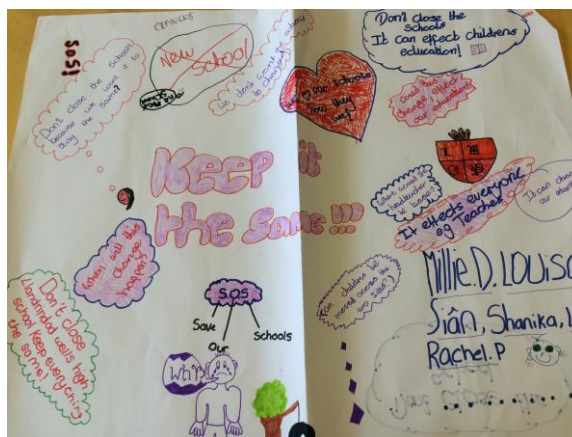
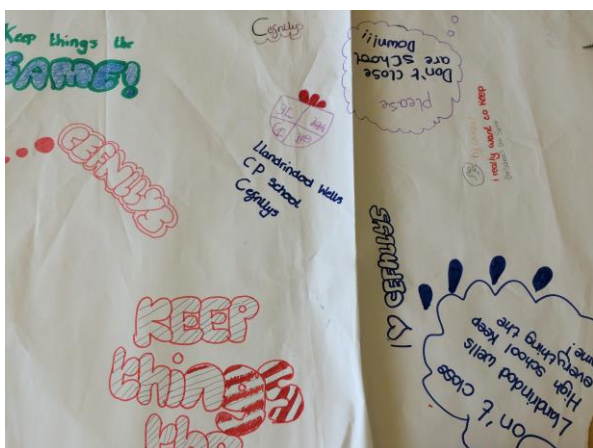
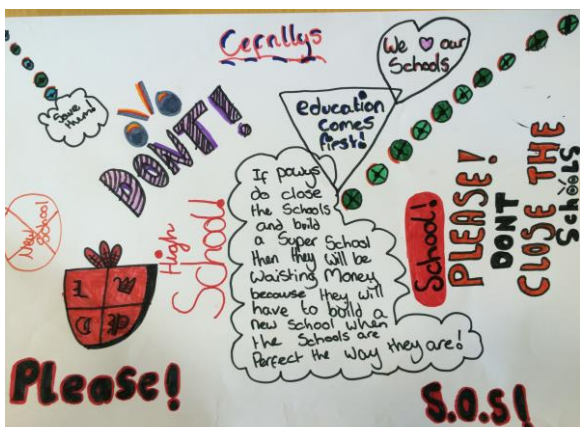
Posters by pupils involved in the primary school workshops

Builth Wells High School Catchment Schools Workshop





Llandrindod High School Catchment Schools Workshop



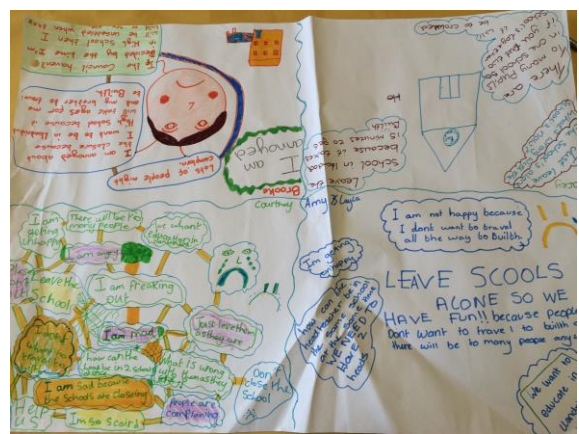
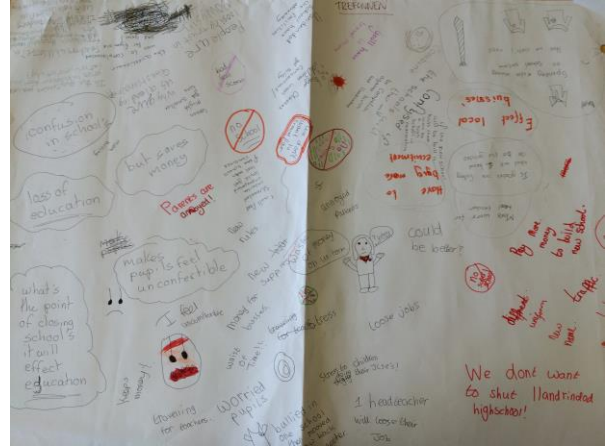


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Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School

Consultation Report – Responses

August 2016

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REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
1 Quality of Education		
1.1 Quality of current provision		
1.1.1	Llandrindod High School has since the appointment of a new head teacher started to see an improvement in its leadership and continues to provide a good quality of education to its learners.	<i>The Authority acknowledges that Llandrindod High School is fully committed to its improvement journey, and to its learners. However, the current acting Headteacher has been in post since May 2016. It is too early to evaluate the impact of leadership on standards and quality of provision. There is no evidence yet to corroborate an improvement.</i>
1.1.2	I have 4 children who have and are still being taught in the wonderful, local and inspirational institution that is Llandrindod High School.	
1.1.3	At Llandrindod High School we care about our students. We have a strong commitment to learning and we have high expectations of all our students and staff. We want our students to achieve and we are committed to providing them with the finest opportunities both academically and culturally to enable them to succeed in life. Schools are the most vital social institution in any community. How well they work is a concern for teachers, parents, managers, politicians, local employers and most of all, the students ... our key purpose is to provide a high quality, challenging, broad and balanced curriculum for our students.	
1.1.4	What about the pre 16 provision? I have found the GCSE selection and progress in year 9 quite poor.	
1.1.5	We need more specialists at KS3/KS4	

1.1.6 KS3 seem to get the raw end of the deal and we want the new proposal to tackle quality of provision 11-16 too or it feeds into poor post 16.

1.1.7 When I was a teacher in Llandrindod and before that at [inaudible] the results on average of all P schools was well above the average of the WJEC for the whole of Wales – very often it was the first. Now, what has happened? Could you elaborate on that fact? What is the evidence from Estyn on the deterioration of standards?

1.1.8 The Estyn reports have been given a lot of weight in this particular meeting. And I'd like it noted that both schools – Llandrindod and Builth – are in special measures. I've noticed a great improvement in Llandrindod High School in the last year or so since [inaudible] has been there. And we look forward to things happening at Builth as I understand they are advertising for a new Head Teacher.

1.1.9 Quality of Estyn inspections. If we are comparing like with like as regards schools in South Powys, then we are a bilingual school. We are also in a different FSM league compared with other schools in South Powys. Therefore, you could compare Swansea FC or Chelsea with Macclesfield Town. Would that be a valid comparison? Stamford Bridge football club is not what it should be at the moment but is it of the quality of Macclesfield Town? We could go down the road of how we got into that league - no point about rurality and that is how Powys is disadvantaged in many ways. The majority of parents are very happy.

Estyn stated:

- *performance in key indicators at key stage 4 is considerably below expectations and significantly below that of similar schools;*
- *in key stage 4, boys do not perform as well as girls and the gap has been significantly larger than both family and national averages in many indicators over the last four years;*
- *too many pupils are making insufficient progress in their acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills;*
- *pupils do not develop their extended writing skills well enough;*
- *the school has not made enough progress towards meeting the statutory requirements of the literacy and numeracy framework;*

In terms of school performance, schools in Wales are compared with similar schools, or families of schools. In both instances, key indicators such as eligibility for schools free school meals, medium of education, ethnicity of pupils and percentage of pupils with special education needs are used to place schools into groups or families of schools.

<p>1.1.10 We've heard from the professionals at the back and at the front that standards have been dropping but nobody seems to be taking responsibility. Not one person has said, 'I get paid for looking after these schools and making them work. [Applause]. The Governing body has taken their share of the responsibility. Mr Williams at the front there and a number of other governors, the head teacher and the teachers themselves ... I was just wondering how Powys CC and their highly paid representatives are going to take share of the responsibility.</p>	<p><i>The responsibility for school improvement; the standards pupils achieve is the responsibility of schools.</i></p> <p><i>However, the LA in cooperation with the ERW consortium in responsible for monitoring, supporting and challenging school performance. These arrangements are in place and regular reports are provided to the</i></p>
<p>1.2 Concerns that the Proposal will not lead to improved education</p>	
<p>1.2.1 This proposal does not explain to us how there will be an improvement in standards to our children. Please can you explain fully how this will happen? We currently have 2 children in full time education in Powys, 1 in year 6 and 1 in year 9. Please give specific examples of the improved education for each child.</p>	<p><i>The Proposal aims to establish a sustainable model of secondary education, which can deliver high-quality education. The current pressures on the secondary sector has already led to a situation when subjects are taught by non-specialist teachers.</i></p> <p><i>The benefits of the Proposal are as follows:</i></p>
<p>1.2.2 Our children will still be taught by non-specialist teachers.</p>	<p>1) <i><u>Improved leadership at all levels:</u> When streamlining the leadership structure following the joining of two schools into one split site secondary school, the newly appointed governing body are able to place the strongest leaders in each position within the new leadership structure. This means we can have the strongest governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and pastoral leaders – those who have the best track record of securing high outcomes and delivering the highest level of care - leading school improvement across the two sites. The joining of two schools represents an opportunity for a step change improvement in the quality of leadership.</i></p> <p>2) <i><u>Improved leadership leads to improved teaching:</u> Professor David Reynolds has stated: 'we know that effective leadership of a school from the Headteacher and through to other 'middle</i></p>
<p>1.2.3 Very many lessons will be taught by non-specialist teachers. This can only lead to reduced educational standards.</p>	
<p>1.2.4 Page 23 "the learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance would be at least as good". This does not state how this will be as good or why only as good is good enough when both schools are currently in special measures so therefore the quality of provision needs to be improved. Where does the proposal explain how teaching standards will be improved? The reason for</p>	

	<p>change on page 2 is the “Poor quality of education” but there is no outcome that shows an improvement!</p>
<p>1.2.5 How will the new school lift standards with less money (the funding being 2/3 teachers per year LESS than the two schools get at the moment)? It will mean less specialists in front of classes, less opportunities for the pupils, lowering standards.</p>	<p><i>leadership’ positions is important in its own right and important in generating...high quality classroom teaching’ (WG PDG guidance 2013-15). Leadership and teaching quality are linked. The research is clear, by securing a step change improvement in leadership, we are able to secure a step change improvement in teaching quality.</i></p>
<p>1.2.6 It provides no demonstrable prospect of an improvement in educational outcomes at either pre or post-16 levels in the catchment areas covered by both current schools, and in particular provides no significant prospect of an expansion of learning opportunities or improvement in standards at post-16</p>	<p>3) <u>Improved coaching and mentoring support opportunities for staff:</u> <i>It is essential that time is allocated to enable the best teaching staff in different subject areas to travel between sites (or communicate regularly via video conferencing arrangements) in order to provide mentoring/coaching/resources for their colleagues on the other campus. This ongoing mentoring support and training can have a considerable impact on teaching quality. One there is a world of difference between the potential impact of loose school-to-school collaboration between separate schools, and the level of collaboration and support in a single school with split sites. The extent to which leaders are willing to invest finite time into engaging in mentoring, coaching and training of staff on the second campus of a single school is considerably higher if leaders are going to be held to account for standards and provision on both sites.</i></p>
<p>1.2.7 A huge part of the truly wonderful educational experience at all schools in Powys comes down to good will of the Teachers caring and wanting to do more. This will not continue.</p>	
<p>1.2.8 So how does that impact on the current learners if quality is the important factor? Bearing in mind you still have to have the same number of teachers?</p>	<p>4) <u>Economies of scale leads to greater investment in teaching and learning:</u> <i>By having a single leader of each curriculum area across the two school sites and a more streamlined senior leadership structure, savings can be generated over time. The new leadership team would be able to invest these savings in whatever way they believe would make the greatest impact on standards.</i></p>
<p>1.2.9 Current proposal don’t improve quality only removes special measures status</p>	
<p>1.2.10 Are the potential benefits to learning really worth this disruption? Shouldn’t we have evidence of how this will improve standards?</p>	
<p>1.2.11 How will the quality of teaching be improved? Will the same teachers and classes be in place? How is this going to improve teaching for children?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has established a school across two sites. Newtown High School now includes the John Beddoes Campus in Presteigne. Standards have improved on both sites, but in particular at the John Beddoes campus. In 2015, 62.4% of pupils at Newtown High School</i></p>

1.2.12 I understand that but currently the head of maths is the best teacher and the one that parents want their children to have when they come to their GCSEs or A levels. So if they're not teaching it can only impact on the quality of the education.

achieved the L2+ indicator which was a 7.6 percentage point improvement on the previous year.

1.2.13 I don't see how the proposals will improve the situation. How is education going to be magically bettered just because you have one head of two schools and how having staff travel between schools using up their precious time – travelling rather than making lesson plans and marking

The arrangement would enable more effective and efficient use of staff specialism between sites. The Authority acknowledges that the Proposal, as it stands, does not improve the condition of school buildings.

1.2.14 So I think what you're proposing - one school on two sites – OK you're saving £133k, but that is not a significant saving. I see that you want to have a larger leadership team – that is needed on two sites. However ring fencing staff seems sensible. On the other hand you talked about raising standards and implied that there are pockets that are not as well staffed as others. Therefore, if you are ring fencing all of those staff - good and bad – you're not going to help to raise standards.

From September 2017, if the Proposal is implemented, there will be one dual-stream school with two sites. The Welsh-medium provision will be delivered from the Bülth Wells site. It will be the decision of the new governing body how it wishes to deliver post-16 education.

1.2.15 Trying to get my head around why one school on two sites will definitely provide choice for under 16s compared to two separate schools – without using words like 'aspiration' can you please give a concrete fact of how there will be a benefit.

It does, however, provide an opportunity to establish a critical mass of post-16 learners, should the new governing body wish to establish one sixth form centre. At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupil

1.2.16 Why would there be suddenly specialist teachers if they are still on the two sites?

1.2.17 You were asked earlier how these plans would improve standards. I'm not sure that less contact time will help to

drive up standards. You mentioned about providing different courses and how are we going to do that given that the staff are going to be the same. I'm not sure. At the High School meeting we went through a number of factual inconsistencies in the consultation document. And our concerns are exactly the same as for the parents. We want the best education and the best standards to be achieved. I am still unconvinced that this proposal will improve standards. I will ask that question again. How exactly will the standards be improved? I'd like to look into the forecasts a little bit more – further into the future and ask what the CC has in plan to make sure that standards improve in the longer term. Because I don't think you have addressed these fundamental issues or that the plans will have a sustained impact. [Applause]. My question is what plans CC has to ensure standards continue to rise in future? And are your further plans for one site, one school. But I'd appreciate if you didn't repeat what you said earlier – students travelling from place to place I don't think will improve standards. Breadth of choice, I don't think will improve standards; having increased class sizes I don't think will improve standards. [Applause] ... R – I want you to tell us what difference we will see in the way our children are taught and the provision for their children – not what the organising bodies do – I want you to tell us what difference they will see since as you have pointed out it will be the same teachers as you point at as being demotivated as a risk in this document. So I would like to know what difference we'll see day to day

- 1.2.18** It's been hinted that teaching posts will be 'ring fenced' Therefore it would be the same teachers in front of the classroom. With all due respect, if there is an issue about quality of individual departments in schools, that is the

job of the LEA school improvement officers – that's their job! [Prolonged applause] ... the previous speaker was right. If you look at the list of criteria which we need to address, these proposals don't change anything about [inaudible]; they don't change anything about school buildings; they don't change anything about the size of pupils that are in the sixth form – children will still have to continue to travel to access A level classes. These proposals have no impact upon Welsh medium, although the changes to Brecon may have an impact. But these proposals have no impact. Surely the priority for the Council should be on raising standards in the individual schools and this is a diversion from what we should be doing and that is supporting those schools to get out of SMs as quickly as they can, because the staff and the pupils can get those schools out of SM if we dedicate time to do that and not to this proposal ... There are opportunities for greater collaboration, cooperation. That's what happens now. Good practice can be spread. We don't need structural change to allow good practice to spread across the schools. That can happen now. And if we are looking at improving and changing our practice, may I humbly suggest that changes in the curricula focus on collaboration between the primary and secondary sectors would actually bring bigger dividends in terms of educational outcomes for our children

1.2.19 How is your proposal going to benefit our children?
Teachers don't know whether they have jobs or not.

1.2.20 The case for change – I understand the financial pressures and I understand that Estyn aren't terribly happy with us – I don't understand how saving £133,000 and a massive upheaval improves the experience of our pupils.

- 1.2.21** When you're looking at curriculum manager's quality assuring the departments and monitoring what's going on two sites is going to increase their workload and make life extremely challenging for them. I would also argue that having non-specialists ... it hasn't affected our standards at KS3.
- 1.2.22** Please explain what my younger child would see differently in 2018 if this proposal goes ahead. You haven't answered my question. You haven't told me the difference - my son's 11 – he isn't going to know that the head of department or the teaching is different. How is his education going to be different from his older brother – how is he going to get more GCSE choice?
- 1.2.23** What happens on the days when there are three supply teachers in one day? They're not getting a proper education. You've not addressed any of these issues. For the 3 lessons of 5 a day, they have a supply teacher who doesn't know what they're doing. This plan is for 2017 and 2018 – by that time they've left the education system and you are failing them and you have not put any plans in place
- 1.2.24** I know you said it's not about finance but you instantly said the saving would be £133k and you dismissed the option put to you by Llandrindod governors by saying it would be a £230k extra cost. I wonder if this new proposal is a poisoned chalice for the new governing body and they wouldn't actually be able to supply teachers to essentially speaking three different sites: a Welsh medium in Builth, an English medium in Builth and an English medium in Llandrindod to all the subjects from year 7 to 11 and having a subject specialist teacher in

each of those classes. I just don't think it would work. One of the problems now is the falling roles so it's going to get even worse. I do wonder whether it will be a poisoned chalice for a new governing body not being able to fund the school on the basis of the money that's going to be going down anyway and so therefore the fait accompli would be well, we'll have to build a new school. End of story

- 1.2.25** When you open the new school in Sep 17 you will have an English medium site at L; an English medium site at Builth; a WM site at Builth and a sixth form site in B and a sixth form site in L – so you'll still be covering the two sites – exactly the same thing with a different teaching structure. Is that right? So how does that impact on current learners? How will that benefit the current learners? If quality is the important factor because you still have to have the same number of teachers across the two sites?
- 1.2.26** To continue with these proposals at such time will in my opinion will have a negative impact for those finishing off and future learners who will become part of the proposed one school system over two sites.
- 1.2.27** Improving educational standards is not only about Estyn, it's also about having a High School in your local community – having a school that our children can walk to and a school with a leisure centre attached to it so they can go swimming and play lots of sports. Having a school with a big field – making friends who live down the road; having teachers in the local area who have a short commute to work. Where people are happy with their jobs and satisfied – it's about all these things and I just

feel that people are dwelling on money and statistics and the things that are really important are the children.	
1.3 Critical Mass Argument and curriculum choice	
1.3.1	<p>The Council states that the way to improve our Children's education is to increase the "critical mass of learners". This proposal does not do this. For Pre-16 education the same number of children will be in the same school building for each school. Therefore there will be no change in the "Critical Mass". Can you fully explain how this will improve our children's education?</p>
1.3.2	<p>Class sizes will remain the same meaning that the increase in critical mass of students to help fund more specialist teachers will not happen.</p>
1.3.3	<p>Given that pupil numbers are projected to continuing falling, how soon will it be before you once again have to start reducing the number of subjects offered?</p>
1.3.4	<p>How will running the two schools on two sites enable you to offer more subjects if neither staff nor pupils are travelling between sites?</p>
1.3.5	<p>Where is the evidence that an average year group of 120 pupils would lead to better outcomes than a group of 100 which is roughly what we have. p 17 says the Council believes a new school with a minimum of 600 pupils in KS3 and KS4 would help to maximise the curriculum benefits. ..But there's no evidence that would lead to better outcomes is there? You know if you could say to me that across schools – if you get to 120 in a year group they statistically do better than kids with 100 in a year</p>
	<p><i>The Authority accepts that the Proposal will not lead to increased groups of pupils on one site, however, as noted earlier, there are significant benefits to this Proposal that could lead to improved standards.</i></p> <p><i>Critical mass is, however, important in the sixth form. The Authority aspires to having sixth forms with a minimum of 150 pupils, which would enable a wider range of provision to be delivered from one site. Currently, pupils travel between schools/college to access subjects that aren't available to them at their home school.</i></p> <p><i>The school will be funded in accordance with the Authority's fair funding formula, which is based on pupil numbers and lump sums.</i></p> <p><i>If pupil numbers fall, the amount of funding a school receives also decreases. It is the responsibility of the governing body to manage the budget.</i></p> <p><i>At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.</i></p> <p><i>The figure of 600 pupils was agreed by officers of the Authority, in discussions with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), following their Study into the Viability of Secondary Schools. The Authority currently funds KS3 and KS4 classes that deliver core curriculum subjects on a teacher-pupil ratio of 1- 23, apart from subjects which have a health and safety aspect where it is expected that no class has more than 20 pupils. e.g. science – (these classes make up approximately 20% of the curriculum),</i></p>

<p>group, I would shut up – because that’s presented as some sort of panacea.</p> <p>1.3.6 I want to query how having one school over two sites will benefit up to KS 4 with a mind to increasing the number of options unless you have students and staff travelling between two sites, you are not going to be able to offer additional GCSEs. It’s likely we can offer the GCSEs on this site and similar GCSEs on the other site but if you want to include more GCSEs and you only have to take up of 3 on one site and 4 on the other, that’s not going to be feasible.</p> <p>1.3.7 You said about critical mass but for pre 16 education, if you’re still running two sites with the same learners in B and the same learners in L, how does that actually impact on critical mass? They’re still going to be in the same schools with the same teachers. I understand the leadership ... but I can’t quite understand for pre 16.</p> <p>1.3.8 My question is about collaboration of timetables – we’d have to have synchronisation of timetables. At the moment they (Llandrindod High School) have six lessons; we currently have five – presumably there will have to be parity between the two sites. Obviously if we go to the 50 minute timetable ... so somewhere there’s going to be an increase in redundancies ...</p>	<p><i>In future, it is expected that the maximum teacher-pupil ratio will not exceed 1 – 30/31 for core curriculum subjects.</i></p>
<p>1.4 Estyn Monitoring</p>	
<p>1.4.1 Estyn report for both schools is not as it should be– is it not putting extra pressure on the education if reorganisation goes ahead. They are trying really hard to up the quality now.</p>	<p><i>The Authority recognises that both schools are implemented specific post inspection action plans to address the deficiencies identified by Estyn. If the Proposal is implemented, WG and Estyn would still require the new school to be regularly monitored by ERW and by Estyn...</i></p>

1.4.2	Each school currently is under Estyn Special Measures. This means that each school has a Post Inspection Action Plan tailor made to improve the outcomes for the current learners. If the schools are combined and removed from Estyn special measures what guarantees do the pupils have that their needs will be met and the new school will action the points highlighted by Estyn as they will no longer warrant monitoring on their progress?	<i>Estyn inspect all new school within two years of opening, usually when there are two sets of pupil attainment data available.</i>
1.4.3	On page 23 of the proposal your statement on “Impact on Provision” states that the “new school would be subject to the requirements of Estyn’s Common Inspection Framework. Does this change anything for the schools as both schools are currently subject to these requirements?	
1.4.4	When will there be another inspection from Estyn after the two schools are joined and Special Measures cease to exist?	
1.4.5	What happens to the special measures? Do they have the same teachers? How do we know if it will be same as the old school because it won’t any longer be monitored by Estyn because it won’t be in Special Measures.?	
1.5 Surplus Places		
1.5.1	What does 17% of vacant places mean to pupil numbers per class?	<i>The level of surplus places cannot be evaluated per class, but is the assessment of the overall physical capacity of the school.</i>
1.5.2	Page 2 states “surplus places” in each school but the only change will be Welsh stream children moving from Brecon to Builth, if the Brecon/Gwernyfed proposal goes	<i>The Consultation Document states that there are too many surplus places in both schools, it does not state that this Proposal will reduce the level of surplus places.</i>

<p>through. So please can you explain how this proposal will directly impact on the “surplus places”?</p>	
<p>1.6 Experience from merger of Newtown High School and John Beddoes School</p>	
<p>1.6.1 A precedent has been set of merging schools in Powys. Would like to know when John Beddoes merged with Newtown. Have you gone into speak with middle managers there to see if that has led to improved range of subjects? If so are there any documents so we can read that please? Because it seems obvious that you would do that first before presenting that model to us.</p>	<p><i>Challenge advisors working on behalf of the Authority and ERW are continually monitoring schools, including Newtown High School. The evidence shows that standards have improved at the John Beddoes Campus since the school was taken over by Newtown High School.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority believes there are many benefits from the model of one school across two sites.</i></p>
<p>1.6.2 Have you gone into talk to those staff to get direct feedback from them on the impact?But I would ask that you go out and actually speak to members of staff and gather their experiences – what the pros and cons are of delivering that model.</p>	
<p>1.6.3 Refers to presentation slide: You mentioned that surplus places at our High Schools is 17%. Now my question for that is if you close two High Schools and make them into one you’ll still have 17% - so how is that 17% going to be filled? Because we all know the WG is obsessed with empty places. We see it in our primary schools ... they’ve been affected due to surplus places. How is that going to be filled?</p>	<p><i>Whilst secondary school numbers are projected to fall, the numbers of pupils in the primary sector are forecasted to rise.</i></p>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
2 Post 16 Education		
2.1 Post 16 choices – Barely meeting minimum requirements even with current inter school collaboration		
2.1.1	Reason for change- talks about difficulty providing a full curriculum and providing a legal minimum through post 16 collaboration - is the school barely achieving this legal minimum at present.	<i>Schools in South Powys deliver post-16 provision through the South Powys Post-16 Partnership. Learners are able to choose subjects from a single timetable with option blocks – learners can then travel to other schools to study subjects not available to them at their home school. This model enables the Authority to meet the statutory requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure – i.e. all learners in South Powys have access to 30 options, 5 of which are vocational. However, the reality is that, depending on school location or other subject choices, a learner’s choice is limited.</i>
2.1.2	The consultation is misleading in implying that Builth High School offers more A Level subjects than Llandrindod High School. Both schools offer 12 subjects through the medium of English. Builth High School offers 5 subjects through the medium of Welsh and Art through the medium of English and Welsh. This accounts for the total of 17.5 shown for Builth but they are not additional subjects.	<i>The Consultation Document does not imply that there is a wider range of subjects at Builth Wells High School than Llandrindod High School. The Consultation Document clearly states (page 8) ‘There are small sixth forms at both schools with a narrow choice of subjects’, and shows the number of funded subjects over the last three years. It does not specify the medium of those subjects.</i>
2.2 Increase migration out of county for Post 16 because of uncertainty		
2.2.1	Will this consultation drive people out of county for post 16 provision?	<i>The Proposal is to establish a new 11 – 18 school across two sites. It would be the decision of the governing body whether it wished to centralise post-16 education on one site, but the Authority would strongly encourage this to happen. The benefits would be increased critical mass, enabling a wider range of subjects to be offered from one location. It is the Authority’s view that this would be attractive to learners and would stem the flow of learners leaving the county for post-16 provision, as currently happens.</i>

2.3 Draw of Brecon learning campus on number of post 16 students in Mid Powys	
2.3.1 Won't the post 16 plans for the Brecon learning campus just take post 16 learners from this area? We've been losing a few but they usually come back as they have to travel.	<i>The current Proposal for the Brecon Learning Campus is to have a sixth form academy run by NPTC Group of Colleges. It is acknowledged that this model may be attractive to learners.</i>
2.4 Single sixth form site for Llandrindod and Builth	
2.4.1 Part of the issue here is transport across more than one site. This applies if we have one school on two sites, so the preference is to have 1 sixth form site on either here or Builth. This option would have given a more positive frame to these proposals- people would buy it here and in Llandrindod. This single sixth for one of the sites will mitigate against people leaving the areas for post 16 provision and there is support for centralising sixth form provision on one of the sites. The two schools already have joint sixth form events. Makes sense to centralise post 16 on one site.	<i>Comment noted</i>
2.4.2 The document is data driven and could do more to sell the benefit of this proposal for post 16. Governors have the choice to deliver in this way, so we could do more to sell this as a benefit (pupils in Llandrindod also wanted central post 16 on one site!)	<i>Comment noted</i>
2.4.3 Do we attract any post 16 from other areas in to mid-Powys? A central sixth form provision may be an incentive for pupils to come into this catchment to study- notwithstanding welsh medium provision.	<i>Pupils from other schools in South Powys travel to both Builth and Llandrindod to study some subjects.</i>

2.5 Need to consider developing the vocational offer post 16 – being over looked in current proposals	
2.5.1 What about those who don't go to sixth form who are not academic, what about those who leave? We need to think about vocational side too. We want vocational provision local too. In this area a greater proportion want vocational training. Greater numbers of learners would seem to allow for this.	<i>If there was a critical mass of learners, then it could be possible to commission providers of vocational learning to deliver in the area, and collaboration could continue with NPTC Group of Colleges.</i>
2.6 Capacity to deliver a greater range of sixth form courses	
2.6.1 How long would it take for sixth form provision to be established? She knows three young people who intend to travel to Hereford.	<i>The Proposal, if supported, would be implemented from September 2017. The delivery of post-16 education would be a decision for the shadow governing body, or ultimately the new governing body. It may be the case that the shadow governing body decides to centralise on one site from September 2017.</i>
2.6.2 But some of those subjects will be the same subjects. I want to know about the breadth and width of the subjects.	<i>This would a decision for the shadow/new governing body in agreement with the Headteacher. However, in comparison, Crickhowell High School has 170 sixth form pupils and receives funding to deliver 24 subjects.</i>
2.6.3 Regarding post 16 education, we know WG would like 25 + 5 courses available for each child. Following merger and assuming it's important for pupils to have equality of education through the medium of Welsh how many courses do you expect to be provided through the medium of Welsh and medium of English.	<i>The Authority agrees that there should be equality between English and Welsh provision, at all key stages. The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 requires local authorities to ensure that all post16 learners have access to at least 30 subjects, 5 of these vocational. In terms of Welsh-medium provision, the Measure does not specify the number of courses required – it states instead that 'all efforts must be made to ensure that, where a subject is available in the medium of Welsh at GCSE, then it should be made available at post-16.'</i>
2.6 WG learning measures places stress on rural areas to deliver sufficient range of Post 16 courses	
2.6.1 I can quite understand the dilemma you have with the sixth form. And I'm saddened that we need 30 subjects.	<i>Comment noted</i>

<p>Could we name 30 subjects? You could well cut down on the number of sixth form options.</p>	
<p>2.7 Single site for Post 16 at the proposed school</p>	
<p>2.7.1 can just see a position where A level provision on one site – I teach biology A level and if I have say doubling up to 25 I haven't sufficient equipment here – I can see that could be quite difficult with teaching allocations and it's all those ramifications.</p>	<p>Comment noted</p>
<p>2.7.2 If you have a 6th form of 150 – I appreciate the skills budget, yes. But I've read somewhere where there are people in Welsh Government (WG) possibly starting to question the skills measure. Now if we're talking about kids going down the academic route and going for the very best universities. The Russell Group identifies (in their doc 'Informed Choices') a list of facilitating subjects – 'choosing these at advanced level leaves open a wide range of options for university studies' They list 8 or 9 core 'facilitating subjects' incl sciences, English ... It says if you don't know what you want to study at University by taking two facilitating subjects will leave a wide range of degree subjects open to you. It asks students if you are not taking the core subjects, are you avoiding the challenge. So my question to you is are we trying to avoid the challenge by not supporting small schools, small sixth forms ... For A levels we have the second best average for A* to B and we're third best in the County for A* to C. We have plenty of students going through to the best universities. I think there is a huge flaw in the argument about size of sixth form and the number of subjects you actually need to offer because the best universities are telling us that you only need to offer 10-12. Why are we going down the route of</p>	<p><i>The Learning and Skills Measure 2009 was reviewed a few years ago, and changes were applied to the 14 – 6 element of the Measure. However, no changes were proposed to the post-16 element. The Authority is not aware of any further reviews of the Measure.</i></p>

more subjects? Our concern is that this is based on a policy that is going to be overturned in the future.

2.8 Challenge of delivering the LSM amplified in rural schools

2.8.1 I appreciate that – and what really should be happening is that LAS should be in a position to turn round to WG and say because of the rurality of our situation, we do not have the money to provide the best education service for our pupils. And I appreciate that the WG answer is ‘tough luck’ but the consequence of that is that we find ourselves in a position where putting forward a proposal where the financial side is driving the proposal – consequence of that is that the original aims of improving standards and getting the best education gets pushed aside by the need to save money.

The Authority agrees with this statement. Discussions are on-going with the WG about the sparsity uplift of the post-16 grant.

2.8.2 Going back to the question of efficiencies for A level – you said that music, for example – there are small numbers at Llandrindod. What number would be considered to be efficient?

The Authority’s optimum model for post-16 education is for centres to be able to provide 25 subjects, with a minimum class size of 12 and above.

Each learner, over a two year period, studies an average of 3.5 subjects (4 AS in Year 12, 3 A Levels in Year 13).

On an average class size of 12, the size of a sixth form (Years 12 & 13) would be 180

On an average class size of 15, the size of a sixth form (Years 12 & 13) would be 220.

$$\underline{180 \times 3.5 = 630/50 = 12.6}$$

$$\underline{220 \times 3.5 = 770/50 = 15.4}$$

However, in order to reflect Powys’ extreme rurality and sparsity, officers agreed that the threshold should be 150 pupils.

REF	ISSUES	RESPONSE
3 Travel		
3.1 Home-to-School Transport and Travel		
3.1.1	The closure of a high school in Llandrindod would mean that my children would spend at least 45 minutes on a bus to reach their next nearest high school. This is unacceptable to our family.	<i>The Proposal is to establish one school across two sites, using the current sites of Llandrindod High School and Builth High School.</i>
3.1.2	Increases to the cost of transport for children who are transferring schools would put further pressures on Powys County Council's budget, along with the massive capital investment of building two new schools along with the massive capital investment of building two new schools (refers to all proposals)	<i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility, and would be subject to another consultation if Cabinet decided to proceed with the second stage.</i>
3.1.3	You will see that large numbers of pupils will have to be transported large distances to access a provision of education. In fact pupils from the Rhayader and Upper Ithon Valley areas may in fact be closed to Llanidloes and Newtown High Schools respectively yet the future of these schools is uncertain because the proposals for the North of the County haven't yet been proposed.	<i>The Authority is currently developing a business case for the establishment of a Category 2A School or Schools in North Powys. It is anticipated that the business case will be considered by Cabinet in autumn 2016.</i>
3.1.4	My daughter is coming up to High School in September – lives out of catchment, so obviously because I work here she's coming here – she'll travel down with me. However, if we become one school does she then become liable to be transported and if so, to which campus?	<i>Eligible pupils will be provided with free home-to-school transport in accordance with the Council's Policy, which provides transport to the closest site. If a pupil wishes to attend a school/site that is not their closest school/site, and there is an available place at that school, parents/carers would need to make their own transport arrangements.</i>
3.1.5	From Rhayader the Welsh medium obviously get bussed down to Builth, but the English Medium don't but what if we were one school ?...	<i>It is the Authority's expectation that if the schools became one school, transport would only be provided to the closest site, and those wishing to</i>

<p>3.1.6 If it became one school- will pupils be able to choose and be transported to their preferred site? Otherwise it seems like it will be no change to how it is now.</p>	<p><i>access Welsh-medium provision would continue to be transported to the Builth site of the new school.</i></p> <p><i>Eligible pupils would be provided free home-to-school transport to their closest school/site, in accordance with Council policy.</i></p>												
<p>3.2 Teachers travelling between sites</p>													
<p>3.2.1 Teachers WILL have to travel between the two sites – taking up time when they could be supporting our children in their education.</p>	<p><i>The costings included within the Consultation Document include provision for additional funding in respect of a school operating over a split-site. If this Proposal are implemented, it would be the responsibility of the governing body to budget and plan for the use of the resource.</i></p>												
<p>3.2.2 Has the increased transport needed for teachers and senior leaders between campuses been taken into account in the proposal? The saving is negligible and will be sucked up in the cost of alterations needed and the increased cost of supporting two campuses.</p>	<p><i>The governing body of the new school would be responsible for how it structures the school timetable, and would have to ensure that any travelling between sites does not adversely impact teaching and learning.</i></p>												
<p>3.2.3 Ian Roberts did suggest at one of the public meetings that specialist teachers would have to move between sites but that does not help if the class sizes are small and there is no additional funding for the extra teachers required to cover the travelling.</p>	<p>The number of pupils in the sixth forms at both schools, according to PLASC 2016, were:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Year 12</th> <th>Year 13</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Builth Wells HS</td> <td>50</td> <td>46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Llandrindod HS</td> <td>49</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Combined</td> <td>99</td> <td>79</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Year 12	Year 13	Builth Wells HS	50	46	Llandrindod HS	49	33	Total Combined	99	79
	Year 12	Year 13											
Builth Wells HS	50	46											
Llandrindod HS	49	33											
Total Combined	99	79											
<p>3.2.4 Are there subjects involving staff travelling between the two sites?</p>													
<p>3.2.5 And how having staff travel between schools using up their precious time – travelling rather than making lesson plans and marking.... Just by having Builth and Llandrindod, you're still going to have a relatively small sixth form – so you'll still have issues with choice – so they'll have to travel so I don't understand from that list of</p>													

things you were concerned about how the current proposal will actually benefit pupils in any way.

3.3 Pupils travelling between sites

3.3.1 Children prefer only one journey a day and not travelling across different sites to access courses

From September 2017, the school would be run as a dual-sited school. At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.

3.3.2 Pre 16 can you guarantee that the children won't be moved or transported to bigger size classes from each of the schools?

3.3.3 In your proposal you said that there would be more choice for KS4 pupils and mentioned the concerns of having KS4 subjects being offered on both sites being unfeasible due to numbers. Therefore, the only way to increase options is where pupils travel between sites. E.g. If Latin was offered in Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod pupils wanted to take Latin, they would have to travel to Builth, which contradicts your concerns about KS5 pupils having to travel to access the curriculum. So if you have a school on two sites and you want to increase the number of subjects at GCSE, we are going to have to accept that our pupils in year 10 and year 11 are going to have to travel between sites to do that. That completely contradicts your concerns. What would be the travel policy for this? Where would the money come from? Would the school pay for the transport to enable those children to access the wide range at KS4? ... R - So you'd be happy for KS4 pupils to travel to access their curriculum, whereas for KS5 pupils it is considered to be detrimental to their education?

The Authority currently funds transport costs for pupils aged 14 – 16 to access the Futures Programme at NPTC Group of Colleges, and this funding would be utilised to support any additional transport costs.

In order to provide a wide ranging post-16 curriculum, the Authority aspires to having sixth forms of a minimum of 150 pupils. This would enable the provision of a wide-ranging curriculum, which would reduce the need for learners to travel between different schools/college, as they do now.

3.4 Travel Costs	
<p>3.4.1 Would Powys be willing to fund the travel for students? Which budget would this come from?</p>	<p><i>From September 2017, the school would be run as a dual-sited school. At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority already provides funding through the 14 – 19 Futures Programme for learners to access additional subjects. Consideration will be given to using this funding stream to support transport costs for learners, if this was required.</i></p>
<p>3.4.2 Using the precedent of John Beddoes School, how many new staff were appointed and how many old staff claim travel and what is the cost?</p>	<p><i>The current Proposal is different to the Proposal for John Beddoes and Newtown High School – the Proposal was to expand the capacity of Newtown High School to include the campus of John Beddoes, making it a split-site school.</i></p>
<p>3.4.3 When you have a school across sites – you then have a cost of staff travel - middle managers and teachers. Implications on insurance premiums on their own cars.</p>	<p><i>A split-site allowance of £20,495 is given to Newtown High School in this current year, and the governing body and Headteacher are responsible for how to use that allowance to support any travel costs.</i></p> <p><i>The costings included within the Consultation Document include provision for additional funding in respect of a school operating over a split-site. If this Proposal are implemented, it would be the responsibility of the governing body to budget and plan for the use of the resource.</i></p>
<p>3.4.4 Appendix B 6.5. It does not seem credible that the extra cost to bring Builth students to Llandrindod is £306,318 but the cost of transporting Llandrindod students to Builth is only £238,366. The number of students who attend Llandrindod at no transport cost to PCC is 295. From the</p>	<p><i>The current and estimated travel costs were calculated following an analysis carried out by officers from the Schools Service and the Transport Unit. An analysis of the additional routes required in both catchment areas was undertaken, including the ability to amalgamate such routes, and providing an estimate for each route of the additional costs that would be</i></p>

information given at our meeting at County Hall on 27 January 2016 the number for Builth is just over 200. (The Chair of Governors at Llandrindod High School actually asked for the numbers in written questions to that meeting and has yet to receive a reply.)

3.4.5 It defies logic to say that to transport all pupils to Builth would cost less than to transport them to Llandrindod. Where do you get the figures?

incurred. The analysis also included the impact of the revised transport network on any linked transport that is used for primary education as well.

There is already transport running between Llandrindod and Builth for Welsh-medium pupils – pupils would be able to access vacant seats on this transport with no additional cost to the Authority.

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
4	Welsh Medium Education	
4.1	General	
4.1.1	Appendix B 6.4 SWOT analysis for Option 3 (Single school in Builth) also does not mention as a threat that parents in Brecon and Sennybridge may prefer to send their children out of county for Welsh medium education. Sennybridge is closer to Ystalyfera than Builth Wells.	<i>As stated in the consultation document, the majority of Welsh-medium pupils from Sennybridge Primary School already transfer out of county to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, where they are able to access full Welsh-medium provision. The transport provided to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera was provided following a transport appeal where it was recognised by the panel members that the level of Welsh medium provision in Brecon was far below that provided in Ystalyfera.</i>
4.1.2	If Brecon Welsh unit is closed then it is likely that some pupils may transfer out of county for Welsh medium education.	
4.2	Current Staffing Doesn't Currently Allow Welsh Medium Capacity to Grow Quickly	
4.2.1	Every teacher who can teach through Welsh already has a full timetable- they can't deliver more overnight. This change and expansion would have to be gradual so won't be an overnight big increase in Welsh language provision.	<i>In recent years Builth Wells High School has actively developed its Welsh-medium provision, through the recruitment of additional Welsh-medium teachers. The Authority recognises that it will take time for provision to expand, but an increase in critical mass of pupils would enable a greater range of subjects to be provided, especially at KS4 and post-16.</i>
4.3	Proposals May Diminish Vision of Creating a Fully Bilingual School in Mid Wales	
4.3.1	We have some second Welsh medium classes in some year groups due to increased numbers but what are the plans about expanding the Welsh stream further. I'm worried about our status as a bilingual school if we merge with an English school. What will be the effect of injecting more English medium pupils into the school by	<i>The Proposal is for the Welsh stream to remain on the Builth Wells site of the new dual-sited school. The new governing body and senior leadership team would be required to develop a strong Welsh ethos across both sites.</i>

	a merger? Will this diminish the vision to become a fully bilingual school in mid Wales?	
4.3.2	But it could possibly go the other way, could the Welsh here be marginalised and Welsh learners be swamped. I'm worried that a larger school, dilutes the burgeoning Welsh ethos.	
4.3.3	It is essential to create the draw from the Brecon area by growing the Welsh ethos here; we can't risk that by marginalising the Welsh stream by merging with an English school.	
4.4 Making each site single language tackles surplus places and final case for change		
4.4.1	Class size can be overcome by putting all English medium in one place. Suggest English on one site; Welsh medium on another (Llandrindod and Builth).	<i>There is insufficient capacity at Llandrindod High School to incorporate all the English-medium pupils, and it would lead to a significant increase in surplus capacity at the Builth Wells site.</i>
4.4.2	Class sizes and financial difficulties - this can be got over by putting students all in one place? By having schools on one site, merge English medium on one site and Welsh and 6th form on the other site to minimise transport and staff.	
4.5 Alternative if shortfall in Welsh Medium pupils at Builth		
4.5.1	Let's say that after the consultation in Brecon the Welsh medium students won't go to Builth what change will be made to proposals?	<i>In the short term, the Authority would expect there to be some reduction in the proportion of pupils from the Brecon area continuing to access Welsh-medium provision in the secondary sector. However, the current Welsh-medium provision in KS4 in Brecon is very limited, and there is no provision at all at Post-16. The Authority will work with the primary schools concerned and the secondary school provision in Builth Wells and the expectation is that any reduction in transfer rates into KS 3 would be reversed in the longer term</i>

		<i>As the Authority will be providing free home to school transport, it is the authority's view that while there may be some parents who choose to opt for the English stream at Brecon High School, the majority of Ysgol y Bannau pupils will continue to transfer to Welsh-medium secondary provision in the long term.</i>
4.5.2	Problem - small cohort of Welsh learners across the County – figures based on South only. Surely it should be looking at the whole picture including North. Feeding to Builth currently. Why not looking at Brecon and Newtown centres as they have the biggest number of learners?	<i>The Authority is currently developing a business case for the establishment of a Welsh-medium secondary school/s in North Powys.</i> <i>Although Brecon is a larger community, the provision in Builth Wells currently serves the towns of Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader as well as Builth Wells, and there are more pupils in primary Welsh medium provision in the Builth catchment area.</i>
4.5.3	But you built a WM primary in Newtown. If you are saying Rhayader is one of the feeder schools why doesn't it go to Newtown?	<i>Pupils from Rhayader Welsh stream are closer to Builth Wells than Newtown.</i>
4.5.4	Remember Builth, Llandrindod and Rhayader are not Welsh speaking towns. The reason there are more learners in Builth is that they are bussed in.	<i>The percentage of residents who have more than one skill in Welsh is higher in Builth Wells than in Brecon.</i>
4.6 Travel and effect on take up of Welsh Medium secondary places		
4.6.1	That may be because people choose not to travel? If you move WM to y Bannau, I know some transferred, and this is so they don't have to transfer at a later date. You don't know what the effect later will be on people having to travel and wanting to do Welsh medium secondary education. Less people may be willing to learn welsh because of travel	<i>As noted in the Consultation Document, The Authority recognises the risk to pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau, and would work closely with the school and organisations such as TWF and Menter Brycheiniog to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education in the local area.</i> <i>Ysgol y Bannau would become an official feeder school for the new dual-stream, dual-sited school in Mid Powys, and both schools would work closely to ensure clear transition and progression routes for pupils. The</i>

	<p><i>Authority would only provide transport for pupils to the nearest school that provides Welsh-medium education.</i></p> <p><i>If the Proposal is implemented from September 2017, the Authority would expect the school in Builth Wells to have developed transition plans along with Ysgol y Bannau in readiness.</i></p> <p><i>As the Authority will be providing free home to school transport, it is the authority's view that while there may be some parents who choose to opt for the English stream at Brecon High School, the majority of Ysgol y Bannau pupils will continue to transfer to Welsh-medium secondary provision in the long term.</i></p>
<p>4.7 Cost implications of additional lunch time activities and travel time for learners coming from South Powys on access to extracurricular activities</p>	
<p>4.7.1 Is all this extra curriculum activities been costed into the proposals and is lunch time enough to provide all the clubs and activities kids need? Point related to impact on after school activities offered to those Welsh medium learners having to travel to Builth from Brecon/Sennybridge area.</p>	<p><i>The authority acknowledges that there could be a negative impact on learners who live in the Brecon area if they are unable to access after-school activities at Builth. The authority would encourage the school to work with parents to find a solution to this issue.</i></p>
<p>4.8 Availability of additional Welsh Medium Post 16 Courses</p>	
<p>4.8.1 Regarding post 16 education, we know WG would like 25 + 5 courses available for each child. Following merger and assuming it's important for pupils to have equality of education through the medium of Welsh how many courses do you expect to be provided through the medium of Welsh and medium of English. You know the numbers, you've done the modelling ...</p>	<p><i>The Authority agrees that there should be equality between English and Welsh provision, at all key stages. The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 requires local authorities to ensure that all post16 learners have access to at least 30 subjects, 5 of these vocational. In terms of Welsh-medium provision, the Measure does not specify the number of courses required – it states instead that ‘all efforts must be made to ensure that, where a subject is available in the medium of Welsh at GCSE, then it should be made available at post-16.’</i></p>

<p>4.8.2 Would need a sixth form of about 300 to deliver full range. 8 or 9 Welsh medium out of 26 and rest in English. This is not significantly more than at the moment.</p>	<p><i>The Authority's funding formula for sixth forms would require a sixth form of 180 pupils to be able to deliver 25 academic courses.</i></p>
<p>4.9 Travel Times for pupils into Welsh stream</p>	
<p>4.9.1 In terms of Welsh medium education – there are 129 pupils currently in BW - should the proposals go ahead in S Powys, and all children come from the Brecon area to receive WM education here what would be the final number of pupils receiving WM education in this school and what would be the travelling distance time for a single pupil?</p>	<p><i>According to PLASC 2013, there are 129 pupils currently in the Welsh stream at Builth Wells High School, with 30 pupils at Brecon High School.</i></p> <p><i>Please see page 41 of the Consultation Document for an analysis of pupil travel ties.</i></p>
<p>4.10 Redirecting out of county travel subsidies into Powys Welsh Medium provision</p>	
<p>4.10.1 I am a parent of a child in the Welsh stream. We moved from Brecon High School. It is significant that 3 out of 4 schools that are supposed to be closed are in special measures. If you want to strengthen the Welsh school you shouldn't just dismiss the Sennybridge children and assume they're all going to go to Ystalyfera. It costs you a lot more to pay for a child out of County and if over the years you haven't paid as much transport for children to go out of County it will be more finances for our schools in Powys.</p>	<p><i>As stated in the consultation document, the majority of Welsh-medium pupils from Sennybridge Primary School already transfer out of county to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, where they are able to access full Welsh-medium provision. The transport provided to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera was provided following a transport appeal where it was recognised by the panel members that the level of Welsh medium provision in Brecon was far below that provided in Ystalyfera.</i></p>
<p>4.11 Reassurances around strengthening Welsh Medium provision</p>	
<p>4.11.1 Parent of child who has just moved from Welsh Medium Brecon to Builth – My child gets on the bus at 25 to 8 in the morning and I've got two other children and I'm hoping they'll come into Welsh Medium education over the next four years – we'd like that to be in Powys. I'd</p>	<p><i>The Authority recognises that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils, and therefore it is important that the process is undertaken as effectively and swiftly as possible.</i></p>

<p>like reassurance – and I think you are aware that there are a lot of parents of those 30 children in Brecon who want assurance that they are not going to have to travel any further than Builth. There still seems to be discussions of the possibility of one school. I think the WM parents from S Powys need an absolute assurance very quickly if you want to concentrate the WM and include it you need to be telling those parents distinctly that it will be consolidated in Builth and remain that way. You may lose some children out of Powys but the majority of children not just being lost out of County – they’re being lost to private schools or to English medium because people haven’t got that assurance – and I think you need to firm about what the decision is about the WM – If you think you’re going to get those 30 children, you won’t. Don’t count them as 30 but you need to encourage them very quickly.</p>	
<p>4.11.2 I am supportive of the proposals for WM education as I said in the meeting last night – it presents opportunities to children who choose to study through the WM.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted.</i></p>
<p>4.12 Existing numbers of Welsh Medium pupils travelling into Builth from Brecon</p>	
<p>4.12.1 Welsh language impact assessment on your report P 4 – you have BW currently – Welsh speakers 129 and Brecon 30 – how many children are currently being brought in by bus from Brecon area to make up the 129?</p>	<p><i>The Authority transports 35 pupils from the Brecon area to Builth currently.</i></p>
<p>4.13 Welsh Medium pupil numbers</p>	
<p>4.13.1 I wouldn’t say cohorts are small. There are smaller cohorts in Powys. Our cohort here is growing. I heard from Builth Wells Primary School this morning and</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>

they're almost 50:50 there in regards to who's in English medium and Welsh medium. To say small cohorts; I would say 'smaller' would be better.

4.14 Location of Welsh Medium stream in Proposed New School

4.14.1 Welsh medium here? Does that mean Welsh medium will also be taught in Llandrindod? Will it still be like it is now, bilingual?

The proposed new dual-sited school will be a dual-stream school. The Authority would expect the Welsh stream to be delivered from the Builth Wells site in order to maximise benefits.

4.14.2 Is Powys open to a legal challenge if parents want to send their children to the Llandrindod site for full Welsh medium teaching? Some don't come to Builth because of siblings and peer pressure and staying locally is more important.

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
5 Finance		
5.1 Criticism and Queries about the Financial Savings		
5.1.1	Local politics and penny pinching by PCC should not penalise their career opportunities, nor should it cause such uncertainties that people are dissuaded from sending their children to this school.	<i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The Proposal is intended to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term model of education for pupils.</i>
5.1.2	Realistically there will be no money saved. No money to use to improve standards.	<i>The estimated savings are included in the consultation document Section 7.1 page 27.</i>
5.1.3	There is a very small saving on the senior management team through the proposal. Has the increased transport needed for teachers and senior leaders between campuses been taken into account in the proposal? The saving is negligible and will be sucked up in the cost of alterations needed and the increased cost of supporting two campuses.	<i>The figures have been based on the current fair funding formula with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required for 2017/18 to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on leadership scale point 12. These changes are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.</i>
5.1.4	You won't find these saving through cutting middle management but will it find enough to provide these extra courses and staff. Where will the money come from to expand welsh medium provision at a-level.	<p><i>The funding delivered to schools is via a formula which is consulted on and agreed by Cabinet each year where changes are proposed. It is the Governing Bodies responsibility to structure the school in line with statutory requirements and within the funding available.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority receives a grant for post-16 education from the Welsh Government which is based on pupil numbers, plus uplifts for sparsity, deprivation and Welsh-language. The intention of the Proposal is to create a critical mass of learners that will enable the Authority to draw down more funding for Welsh-medium subjects.</i></p>

5.1.5	Can you send a detailed breakdown of all the costs and savings used within the proposal? We can't see where this is explained. What is the £133,000 made up of?	<i>A breakdown of the savings is included in section 7.1 of the consultation document.</i>
5.1.6	If you keep pupils in the same location, you have the same teachers teaching the same pupils. Potential savings are management only. Agreed that management costs will be a saving. Can you make savings by structuring differently?	<i>The Governing Body of the new school would be responsible for the structuring of the school within the available funding delegated via the funding formula to the school.</i>
5.1.7	Can I return to £134k? It hasn't built in the fact that it doesn't account for people who have protected salaries. Council 'believes' rather than you 'know'. Needs to be costed more. Hasn't looked at staff losing jobs and having to reapply etc.	<i>The estimated savings are based on the financial savings the Authority would make from funding 1 school instead of 2 schools. Redundancy costs have not been factored into the financial assessment.</i>
5.1.8	Talking about potential saving and thinking about the challenges faced by the local Authority, is this the thin end of the wedge and will it be a salami slicing exercise and will it (funding) keep going down? Are these just about finance and efficiencies and not about quality? We know the challenge Powys faces and will the combined budget of the new school be enough and is the proposed £133000 enough to go toward improving quality. A: school delegated budget is protected but no guarantees	<i>Officers and members actively seek to influence funding levels for Powys whenever possible. This action successfully gained an additional £1.9m for the 16/17 financial year, of which £1.2m was directed to schools. The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The Proposal is intended to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term model of education for pupils.</i>
5.1.9	Another aspect to the funding is that education is a large budget, so once this is protected other services suffer but does show the Council's commitment to education.	<i>The Authority notes this comment</i>
5.1.10	Class size problem does not go away - will still be same teachers teaching the same pupils. The savings	<i>The Authority notes this comment</i>

	are management costs but teaching costs will remain, projected savings will still be inadequate.	
5.1.11	Is the funding formula risk assessed- are the calculations based on the single school on two sites?	<i>The proposal is based on a single school across 2 sites. The formula is subject to full consultation and Cabinet approval.</i>
5.1.12	Hardworking Friends of the school. There's been a lot of fundraising for Builth Wells High School. What happens to the funds that have been raised already if the two schools merge?	<i>If these funds are held in accounts separate to the delegated budget, the account holders decide what happens to the money. The Authority cannot dictate this.</i>
5.2 Current Proposals are not a Long Term Solution to the Financial Challenges		
5.2.1	Budget? What is the estimated saving? Is that (£133k p a) going to be enough to keep the status quo of two schools if they are in the financial situations that they are – it says about Llandrindod that their budget forecast being in deficit in future years but it doesn't actually say about B, so it would be nice to know if B is in the same situation. And if finance is a problem how is £133k actually going to impact and actually make a difference between the two schools?	<i>The £133k is the saving to the Authority through reduced funding allowances by creating one school. The Shadow Governing body will be required to structure the school within the funding delivered via the funding formula.</i> <i>The budget projections of both schools at the time of consultation is on page 42 of the consultation document.</i>
5.2.2	I've worked in Cardiff and Bristol and I've just moved here. If the school becomes one will it mean that WG will give us as much money because the money compared with Bristol and Cardiff is three quarters less? Money in this area is a lot less than other areas in Wales. It doesn't mean we'll have all the IT equipment we need. Is it actually in that respect going to benefit compared to South Wales' schools – not a level playing field compared with South Wales' schools. That seems a shame. We moved to here for a better quality of life – it doesn't seem fair and that's why a lot of people move out of the area down to S	<i>Welsh Government funding is based on a number of factors, the number of pupils is a contributing factor, but not the structure of our school sites.</i>

<p>Wales –it’s not just because of the schools – there’s nothing here.</p>	
<p>5.3 Likelihood of Increased WG Funding for Education in Powys</p>	
<p>5.3.1 I know that Powys schools are the worst funded in Wales. Are Powys looking at the Funding formula and bringing them in line with other Welsh schools?</p>	<p><i>Powys reviews the formula on a yearly basis, a working group is formed which includes Headteacher representatives. Any proposed changes are subject to full consultation and Cabinet approval before they are implemented. Cabinet and Council consider the amount of funding provided to fund the overall formula on an annual basis.</i></p>
<p>5.4 Staffing</p>	
<p>5.4.1 If there is the same finite pot of money and you’re looking for more courses because you have a greater number of students– that will increase the cost of resourcing the new courses– so you’re not going to have the money – where’s the money going to come from? The only way you can do all this within budget is compress the six lessons in Llandrindod to five to save the staffing costs which you can then use to fund the additional courses or free up middle managers – which then will mean that teachers will lose their jobs. Without any additional money you are hard pressed to raise standards by adding additionality or extra training – we seem to be trying to rob Peter to pay Paul.</p>	<p>It is expected that the Proposal will result in the new school delivering post-16 provision in a more economical way that will be more attractive to learners and therefore would retain more learners in post-16 provision within the Authority. As the funding for post-16 is based on pupil numbers, this would result in more funding being made available from Welsh Government.</p> <p>The responsibility for developing the curriculum and timetable across the two sites lies with the governing body and Headteacher of the proposed new school, and they would be expected to operate within their delegated budget.</p>
<p>5.4.2 The savings of money across the two sites when it’s under one umbrella – If you’ve got two heads of faculty which will end up being advertised as one then the person that loses their role will still be entitled to their pay for up to three years. And then all the TLR holders will get an increment because they’ll have more teaching responsibilities. Everybody’s wages</p>	<p><i>The savings shown in the consultation document are based on the current delegated funding formula. The transition of current staff to the new staffing structure will be undertaken through the Authority’s management of change processes and any transitional payments or redundancies will be an additional cost to the Authority.</i></p>

<p>would go up – so it seems that it will take quite a long time for savings to be made. It seems quite a lot of heartache for what will take a long time to make any savings.</p> <p>5.4.3 Looking at the numbers and modelling, is their organigram for staffing structure cost modelled?</p>	<p><i>The funding calculations relate to the funding provided to schools and not the actual cost of a staffing structure that is put in place by the Governing Body. The Governing Body will staff and run the school within the funding made available to them.</i></p>
<p>5.4.4 Then there will be no saving for three years, as pay will be maintained because of cover for teachers' pay. If proposal is that 11-16 in Llandrindod and Builth, timetabling and VCing will be continued, only saving being made is leadership team ignoring redundancy costs?</p>	
<p>5.4.5 Student of Llandrindod High School – so you say I will have the same staff, the pupils would stay on the same sites. But yet just from having one head and one senior leadership team, that's enough money that you will save to risk the education of 1,112 students plus the ones in the future which are growing. This whole thing. Everyone keeps saying it's not about the money but when you get deep into it, it is.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing the secondary sector in Powys, which includes ensuring that educational provision is of the highest standard possible within an economic/financial climate that is very challenging. The Proposal is intended to deliver a sustainable model of secondary education, which can deliver high-quality provision.</i></p>
<p>5.4.6 Are you saying if you were in year 8 and you were having a lesson in Welsh you would do it in the same class as one in the medium of English? There would be three classes for that subject. So that's very hard to achieve with the reduced funding.</p>	<p><i>The dual-stream model enables schools to deliver Welsh-medium and English-medium subjects in separate streams. The school across two sites would receive funding in accordance with the Authority's Fair Funding Formula, which includes an additional allowance for Welsh-medium classes, and also a split-site allowance.</i></p>
<p>5.5 Basis of Budgetary Information</p>	
<p>5.5.1 The formal consultation P3 – financial statement. It says in there that you are concerned about the financial liabilities of Llandrindod High School. Having</p>	<p><i>The forecast budget position at the time of consultation for Llandrindod High school on page 42 was showing a rising deficit position. This was the latest</i></p>

	<p>seen their financial statements I can't quite see where you see that. Can you explain why you feel Llandrindod High School is in financial problems?</p>	<p><i>budget held by the Authority and received from the school at the time of consultation.</i></p>
<p>5.5.2 I know that our school hasn't gone into debt with our budget – one of the few schools in P that hasn't – I know that one other school in this consultation has and I know they are Welsh medium and that Welsh medium has more money so when schools like that go into debt and schools that don't get as much money don't, to write in there a statement that makes it look like we are rubbish at managing our budget and to put nothing about the fact that they have had to have a loan to get out of their problem really, really angers me.</p> <p>5.5.3 That budget that I sent out was the first draft and I was asked for it by the GB. For the next two years we were forecasting surplus. The GB said, right so we've got to do something. No rescue plan had been allowed to be put in place. So they've taken that out of context. A rescue plan has now been put in place. In fact have saved money in the last year - we are in surplus for this year. Next year we'll be in surplus. For the following year we'll be in surplus. My accounts have been signed off. My budget's now been licenced.</p>	<p><i>Llandrindod High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £151,986.</i></p> <p><i>The school have a planned surplus of £41,434 for the 2016/17 financial year.</i></p> <p><i>The budget plan used in the consultation document was the latest available that had been received by Finance at the time of consultation which was received from the school on the 19th May 2015. Latest projections for all schools were included in the consultation documents.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document clearly states the source and status of this financial information:</i></p> <p><i>'The budget plans overleaf have been received directly from the four schools over the course of the last year. They indicate that two of the four schools are already forecasting a significant deficit over the next three years. The Authority is currently compiling the final budget allocations for 2016/17 whilst also providing updated indicative funding for the next three year. Once this information has been provided, schools will update their budget plans accordingly.'</i></p>	
<p>5.5.4 Why is there no mention of the budget deficit that has been in Builth High School for several years? Many other schools in P are operating on deficit. We are paying less per child less than the P average by £400 per child than a Builth Wells High School student – that equates to £200,000.</p>	<p>The budgetary information provided in the Consultation Document for both schools was factual at that point in time and clearly states the source and status of the information.</p> <p>Information for Builth Wells' High School's budgetary position was included in the addendum to the Consultation Document.</p>	

REF	ISSUE	
6	Buildings	
6.1	Maintenance	
6.1.1	The document states that Llandrindod High School is in poor condition. Why has the building been left to get in this state? Surely the building should be maintained to an adequate standard.	<i>In terms of annual repairs and maintenance, the Authority provided Llandrindod High School with an annual revenue stream of £38,769 in 2015/16 through the Fair Funding Formula to carry out repairs and maintenance, and statutory testing requirements. As this forms part of the delegated budget, the school can choose how much of this funding it wishes to use for repairs and maintenance.</i>
6.1.2	Having established one school on two sites will you now commit to carrying out the backlog of maintenance identified in the documents?	<i>The Authority's capital funding for schools is either through the 21st C Schools Programme, or through the Major Repairs and Improvements Capital Budget. The Authority can fund refurbishments or remodelling of schools through either of these capital streams. However, the Authority can only fund new-build schools through the 21st C Schools Programme.</i>
6.1.3	A lot of what you've said so far seems to relate back to finances. There seems to be a current estimate of backlog maintenance costs in excess of £5.3m across both sites should things go to the proposed plan – what is the expected timeframe for that single school on two sites to be running. Is this an intermediary measure until something more permanent can get worked up and Government funding or whatever is provided to the Council to allow them to do so?	<i>In terms of annual repairs and maintenance, the Authority provides schools with an annual revenue stream through the Fair Funding Formula to carry out repairs and maintenance, and statutory testing requirements. As this forms part of the delegated budget, the school can choose how much of this funding it wishes to use for repairs and maintenance.</i>
6.1.4	Doing what you are proposing to do may ease some of the financial pressures but there is still as significant deficit of maintenance required today – it's not even looking forward to future maintenance that may be required and I would just like to understand the timeframes to bring the schools up to a standard fabric which makes it presentable to the kids – because there are two aspects to children's learning – the	<i>The Authority's Cabinet, as part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan, approved in April 2016, a schools requirement to fund capital expenditure if their revenue spend is lower than an agreed level. The Cabinet also approved a five year rolling programme of condition reassessments, which will be utilised to plan future investment to ensure all buildings are maintained.</i>

quality of the teaching the quality of the environment in which they're learning.

6.1.5 Should it go through, will there be capital investment across both sites? What's on the maintenance backlog?

The estimated backlog maintenance costs for both schools is

School	Estimated backlog maintenance costs
Builth Wells High School	£1,743,600
Llandrindod High School	£3,607,800

6.1.6 That is a significant amount of money. I also manage the buildings. I don't know where the figure of £3.6m comes from. We've maintained those buildings. We have not been told there is anything insufficient in it. The chair of governors has not been told anything. I would love to know where that comes from. Builth recently had £2m spent on their new canteen ... Our buildings are a lot older. Nobody has come to me and said we think this needs doing – to work with us on it. I think it's very unfair.

*As part of this Review, the Council's Property Service were requested to carry out a condition survey of the schools - the expenditure has been based on a desk top survey, which identifies the **minimum** investment required to upgrade the school . As stated in the Consultation Document, it is estimated that it would cost £3.6m to upgrade the facilities at Llandrindod High School.*

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
7	Impact on students	
	7.1 Specialisms may Improve But May Come at Cost of Relationships with Pupils	
7.1.1	Working the strengths of the two schools is where certain subjects and specialisms are developed- but will this degrade the personal relationship with pupils?	<i>The Authority would expect teachers to provide every pupil with the same level of support as currently provided, even if the school was a dual-sited school.</i>
	7.2 Impact of Travel Time on GCSE	
7.2.1	Travel time for GCSE will be an issue if there is one site per subject. Worries raised about pupils having to travel back and forth between sites	<i>At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.</i>
	7.3 Impact of Students During the Transitional Phase	
7.3.1	Current pupils are at risk of not achieving their full potential during the upheaval.	<i>The Authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved. Should the schools close, it would be expected that the governors and staff of the school would support pupils during, and after, the transition period. The Authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</i>
7.3.2	How is this going to affect the children's education in terms of the transition? My daughter will be studying for her GCSEs at the time.	
7.3.3	Overseeing the management of it I have less concerns with – it's the potential outcome because all of this is happening at the start of a new academic year and as such it is ensuring that there is minimum impact to the children that could be quite heavily affected by the proposed changes.	

7.4 Impact of Changes on Availability of Existing GCSE Subject Choices	
7.4.1	<p>Timeline for potential implementation? There is a requirement for a new HT and the SGB to put in place a curriculum. Just by the nature of the timing of that, with it being right at the start of the academic year, will that impact the subject choice of children that have had to make the choice in advance of that time?</p>
	<p><i>The timescale is outlined within the Consultation Document. It is expected that, should the Proposal be implemented, the new school on two sites would open in September 2017.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority would work closely with the shadow governing body of the new school and the Headteacher to develop the curriculum in advance of September 2017.</i></p>
7.4.2	<p>So what you're saying is pupils currently being education in B and L irrespective of the subject would be expected to continue those topics in their current learning environment for the duration of that period. So what you've just said, I'm going to assume that any new curriculum would not be started till the summer of 2018 because that way the children would not be impacted by any decisions to change the range of subjects.</p>
	<p><i>The expected efficiencies calculated by the Authority are based on having a revised management structure over the new school. KS3 and KS4 provision delivered on each site would not change before the date indicated in the comment.</i></p>
7.5 Continuity of Teacher-Student Support During Transition	
7.5.1	<p>I am confused. You said that the same teachers will be helping the children through this transition stage. Yet you also said that the teachers would have to apply for their jobs so they will not be supplying the same level of support to the children as they normally would. If they're having to apply for their jobs, the teachers will be worried so they will not be providing the support they normally would.</p>
	<p><i>In the Consultation Document, the Authority has highlighted the following as a risk:</i></p> <p><i>'Difficult for both schools to focus on improving outcomes due to the uncertainty caused by the Proposal - may affect standards' with the following mitigation:</i></p> <p><i>'The Council would continue to provide advice and support to both schools and the shadow governing body of the New School to ensure that standards and performance continue to improve during the transition period.'</i></p>

7.6 Migration of Pupils Out of County as a Consequence of Merger	
7.6.1	<p>There is evidence for pupils leaving merged schools in Powys so questions this proposal. Some go over the border into other counties.</p> <p><i>There is no evidence that pupils are leaving schools that have been 'merged' or reorganised in Powys.</i></p>
7.7	Integration of Pupils
7.7.1	<p>What will be done to integrate the pupils from Builth and Llandrindod to make them feel that they do all belong to one school?</p> <p><i>A number of actions could be taken forward to support pupils to integrate e.g. establishing a new school Council with representation from both schools; carrying out whole-school activities where possible e.g. sporting activities, extra-curricular activities.</i></p>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
8 Impact on teachers		
8.1 Staff Recruitment Issues could be Exacerbated- More Pressure on Current Staff to Deliver Additional Subjects		
8.1.1	How will we recruit with our staff already under pressure? Surely more a-levels will add pressure on teachers.	<p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well. A priority would be to work alongside the shadow governing body and Headteacher, when appointed to develop and consult on the proposed staffing structure for the New School.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document states that 'The shadow governing body of the New School would be expected to appoint high-quality teaching and support staff who would be able to provide excellent learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance.'</i></p>
8.1.2	The report says teachers will need to apply for their own posts and will result in high quality teachers - How?	
8.2 Staff Recruitment and Retention		
8.2.1	Recruitment to a school going to close is dangerous, people are unlikely to apply to a closing school.	<i>The Authority recognises that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty. As stated in the Consultation Document:</i>
8.2.2	Teachers have low morale, 'being kicked in the teeth'	<i>'It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i>
8.2.3	To me, as a service user, now for education in Powys for probably the next 15 years, I would like to know if the quality of standards are going to be maintained to what they are now. We've spoken a lot about bringing teachers to the area. What about retaining the teachers that are here? The children thrive through the teachers. A lot of teachers travel for their jobs here. What's to say if the proposal doesn't succeed, that it goes to an amended timescale, which you haven't given us? Half the teachers in Llandod might	<p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better standards may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p> <p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well. A priority would be to work alongside the shadow governing body and</i></p>

	leave for jobs elsewhere. Where is the policy for the retention of the existing staff to ensure the present quality of education?	<i>Headteacher, when appointed to develop and consult on the proposed staffing structure for the New School.'</i>
8.2.4	We've got teachers in these schools who deliver standards. Yes, there might be the odd teacher who might not achieve it – the problem you're going to have is that who in their right mind will come to these schools when they're failing – we need, not just as a community but the Council needs to get behind the schools and say we are investing £x million over the next five years	
8.2.5	It is currently very difficult to recruit teachers to mid-Wales, accepting this proposal will make it impossible.	
8.2.6	The lack of information will lead to a reduction in education standards and the instability and uncertainty of proposals will make recruiting teachers to mid-Wales even harder than is currently the case.	
8.3 Terms and Conditions of Teacher Contracts		
8.3.1	Would our place of employment change? If A level goes up to Llandod (the two full time teachers here) would have significant gaps in our timetable. However, Llandod has two [subject] teachers as well so if the governors decided that four is too many – one redundancy but then there would be a gap in Llandod to be filled, where would our place of employment be? Would we be expected to travel and how would that be reflected in the cost for staff? Where would we stand in terms of time for travel?	<i>f the Proposal is implemented, then a new staffing structure would be developed and staff appointed to the new structure. If the only available suitable post was based at another site there would be a discussion with the member of staff to see if the new base was reasonable taking into account their individual circumstances. There is no hard and fast rule about how long a journey is "reasonable" – it is looked at on a case by case basis. Once agreed then staff who incur a longer home to work journey as a result of a change proposal are financially compensated through the Council's Disturbance Policy. There is no reimbursement of time for a longer journey resulting from a change in base between sites, then staff would with such travel being classed as "business travel".</i>

8.3.2	<p>Are you foreseeing a lot of job losses or are you looking for redundancy and then re-assess the situation? If the SGB isn't going to let us know until next April then we might be out of a job by then. If someone's moved to the area and has a job in a local High School for this year and is hoping to stay on – it's going to be a problem for a lot of staff who are set up here to then go looking for jobs elsewhere. There are people who are coming up to retirement age – are you looking for people to take early redundancy to try and minimise the amount of job losses? I'm a TLR holder currently – my staffing job hopefully is ring fenced ... [inaudible] If I have to commute to, say, Swansea ... It needs time – job adverts come out in February and if we're not going to find out till April/May. You could end up with people deciding to jump ship and leave and that means it's going to be a problem for the area. It would be my worry that I'm not going to have a job full stop. Most of us have got mortgages and families ...</p>	<p><i>The financial evaluation within the Consultation Document shows a saving of £133k per annum if this Proposal is implemented – this saving is based on a reduced senior leadership team structure rather than teaching and support staff. A new staffing structure would be developed, and there may be some staff who choose not to apply for posts in the new structure.</i></p>
8.3.3	<p>I was previously employed in John Beddoes School so I have experienced this situation before – we were offered ring fencing of jobs and I am very curious as to what the situation here is.</p>	<p><i>The situation at John Beddoes was different because this was the expansion of one school (Newtown High School) to include another (John Beddoes), not the closure of 2 schools and the opening of a new school. The role of the shadow governing body in the creation of a new school includes deciding on recruitment. Other than for Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher posts Powys County Council will recommend to the shadow governing body that they consider ring fenced recruitment to posts in the new school for staff of the existing school, so as to mitigate against redundancy where possible. However, appointment is on merit. The Staffing of Maintained Schools regulations clearly give the shadow governing body the power of appointment and it is for the governing body to decide how it wishes to recruit (with the exception of Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher posts).</i></p>
8.3.4	<p>Going back to the ring fencing. Can you elaborate? What it means? If there are two heads of a subject –</p>	<p><i>Ring-fencing means that staff within the existing 2 schools could, if the shadow governing body decide to proceed in this way, be placed into a "pool"</i></p>

	there will be one in the new school. What exactly is ring fenced? There will be 'a job' but not 'the job' or salary as now.	<i>and recruitment to all posts (with the exception of Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher posts) would be restricted to staff within the pool in the first instance. The detail about who would be eligible to apply for which post would be outlined in the consultation document.</i>
8.3.5	So it's the new governing body that does the ring-fencing and the ring-fencing is about all the jobs and not the individual roles. Would a maths teacher be able to go for a science job if they weren't qualified or only the type of job they had before?	<i>Teachers are usually employed on a generic "teacher" contract rather than being employed as the teacher of a specific subject. In this case teachers in a ring-fenced pool would be able to apply for any post there were eligible to apply for in the new structure. This would be explained in the consultation document. If any teacher believed that they were employed as a subject specific teacher they should raise this during the consultation process as decisions would be made on a case by case basis.</i>
8.3.6	You said that there will be new contracts. I had my permanent contract 20 years ago. Does my contract differ from somebody who was given a contract last year regards retirement age and if this is so, would my new contract under a new school change my terms and conditions, for example on things like retirement date?	<i>There are no mandatory retirement dates in staff contracts within Powys County Council. Very old contracts may refer to a retirement age but this is superseded by the requirements of the Age Discrimination Regulations 2006 and the Equality Act 2010. Employees chose when they wish to retire subject to the provisions of their individual pension entitlements.</i>
8.3.7	Why is there an option to ring fence the head teacher post? It seems an obvious to put out an open advertisement if you want to improve standards	<i>The Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations state that the governing body may choose not to advertise if there is already a head or heads in the schools being re-organised who is interested in becoming head of the new school. If the governing body is satisfied that this person or persons is suitable, they may proceed to interview without advertisement. The same applies to deputy Headteachers.</i>
8.3.8	Can you confirm which jobs will be ring fenced for current teachers?	<i>Ring-fencing means that staff within the existing 2 schools could, if the shadow governing body decide to proceed in this way, be placed into a "pool" and recruitment to all posts (with the exception of Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher posts) would be restricted to staff within the pool in the first instance. The detail about who would be eligible to apply for which post would be outlined in the consultation document.</i>

8.4 Head Teacher Recruitment		
8.4.1	We would also request that Llandrindod High School be allowed to undergo a formal recruitment process for a permanent Head Teacher as Builth Wells High School was a few months ago. As it stands, as an Acting Head, the current incumbent in Llandrindod High School would not be eligible to be ring-fenced to the joint Head role and therefore it is a <i>fait accompli</i> that Mrs Spowage would become the joint Head. This is not fair on Llandrindod High School.	<i>It would be the decision of the shadow governing body of the new school whether it wished to advertise the Headteacher post or not. The Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations state that the governing body may choose not to advertise if there is already a head or heads in the schools being re-organised who is interested in becoming head of the new school. If the governing body is satisfied that this person or persons is suitable, they may proceed to interview without advertisement. The same applies to deputy Headteachers.</i>
8.4.2	What will happen with the headship if this proposal goes through? What grade will a Head over 2 campuses be on? Will this be higher than the current grades of each head and has this been taken into account in the financial effects of the proposal?	<i>The Individual Salary Range of a Headteacher of a school is based on pupil numbers, and therefore the enlarged school would be in a higher group. The Authority has factored the increased costs of the leadership team into the pot. Based on the current pupil numbers, the new school would be at the top of a Group 6 or bottom of a Group 7, and it is the Authority's view that the Shadow Governing Body would set a salary range for the Headteacher post of between point 24 – point 30, or between point 27 – point 33. Both of these are above the salary of a Headteacher post in the current two schools, which are in Group 5.</i>
8.4.3	Currently Builth is the only school with a permanent head teacher. Therefore, does this mean that there will be no external competition for this post? Will Llandrindod be given the support needed by the Council to gain a permanent Head prior to the closure?	<i>See 8.4.1</i>
8.4.4	Given that neither school currently has a permanent Headteacher, and the time usually taken in recruiting Headteachers in Powys, what impact will this have on the timescales. Will an 'Acting Head' be appointed?	<i>There is a permanent Headteacher at Builth Wells High School. The first decision that the shadow governing body must make is to agree the salary scale of the Headteacher post. It is the Authority's expectation that the increased salary would be of a scale that would attract high-calibre candidates, and that an appointment would be made.</i>

8.4.6	Will that person (new Head Teacher) be a Welsh speaker (has heard anecdotally that assurance has been given about this)?	<i>This will be a decision for the shadow governing body. No decision can be made until the shadow governing body has been appointed.</i>
8.5 Concern about Impact on Staff, Leading to Lowering of Standards.		
8.5.1	This proposal DOES NOT provide a duty of care to the Teachers at both schools.	<i>The Authority has recognised in the Consultation Document a risk that staff may feel demotivated as a result of the uncertainty caused by the Proposal and choose to leave.</i>
8.5.2	To close both schools and re-open them with all the same pupils will achieve nothing apart from giving more stress to a single senior leadership team and governing body who would be responsible for 1 school on 2 sites. Both schools are currently in special measures from Estyn and current workload issues for the senior leadership teams are already overwhelming.	<i>However, it is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better standards may go some way to mitigating this risk</i>
8.5.3	Reducing the number of members of the Senior Management teams will over-stretch already stressed and unhappy Senior Leaders, leading to increased disenchantment that will filter down through the staff body.	<i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well. A priority would be to work alongside the shadow governing body and Headteacher, when appointed to develop and consult on the proposed staffing structure for the New School</i>
8.5.4	It WILL NOT improve standards and an already stretched Senior Management Team will NOT have time or resources to adequately support failing teachers or to follow correctly the Councils Performance Capability procedure for Teachers.	
8.5.5	This proposal will reduce the numbers of leaders within the two campuses therefore increasing the pressure on those leaders to produce results within	

each field. Where is the duty of care to the staff of the schools within this proposal?

8.5.6 At the moment I have two hours management a fortnight to oversee the department which is easy enough to do. However, timetable-wise it's easy enough to see when you'd need to be in Builth or Llandod but in that management time to try to oversee colleagues on the other campus could be a logistical nightmare.

8.5.7 Myself and a lot of people in my department are currently teaching eight different subjects. If we were a new school site, I can see how we could have new teachers for one subject but I don't see it improving the quality. For example textiles is my specialism. Would I be just the textile teacher for Builth or would I be travelling back and forth. My friends back where I live have to do that and travel in their dinner hours – they are not allowed time to travel – my concern is not having the time to do all that travelling.

9. Impact on Governance

9.1 Shadowing Governing Body

<p>9.1.1 It raises a challenge for us as governors. Will the governing body be made from the two existing governors? We need a high quality body- how do we choose the best people to deliver and face those challenges rather than ducking them? Risk that it is the longest serving that are thought of as the best. We need to ensure the best people are on the new governing body.</p>	<p><i>The Shadow Governing Body would be formed from amongst those governors currently serving on the governing bodies of Llandrindod and Builth Wells, in accordance with Regulations. Expressions of interest to serve on the shadow governing body would be invited, and it is anticipated that those individuals would be best placed to determine whether they have the available time to commit. The membership would reflect that of any governing body, and would include teacher governors.</i></p>
<p>9.1.2 You mentioned if this goes ahead there will be a Shadow GB – you haven't mentioned how you are going to formulate picking those members because I understand that SGB may well have a say where the sixth form might be in the future. Llandrindod High School has put a proposal forward and that is English should be spoken in Llandrindod High School from 11 to 16 ... giving you quite a lot of numbers in the sixth form.</p>	<p><i>The new governing body would be established in accordance with the Education Act 2002, Part 3, Chapter 1, which sets out the framework for the establishment of governing bodies. All school governing bodies are a combination of appointed or elected governors of various types. The composition of each governing body will depend upon the number and age range of pupils at the school and the category of the school i.e. community, community special, foundation, voluntary aided (VA), voluntary controlled (VC) or maintained nursery (MN). The membership of each governing body will be set out in the Instrument of Government of the particular school, which is produced under section 20 of the Education Act 2002. The Instrument of Government will be made in accordance with The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.</i></p>
<p>9.1.3 So the shadow governing body is extremely instrumental in the process of staffing?</p>	<p><i>The Shadow Governing Body is responsible for key tasks such as appointment of the Headteacher and overseeing the process of developing a new staffing structure. Other key decisions to be taken are the name of the new school and operational issues such as uniforms.</i></p>
<h3>9.2 Challenges Faced by New Governing body</h3>	
<p>9.2.1 I am getting worried about the GB and the workload to be undertaken in the coming months.</p>	<p><i>The Authority recognises that there would be an additional workload for those governors serving on both the current and shadow governing body, but the Authority would provide officer support from a range of service areas</i></p>

9.2.2	There will be substantial workload on Governors and Senior Leadership team of the new school during the “transition” stage of the proposal. Where will this work go to after? There will still be an increased number of pupils over two sites, in two languages with one senior leadership team and one governing body, surely therefore there will be a continued increase in workload.	<i>– HR, Challenge Advisor, Central Services, Finance etc. The Council would also provide clerking services to the shadow governing body and to the new governing body of the New School for a minimum period first school year</i>
9.2.3	So within that timeframe that shadow GB would have to meet far more frequently than usual.	
9.3 Middle Management Arrangements in Proposed New School		
9.3.1	Will you change the middle management or is it is the governing body of the school that appoints middle management with support of LA – through teaching and HR.	<i>The shadow governing body would be responsible for establishing the staffing structure of the new school, alongside the Headteacher. HR would provide support.</i>
9.4 Challenges and Responsibilities of Being a Governor		
9.4.1	Local business person and parent - It's taken me over four and a half years as a governor to get anywhere near understanding the depth and the level of what's required. My first umbrage against the governing bodies – not just Llandrindod school – across all the schools in Powys – which we work very, very hard to try and achieve something for nothing. We don't get paid expenses for meetings. We get put on a cross if we're wrong and then everything we have to try and do we have to do the accounts [inaudible] and pass it through Powys. I just take a little bit of personal umbrage over these statements against Governing Bodies.	<i>The Authority recognises that serving on a governing body is a commitment for those individuals.</i>

If this interim governing body is put together and decides that the only way they can deliver 11-16 English medium is on one site – what happens?

Both schools currently have capacities of 659 and 713. According to PLASC 2016, there were 934 pupils in KS3 and KS4 at both schools. It would therefore not be possible to accommodate all 11 – 16 year olds on one site.

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
10 The Proposal		
10.1 In Support of Proposal		
10.1.1	I write in support of the above proposal because I believe it has the potential to deliver improvements in standards and management. The combined pupil numbers should make it easier to attract a quality Head teacher and leadership team which as we have seen with the Newtown and John Beddoes experiment really uplifted standards in a very short period of time. I wish to make it clear that my support is for the above proposal only and not for any future aspirations of the Council for a school on one site.	<i>Comments noted</i>
10.1.2	My eldest son will be going to high school this September and he has had a first rate primary education in Builth and I would like to see this continue into High school. It does not bother me on the location be it Builth or Llandrindod that he is taught as long as it is to the high standard we have been accustomed to. Travelling is part and parcel of living in Powys and the time and cost is something that we must bear. The extra cost of this is going to be far better in the long run than having to pay for private tutors or worst still private school.	
10.1.3	As a governing body we are not against the merger. But we don't think your proposal goes far enough – should split into two according to medium. E.g. Welsh and English 11-16 on two separate sites.	

- 10.1.4** Something isn't done urgently then what will happen to our sixth forms. I feel the current proposal is not urgent enough ... Could we do the sixth form process quicker if we moved ahead? Could the potential process of closing L sixth form be done quickly – there is a real urgency – we are losing kids rapidly out of county. So yes, to the WM provision and yes to the proposals for the sixth form
- 10.1.5** I also support post 16 on one site – anything that can be done to reduce travel between the sites is to be welcomed.
- 10.1.6** I understand the theory and I even accept that we have non-specialists teaching subjects. Knowing our school and Builth – I know a lot of the staff there. I don't know how having more of the same ... has a skills audit been carried out? It might improve that KS3. I'm not convinced you'll have the specialist subjects at post 16. So it might cause a little bit of improvement in some places.
- 10.1.7** I would also support the establishment of a single sixth form centre, the additional traveling in the morning and evening would be more than compensated in that there would be very little, if any, requirement for additional travel during the school day.
- 10.1.8** So what solutions are available to save both Llandrindod and Builth High Schools? I was at the meeting in Llandrindod where they unveiled their plan they believe would solve the issues for both towns and both schools. The proposals on the face of it do seem Specific, Measurable, Achievable, and Realistic and have a Time element. Now I am fully aware the

<p>proposals would not be ideal for everyone, but they would solve the current issues at a fraction of the cost of Powys County Councils proposals that they have not got any money for anyway.</p>		
<p>10.2 Acknowledge a Need for Change - but not in Support of Proposal</p>		
<p>10.2.1</p>	<p>We acknowledge that there is a need for change with regard to education in the Mid of Powys. Both schools are small, in special measures and struggling funding wise which is reflected with less specialist teachers in front of our children.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>10.2.2</p>	<p>I realise that there needs to be changes for our learners both for financial reasons but also to make the education on offer to our youngsters in the 21st century second to none. As recommended by the SORP the status quo cannot continue. With falling school numbers and consequently school budgets there needs to be more innovative thinking to achieve a practical solution for Mid Powys.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>10.3 Opposition to Proposal</p>		
<p>10.3.1</p>	<p>It is a tick box exercise designed to appease Estyn; demonstrating that “something” has been done to get the two schools out of special measures quickly, swiftly and without having to address the core issues and concerns raised by Estyn.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures on the Powys secondary education system. The Authority believes that the Proposal has many benefits which will lead to an improvement in educational standards.</i></p>
<p>10.3.2</p>	<p>Much is made in the consultation document of improving services for students yet as can be seen by the wholesale rejection of Powys County Council Cabinet’s school re-organisation programme the overwhelming majority of residents, teachers, governors</p>	<p><i>Both schools are currently implemented post-Estyn Inspection Action Plans, and will continue to be monitored by Estyn.</i></p> <p><i>Estyn and the Welsh Government will still require the new school, if implemented, to be continually monitored.</i></p>

and students simply disagree with the proposals in a fashion that should not, and must not, be disregarded by Powys County Council ... We urge Powys County Council to use the huge enthusiasm currently displayed in our communities towards their schools to achieve something creative and exciting and which meets the aspirations and expectations within the current schools structure.

10.3.3 Political – it is strongly opposed at all political levels within the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells area - by the local MP, the local constituency AM, all the local members of Powys County Council (bar the local member for Builth Wells who is currently bound by Cabinet collective responsibility), all local community Councils and every local voluntary sporting, cultural and community group; and opposition to the proposals is widespread among individual local residents

10.3.4 WLD Group believes the proposals should be abandoned and that Powys CC should concentrate on supporting both schools to improve both their learning outcomes and financial management over the coming years. The WLD Group recommends that Powys CC retains both schools as 11-18 schools for the foreseeable future

10.4 Welsh Provision and Reasons for Proposal

10.4.1 It is perfectly clear that the proposals around Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells High School stem from the change to the Brecon and Gwernyfed High School proposals that see the provision of Welsh Medium Education being provided in Builth Wells High School from 1st September 2017. In fact a proportion of pupils

The Consultation Document clearly outlines the pressures facing the secondary education system in Powys, and the Authority believes that the Proposal has a number of benefits that will lead to improved standards of education in the Mid Powys area.

	from the Brecon Secondary School catchment area are already receiving free transport to Builth Wells High Schools to receive a Welsh Medium Education.	<i>Free home-to-school transport is provided for some pupils from the Brecon area to travel to Builth Wells High School for Welsh-medium provision. This has been provided following a successful transport appeal by parents.</i>
10.5 Wrong Model for Rural Area		
10.5.1	An urban model for education is not appropriate for the most rural county in Wales.	<i>The Proposal retains secondary education across the two communities.</i>
10.6 Only One Option		
10.6.1	I am not happy with you only being given one option to vote on, this is not a choice but an ultimatum. This option may be the best option but with no others supplied to you I would be asking questions, There have been other proposals that have been drawn up but have been rejected out of hand why?	<i>The Consultation Document includes details about the Option Appraisal Exercise that was undertaken as part of this review.</i> <i>The Consultation is not about voting, it is to ensure that everyone has a chance to put their views across on the current Proposal, so that Cabinet can make an informed decision.</i>
10.6.2	The only idea discussed is the proposal and no other ideas or proposals are able to be looked at during this period? ... Does the Council not feel that the general public might have other relevant ideas to put forward?	<i>Alternative options brought forward during the Consultation will be included in the Consultation Report for the consideration of Cabinet, prior to any further decisions on the current Proposal being made.</i>
10.6.3	Can you explain why on page 65 Option 5 has the score of 15 (incorrectly added up) and, therefore, the best scored option but is not being consulted on?	The Authority acknowledges that there was an error in calculating the number of ticks for this option – it should read 15 not 14. However, the scoring was a mechanism to identify those options that scored above the agreed threshold to go from the long-list of options, to the short-list for further evaluation, including costings. Section 6.6 on page 76 of the Consultation Document outlines the rationale for the preferred option and the reasons for discounting Option 5.
10.7 Future Mergers?		
10.7.1	If, as one Councillor suggested at the meeting in May, it becomes Council policy to amalgamate High Schools	<i>The Authority is currently considering the outcome of a separate consultation for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. Any future school</i>

	wherever possible. How long will it take for pupil numbers to fall sufficiently for you to consider joining Brecon area High School with Builth/Llandrindod area High School?	<i>reorganisation proposals would have to follow the process outlined in the Authority's School Reorganisation Policy 2015.</i>
10.8 Underlying Reasons for the Proposal		
10.8.1	Llandrindod County Primary School identifies its aspirations for secondary education. In summary: sustainable and resilient in the long term; a wide range of academic and vocational options; high quality teaching and support staff; premises that conform to the highest modern standards and up to date resources; smooth transition arrangements from primary to secondary education; minimal travel particularly during the school day.	<i>Comments noted</i>
10.9 Other Proposals		
10.9.1	My second question ... the High School had a meeting where the Governors made a proposal to PCC to put Welsh Medium and provision for 16 to 18 year olds in Builth and the 11-16 year old in Llandrindod. Has this been addressed – has anyone considered that proposal?	<i>Llandrindod High School Governing Body submitted a proposal to the Authority's Schools Organisation Review Panel (SORP) as part of this review. The proposal was considered but discounted on the basis that there is insufficient capacity at Llandrindod High School to incorporate all the English-medium pupils, and it would lead to a significant increase in surplus capacity at the Builth Wells site.</i>
10.9.2	The proposal is not the one originally identified by Powys several years ago which proposed to put the 2 English streams together to create a larger "critical mass of learners" which would achieve a better outcome for the current learners. Why has this proposal been removed?	<i>In 2011, the Authority carried out a county-wide informal consultation on a range of possible options for secondary school reorganisation. Following this consultation, Cabinet agreed to proceed with a number of initiatives to support the secondary sector that did not involve the closure of any schools.</i>

REF	ISSUES	RESPONSE
11 Process		
11.1 Consultation Document		
11.1.1	The proposals are rushed and sloppy with mistakes throughout the documents.	<i>The Authority acknowledges that there were some errors in the data presented in the Consultation Document. An Addendum was issued with the correct information.</i>
11.1.2	I have got concerns – this is a document that parents and staff are having and you are asking for a consultation and this has to be accurate. It is not fair on staff, pupils, and parents’ community. I only sat there for a couple of hours and immediately spotted inaccuracies.	
11.1.3	I found the document very hard going, not easy to understand and repetitive. There is not enough information to show how one school over two sites will work. How the schools will come out of special measures? How this will affect the children's education and their emotional wellbeing. It doesn't take into account any additional needs of pupils.	<p><i>The Consultation Document is compliant with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, and includes information about the likely impact of the Proposal on outcomes, provision and leadership and management.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document also states the likely impact on pupils with additional learning needs.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority believes that there are many benefits to the Proposal, as outlined in section 1. If a new school is established, Estyn and Welsh Government will expect the school to be continually monitored.</i></p>
11.2 Pupil Data		
11.2.1	The consultation document appears to use assumptions favourable to Builth Wells and detrimental to Llandrindod. As an example Paragraph 2.2.(i) gives	<i>The following data shows the primary pupil projections (PLASC 2016) for both catchment areas in total, updated August 2016. These do not include nursery-aged pupils.</i>

	<p>the forecast future numbers for Llandrindod and Builth but these do not correspond to the numbers in the primary schools in January 2016 ... These incorrect figures are repeated in Appendix A Part A 2 P35 of consultation document – catchment figures queried.</p>	<p><i>(Please see table at end of this document)</i></p>
11.2.2	<p>Any projections on future sec school numbers from current cohorts coming through now. Is the decline set to continue? If the numbers increased there would be issues in the future.</p>	
11.2.3	<p>All the local schools are full so I would like to know what your estimate is for the next few years on where those numbers are going to</p>	
11.2.4	<p>Appendix A Part A 2 overstates the primary pupil numbers in the catchment area for Builth High School and understates those for Llandrindod as at January 2016.</p>	
11.2.5	<p>Appendix A Part A 1 I) says of Llandrindod High School “about half the pupils coming from the towns of Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader”. 53% of our pupils live within three miles of the school. If Rhayader was included, and using ESTYN definitions, it would either be a majority (over 60%) or many (over 70%). (Llandrindod High School Governors)</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
11.2.6	<p>The School Organisation Code also says PCC should take into account “the overall effect of a closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community), particularly in rural areas”. The Impact Assessment issued at the time of the Business Case did not include</p>	<p><i>A draft Community Impact Assessment was prepared as part of this consultation, which included Information about the use of the school’s facilities by the community. The information relating to Llandrindod High School that is included in the draft Community Impact Assessment was provided directly by the school on in January 2016.</i></p>

	<p>all the activities at Llandrindod High School despite being provided to PCC. There are also many activities run by Llandrindod Leisure Centre using the High School premises and grounds for which the Leisure Centre receives the income.</p>
<p>11.3 Lack of Detail</p>	
<p>11.3.1 How can you change admission structure, 'how, what, who, where, when'. This doc isn't very smart and doesn't give a clear understanding of what will be done and when. How will the state of buildings change where does the money come from?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document is fully compliant with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority provides all schools with an allowance for repairs and maintenance of school buildings in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority's capital funding for schools is either through the 21st C Schools Programme, or through the Major Repairs and Improvements Capital Budget. The Authority can fund refurbishments or remodelling of schools through either of these capital streams. However, the Authority can only fund new-build schools through the 21st C Schools Programme.</i></p>
<p>11.4 Factual Inaccuracies</p>	
<p>11.4.1 In terms of the documentation in front us here, there are a number of errors in there – some have been amended and corrected.</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that there were some errors in the data presented in the Consultation Document – these were amended and an Addendum was circulated with the correct information.</i></p> <p><i>The figures have been based on the current fair funding formula with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required for 2017/18 to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on leadership scale point 12. These changes are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.</i></p>

11.5 Cost of consultation	
11.5.1	<p>How much are you getting paid for this consultation? The question was dodged and not answered publicly although it was mentioned that the question would be answered by email only to Mr Price. Why should he know and I can't as a parent? My reasoning is that the consultation costs a lot (too much and you can't justify it, so keep it quiet).</p>
	<p><i>The Authority has commissioned ORS to support 9 school consultations at a cost of £49,998.</i></p>
11.6 Primary School Proposals/Consultations etc.	
11.6.1	<p>Our daughter is a bright child and we have discussed with her the proposals and changes as they directly affect her. She was asked, as part of her School Council, to attend a consultation meeting at Cefnlllys CP School on Monday 16th May 2016. She was pleased to attend and told us her class had worked out questions that they wished to have answered and these were taken by the School Council to the meeting. We also spent time at the weekend before going through the proposals and checking her understanding of the pros and cons. When I collected her from school the first thing she said to me was that it was a complete waste of time and they were treated like younger children who had no idea. They were set little tasks which meant nothing and wasted time; the proposals and reasoning's were not fully explained and they had only a short Q&A session which meant many of their questions went unanswered. She felt it was pointless and had to report this back to her classmates the following day. These are the customers of this service. The key individuals who futures hang in the balance and they are being made to feel like they have just been a useful exercise in ticking a box and showing everyone that "due</p>
	<p><i>Primary schools in the catchment area of Llandrindod Wells were invited to attend a consultation event at Cefnlllys CP School on Monday 16th May 2016. The format of the meeting was consistent with all other pupil meetings, and the views of pupils is reported within the Consultation Report prepared by ORS.</i></p>

<p>process” is being followed. We were disgusted by this lack of care for their opinion.</p> <p>11.6.2 My daughter of 11 who went to the consultation event at Cefnlllys school and had completed research prior to going and had questions to ask the Powys panel but came home and stated “I was patronised made to feel like I was a small child and they did not answer my questions” How does this help our learners? Why do you feel that they should not know what the direct impact will be on their education?</p>	
<p>11.7 Public Consultation Events</p>	
<p>11.8.1 I attended both the Llandrindod and Builth Wells public consultation meetings and was saddened by the change in attitude of the panel from the Wednesday to the Thursday evening. I felt the facilitator spoke and responded far more at the Llandrindod event, not allowing Officers to speak and answer questions. He was deflecting questions and strong feeling away from them. It was ridiculous to stop the two Council Members from speaking at Llandrindod when they commented and engaged in the process at Builth Wells.</p>	<p><i>The Authority notes this view. However, both meetings followed the same process and had the same independent Chair.</i></p> <p><i>The Chair explained that the two Cabinet members on the Panel were here to observe the meetings and to listen to the views of the audience. However, they were able to provide specific responses to questions directed at them so long as they were not pre-determining the outcome of the process.</i></p>
<p>11.8.2 We would also like to point out how disappointed we were with the consultation process that has been conducted by Powys County Council. We went to both the meetings in Llandrindod and Builth. Council members were able to comment and engage in the process in Builth but not in Llandrindod. The person leading the meeting in Llandrindod took up a large amount of time seemingly answering the questions on behalf of the panel and giving his opinion.</p>	

11.8.3	<p>Could I ask you, Chair why the decision has been taken this evening that for the chair and the portfolio holder it is inappropriate for them to comment. I attended the meetings in Dolau and Llanbister schools at which the chair and the portfolio both commented on a number of points – and I’m curious to understand if that’s the way the Council decided to run those meetings why has it not been decided to conduct these meetings in the same way. It’s a curiosity to me that there’s been a change in policy ... They were statutory meetings – exactly the same status as this meeting.</p>	
11.9 Other Criticisms of Consultation Process		
11.9.1	<p>Can you explain why this is called a consultation period when there is no discussion, debate or negotiation. The only idea discussed is the proposal and no other ideas or proposals are able to be looked at during this period? Is this a true consultation? Does the Council not feel that the general public might have other relevant ideas to put forward?</p>	<p><i>The process is fully compliant with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document outlines all other options considered and the reasons why the Proposal has been put forward for consultation.</i></p> <p><i>Any alternative options brought forward during the Consultation process will be included in the Consultation Report that will be considered by Cabinet.</i></p>
11.10 Process Might Have Been Sold Better by not Talking About Closures		
11.10.1	<p>Could this be achieved without talking about closing schools- think about the impact of the this process, could it have been achieved through e.g. federation and do it through contracts and management changes without talking about closing. Can’t you create a new organisation through changing contract of teachers without closing anything?</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, collaboration, clustering or federation were not considered practicable, as they did not provide a solution to the challenges faced by the secondary schools.</i></p>

<p>11.10.2 Is there a sense of brand loyalty to a school? Is it a shame that the one school on one site and closing schools was ever mentioned? Closure is a negative word- the language and the terms used have set things up in a negative frame whereas a rebrand can be a positive thing. Can we change the language in the proposals to put a more positive complexion on it? Sell it in a different way.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.11 The Questionnaire</p>	
<p>11.11.1 Our daughter will not be completing the Youth Questionnaire. It is written in a deliberately confusing manner. Upon working through it she questioned a number of times the outcome that the answers would have given saying that it makes her sound as though she wants the school to close and is happy for all these changes. We feel that it is weighted to produce Our children will not be completing the Youth Questionnaire. It appears to be written in a deliberately confusing and biased manner and neither of our children feel able to give their honest opinion of what is best for their education on this form. These are the very pupils that will be affected by this proposal. They are the future and yet they feel unheard, patronised and disenchanted with the whole education Authority through this process. This lack of understanding of their needs and opinions is reprehensible. A positive outcome for the proposal.</p>	<p><i>The School organisation Code sets out the requirement to present supporting information on the case for change in a clear and coherent way. The question on page 2 of the questionnaire is designed to seek responses (either positive or negative) to that case for change. The distinction between asking about the need for change and support for the specific proposals is important as an individual could agree that there is a need for change but might not necessarily agree with the solutions being proposed. Of course, they may also say there is no need to change. The questionnaire then goes on to ask for responses to the specific proposals around the future of English and Welsh medium provision. Furthermore, open text boxes allow respondents to explain why they agree or disagree with the proposals and to suggest alternative proposals including no change.</i></p> <p><i>The specific concern being raised appears to be around whether or not any support for the case for change might be conflated with support for the specific proposals, so it is worth clarifying then that ORS will present data on each question separately as they appear in the questionnaire with supporting verbatim comments to ensure that no such conflation occurs. The bottom line is that the consultation is asking for responses the specific proposals for the reorganisation of schools and this- not response the case for change- is the key measure.</i></p>
<p>11.11.2 The yellow questionnaire that comes out with it (consultation document) doesn't give you the full chance to answer the questions. I feel that the way it has been written is to only give you the option that PCC is putting forward.</p>	

11.12 Cabinet Versus Whole Council Decision

11.12.1 I find the decision of Powys County Council to propose to close these schools difficult to comprehend. I am sure you agree, providing each and every pupil an education is an investment for the future which can only pay off. This a major life changing decision that will affect a large number of families should not be left to the small number of Councillors in the Cabinet but be debated and decided on by the whole Council.

At a meeting of the full Council on the 12th June, it was agreed that any recommendations relating to secondary school reorganisation proposals should be discussed by full Council prior to Cabinet making any further decisions. The process of school reviews is set out in the Schools Transformation Policy 2014 and the updated Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015.

11.12.2 With regard to the 21st century's schools programme – I take an interest in other counties, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire – school reorganisation - decisions are taken by the full Council not just the cabinet. Could this Council move to this? I have the exact regulation that PCC could to move to – every CC would make a decision.

11.12.3 The present policies for the re-organisation of both primary and secondary schools in Powys have never been approved by the full Powys County Council. They have only been approved by the Cabinet. This would appear to be against County Council Policy whereby it is the full County Council which decides all policy matters. Why have these policies only been approved by the Cabinet?

11.13 Timing of Proposed Changes

11.13.1 We are disappointed with the Estyn report and the level of education in Powys and this is a very serious matter. We both believe this is the wrong time for this type of turmoil process because they won't give

Both schools are currently implementing their post-Estyn Inspection Action Plans, and will continue to be monitored by Estyn. Should the two schools close, Estyn and Welsh Government will still require the schools to be monitored closely.

<p>encouragement to Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School to help their uncertainty of a future and the certainty to improve as well. Our view on the matter is it's the wrong time for these proposals to come forward because it won't actually give the encouragement for both schools to improve the quality of teaching and quality of learning that is so important.</p>	
<p>11.14 Public Consultation Process- Ticketing and Access</p>	
<p>11.14.1 The community of BW and surrounding areas has only been given six days for getting tickets for these events – I personally think that is unreasonable within the context of the whole period of the consultation.</p> <p>The community hasn't been given enough time to book tickets for the public meetings – 7 days.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted. However, the public meeting was only one way that stakeholders could participate in the consultation process.</i></p>
<p>11.15 Proposals Disproportionately Hit Mid and South Powys- Cabinet Montgomeryshire</p>	
<p>11.15.1 It does seem a perception that Radnorshire used to be targeted for the closure of primary schools. We now have a high school that's under threat. Now that perception could not be said if we look into Montgomeryshire. In the current situation Powys is made up of 73 CCs – the majority of those County Councillors come from Brecon and Radnor and yet we have a Cabinet that was 7 from Montgomeryshire and 3 from Brecon and Radnorshire – so that perception is, why hasn't Montgomeryshire had something like this?</p>	<p><i>The Cabinet currently includes 5 councillors from Montgomeryshire, 2 from Radnorshire and 2 from Brecknockshire.</i></p> <p><i>A review of secondary education in North Powys is currently underway, and is due to report back to Cabinet in the autumn.</i></p>
<p>11.16 Reversing Decisions Around Education Once Made</p>	
<p>11.16.1 If the cabinet decides to go ahead with the proposal and then next year at the local elections we end up with</p>	<p>Any future school reorganisation proposals would need to follow the process outlined in the Council's Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015.</p>

a new cabinet, could they then decide to reverse the decision?	
11.17 Process- Statutory Notice Period	
11.17.1 You mentioned the terminology 'Statutory notice' that is obviously a legal process. Can you confirm that if the Authority was to close one of the two campuses in the future we would still have the statutory notice or not.	<i>A statutory notice would only be published if Cabinet approved the Proposal following the consultation.</i>
11.18 Recording Strength of Feeling	
11.18.1 90% of people here will not have anything to say this evening and I hope when you are noting the points you should note when comments get widespread applause from people who are not going to say anything else. Applause is our voice.	All stakeholders were able to participate in the consultation through a variety of ways, including attending meetings, completing a questionnaire or in writing.
11.19 Options if Proposals Rejected or Amended	
11.19.1 Your last slide gave the options of what you would do if you proceed. We didn't have a slide to show what would happen with the amended timescales; we didn't have a slide to say what would happen if the proposal was thrown out. So to me that seems quite final.	<i>The timescales shown in the Consultation Document and on the slide are related to the specific proposal.</i>
11.20 Faith in Powys County Council to Deliver Change	
11.20.1 Some years ago Powys put money into consultation reorganisation and nothing has happened. Is this the same on this occasion?	<i>In 2011, the Authority carried out a county-wide informal consultation on a range of possible options for secondary school reorganisation. Following this consultation, Cabinet agreed to proceed with a number of initiatives to support the secondary sector that did not involve the closure of any schools.</i>

	<p><i>This is a formal consultation process, based on the requirements of the Schools Standards and Organisation Act. However, Cabinet has the right to, following consultation, abandon the Proposal, approve the Proposal (with or without modification) or to significantly re-cast the Proposal for reconsultation.</i></p>
<p>11.21 Objective or Aspiration for a Single Site-Mixed Messages</p>	
<p>11.21.1 On page 20 then – the word ‘objective’ – implies something we’d like to happen. It says parents in Llandrindod may choose their children to attend other schools due to the long-term ‘objective’ to establish a new school in the BW area. Use of word ‘objective’. What changed in the four weeks since that was the objective? Mixed messages are being given. On the one hand you say you are going to discuss a single site at this moment but you just said its part of what is potentially your long term plan. What I would like to happen now is that any reference to a single site be removed from this document. If it’s not part of the consultation now, it shouldn’t be in the documentation. Can I as that is done with immediate effect. [</p> <p>11.21.2 I’d like some clarification with some of the terminology. An ‘interim period’ means something else will happen? P 30 secondary education would remain in both communities for the ‘interim period’</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility, and would be subject to another consultation if Cabinet decided to proceed with the second stage.</i></p>
<p>11.21.3 What has changed since 23 Feb? Because if the vote had gone the other way we would have been consulting on this new school.</p>	<p><i>On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet approved the following recommendation which can be viewed on the Council’s website:</i></p> <p><i>‘To approve the commencement of formal consultation with stakeholders in accordance with Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code on • the closure of Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on</i></p>

	<i>the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new dual stream secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017.</i>
11.22 Inaccuracies in Consultation Document Leading to Criticism of the Process, Confusion and Lack of Confidence in Powys County Council	
11.22.1 As a member of staff and a parent in the community I really want to get behind the process for change but it's very hard for us to get behind the process for change when you're giving us mixed messages. I think you need to work with the community – if you'd like us to get on board with change, you have to meet us half way. I don't feel at the moment you are prepared to do that really.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.22.2 Why is this plan in the public domain? How has it become public?	<i>It is in the public domain as Cabinet approved to carry out formal consultation at its meeting on the 23rd February 2016.</i>
11.23 Option Appraisal Process Challenged-Specific Inaccuracies to Address	
11.23.1 Page 65 – query the mid Powys option appraisal framework which I assume is one of the key indicators based on the conclusion at the end where the framework decides which is a good option or not. I just wanted to know whether scores at the bottom are based on the ticks that have been given. Option 5 has got 14 at the bottom and I counted it should score as 15. If we turn to p76 where we have the overall conclusion of option appraisal it does say very clearly for parents who are going to be reading this ... the overall conclusion says that following this assessment it is clear that the option that scores highest is Option 3a. Well, that scores 14. Option 5 scores 15. That is	<i>The Authority acknowledges that there was an error in calculating the number of ticks for this option – it should read 15 not 14. However, the scoring was a mechanism to identify those options that scored above the agreed threshold to go from the long-list of options, to the short-list for further evaluation, including costings. Section 6.6 on page 76 of the Consultation Document outlines the rationale for the preferred option and the reasons for discounting Option 5.</i>

	important because Option 5 this is a strong argument for English medium education remaining in Llandrindod High School and yet the impression this document gives is that that is not as high a score as Option 3a. That is factually incorrect and you make a conclusion that is incorrect.	
11.23.2	can I just add to that that on page 18 – efficiencies of economies of scale – is an advantage but the third most disadvantageous is marginal economies of scale – it's either one or the other ...	The Advantages and Disadvantages table on page 18 clearly acknowledges that ' there are opportunities to generate some efficiencies in terms of economies of scale' but also recognises that these would be 'marginal as there would still be significant duplicated overheads'. The Authority's view is that this is a reasonable assessment of the Proposal.
11.24 Predetermination Reflected in Factual Inaccuracies		
11.24.1	I've been teaching at Llandrindod High School since 1991. My blood was boiling at the things that are wrong. That were stated about our school that weren't true. If you want us to get involved and be part of it, it has to be right or you get our backs up because it makes us feel you have already made your decision.	<i>The Consultation Document and Addendum includes specific information about both schools, as required by the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.</i>
11.24.2	From our point of view it's not that we're against change. We want the best for our pupils but we want something presented to us that is factually correct, balanced – we are being asked to consult on something that is not balanced. We can move on to that. That is really important.	<i>Comment noted.</i>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
12 School on One Site		
12.1 Comments Related to a Single Sited School		
12.1.1	I believe the present proposals are flawed in many ways. How you can issue a statement about a preferred site for a new secondary school before consultation. This is divisive and I'm guessing a tactic to try and split the two communities. The facts are as I am led to believe is that no site on which to build a school in Builth Wells has been located. There are also no finances in place to build this school, and possibly won't be until the next round of capital funding. It's not looking very positive at the moment is it?	<p><i>The Proposal is to establish one school across two sites, utilising the current sites of Llandrindod and Builth Wells High School.</i></p> <p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility, and would be subject to another consultation if Cabinet decided to proceed with the second stage.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority carried out a review of secondary education in Mid Powys. The review took the form of a business case and included a detailed option appraisal and financial assessment. The outcome of this process was that a single-sited school in Builth Wells was identified as the preferred option for a number of reasons, which are outlined in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
12.1.2	It's clear to me that this proposal is an interim measure – the service can't run over two sites and to say that is proposal is for the foreseeable future isn't good enough for me. I need to know how long there will be an English stream secondary provision in BW. There is talk about the possibility of building a new school.	<p><i>The Consultation Document clearly states: 'The proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility.'</i></p> <p><i>This consultation document relates only to the above Proposal and does not relate to potential wider plans for secondary education in the area.'</i></p> <p><i>According to PLASC 2016, there were 1112 pupils at both schools, with only 129 of these in the Welsh-medium stream. It would not be possible to centralise all the English-medium pupils onto one site as this would be</i></p>

		<p><i>over-capacity, and would significantly increase the surplus capacity at the (WM) site.</i></p> <p><i>Both schools currently have capacities of 659 (BW) and 713 (LID).</i></p>
12.1.3	<p>The outstanding maintenance costs of both schools has been mentioned. The Council in its capital programme has set aside a figure of £17.62 k and that money exceeds our figure for the maintenance costs of the two schools so it is my assumption that that money is available for a new school on one site. Maybe you can confirm or deny that.</p>	<p><i>The Authority has identified £17.62m in its Capital Strategy for the development of a new school in Mid Powys. However, as stated in the Consultation Document, further work is needed to be carried out to understand its feasibility and overall costs.</i></p>
12.1.4	<p>Finally with regards to a single site. We live in a small area and rumours abound about where a new school will be built. Can I ask you please, has any landowner been asked already about the possibility of building a school on their site?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has not had any discussions with any landowners about potential sites in the Builth Wells area.</i></p>
12.1.5	<p>You say that there's no plan for a single site. However, can you confirm to people here this evening that this week on the grapevine I hear that people living in Builth Wells are hearing about a new school site on the young people's village? Can you confirm it or deny it please.</p>	
12.1.6	<p>The School Organisation Code says PCC should take into account "what impact proposals will have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds". Also "how parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported. E.g. How pupils (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities". Llandrindod Wells north ward is one</p>	

of the most economically deprived areas in Wales. A New School in Builth Wells would adversely impact this group.

- 12.1.7** Using existing sites would have significant cost savings if in the future there was a new build or significant modernisation of the school buildings. Existing sites already have connections to mains services and in the case of Llandrindod room to expand the number of buildings if required at some point in the future. The costs of a green field site development would be considerable in comparison. It is difficult to see where a new build school could be accommodated within Builth and how additional traffic would not further congest the streets. (LW Business Group)
- 12.1.8** Reference is made by Powys County Council of the reduction in pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. However, Powys documents also openly admit that 'pupil numbers in the primary sector are now INCREASING'. They then go on to say that 'this isn't expected to impact on the secondary sector for a number of years.' The fact is, it will impact on the secondary school sector in the not too distant future. Any upheaval to the schools sector now would be premature, damaging and would represent wasted money if used to build new schools. Any available money would be much better spent investing in the existing facilities which are important hubs for educational, economic and social development in a wider number of our communities than that proposed by Powys County Council. (Rhayader Town Council)

12.1.9	The idea of building a new school without any firm practical or financial backing in this current era of cutbacks is, I believe, fanciful.	
12.1.10	There seems no guarantee that the money for this build will be forthcoming. Indeed, both MP Chris Davies and AM Kirsty Williams state that there aren't the funds available for the build. There will also be two elections before the funds can be applied for; what is the guarantee that the current situation will still be in place following these elections?	
12.1.11	How will a site for one school be identified if the Council proceeds to the next stage of building a new school on one site.	
12.1.12	Appendix B 6.4 SWOT analysis for Option 3 (Single school in Builth) says "potential constraints of the current Builth Wells High School Site". The constraints are not potential – they are manifest.	
12.2 Impact on Llandrindod Wells Economy Due to Potential Loss of School		
12.2.1	We must ensure that families are encouraged to live and work in rural Radnorshire. Taking away the high school from the county town of Radnorshire is not the way to do this. Llandrindod is a town that needs to encourage further investment and growth. I am concerned that losing its high school would lead to further decline within the town ... My first teaching practice was in Pantycelyn in Llandovery and it saddens me to see that town without its high school today.	<i>The Authority notes these comments</i>

<p>12.2.2</p> <p>12.2.3</p>	<p>Llandrindod Wells is already struggling economically and that why it has been identified as the only growth zone by Welsh Government and the appointment of a Town Champion working with the Business led initiative. Without a secondary school Llandrindod Wells will struggle even more and would be hard to think of Llandrindod Wells as the County Town of Powys without any provision for Secondary Education.</p> <p>I think it would be a moral and social outrage to shut Llandrindod High School. It would impact on the whole town and not just the learners</p>	
<p>12.2.4</p>	<p>Like many people in this town I am concerned about the economic implications of these proposals. On behalf of the community I'm asking for some clarity – what would happen if the new split site school did decide in the future to close one of the sites – exactly what that process would be and what have been the experiences in John Beddoes and Newtown? Would it have to be a full cabinet decision, would we have the same rights of objection to the proposals or is it easier for this new school to push through that closure? For the sake of our children and the future of our town we need some clarity around this please</p>	<p><i>Any proposals to close a school site must be carried out in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act, and the School Organisation Code, if the proposal was deemed to be a 'regulated alteration' to a school.</i></p> <p><i>If the governing body of any dual-sited school wished to close one of the sites, it would have to approach the local Authority to discuss this. If the Portfolio Holder for Education agreed, then Cabinet would be requested to approve the commencement of the statutory process for school reorganisation. The process would be in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the Code.</i></p> <p><i>The Cabinet of the Council would be the decision-maker in this process.</i></p>
<p>12.2.5</p>	<p>From a county town, with a county hall where all the Council works – it needs a school. Because without the school you will not have jobs; without jobs the children will have no need to learn because they won't want to live here – I have a 13 year old who wants to go abroad and work as a carpenter because the work in the area is drying up – he can go out of county and earn £10 - £15 per hour more for the same job. But if</p>	<p><i>The Authority notes these comments</i></p>

investment came into the town, that's going to help it grow f- when people look at the area and see it's got a good school and good leisure facilities. These are all linked and all marry together. Without a school there will be no community.

12.2.6 The thing you should be getting from this meeting this evening is you cannot close Builth. You cannot close Llandrindod – you will ruin the towns. You will ruin parents' access to the schools. Your vision is to keep those two schools open

12.3 Impact on the Sports Centre

12.3.1 After a recent discussion with the manager of Llandrindod sports centre, he is convinced that if the High school campus is shut then the sports centre will be soon to follow. The indoor dry sided activities will be halved due to losing the gym; the bookings made on behalf of the High School will be very difficult to fill. As the centre is losing money as it stands, how is it going to survive the catastrophe of Llandrindod High School campus being closed (indeed, the same could be said for Builth sports centre, if a new school is built). Who, do you suppose, is likely to move to a town with no school or sports centre? Who is likely to open their business in the town? Businesses, who are struggling at present, will lose out the 'school run' clientele; those who drop in for a quick shop or use the post office etc. when they pick up their children. The effect of losing the campus in town will be catastrophic to a town that is struggling to survive at present.

The Authority notes these comments

12.3.2	If you close the Llandrindod campus, what will happen to the town? The sports centre? I would suggest many will be adversely affected.	
12.4 Proposals are a Precursors to Losing Llandrindod High School		
12.4.1	The concern of this community is that this is a prerequisite to losing their high school. It is inconceivable for this town not to have this school.	<i>The Authority notes these comments</i>
12.4.2	We have a business here in town and one of the big concerns we have – and I really do believe this is a precursor for shutting down the school – and as an employer it is already very difficult to get the staff. This is a learning process for all of us. Until this started I most certainly wasn't aware that 70% to 80% of people who make the decisions on our behalf of our town live in Montgomeryshire ... and whether you say that you'll look after us – I'm very sorry but the decision you make about closing Llandrindod school will have no effect on your life at all but it will on everybody in this room.	
12.5 Underlying Economic Development Issues Need Addressing		
12.5.1	What has happened is you haven't got young families in Builth, Rhayader, Llandrindod, and Presteigne? We haven't had economic development to bring them. So, you have no plan in place for my children - what happens in the meantime? What you need to do is try and attract some teachers to the area. But you can't attract them here – there are no jobs. If Mr and Mrs Jones are in Birmingham and there's a job in Llandrindod High School, they are not going to come for Mrs Jones to teach in Llandrindod High School	<i>The Authority notes this comment</i>

because there's no job for Mr Jones to do. So you're just going to keep failing the children of this area. This is about mid Wales – about Llandrindod High School and the pupils – it's not about Ceredigion or wherever – and at the moment you are failing them. There is no plan in place to provide teachers for those children to get a full education for the whole time they're in school.

12.5.2 One of the businesses we did bring here was [inaudible] supported by the Welsh Assembly – came over with a number of young families and brought new technology of carbon fibre cars etc. One of the really strong things that encouraged them to come to Llandrindod was the High School. They did tours, they thought it was lovely here and their families came with them. If you move the high school it will damage the town and it's going to be a real problem for us and we've got to make sure that Powys CC who wants to attract an awful lot of business rates etc. appreciates the fact that in the real world money talks and what I was thinking is that you're chasing the money from the Welsh Assembly not necessarily what's best for our kids' education.

12.5.3 From your perspective, you are accountable. Taxpayers pay your wages. Now, the only way the schools are going to thrive and continue to develop and deliver an even standard of education across the county is by having a measured service – that we're only going to get by attracting investment not just in terms of jobs but in terms of teaching ... when teachers come to an area the last thing they want is to come to a school which has just come out of special measures, is about to be married to another school

which has just come out of special measures where the surrounding community schools you are trying to close, despite the fact that Llanbister, Dolly and Nantmel are marked for closure, there is proven area going to Llanbister that numbers are increasing year on year for the next five years ... Crossgates which has increasing numbers – which is going to increase numbers going to Llandrindod High School. So by increasing the numbers into the school, that then increases the investment that the County itself can put into the school. My business works all across the UK ... I choose to run it from here because it's my home town, I was born here and it's a lovely place to live But it's slowly dying because of decisions not just [inaudible] but what Powys CC ... the decisions they make for the town. By closing Llandrindod High School –it's going to cause such a downward turn in investment – we've already heard about a company which is earmarked for receiving a large amount from the Welsh Assembly ... this is what we need – businesses to employ these people.

12.6 Impact of Similar Reorganisation on Businesses

12.6.1 We heard scepticism when we heard that Radnor and Llandrindod Wells is dealt with somewhat harshly when it comes to decisions that are being made. One example of that would be the local college where half the students went on to Newtown and the other half down to Brecon, leaving us with about 23 students, leaving us unviable and therefore the building had to close – this is a reality for us on the ground for people who run businesses and live here and try and bring other businesses here.

The Authority notes this comment

<p><i>The Authority is not responsible for any decisions taken by NPTC Group of Colleges about its provision or campuses.</i></p>		
<p>12.7 Long Term Aspirations for Single Site Would Damage Llandrindod Wells Community</p>		
<p>12.7.1</p>	<p>The fifth proposal down says no negative impact on community but there is an objective, something to aim for, which is a new school. As a member of the community that is a huge concern.</p>	<p><i>The Authority notes these comments</i></p>
<p>12.7.2</p>	<p>I fail to see how closing both schools and Building a new one will benefit the education of children in the current schools until the new one is built. The uncertainty will lead to low morale in the teaching staff, It will be harder to recruit new staff thus lowering the standard of education being delivered. As I understand the new school could take up to 10 years to build as you do not have planning on a site or the funding. Are you willing to jeopardise a decade of learning?</p>	
<p>12.7.3</p>	<p>Can you explain how the County can consult on an “interim proposal”? Without understanding the Council’s plans for the future of the school’s, how can the general public give fully informed feedback?</p>	
<p>12.7.4</p>	<p>The current proposal seems flawed in its construction; with the two schools combining together, and remaining on their own sites as an interim measure before a new school is built. There seems no guarantee that the money for this build will be forthcoming. Indeed, both MP Chris Davies and AM Kirsty Williams state that there aren't the funds available for the build. There will also be two elections</p>	

before the funds can be applied for; what is the guarantee that the current situation will still be in place following these elections? The uncertainty of this situation is a real concern.

- 12.7.5** The prospect of the high school closing down has upset both my son and myself. He is very worried about the effects of this and how he will perform at school. He can currently walk to the high school which will help his independence. He doesn't feel that going to Builth High School will help him to excel.
- 12.7.6** The indication that Powys County Council has placed in its recently approved Capital Strategy the provision of £17.6M over the next couple of years for a new school on the Builth Wells side shows that the intention eventually is to close the Llandrindod Wells High site of the two school option and have all secondary and Welsh Medium education being taught from a new, or remodelled Secondary School on the Builth Wells side of the county. I object to the proposal as they are now, and any future proposals that will see the ceasing of a secondary educational provision in Llandrindod Wells.
- 12.7.7** The merger between Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School is, sadly, a necessity. However, the shutting of the two campuses is ill thought out and damaging to the locality of whichever town loses secondary education.
- 12.7.8** It is clear though that the intention of the Council is to build one new, shiny school and merge the two onto one premises and this proposal is a way of creeping towards that final goal. With the wait for funding; land

identification and all the building process we are many years off a new school but in the meantime we believe this proposal will lower the morale of the teaching body and leave both schools in a state of limbo. This will impact our children.

12.7.9 We fully understand that there is a need for change, both schools are small in pupil numbers and critical mass, both schools are in special measures, both schools struggle to fund specialist teachers. This document clearly shows that the Council believes the best proposal is for the creation of an English medium school in Llandrindod and a Welsh medium school in Builth but because they think in years to come they might get a shiny new school building they are willing to sacrifice our current learners' education.

12.7.10 I am strongly opposed to an end to secondary education in the town (Llandrindod Wells). The PCC proposal for both Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools to merge in 2017 and await the building of a new High School in the Builth area, with no chosen site and no hope of finance for at least five years, is extremely short-sighted, ill thought out and definitely not in the best interests of our children, our towns and businesses and our prospects.

12.7.11 I object to closure of Llandrindod High School and Builth Wells High School and the establishment of a new dual-stream 11 - 18 year old secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017. I understand that these proposals are just an interim measure as it is intended to build a new school to accommodate both the present schools on a new site in the Builth Wells

	<p>area. I would also ask that you reject the proposal for one school on a new site in the vicinity of Builth Wells to replace both Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools.</p> <p>12.7.12 As the business case is trying to justify PCC's proposal for one school on one site "in the vicinity of Builth Wells" the consultation cannot possibly exclude comment about one school on one site "in the vicinity of Builth Wells".</p> <p>12.7.13 The information on pupil travel patterns given to us last September based on PLASC 2014 data for years 7-11 was that if Llandrindod school was closed 116 pupils (23.5%) would be closer to a school other than Builth Wells. If they were to transfer the impact on the New School would be substantial. The equivalent data for Builth Wells school is that 19 English medium pupils (5.2%) would be closer to a school other than Llandrindod Wells. There were also 81 Welsh medium pupils that would transfer to Llanidloes (28) or Brecon (53). If the New School were based in Llandrindod the potential Llanidloes pupils would remain as would the larger part of the potential Brecon pupils. <i>Comments noted.</i></p>	
<p>12.8 Impact of Uncertainty in the Longer Term</p>		
<p>12.8.1</p>	<p>As there is no funding for the project and it will be many years before Welsh Assembly funding can be applied for it will create massive uncertainty for students and staff at both schools in the interim.</p>	<p><i>The Authority notes these comments</i></p>
<p>12.8.2</p>	<p>The inability of the Schools' Service and Cabinet to currently identify a site for the new 11-18 school in</p>	

12.8.3	<p>Builth Wells presents an unacceptable degree of uncertainty in to the proposal, leaving it in a damaging 'limbo'.</p> <p>The Business Case showed that the potential pupils from new housing developments was three times as many in Llandrindod than in Builth. Given that there are already more pupils in the Llandrindod catchment area than the Builth catchment area this discrepancy can only increase. There would therefore appear to be more future transport costs if the New School were to be built in the vicinity of Builth Wells rather than on the existing Llandrindod site which is already owned by PCC. How would building in Builth Wells meet the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Framework?</p>	
12.9 Support For a Single Sited School		
12.9.1	<p>Will this consultation drive people out of county for post 16 provision? Until we have the ultimate vision for a new school with a brilliant sixth form, are we damaging the projects by this interim recommendation for a new school on two sites? Why can't we shoot for the stars and make a proposal for a new school?</p>	<p><i>The Authority notes these comments</i></p>
12.9.2	<p>We all agree that single site school has more benefits especially about quality of education.</p>	
12.9.3	<p>The end game is to have a single site isn't it? So, is the current proposal about financial benefit or quality benefit? Might it be better to wait until you have a firm proposal for a single school on one site rather than delivering in two phases? The risk is the second phase is left alone and forgotten about.</p>	

- 12.9.4** We don't want to accept one part of a two part open proposal that the other bit may never happen. It becomes something that might never happen and makes me worried. There so much talk about the new school that this interim proposal feels like a let-down. People feel like we're the winners in this process but I'm not sure it is unless we get a single sited school. We all agree that single site school has more benefits especially about quality of education.
- 12.9.5** Only new single site can tackle surplus places and maintenance backlog
- 12.9.6** I can see the benefit of critical mass but two issues worry me. What about the one site new school. I think the one site model delivers the full benefit but 1 school on two sites doesn't solve surplus places or maintenance backlog issues- so doesn't help.
- 12.9.7** Instead of doing this and for the sake of a saving of ONLY £133K stop this proposal and look to make a definite move with a new combined site school. Whilst that process is being undertaken work with both schools to continue the work already being done to raise standards.

13 Alternative Options

I believe that we need to be creative when considering how best to meet the needs of delivering a good curriculum model in a challenging financial climate. Please consider the merits of through schools and split sites rather than leaving communities without a school within their towns.

Rather than pushing these proposals forward why not work with the schools as they are and get them out of Estyn special measures. Then take a full proposal for either option 5 or a fully funded new school, financially, environmentally and socially costed. Doing this for the sake of a saving of £133K and getting out of Estyn special measurers is an insult to both our learners and our teachers.

As county Councillors I believe you have to look at the bigger picture which is two communities, two schools and the futures of them both. In my opinion your aim needs to be how to find a solution that keeps both towns thriving whilst offering the best educational opportunities for the pupils of both towns. Not an easy task I'm sure, but one you have to find an answer to. Certainly the closure of either school in my opinion is not an option.

I would ask you to reject the proposal put forward by the SORP and ask your officers to draw up a new proposal to keep local provision of education in both Llandrindod and Builth Wells.

Why is there no consideration of a welsh medium through school for Builth Wells to provide primary education for mid-Powys and secondary welsh medium provision for mid and south Powys? As current number of pupils as a barrier to establishing a full 2a welsh school should this not have been considered as an alternative options to make it viable?

It is therefore vitally important that Secondary Education is retained with Llandrindod Wells and that why I'm supportive of the proposals put forward by Llandrindod Wells High School Governing Body.

I strongly believe that the proposal put forward by the governing body of Llandrindod High School, is both pragmatic and logical. It protects a high school in both towns, protects the sports centres in both towns (indeed, strengthens the booking requirements in Llandrindod), yet still maintains Welsh language education in Builth Wells; a driving influence, I believe, on the Council's decision. The critical mass of learners and specialists will be together, giving greater flexibility in time tabling of specialist teachers; thus placing specialists in front of classes, a big problem in both schools at the moment. The Welsh stream would have a dedicated true Welsh environment in which to flourish and the same for the VI form centre. The money saving would be greater without a new build, and transportation of the smaller amount of pupils all contribute. Having a permanent solution to this situation would take away the uncertainty for all involved, not least of all for both towns of Llandrindod and Builth.

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I sincerely hope you listen to the governors and teachers excellent proposal to make Llandrindod High School the main English medium school in the area, with Builth Wells becoming a dedicated Welsh medium secondary school and centre for Sixth Form. This would be in the best interests of all students, it would be millions of pounds cheaper to implement and could be actioned sooner rather than later, instead of some 'pie in the sky' plan to build a super high school we cannot afford and do not want.

An alternative is the proposal put forward by the Llandrindod High School Governing body to have English stream 11 – 16 at the Llandrindod Site and Welsh Stream 11 – 16 at the Builth Wells site with a sixth form provision also at the Builth Site. This would see an increase in class sizes and according to your documentation it has fewer cons than it does pros'. Sixth form provision is a big worry for us as parents as we would much prefer her travel to Builth Wells each day than Hereford to undertake her studies. We would support this proposal.

In closing I would like to state that we do not support this proposal but would support Option 5 as suggested by Llandrindod High School Governing Body.

Page 79 "Conclusion" states that Option 5A "should be the preferred option" this is to create an English medium school in Llandrindod and a Welsh medium school in Builth. Why is this not the proposal based on the educational need of our learners? The only reason for not doing this is economic but in every meeting we were told that this was not an economic decision. Why is this?

The proposal from Llandrindod High School would be a practical way to achieve change and to utilise the current excellent school and leisure facilities already in place in both Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells. This could be achieved in a realistic timescale without huge investment and it would enhance the learning provision to help offer the education our children deserve.

However, if the critical mass of students and staff are permanently together at Llandrindod then this gives greater flexibility for time tabling of specialist teachers and greater provision at Post 16, students will also have greater opportunities afforded them. This fits very well with the proposal put forward by the governors at Llandrindod High School.

Sixth form provision is a big worry for us as parents as we would much prefer her travel to Builth Wells each day than Hereford to undertake her studies. We would support this proposal put forward by Governing Body.

Centralised sixth form provision? Opportunity to develop the post 16 is not something that is coming out strongly enough in these proposals and maybe not being sold to the public as well as it could be. We need a clearer vision of a brand like a sixth form science or arts academy on the sites- somewhere parents and pupils would want to go.

Can't we create a stand-alone 6th form institution on one site and leave the current under 11-16 provisions alone?

I heard reference to a sixth form. I have seven grandchildren. Unfortunately they won't come to Wales. Their parents have got jobs in England. I am familiar, though with what is happening in England. In the rural areas they have secondary schools 11-16 and then they have proper tertiary colleges – not this Mickey Mouse thing forced on Powys several years ago. A proper tertiary college caters for all ranges of ability from your high flyers to those who aren't so academic but still have skills. My suggestion would be this. Any fool can criticise. I'm not criticising. Most schools are good enough and should be kept on their present sites. Build a proper tertiary college. And my suggestion in one organisation who is recognised the advantage that we have in Wales and that is the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society. This tertiary college would cater for the wide range of activities in rural areas – farming, conservation, tourism, forestry.... It would be run by Powys CC, not this organisation we've got now. The Welsh Assembly could make those changes. Points to an example in Shropshire. [applause]

Given the confusion over the current schools modernisation programme, should a line be drawn where we start afresh with a mid-Powys plan taking in Newtown, John Beddoes, Builth Wells, Llandrindod, Gwernyfed and Brecon – looking at delivering an improved 21st century plan to inspire, improve and excite our young people for many years to come and parents, teachers, governors can fully get behind instead of pitting communities against each other. Having worked with former head so education at no time have their past or future ideas ever considered shutting Llandrindod– they had visionary plans for the school. My rationale for looking at the mid Wales reconfiguration is worst case scenario we lose Llandrindod High School, the children in the surrounding area are bussed to Builth - it needs looking at together.

PRIMARY PUPIL PROJECTIONS (Based on PLASC 2016 data, updated August 2016)

		Forecast NOR excl. N1 & N2				
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Llandrindod Catchment	Franksbridge C. P.	33	36	34	35	37
	Llanbister C. P.	26	28	32	35	35
	Cefnlllys C. P. (L'dod Wells)	255	277	286	297	304
	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C. P.	29	28	27	24	25
	Crossgates C. P.	151	146	147	149	148
	Nantmel C. of W	31	34	34	33	34
Shared (Welsh-medium streams at Rhayader and Trefonnen feed into Builth Wells High School. Newbridge pupils have a choice of both schools.						
	Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W.	106	113	119	120	123
	Rhayader C. in W.	156	157	160	163	165
	Trefonnen C. in W. (L'dod Wells)	179	182	174	173	174
Builth Wells Catchment	Ysgol Dolafon	64	68	61	51	58
	Builth Wells C. P.	245	232	230	224	226
	Irfon Valley C. P.	53	50	47	41	44
	Llanelwedd C. in W.	86	86	87	85	93
TOTAL		1413	1436	1436	1430	1465

APPENDIX C – FINAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells High Schools
September 2016

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Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council’s Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

Page 846 Proposal	To close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on the 31 st August 2017, and to establish a new dual-stream 11 - 18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1 st September 2017 (“the New School”)	Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Marianne Evans
Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	25 th August 2016		

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following ‘general duty’:

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

1. AIM or PURPOSE

Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change proposal being assessed.

The School Review Process as outlined within the School Transformation Policy 2014 was restarted in September 2015. The stages of the Process are outlined below:

- An Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with Stage 1 of the School Review Process was carried out, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were considered against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy. As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of the two schools.
- Dialogue took place with the governing bodies, headteachers and local members during 2015 and 2016 in accordance with Stage 2 of the School Review Process as described in the School Transformation Policy, as follows:
 - Initial meetings held on 21st September 2015 to agree data in respect of the school and to discuss future options relating to the school;
 - An opportunity for the governing bodies to provide feedback on the options presented to them;
- Following the initial meetings with governing bodies, headteachers and local members, the Council carried out a review of secondary education across South and Mid Powys, and developed a business case which considered the case for change in both areas, assessed and costed a range of options and included Proposals relating to the secondary schools under review.
- The business case and its Proposals were considered by the SORP on the 20th January 2016, and the SORP agreed draft Proposals in respect of the all schools under review.
- Feedback meetings were held with the governing bodies, local members and the headteachers on the 27th January 2016 to discuss the SORP's draft Proposals and to give the governing bodies a further opportunity to present additional evidence.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet considered the SORP's Proposals, together with the business case and additional evidence presented by the governing bodies following the feedback meeting. Cabinet resolved to commence formal consultation on the Proposal outlined above. • The consultation period commenced on the 6th April 2016, and ended on the 1st June 2016. • The Consultation Document was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The Document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2013).
2. OBJECTIVES	
Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.	Investment Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range; • To maximise the curriculum benefits at key stages 3 and 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English; • To provide post 16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day; • To reduce surplus places in schools; • To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh Medium provision across all key phases of education; • To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs, whilst maximising the percentage of the budget spent on teaching and learning.
3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES	
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides access to a secondary school located within two communities • No additional transport costs • More acceptable to local stakeholders • School can build on current plans towards improving standards • No negative impact on local communities due to removal of secondary provision • Opportunities to generate some efficiencies in terms of economies of scale • Opportunities to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment • Opportunities to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities • Opportunities to develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners • Opportunity to have a single sixth form centre, enabling more subjects to be provided without the need for inter-school travel

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a greater mass of Welsh-medium secondary learners, enabling more subjects to be provided • More cost effective delivery of Welsh-medium provision • More appropriate location for Welsh-medium pupils in Mid and South Powys, taking into account the location of other Welsh-medium secondary providers within Powys and outside Powys • Would provide more robust linguistic continuity as part of a designated Welsh-medium provision • Would enable the development of Welsh-medium provision at Post-16 level May act as a catalyst for growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers, which may grow to a point where a Bilingual Category 2A School (Welsh-medium) could be considered;
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4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE

How does this change proposal relate to the Powys Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	<p>The proposal supports Powys County Council’s vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. ‘Transforming Learning and Skills’ is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states that</p> <p><i>‘We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity’</i></p>
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5. DATA USED

5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	✓
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	
	Wider research reports and findings.	
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No ✓

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6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Quantitative

Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics.

Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.

Key questions:

- i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?
- ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?

Information on pupils who attend both High Schools, along with information on pupils who attend each feeder school in both catchment areas is obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census 2016 (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. In relation to the protected characteristic groups, the profile of pupils at the school is provided below:

Builth Wells High School

- 585 pupils in total. 127 pupils including subsidiary pupils in the Sixth Form.
- Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 270 (46%) are boys and 315 (54%) are girls.
- Free school meals: 41 pupils (7%) are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: 1% of pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs – none of these have physical or medical needs.
- 21% have special needs but do not have a statement
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for 7 pupils.
- Welsh Language: 11% of pupils speak Welsh fluently at home. 14% do not speak Welsh at home but are fluent.
- The ethnic group of pupils at the school is as follows:
 - White British – 96%
 - Other ethnic groups – 4% (10 ethnic groups identified)

Primary Schools in the Builth Wells Catchment area

- 579 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11..
- Gender: Of the pupils attending schools in the catchment area, 295 (51%) are boys and 284 (49%) are girls.
- Free school meals: 51 (9%) pupils are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: Less than 1% pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 0.5% of these have a physical or medical difficulty.
- 21% pupils have special needs but do not have a statement
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for less than 1% pupils.
- Welsh Language: 7% pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. 10% pupils can speak

Welsh but do not speak Welsh at home.

- Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the nationality and ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over.
- The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over attending schools in the catchment area is as follows:
- White British – 96%
- Other ethnic groups – 4% (11 groups identified)

*Newbridge C. in W. School is also included in the Llandrindod Wells Catchment data.

Llandrindod High School

- 571 pupils in total. 13 subsidiary pupils. 92 pupils, including subsidiary pupils in the Sixth form.
- Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 289 (51%) are boys and 282 (49%) are girls.
- Free school meals: 68 pupils (12%) are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: 3% of the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. 0.5% of these have physical or medical needs.
- 14% have special needs but do not have a statement
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for 2% of pupils
- Welsh Language: 0.5% come from homes where Welsh is spoken fluently. 0.5% come from homes where Welsh isn't spoken but can speak Welsh fluently. 1% come from homes where Welsh is spoken but not fluently.
- The ethnic group of pupils at the school is as follows:
- White British 96%
- Other ethnic group – 4% (15 other ethnic groups identified)

*Newbridge C. in W. School is also included in the Bulth Wells Catchment data.

Primary Schools in the Llandrindod High School catchment area

- 1035 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11
- Gender: Of the pupils attending schools in the catchment area, 53% are boys and 47% are girls.
- Free school meals: 14% pupils are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: Less than 1% of pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs, and of these less

	<p>than 0.01% have a physical or medical need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 21% pupils have special needs but do not have a statement ▪ English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for 4% pupils. ▪ Welsh Language: 6% pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. 3% pupils speak Welsh but do not come from homes where Welsh is spoken. ▪ Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the nationality and ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over. ▪ The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over attending schools in the catchment area is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ White British – 96% ▪ Other ethnic group – 4% (19 different ethnic groups identified) <p>*Newbridge C. in W. School is also included in the Builth Wells Catchment data.</p>
<p>2.2 Qualitative Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this? ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views? iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position? iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics? 	<p>Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.</p> <p>A total of 996 questionnaires were analysed, of which 182 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 735 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 79 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.</p> <p>21 written submissions were received concerning the proposals for Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. These were from professional, political, interest and community groups as well as from individual residents.</p> <p>During the consultation period, meetings were also held with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Councils and other pupils of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools • School Councils and other pupils of all primary schools in both catchment areas • Staff of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools • Governors of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools • Parents / community of both schools

- Protected Characteristics Group

Impact of the Proposal on key characteristic groups

ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report which can be found on <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/corporate/find-out-about-consultations-in-powys/past-consultations/llandrindod-and-builth-wells-high-schools/> along with the Authority's responses to issues raised. The main themes from the consultation are summarised on pages 14 - 30 of the Report.

Page 29 (general comments) states the following:

'2.1 While there was some recognition that change was necessary many were sceptical over whether the current proposal would deliver the improvements in quality and cost savings presented in the consultation document. There was some concern that teachers, the leadership team and the new Governing Body would have higher workloads affecting their wellbeing and ultimately impacting negatively on quality and pastoral support for students, particularly if they have to travel between sites for lessons.

2.2 There was some support for a single sixth form centre and for increased Welsh medium provision in Builth. However, very many people involved in the consultation would prefer the model for secondary school education which would see Welsh medium provision and a sixth form centre in Builth and English medium education in Llandrindod.'

The authority is confident that the New School across two sites would be able to meet the needs of all pupils who belong to the protected characteristic groups, and the needs of pupils with any additional learning needs.

The Proposal aims to establish a sustainable model of secondary education, which can deliver high-quality education. The current pressures on the secondary sector has already led to a situation when subjects are taught by non-specialist teachers.

The benefits of the Proposal are as follows:

- 1) Improved leadership at all levels: When streamlining the leadership structure following the joining of two schools into one split site secondary school, the newly appointed

governing body are able to place the strongest leaders in each position within the new leadership structure. This means we can have the strongest governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and pastoral leaders – those who have the best track record of securing high outcomes and delivering the highest level of care - leading school improvement across the two sites. The joining of two schools represents an opportunity for a step change improvement in the quality and capacity of leadership.

- 2) Improved leadership leads to improved teaching: Professor David Reynolds has stated: 'we know that effective leadership of a school from the Headteacher and through to other 'middle leadership' positions is important in its own right and important in generating...high quality classroom teaching' (WG PDG guidance 2013-15). Leadership and teaching quality are linked. The research is clear, by securing a step change improvement in leadership, we are able to secure a step change improvement in teaching quality.
- 3) Improved coaching and mentoring support opportunities for staff: It is essential that time is allocated to enable the best teaching staff in different subject areas to travel between sites (or communicate regularly via video conferencing arrangements) in order to provide mentoring/coaching/resources for their colleagues on the other campus. This ongoing mentoring support and training can have a considerable impact on teaching quality. One there is a world of difference between the potential impact of loose school-to-school collaboration between separate schools, and the level of collaboration and support in a single school with split sites. The extent to which leaders are willing to invest finite time into engaging in mentoring, coaching and training of staff on the second campus of a single school is considerably higher if leaders are going to be held to account for standards and provision on both sites.
- 4) Economies of scale leads to greater investment in teaching and learning: By having a single leader of each curriculum area across the two school sites and a more streamlined senior leadership structure, savings can be generated over time. The new leadership team would be able to invest these savings in whatever way they believe would make the greatest impact on standards.

	<p>From September 2018, if the Proposal is implemented, there will be one dual-stream school with two sites. The Welsh-medium provision will be delivered from the Builth Wells site. It will be the decision of the new governing body how it wishes to deliver post-16 education.</p> <p>It does, however, provide an opportunity to establish a critical mass of post-16 learners, should the new governing body wish to establish one sixth form centre. At KS3 and KS4, it is not expected that pupils would travel between sites. However, the new governing body would be responsible for how it structures the curriculum and timetable, and it may be possible that some subjects would be taught on one site only at KS4. This would increase the options available to those pupils.</p>
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7. EqIA RESULT

<p>Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.</p>	<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	✓
	<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]</p>	

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	
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9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?

i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?

i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?
 ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?
 iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?

9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?

Yes **No**

Date added.....

Reference.....

If no, please explain why not:

10. ONGOING MONITORING

How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?		Please tick/shade
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	✓
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	✓
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	✓
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	

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Monitoring arrangements		
<p>The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the Transformation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.</p> <p>Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.</p> <p>The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.</p>		
Publication of results of the impact assessment		
<p>The results of the impact assessment will be published on the Council's website</p>		
Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan		
<p>Any actions identified as a result of this impact assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan</p>		

Final Community Impact Assessment

1. Introduction

Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 23rd February 2016, the Authority has carried out formal consultation on the following proposal:

- **To close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new dual-stream 11 - 18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017 (“the New School”)**

The Council published a draft Community Impact Assessment on the Proposal as outlined in 1) above, as part of a Formal Consultation that took place between the 6th April and the 1st June 2016.

The draft Community Impact Assessment was prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code 2013. In order to prepare the assessments, a questionnaire was sent to each school on the 10th December 2015 to gather initial information about the community’s use of school facilities. Following the Council’s School Organisation Review Panel (SORP)’s feedback meetings with the school on the 26th January, the schools were invited to review and resubmit the questionnaires, having been informed of the SORP’s draft recommendations. An example of the questionnaire is attached at the end of this document.

The draft Impact Assessment was based on the information received from the schools via the questionnaire.

2. The communities served by Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School

The catchment of Builth Wells High School includes the towns of Builth Wells and Llanwrtyd Wells, as well as the surrounding rural area. The catchment of Llandrindod High School includes the town of Llandrindod Wells and the surrounding rural area.

The town or community councils that serve the area are:

- Builth Wells Town Council
- Aberedw Community Council
- Llanafan Fawr Community Council
- Treflys Community Council
- Llangammarch Community Council
- Dunhow Community Council
- Erwood Community Council
- Glaschw Community Council
- Cilmery Community Council
- Llanelwedd Community Council
- Llandrindod Wells Town Council
- Llanbadarn Fynydd Community Council
- Llanbister Community Council
- Nantmel Community Council
- St Harmon Community Council
- Llanwrthwl Community Council

- Rhaeadr Town Council
- Llanyre Community Council
- Dissert and Trecoed Community Council
- Penybont Community Council
- Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council
- Llanddewi Ystradenney Community Council

3. Community Impact Assessment

3.1 Extra-curricular activities

Builth Wells High School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- 5x60 – Football, multi-gym, badminton, pupil-led community badminton for primary school and ks3 pupils
- PDG Enrichment Cookery Club
- PDG Revision Club
- Homework Club – Monday to Thursday 3:30-5:00
- Young Leaders Coaching
- KS3 Numeracy Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

Sports (Hockey, Netball, Rounders, Cross-Country, Rugby, Football, Athletics and indoor athletics, Badminton, Swimming, Basketball, Cricket, Gymnastics, Dodgeball, Catch me if you can (ball skills session run by pupils), shooting clinics (basketball and netball), KS4+ fitness sessions, multi-gym sessions, American Football, Volleyball, Tennis Club, Strength and Conditioning Club – Rugby Development Officer, Table Tennis Club, Dance-led KS4/5 pupils, lunch time Zumba), “This is me” wellbeing group, Buallt Benefice – Christian Aid Collective Youth group, Bike Club, Proactive group, SWEET BTEC programme, Jamie Oliver Food Skills cooking group, Carpe Diem – pop-up restaurant, Enterprise group, Break time social group, Choir, Jazz Band, String Group, Orchestra, Ensemble, Brass group, Peripatetic – voice, guitar, harp, woodwind, brass, piano, Guitar Club, Composing Club for GCSE and A Level, Clwb yr Urdd, Clwb Cogurdd, Clwb Ieuenctid, Clwb Dylunio a Thecnoleg, Menter Iaith, Eisteddfod yr ysgol, Clwb siarad cyhoeddus, Prosiect Trochi – disgyblion ym mlwyddyn 11, Sesiynau ‘ymwybyddiaeth iaith’ holl blant 7-9, mamiaith ac ail iaith – Alun Jones Swyddog Prosiect Brycheniog a Maesyfed Urdd, Cystadlu yn yr Urdd (Cor Merched Hun, Cor Adran – B4-B9 efo phlant Trefonnene ag Ysgol Gynradd Llanfair, Unawd B7-B9, Unawd B10-B13, Deuawd B7-B9, Cystadlu am y gadair – 1af ag 2ail) Film Club, Twm Sion Cati Club (Set Design, Musical devising, costume design, drama production) KS3 Creative writing group, Speak up with Emma Beynon, Chess Club, Debating Club, Craft Club, Year 13 pupil S4C Ambassador, Eco-club, Gardening Club, Forest Schools Project, Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards) KS3 Maths Catch-up, KS3 Maths Challenge, KS4 Additional Maths, KS4 Revision Class, Science Club/Crest Awards, KS3 Languages Club, Textile Club, DT Club, Young Writers Group, Homework Club

Llandrindod High School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- Homework Club

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

5x60 clubs, Sports Clubs, Music, Drama – School Productions

3.2 Community Use of School Building

Builth Wells High School

The school's facilities are used by the community for the following activities:

- Cylch Meithrin meetings
- Cylch Meithrin Social events e.g. Christmas Fair
- Adult Welsh Lessons
- Breakfast Club
- Clwstwr y Ffynnon – meetings and “Diwrnod y Ffynnon” for all Welsh-medium schools and schools with a Welsh Stream

The school building and facilities are also used by the following:

Builth Wells Rugby Club – over 200 pupils, Builth Wells Male Voice, Cylch, Rotary Club, Scouts, Brownies and Guides, Beekeeping Association, Outside catering for Antur Gwy, Primary School dinners, YFC cookery classes, Youth Club cookery classes, Powys Catering, Rotary Club, Facilitating Pensioner Lunch, Eppynt Motor Club, Gymnastics and dance events, Irfon Judo Club

Llandrindod High School

The school's facilities are used by the community for the following activities:

Urdd Eisteddfod, National Youth Orchestra, School changing rooms are used by sports centre users after school

3.3 Other links between the schools and the community

Builth Wells High School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

Menter Brycheniog a Maesyfed – Curriculum Support Welsh 2nd Language KS4, Cylch Meithrin – Post 16 student placements, Forest School Project Coed y Wern wood, Newbridge – delivering Level 1 and 2 OCN qualifications for KS3/4 Learners, BTEC Agriculture Pentre Farm – Merthyr Cynnog, Royal Welsh Agricultural Society – Litter picking contract for Royal Welsh Show, Rotary Club (Young Chef local, regional and national finals, Young Musician local and regional finals, Young Photographer Competition, Youngspeak Club, Rotary interviews for Welsh Bacalaureate and University entrance mocks), Local churches, friends of BWHS, Wyeside Arts Centre (Bi-annual whole school musicals performed at Wyeside Arts Centre, Showcase Exhibitions for Art and Design and Technology Departments, Concerts, Fashion Show, Wyesides first community festival, Rewards trips to wyeside, Screen and Scripting, Spoken Word Slam Day, Filmmaking), Brynhyfryd Residential Home (Musical Concerts, Drawn to the Stars, History Project), Builth Wlls Rugby Club – Part Funding, Royal British Legion, Youth Club, Barclays Bank – Supporting PSE and WBQ, St Marys Chrch/Rev, Builth Wells Community Support (WBQ –

enterprise and Community Participation, Community Fair), A Level Health and Social Care Long-Term work placements (Builth Wells Primary School, Wee Care Day Nursery, What Tots Want Nursery, Cylch) Cooperative Store, Builth Gardening Club, Jewsons, Caerfagu, Cylch-Tec Bike Shop, Textil artist Anna Bessant, Ralph Bolland, "Speak Up" project, Set and Costume design, Rebecca Ray, Dai Hawkins, Clwb Dawnsio Gwerin, Eisteddfod Llanwrtyd, Builth Bike Bash, Caroline's Bread Company and Drivers' Rest Restaurant Llanwrtyd, URDD, Builth Wells Community Play, Geography Fieldwork base

Llandrindod High School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

- Llandrindod Twinning Society
- Friends of Llandod
- Local Drama Society
- Art/Sculpture Project
- Young Fireman

4. Feedback from the Consultation

Page 29 of the ORS Consultation Report states the following:

'2.3 By far the highest level of concern was raised in relation to the longer term aspiration for a single site school on a new site in Builth Wells and the closure of the High School in Llandrindod Wells. Many felt that the current proposal was merely a precursor to this happening and were deeply concerned over the negative social, economic and demographic impacts on Llandrindod Wells. Meanwhile, uncertainties over the future of the schools were considered to be impacting on the ability to retain and recruit quality specialist teaching staff to the area.'

However, this Formal Consultation deals only with the Proposal outlined in 1) above, and the Consultation Document clearly states:

'The proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility.'

This consultation document relates only to the above Proposal and does not relate to potential wider plans for secondary education in the area.'

5. Conclusion

The conclusion that was included in the earlier draft Community Impact Assessment remains the same: 'there would be little or no impact on either community because secondary provision would remain in both communities.'

However, the Authority recognises that the potential wider plans for secondary education are a cause for concern, in particular for the Llandrindod Wells area. Should the wider plans be taken forward, then further consultation and impact assessments would need to be undertaken before any further decisions are made about a single-sited school.



Community use of school facilities - questionnaire

School:

Date questionnaire completed:

1. Please list any after-school clubs provided by the school:

2. Please list any other extra-curricular activities provided by the school:

3. Please list any other facilities or services the school accommodates e.g. youth club, play group:

4. Please list any other use by the community of the school building:

5. Please list any other links between the school and the community:

6. Please provide any additional comments you would like to submit:

Please return this questionnaire to:

School Transformation Team, Schools Service, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, Ld1 5LG

Or by e-mail to school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit incorporating Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation. **Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Ian Roberts	Strategic Director	Jeremy Patterson	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Arwel Jones
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Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	School Transformation Policy
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Outline Summary

This Impact Assessment relates to the following proposal:

To close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new dual-stream 11 - 18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017 (“the New School”)

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1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	26/08/16
2	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	16/09/16

2. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council’s strategic vision?

Council Priority	How does the policy / change objective impact on this priority?	Inherent Judgement <small>Please select from drop down box below</small>	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	Residual Judgement <small>Please select from drop down box below</small>	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives	<i>The aim of the Proposal is to establish a secondary school infrastructure that is sustainable in the long-term, and can provide</i>	Good		Good	Consultation Report Community Impact Assessment

	<p><i>the highest quality education for pupils in the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells catchment areas. The reasons for change are documented in the Consultation Document.</i></p> <p>The conclusion that was included in the earlier draft Community Impact Assessment remains the same: 'there would be little or no impact on either community because secondary provision would remain in both communities.'</p> <p>However, the Authority recognises that the potential wider plans for secondary education are a cause for concern, in particular for the Llandrindod Wells area. Should the wider plans be taken forward, then further consultation and impact assessments would need to be undertaken before any further decisions are made about a single-sited school.</p>				
<p>Developing the economy</p>	<p><i>The aim of the Proposal is to establish a secondary school infrastructure that is sustainable in the long-term, and can provide the highest quality education for pupils in the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells catchment areas. The reasons for change are documented in the Consultation Document.</i></p> <p><i>The potential impact on local businesses in Powys if more young people are better educated and are in employment or training within Powys. This will result in retaining a</i></p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>If the Proposal is implemented, the Authority would support the schools to continue working with key partners to promote the availability and opportunities for volunteering, training, work experience placements, graduates and apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Community Impact Assessment</p>

	young skilled workforce in Powys which in turn will develop the economy.				
Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage	<p>The proposal aims to ensure that high quality education is accessible to all, and that it is affordable and sustainable with a focus on high quality leadership, teaching and learning.</p> <p>All children and young people (including those in receipt of free school meals and with additional learning needs) will be supported to achieve their full potential at the New School .</p>	Good	Should the schools close, transition plans would be put in place to support pupils with their transition into the New School to ensure that disruption is minimised and to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.	Good	Consultation Report, ERW School Improvement Strategy, One Powys Plan
Remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>The proposal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Deliver a more cost-effective delivery of learning ii) Provide an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges 	Good		Good	Consultation Report

3. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the Welsh Assembly's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does the policy / change objective contribute this goal?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
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<p>A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Document</p>
<p>A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>The proposal aims to secure secondary education in Mid Powys for the future, contributing to prosperous communities, and provide education in a more cost-effective way.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings 	<p>Good</p>	<p><i>The Authority's capital funding for schools is either through the 21st C Schools Programme, or through the Major Repairs and Improvements Capital Budget. The Authority can fund refurbishments or remodelling of schools through either of these capital streams. However, the Authority can only fund new-build schools through the 21st C Schools Programme.</i></p> <p><i>In terms of annual repairs and maintenance, the Authority provides schools with an annual revenue stream through the Fair Funding Formula to carry out repairs and maintenance, and statutory testing requirements. As this forms part of the delegated budget, the school can choose how much of this funding it wishes to use for repairs and maintenance.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority's Cabinet, as part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan, approved in April 2016, a schools requirement to fund capital expenditure if their revenue spend is</i></p>	<p>Good</p>	

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			<i>lower than an agreed level. The Cabinet also approved a five year rolling programme of condition reassessments, which will be utilised to plan future investment to ensure all buildings are maintained.</i>		
<p>A healthier Wales: A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>The New School would be expected to provide opportunities for all pupils to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>There were concerns raised during consultation that Welsh-medium pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged by not being able to access after-school activities easily, due to the reliance on home-to-school transport, which would affect the opportunities for after-school activities, affecting their physical and mental well-being.</p>	Neutral	<p>The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p>	Good	Consultation report
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p><i>The aim of the Proposal is to establish a secondary school infrastructure that is sustainable in the long-term, and can provide the highest quality education for pupils in the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells catchment areas. The reasons for change are documented in the Consultation Document.</i></p> <p>The conclusion that was included in the earlier draft Community Impact Assessment remains the same: ‘there would be little or no impact on either community because</p>	Good		Good	Consultation report Community Impact Assessment

	<p>secondary provision would remain in both communities.'</p> <p>However, the Authority recognises that the potential wider plans for secondary education are a cause for concern, in particular for the Llandrindod Wells area. Should the wider plans be taken forward, then further consultation and impact assessments would need to be undertaken before any further decisions are made about a single-sited school.</p>				
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to improve the learning opportunities and outcomes for all children, and has the best interests of the child at heart.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation report</p>

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

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<p><i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</i></p>	<p>The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon to the Builth Wells site of the New dual-sited school in Mid Powys.</p> <p>The concerns were that the Proposal would lead to a decline in the use of the Welsh Language in the Brecon area, and a decline in the number of parents choosing Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon.</p> <p>There were also concerns that pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged by not being able to access after-school activities easily, due to the reliance on home-to-school transport, which would affect the opportunities for those pupils to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The Authority’s intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School currently provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.</p> <p>The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p><i>Treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i></p>	<p>The Authority’s intention is to provide equality of provision.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>

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<p><i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i></p>	<p>The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon to the Built Wells site of the New dual-sited school in Mid Powys.</p> <p>The concerns were that the Proposal would lead to a decline in the use of the Welsh Language in the Brecon area, and a decline in the number of parents choosing Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p><i>Welsh Language impact on staff</i></p>	<p>There will be a requirement for more Welsh-medium teachers at the New School in Mid Powys should numbers of pupils in the Welsh stream in Built Wells increase. There will be a negative impact on Welsh-medium teachers in Brecon.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.</i></p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p><i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i></p>	<p>The New School would be expected to provide opportunities for all pupils to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that pupils from the Brecon area would not be able to access after-school activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport, which would affect their opportunities to participate in sport, arts and recreation.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>The New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Community Impact Assessment, Consultation Report</p>
<p>A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>					
<p>Age</p>	<p>Please see separate Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	

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Disability	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Gender reassignment	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Race	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Religion or belief	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Sex	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Sexual Orientation	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Equality Impact on PCC Staff	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

4. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the policy / change objective impact on this principle?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Sustainable Development Principle					

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<p>Long Term: <i>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</i></p>	<p>The School Transformation Programme considers the general long term forecasts for the Powys population, where it is identified that the population figures for school aged children will continue to fall.</p> <p>This proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p>Collaboration: <i>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>The New School will continue to work in collaboration with other schools in the cluster and regionally, and with other partners, to ensure that every pupil is fully supported.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p>Involvement: <i>The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</i></p> <p>Communication and Engagement</p>	<p>An extensive consultation exercise has taken place on the Proposal.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>If the proposal is implemented, there will be an opportunity for any parent to seek election to the governing body of the New School in the future, and there will be an opportunity for all parents to continue to engage with the school and governing body.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p>Prevention: <i>How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.</i></p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>

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<p>Integration: <i>Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</i></p>	<p>An extensive consultation exercise has taken place on the Proposal.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>If the proposal is implemented, the authority will work with the New School to support those parents and their children to become fully integrated in the school community.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
<p>Preventing Poverty: Prevention, including helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty.</p>	<p>As the school sites would remain in both communities, education would be accessible to those pupils and families eligible for Free School Meals.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the New School that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners and their families.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
<p>Safeguarding: Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</p>	<p>Safeguarding is of the utmost importance and safeguarding measures would be in place at the New School.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting: Enabling our looked after children to fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>The New School would need to meet the needs of looked after children, therefore the authority would have no major concerns about looked after children moving to this school.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>

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<p>Impact on Workforce</p>	<p>Staff at both Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools would be affected if the Proposal was implemented as a new staffing structure would be developed.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p><i>The potential impact on staff and a decline in future pupil numbers were identified as a key risk within the Consultation Document, with the following mitigation:</i></p> <p><i>'The intention of the Proposal is for the New School to provide the highest quality education .It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i></p> <p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p> <p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Consultation Report/Document</p>
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5. Achievability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Impact on Service / Council	Deliverability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	Inherent Risk
Medium	Medium	Medium

6. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Description of risks	
Risks outlined in the Consultation Document	
Risk	Risk management measures
Parents from the Llandrindod area may choose for their children to attend other schools due to the longer-term objective of establishing the New School in the Builth Wells area	The Council's intention is for the New School to provide the highest quality education and it will engage with stakeholders if a decision is made to progress to the second stage of the wider plan
Difficult for both schools to focus on improving outcomes due to the uncertainty caused by the Proposal - may affect standards.	The Council would continue to provide advice and support to both schools and the shadow governing body of the New School to ensure that standards and performance continue to improve during the transition period
Difficult for both current schools to focus on improving outcomes due to the uncertainty caused by the Proposal - may affect standards.	The Council would establish a Management of Change workstream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements would be managed well. A priority would be to work alongside the shadow governing body and headteacher, when appointed to develop and consult on the proposed staffing structure for the New School
Staff at both current schools are demotivated and some may choose to leave before the New School is established, affecting their ability to deliver the curriculum	It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better standards may go some way to mitigating this risk Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change workstream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well. A priority would be to work alongside the shadow governing body and headteacher, when appointed to develop and consult on the proposed staffing structure for the New School
Heavy workload for governors who are appointed to the shadow governing body, during the transition to the New School	The Shadow Governing Body would be formed from those expressing an interest and it is anticipated that those individuals would be best placed to determine whether they have the available time to commit. The Council would provide officer support from a range of service areas – HR, Challenge Advisor, Central Services, Finance etc. The Council would also provide clerking services to the shadow governing body and to the new governing body of the New School for a minimum

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	period first school year
Challenging for governors, headteacher and SLT to focus on establishing and operating a New School across two sites	The Council would provide officer support from a range of service areas as outlined previously
Pupils from Brecon choose to attend English-medium provision at Brecon High School instead of travelling to Builth Wells	In the short term, the Authority would expect there to be some reduction in the proportion of pupils from the Brecon area continuing to access Welsh-medium provision in the secondary sector. However, the current Welsh-medium provision in KS 4 in Brecon is very limited, and there is no provision at all at Post-16. The Council will work with the primary schools concerned and the secondary school provision in Builth Wells and the expectation is that any reduction in transfer rates into KS 3 would be reversed in the longer term
Pupils from Brecon choose to attend alternative Welsh-medium secondary provision outside Powys instead of the secondary school provision in Builth Wells	Ysgol y Bannau would become an official feeder school for the New School in Mid Powys, and both schools would work closely to ensure clear transition and progression routes for pupils. The Authority would only provide transport for pupils to the nearest school that provides Welsh-medium education
Pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau decrease due to the lack of Welsh-medium secondary provision at Brecon	In the short term, there may be a reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau. The Authority would work with Ysgol y Bannau, Menter Brycheiniog and other organisations to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium primary education in the Brecon area
The school site in Builth Wells is unable to accommodate the additional pupils from Brecon	There is sufficient capacity at the current site of Builth Wells High School to accommodate the additional pupils from the Brecon area
The New School does not have sufficient staff to deliver Welsh-medium provision to 2 teaching groups per year in all year groups in the short term	The Council would support the school in appointing the required staff in readiness for September 2017, and provide additional resource in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula arrangements.
Pupils from the Brecon area attending the Builth Wells site may not be able to access after-school activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport.	The New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport

Judgement (to be included in service risk register)			
Very High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
		X	
Mitigating Actions			Residual Risk
The Authority will provide full support to the governors, staff and pupils of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools during the transition period to the New School and after it has been established. See mitigating actions in previous section.			Medium
See mitigating actions above			Choose an item.
Does the Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving have potential to impact on another service area?			Choose an item.

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No

7. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
<p>On completion of this single integrated impact assessment, the judgement is that the Proposal has many potential benefits and does not provide a high level of risk to the Council.</p>	

8. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
<p>Consultation responses, consultation report, impact assessments.</p>

On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
<p>The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the Transformation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.</p> <p>Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.</p> <p>The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.</p>
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
<p>The impact assessment will be reviewed following the completion of the next stage of the Statutory Process, should the Proposal be supported.</p>

10. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Service Manager:	Marianne Evans	Marianne Evans	26/08/16
Head of Service:	Ian Roberts	Ian Roberts	15/09/16

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Strategic Director:	Jeremy Patterson	Jeremy Patterson	
Portfolio Holder:	Arwel Jones	Arwel Jones	15/09/16

Appendix D Final Welsh Language Impact Assessment

South & Mid Powys

1. Introduction

The Council published a draft Welsh Language Impact Assessment on the following Proposal, as part of a Formal Consultation that took place between the 6th April and the 1st June 2016:

- a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;
- b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;
- c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation; and
- d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.

This impact assessment also relates to the proposed way forward for Welsh-medium provision in Mid Powys.

2. Background information

The proportion of Welsh speakers in the communities where the two dual stream high schools – Brecon and Builth Wells - in south Powys are located are fairly similar. Information from the 2011 Census shows that 21.6% of the population of Brecon town have one or more skill in Welsh, whilst 23.3% of the population of Builth Wells town have one or more skill in Welsh. The percentage of Welsh speakers in the surrounding communities is varied.

Based on the Welsh Government's language categories, Brecon High School is currently categorised as a category 3 bilingual school, whilst Builth Wells High School is categorised as a category 2C bilingual school. The number of Welsh-medium subjects at both schools during the current academic year (2014-15) is as follows:

Welsh-medium Issues – across South and Mid Powys

- There are two Welsh-medium streams in secondary schools in Mid and South Powys – one in Brecon High School and one in Builth Wells High School. The Council is worried that there are not enough pupils to keep both streams open;
- Builth Wells High School has 129 pupils in the Welsh stream this year, but here are only 30 pupils in the Welsh stream in Brecon High School and the school is unable to provide a wide range of subjects in Welsh, especially at KS4;

- The Council is also concerned about that there aren't enough subjects available in Welsh at Post-16;
- This situation doesn't provide Welsh-medium pupils the same learning experience as pupils studying in the English-stream and doesn't help to develop their Welsh Language skills.
- The following tables show the number of pupils in the Welsh stream in both Brecon and Builth High School over the last two years:

Brecon High School	2014/15	2015/16
Year 7	14	3
Year 8	13	7
Year 9	9	4
Year 10	8	8
Year 11	13	8
Total	57	30

Builth Wells High School	2014/15	2015/16
Year 7	18	28
Year 8	23	23
Year 9	28	31
Year 10	21	27
Year 11	17	20
Total	107	129

- During the 2015/16 academic year, the Welsh-medium provision at Brecon High School and Builth Wells High School in years 7 to 11 is as follows¹:

Brecon High School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Number of Welsh-medium subjects	7	6	6	2	2
Number of English-medium subjects	14	14	14	17	18
Number of bilingual subjects	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of subjects	14	14	14	17	18
% Welsh-	50%	43%	43%	12%	11%

¹ Information received from the schools in October 2015

medium subjects					
Language² category	2C	3	3	4	4

Builth Wells High School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Number of Welsh-medium subjects	12	12	13	9	9
Number of English-medium subjects	16	16	16	24	20
Number of bilingual subjects	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of subjects	16	16	16	24	20
% Welsh-medium subjects	75%	75%	81%	38%	45%
Language category	2C	2C	2B	3	3

The Council is also concerned about the limited post-16 opportunities currently available to Welsh-medium learners in South and Mid Powys. Currently, there is no Welsh-medium post-16 provision at Brecon High School, and only a limited number of subjects are offered at Builth Wells High School.

One of the Strategic Aims stated in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is 'to provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education'. The Authority's current policy as stated in the WESP is to aim that all dual stream schools become category 2B³ bilingual schools by 2020. However, schools' progress towards achieving this aim has been limited.

As the current position at both schools does not fully meet the aspirations of the Authority's WESP for linguistic continuity, the Authority has identified the need to centralise provision in south Powys, in order to ensure that a greater level of provision can be offered to pupils.

3. Standards in Welsh

The following tables provide information about Standards in Welsh First Language at Brecon High School and Builth Wells High School for the last 3 years.

Whilst this is useful as background information, the relatively small number of pupils in each year group at each school mean that it is difficult to draw any firm

² Defining Schools According to Welsh-medium Provision – Welsh Government 2007

³ As stated in the Welsh Government document, 'Defining Schools according to Welsh-medium Provision', published in 2007.

conclusions from this information with regard to standards in Welsh at the two schools.

i) **End of Key Stage 3**

Brecon High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh First Language	19	13	8
Number of pupils that achieved Level 5+	19	10	8
% of pupils that achieved Level 5+	100%	76.9%	100%

Builth Wells High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh First Language	17	17	22
Number of pupils that achieved Level 5+	15	16	20
% of pupils that achieved Level 5+	88.2%	94.1%	90.9%

i) **End of Key Stage 4**

Brecon High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of GCSE Welsh First	18	12	18

Language entries			
Number of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	7	6	14
% of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	38.9%	50%	77.8%

Builth Wells High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of GCSE Welsh First Language entries	13	22	17
Number of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	10	13	13
% of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	76.9%	59.1%	76.5%

4. Welsh language activities provided by the schools

Brecon High School

The majority of extra-curricular activities at Brecon High School are carried out through the medium of English, however some activities take place in Welsh or bilingually, depending on which member of staff is responsible and which pupils are taking part.

The south Powys Urdd Eisteddfod is held in Brecon High School each year.

Builth Wells High School

A number of the school's extra-curricular activities and clubs are Welsh or bilingual, depending on which member of staff is responsible and which pupils are taking part.

In addition, the school provides a range of additional opportunities for pupils to use Welsh outside the classroom. The school choir takes part in Urdd competitions, and pupils also take part in written competitions. Workshops are arranged with Welsh speakers from speciality areas, as well as workshops with Welsh poets and Welsh bands. The school holds an annual Eisteddfod, which gives additional opportunities for pupils to use their Welsh. The school puts on a musical every two years, and this is always bilingual, with some of the songs being in Welsh.

The school also supports the local 'papur bro', 'Y Fan a'r Lle', by submitting information to be included in the paper, and also supports the local Eisteddfod held annually in Llanwrtyd Wells.

Welsh for Adults lessons are held at the school on a weekly basis.

5. Feedback from the Consultation

Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.

ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report which can be found on <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/corporate/find-out-about-consultations-in-powys/past-consultations/brecon-and-gwernyfed-high-schools/>, along with the Authority's responses to issues raised. The main themes from the consultation are summarised on pages 45 – 49 of the Report. A summary of respondents' views about the element c) of the Proposal and the impact on the Welsh Language can be found on pages 35 - 41 of the Consultation Report and pages 58 - 75 of the Consultation Report – Responses.

6. Conclusion

The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon. However, the Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.

The Welsh Government's Welsh – medium Education Strategy states 'Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.'

'The term 'bilingual provision' is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called 'dual stream' schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.'

The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a

balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners' linguistic skills in Welsh are not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.'

Whilst there are no designated Welsh-medium primary schools in the Builth Wells High School catchment, there are a greater number of primary Welsh-medium streams and a greater number of Welsh-medium pupils compared with the Brecon High School catchment.

Evidence shows that Welsh-medium provision in terms of pupil numbers and subjects available has grown over the last five years. The Authority has provided the same guidance and support to Builth Wells and Brecon High School over this time.

Whilst Welsh-medium pupils would be leaving Brecon to access Welsh-medium secondary provision, they will continue to live in the town and surrounding areas, and will continue to be able to participate in Welsh language activities in the local community. The Council's view is that the increased level of Welsh-medium provision available to them will enable all Welsh-medium pupils to become more confident Welsh speakers, who will be able to play a greater role in terms of the Welsh language in the community.

The Authority acknowledges that concerns were raised about whether Welsh-medium pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged as they would find it difficult to access after-school activities at Builth due to reliance on home-to-school transport. The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport.

Another risk highlighted during the consultation was that the New School in Mid Powys would not have sufficient staff to deliver Welsh-medium provision to a larger cohort of learners. The Council would support the school in appointing the required staff in readiness for September 2017, and provide additional resource in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula arrangements.

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**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools

The Portfolio Holder for Education advised that following consultation he was not proposing to change the recommendation to Cabinet to close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School and to establish a new dual stream 11-18 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017.

County Councillor Dorrance asked if the recommendation included moving Welsh medium education from Brecon High School to Builth Wells High School as felt this would predetermine where Welsh medium education would be provided. The Portfolio Holder for Education explained that there would be a further consultation on the provision of Welsh medium education in Brecon. Councillor Dorrance asked about capacity and the Portfolio Holder advised that there were currently 134 spare places. Councillor Dorrance noted that the capacity would change as a result of the proposals.

County Councillor Gary Price asked if the Portfolio Holder felt the current leadership of the schools were weak. The Portfolio Holder said he did not but that merging the leadership teams would help improve outcomes for learners. Councillor Price asked if the Portfolio Holder had seen the email sent by the Chair of Governors of Llandrindod High School. The Portfolio Holder confirmed he had and that it would be taken into account as part of the consultation. Councillor Price noted the comments from Estyn in the consultation analysis that the proposals failed to demonstrate how they would improve standards. The Portfolio Holder replied that past experience showed that outcomes had improved. Councillor Price noted that £17m capital had been allocated for the scheme and he argued that it would be more beneficial to use the money to address the backlog of £3.5m works at both schools. Councillor Price pointed to a number of errors in the consultation analysis.

County Councillor Gwilym Williams questioned if Welsh medium education would be sustainable in Builth Wells without children attending from Brecon. He noted the improved GCSE results. He referred to Estyn's assessment that the plans were unlikely to improve standards. He called on the Cabinet to abandon the proposals until the issue of the Welsh language provision in Brecon had been determined. The Portfolio Holder for Education again confirmed that there would be a separate consultation on Welsh language provision. He advised that level 2 inclusive results remained unchanged between 2015 and 2016 and that A level A to C results had fallen from 78% in 2015 to 70% in 2016.

County Councillor John Morris asked what the costs would be to the Council if the two schools closed and was advised that Builth Wells High School had a deficit of £103,000 and Llandrindod High School a surplus of £65,900.

County Councillor Maureen Mackenzie said that the public were dismayed by the proposals and needed clarity on how standards would improve as a result of the proposals. She suggested that sharing of resources across both schools would improve standards and argued that both schools should be supported to make best use of their resources.

County Councillor Myfanwy Alexander said that there should not be a presumption that reorganisation would raise standards. She argued that the best way forward was progressive stability.

County Councillor Huw Williams asked for clarification on the provision of Welsh medium education and the Portfolio Holder advised that the proposal was for a dual stream school.

County Councillor David Meredith advised that he could not support the proposal unless any reference to Welsh medium education in Builth Wells was removed.

County Councillor Aled Davies said that the proposal had to be financially viable and that it could only be sustainable if Brecon pupils came to Builth Wells for Welsh language provision.

County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe asked if there was funding for Welsh medium provision in both Brecon and Builth. The Portfolio Holder advised that at the moment both Brecon High School and Builth Wells High School had dual streams and that if as a result of the consultation the proposal was to continue dual streams on both sites the funding would have to be found.

County Councillor Gwilym Vaughan argued that every pupil should have the choice to be educated in medium of Welsh and that they should have access to the full range of services. The Portfolio Holder noted that currently Brecon High School offered three subjects in Welsh and that Builth Wells High School offered ten.

County Councillor Meredith argued that this was because the Council had never funded Brecon High School's category 2b status and that as a result children were being transported out of county to access Welsh medium education.

County Councillor Mackenzie noted that the timescales for the Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School was the same as that for Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High Schools and that had been identified as a risk by Estyn. She remained dismayed by the narrowness of the proposal and didn't look at the potential for sharing resources and skills. Councillor Mackenzie proposed that the Cabinet abandon the proposals for Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School for a period of consolidation of up to 2 years to allow the leaderships teams of both schools to work together on joint proposals to raise standards. The proposal was seconded by County Councillor Alexander.

It was confirmed that this would not affect 21st Century Schools funding nor would it have any implication for the Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School consultation.

The proposal was put to the vote. The Solicitor to the Council reminded Members that the vote would be a recommendation to the Cabinet and would not be binding on them. He also reminded Members that the Cabinet would not be voting as they did not wish to be seen to have predetermined the issue.

The proposal was passed by 32 votes to 9 with 3 abstentions.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the proposals for Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High school be abandoned for a period of up to 2 years to allow the leadership teams of both schools to work together on joint proposals to raise standards.

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Estyn response to the proposal by Powys County Council to close Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools and open a single bilingual dual stream 11-18 school from September 2017

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

This is a consultation proposal from Powys County Council. The proposal is to:

- Close Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School and establish a single bilingual category 2B/C ("dual-stream") 11-18 secondary school operating across two sites as an interim measure whilst further feasibility work is carried out to establish the viability of a new school occupying one site in Builth Wells in the future.

Summary/ Conclusion

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal.

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards or provision or the impact on teaching and curricular arrangements or the leadership and management of the new school. In addition it does not consider fully all the risks involved in the proposal and the consideration of both the longer-term vision and interim solution does not aid the proposal's clarity.

As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that it is not possible to establish whether standards will be at least maintained by the proposal.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for its longer term proposal to establish a single dual stream school in Builth. The proposer appears to base its case for change primarily on the need to address the decline in pupil numbers at both schools, particularly when set in the context of the projected pupil numbers to 2021. It considers appropriately the impact of low pupil numbers on provision and the ability to provide a viable English and Welsh medium curriculum across the county, and sets out its view that a larger bilingual school in mid Powys would provide economies of scale that would effectively address these concerns. The proposer identifies appropriately the need to raise standards at both schools and to improve the condition of school buildings at both schools. The proposer also identifies how the proposal would produce annual revenue savings.

The proposer sets out clearly the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal when compared with the current situation. The proposer sees the main benefits of the proposal accruing from a reduction in surplus places, cost effectiveness, and the ability to provide a broader curriculum range at key stage 4 and 5, with particular attention given to the potential of broadening Welsh medium provision if its plans to remove the dual stream from Brecon High School are achieved. The proposer acknowledges the disadvantages of the proposal in terms of loss of community links and increased travel times for pupils in the Llandrindod catchment area affected. However, overall, it considers that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the disadvantages it has identified.

In many respects, the proposer appears to provide a fair and balanced appraisal of the risks associated with its proposed interim solution of operating across two sites. However, in a few instances, the proposer does not identify or discuss its risk management measures in sufficient detail. For example, although the proposer identifies the risk that some parents may arrange for their children to attend schools other than the new school, it does not identify sufficiently well how it will engage positively with parents to reduce this risk. Similarly, it does not specify clearly enough how it intends to address the difficulties some pupils from the Brecon area may face with accessing after school activities due to transport constraints, other than a vague assurance that it will look into options. Significantly, the proposer does not consider sufficiently well the impact on provision and outcomes of a reduced budget given that one of the two schools is projecting a significant budget deficit over the next three years.

Moreover, there is insufficient consideration of the risks associated with its longer term vision of opening one school – one site in Builth, given that the proposal's main benefits can only be materialised if this longer-term vision is in fact realised.

Most significantly, however, it does not consider the possibility that the proposed new school will fail to improve standards, or identify any measures to address this.

The proposer has considered the impact of the changes on learners' travel arrangements. It correctly identifies that there will be no additional travel for pupils already at the two sites. However, it has not provided sufficient information on current school to school or home to school travel arrangements to support its conclusion that the distance of 8 miles will pose minimal problems for sixth form travel arrangements if sixth forms are maintained on both sites.

The proposer acknowledges the increase in travel arrangements for pupils aged 11-16 who live in the Brecon catchment and who wish to attend Welsh-medium provision in Builth. However, it does not analyse the impact of the proposal on these pupils in this consultation but in its concurrent consultation on the closure of the Welsh medium stream at Brecon. Reference is made therefore to our opinion contained in our response to that proposal.

The proposer considers in suitable detail the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision within mid- and south Powys. The proposer has carried out a separate Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which clearly assesses the impact of the proposal on provision for pupils at both schools and within this area of the local authority. Given the declining and very low numbers of pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium education at Brecon High School, the proposer's view that the proposal provides benefits for the provision of Welsh-medium education and progression appears reasonable.

Educational aspects of the proposal

Overall, the proposer has not sufficiently considered the impact of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management. The proposer makes appropriate reference to the outcomes of both schools' most recent Estyn inspections. It identifies correctly that current performance and prospects for improvement at both schools were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the core inspections and that both schools are in special measures. The proposer also refers briefly to the schools' categorisation within the National School Categorisation System. However, it provides no explanation of the context or detail for these judgements.

Significantly, the proposer provides no analysis of the standards achieved by pupils at either school in terms of attainment at key stage 3, 4 or 5.

In terms of Welsh-medium provision at key stage 3 and key stage 4, the proposer suggests that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new dual-stream school in Mid-Powys would enable the school to set pupils according to ability for some subjects. The proposer argues that this could have a positive impact in terms of outcomes for Welsh-medium pupils. However, it does not provide evidence for its view that setting improves standards.

Overall, the proposer does not demonstrate how the reorganisation would have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils at any key stage.

In terms of provision, the proposer sets out reasonably that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed dual-stream school, will allow greater choice and access to the curriculum, particularly at key stage 3 and key stage 4. Similarly, the proposer's view that the proposal for post-16 education could lead to increased access for post-16 pupils to both academic and vocational subjects seems sound. However, the proposer does not demonstrate how the proposed reorganisation would lead to improved standards of teaching, or how these potential benefits would link to improved outcomes for pupils. Moreover, the proposer does not consider the impact that the reduction in overall funding to a single school will have on the school's ability to deliver its curriculum, given that Llandrindod High School is projecting significant budget deficits in the future.

The proposer identifies appropriately that the transition to the new school will provide substantial additional workload for the shadowing governing body and appointed leadership team, and how the council aims to support this process. However, the proposer is less clear about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management once the new school is established.

With regard to the new school in mid-Powys, the proposer acknowledges that the sudden increase in Welsh-medium pupils in individual year groups may cause initial difficulties for the new school, as it may require them to introduce a second Welsh-medium class in some year groups. However, it considers reasonably that as larger numbers of pupils move through the school, this will improve the school's ability to offer a more comprehensive curriculum to Welsh-medium pupils, particularly at key stage 4 and post-16.

With regard to post-16 provision, the proposer asserts reasonably that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils on the Builth Wells site of the new school in mid-Powys would lead in time to an increase in the number of available subjects at the school post-16. However, there remain questions about equality of opportunities for post-16 pupils choosing to study through the medium of Welsh in terms of the range of courses available to them.

The proposer has considered fairly the likely impact of the interim proposal on a range of pupils from low-income families, Welsh-medium pupils and on the community. It identifies correctly that funding and provision to meet pupils' special educational needs will transfer to the new school and thus continue unchanged. It acknowledges appropriately that support plans will need to be put into place to support pupils to mitigate any negative impact on pupils' feelings of wellbeing. However, the proposal does not contain information on a community impact assessment of its longer term vision of a single school in Builth in this proposal.

C181- 2016

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE 27th September 2016

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Arwel Jones
Portfolio Holder for Education

SUBJECT: Secondary School Reorganisation Programme
- Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary

1. Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 23rd February 2016, the Authority has carried out formal consultation on the following proposal:
 - a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017 (“**the New School**”);
 - b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;
 - c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation); and
 - d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new school in Brecon, in 2019/20 (“**the New School Building**”).
2. The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and Responses, and to receive the Portfolio Holder’s recommendations.
3. At a meeting of the full County Council that was held on the 8th September 2016, all members had an opportunity to discuss the Portfolio Holder’s draft recommendations – minutes of the meeting are available at Appendix E.
4. The report is supported by the following appendices:
 - Appendix A – Consultation Report
 - Appendix B – Consultation Report – Responses
 - Appendix C – Impact Assessments
 - Appendix D – Final Welsh Language Impact Assessment South & Mid Powys
 - Appendix E – Copy of Minutes of the Council meeting on 8.9.16.

Background

4. On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal outlined above. The consultation period commenced on the 6th April 2016, and ended on the 1st June 2016.
5. The Consultation Document was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The Document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2013).
6. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.
7. A total of 1047 questionnaires were analysed, of which 625 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 148 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 274 to the primary school consultation questionnaire;
8. **29 statutory written submissions** were received concerning the proposals for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. These were from: Assembly Members and Members of Parliament; Estyn, other political groups; school Governing Bodies; Town and Community Councils; and other affected local organisations. In addition, **409 other submissions** were received from local residents and non-statutory organisations. The vast majority of submissions were sent in by those within the Gwernyfed catchment area.
9. During the consultation period, meetings were also held with the following:
 - School Councils and other pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools
 - School Councils and other pupils of all primary schools in both catchment areas
 - Staff of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools
 - Governors of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools
 - Parents / community of both schools
 - Protected Characteristics Group
10. ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report, attached as Appendix A, which outlines all the issues raised, along with the Authority's response (Appendix B) to these issues.
- 10.1 At a meeting of the full Council on the 8th September 2016, members received and debated my draft recommendations, which are outlined in paragraph 11 below and the relevant extract from the minutes of that meeting can be found at Appendix E.

Recommendation

11. On the basis of the issues raised during the consultation, the following recommendations are made:
- To abandon elements A, B and D of the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with **draft recommendations** for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015;
 - To re-consult on element C of the Proposal, i.e. the closure of the Welsh-stream at Brecon High School from September 2017;
 - To submit a revised Outline Business Case to Welsh Government's 21st C Schools Programme for capital investment in both campuses. This will include a new build 11 – 18 campus in Brecon and improvements to the Gwernyfed campus.

Options Considered/Available

12. The options available were
- To publish the Proposal as consulted on with any appropriate modifications;
 - To abandon the Proposal;
 - To significantly recast the Proposals and re-consult.

Preferred Choice and Reasons

13. **The preferred choice is to abandon elements A, B and D of the Proposal outlined in 1).** The reasons for this are as follows:
- As stated in the Consultation Document, the secondary school sector in Powys continues to face a number of significant challenges. Although the Proposal to close Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools and to build a new larger 11 – 16 school in Brecon has many benefits, it is not the right solution for these challenges which has been evidenced in the consultation responses. The Impact Assessments clearly indicate that there would be a detrimental impact on the communities in the Gwernyfed catchment, and travel/transport has been raised as a significant issue for pupils and parents. There was also a significant degree of opposition to a tertiary post-16 model.
 - A number of alternative options were suggested during the consultation period which merit further investigation.
 - Estyn's response concludes that:

'The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal to close both schools and establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 school, initially operating across two sites at Brecon and Gwernyfed. It sets out clearly the proposals relating to the transfer of post-16 education to the NPTC group of colleges and the transfer of Welsh-medium education to the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in mid-Powys.'

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards in relation to pupils' outcomes or the leadership and management of the new school. It does not consider sufficiently the risks involved in the proposal, particularly given the short timescales of its proposals.

As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is unlikely to improve the present standard of education provision in the area'.

14. **The preferred choice is to re-consult on element C of the Proposal.** The reasons for this is as follows:

- The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the proposed new school in Brecon. However, the Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.
- The Welsh Government's Welsh – medium Education Strategy states 'Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.'
- 'The term 'bilingual provision' is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called 'dual stream' schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.'
- The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners' linguistic skills in Welsh are not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.'

- Whilst there are no designated Welsh-medium primary schools in the Builth Wells High School catchment, there are a greater number of primary Welsh-medium streams and a greater number of Welsh-medium pupils compared with the Brecon High School catchment.
 - Evidence shows that Welsh-medium provision in terms of pupil numbers and subjects available has grown over the last five years. The Authority has provided the same guidance and support to Builth Wells and Brecon High School over this time.
 - Whilst Welsh-medium pupils would be leaving Brecon to access Welsh-medium secondary provision, they will continue to live in the town and surrounding areas, and will continue to be able to participate in Welsh language activities in the local community. The Council's view is that the increased level of Welsh-medium provision available to them will enable all Welsh-medium pupils to become more confident Welsh speakers, who will be able to play a greater role in terms of the Welsh language in the community.
15. **The preferred choice is to submit a revised Outline Business Case to Welsh Government's 21st C Schools Programme for capital investment in both campuses and to increase the budget for the Project by £8m finance by a Welsh Government capital grant and Prudential Borrowing**
- This will include a new build 11 – 18 campus in Brecon and improvements to the Gwernyfed campus.** The reasons for this is as follows:
- Submitting a revised Outline Business Case for capital investment in both campuses will address the building condition issues of both schools. This will enable the Authority to draw upon Welsh Government capital funding to support the investment within Band A (2014 – 2019) of the 21st C Schools Programme. Brecon High School is categorised as a Condition D and Gwernyfed High School is categorised as a Condition C.
 - The Authority has already submitted a **draft revised** Outline Business Case to the Welsh Government, without prejudice to Cabinet's decision. The reason for doing so prior to Cabinet making a decision on the future of both schools was to understand whether capital funding was available for a revised scheme. If Cabinet do not agreed to support the recommendation above, then capital funding from Welsh Government for the revised scheme will not be
 - The budget for the project has increased by £8m to £28m. 50% of this will be financed by Welsh Government capital grant and 50% from an increase in Prudential Borrowing of the Authority. The cost of Prudential Borrowing is estimated to be approximately £155k per annum, which is 3% over a 50 year loan. This funding from Welsh Government is dependent on either finding capacity within existing 21st Century Schools Programme or requesting an increase to the Authority's overall Band A (2014 – 19) Programme.
17. **Revenue Savings.** The estimated revenue savings of these recommendations, based on the 2016/17 formula, are £119k. This includes

the revenue savings of closure of the Welsh stream and revised revenue commitment following the capital investment in both schools.

No additional transport costs have been included as it is estimated that pupils could be accommodated on existing transport.

The savings estimated do not include redundancy costs.

One Powys Plan

'Transforming Learning and Skills' is one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan. Within this priority, the Plan states that *'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity.'*

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

A Single Integrated Impact Assessment has been produced in respect of the original Proposal which concludes: **'It is concluded that there are too many risks for the Council and stakeholders to proceed with elements a,b, and d of the Proposal, but there are benefits to proceeding with element C of the Proposal.'**

The Equality Impact Assessment, Community Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment in respect of the original Proposal have been updated following the consultation period.

Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The Authority's Schools Transformation Programme is intended to improve educational outcomes for children and young people. This aligns with the aspiration to improve safeguarding and well-being for children and young people.

Local Member(s)

Comments from Cllr Matthew Dorrance in relation to Cabinet papers on Secondary School Reorganisation Programme - Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools:

I welcome the Council's ambition to provide a twenty-first century facility for learners in Brecon. I welcome the Cabinet Members recommendation to abandon proposals to close Brecon High School's sixth form which would have put the school at a distinct disadvantage compared to other Powys Schools.

Two consultations on the future of Welsh Medium Education at Brecon High School have already been undertaken by the Cabinet. I am not convinced that the Cabinet has explained in enough detail why another consultation is needed so soon after the community told the administration they opposed plans to move the Welsh Medium stream from Brecon to Builth Wells. The report notes that Builth Wells does not have a Welsh Medium Primary School. Brecon does and the climate of uncertainty created by the Cabinet is

damaging learners, parents and the community's confidence in the Council. This must be resolved as a matter of urgency.

The census data referred to in Appendix D shows the population of Builth and Brecon with 'one or more skill in Welsh' with a differential of under 2%. This in my view is too small a sample of the community to base a decision about educational provision on. I would urge the Cabinet to consider population growth forecasts, the Local Development Plan and the Welsh Labour Government's ambitions for increasing the number of Welsh speakers – all of which could wipe out the small census differential.

I firmly believe that the decision of the Cabinet Member to fund transport from Brecon to Builth for learners accessing education in Welsh before any consultation took place was an error of judgement that damaged provision at Brecon High School.

Other Front Line Services

N/A

Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

Legal: The recommendations can be supported from a legal point of view

The Finance Business Partner comments: 'The estimated savings based on the 2016/17 formula are £119k. This includes the revenue savings of closure of the Welsh stream and revised revenue commitment following the capital investment in both schools.

No additional transport costs have been included as it is estimated that pupils could be accommodated on existing transport.

The savings estimated do not include redundancy costs.

Finance will continue to work with schools to manage any future changes.'

The Capital and Financial Planning Accountant notes "the increase in the budget required to complete this project and will work with colleagues in Schools and Property to either identify capacity within the 21st Century School Programme or to apply for an increase in the Programme."

HR: 'Any implication on staffing will be managed by the school governors in line with Human Resource policies and in consultation with the recognised trade unions'.

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

N/A

Corporate Communications

Communications Comment: “This issue is of significant public interest and Cabinet’s decision should be publicised widely by press release and through all the council’s social media channels.”

Statutory Officers

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”

The Strategic Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) notes the comments of the Finance Business Partner and the Capital and Financial Planning Accountant.

Members’ Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To consider the Consultation Report and Responses Report2. To abandon elements A,B, and D of the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with draft recommendations for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015;3. To re-consult on element C of the Proposal, i.e. the closure of the Welsh-stream at Brecon High School from September 2017;4. To submit a revised Outline Business Case to Welsh Government’s 21st C Schools Programme for capital investment in both campuses and to increase the budget for the Project by £8m financed by a Welsh Government capital grant and Prudential Borrowing. This will include a new build 11 – 18 campus in Brecon and improvements to the Gwernyfed campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To understand the issues raised during consultation;• To enable officers to bring forward alternative options that will address the challenges faced by the secondary school sector in Powys;• To provide a more sustainable, educationally and linguistically viable model of Welsh-medium secondary education;• Submitting a revised OBC will enable the Council to draw down Welsh Government funding to support a capital investment in both campuses.

Relevant Policy (ies):	School Transformation Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	
----------------------------------	--

Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Marianne Evans
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	September 2016

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Marianne Evans	01597 826155	N/A	Marianne.evans@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:

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Consultation Report on the Future of Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School



Report of Findings for



Opinion Research Services
July 2016





The Future of Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School



A Report of the Consultation Findings

Opinion Research Services

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As with all our studies, findings from this survey are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this survey requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

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Acknowledgements

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is pleased to have worked with Powys County Council (PCC) on the important consultation regarding the future of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools.

We hope this report of the consultations will contribute to the County Council's thinking; and we hope the ORS contribution has been constructive and instrumental in ensuring that the views of the people of Powys are captured and considered as part of the overall consultation.

We are grateful to Powys County Council's managers for their helpful and positive liaison throughout the detailed preparation and management of the consultation. ORS' status as an independent social research organisation was respected throughout.

We also thank the members of the public, professionals and representatives of political, interest, voluntary and community groups who took part in the consultation; participants shared their views and took a full part in the process.

1. Background

- ^{1.1} On 11th November 2014, Powys County Council Cabinet approved a School Transformation Policy, which set out the Council's vision and process for the transformation of primary and secondary schools in the county. The Policy includes:
- » a range of criteria to be used to determine which schools would be reviewed
 - » the establishment of a School Organisation Review Panel (SORP) to carry out reviews of schools
 - » the establishment of a School Review Process to be used to review schools
- ^{1.2} On 24th March 2015, Cabinet approved 'the commencement of formal consultation to close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School by August 2017 and open a new English-medium 11 – 16 dual-sited school on the current sites of both schools by September 2017, and also the commencement of formal consultation to withdraw Welsh-medium provision from Brecon High School from September 2016'. However, following procedural errors which were challenged in a Judicial Review, the process was stopped. The School Review Process as outlined within the School Transformation Policy 2014 was restarted in September 2015. The stages of the Process are outlined below:
- » An Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with Stage 1 of the School Review Process was carried out, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were considered against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy. As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of the two schools.
 - » Dialogue took place with the governing bodies, headteachers and local members during 2015 and 2016 in accordance with Stage 2 of the School Review Process as described in the School Transformation Policy, as follows:
 - Initial meetings held on 21st September 2015 to agree data in respect of the school and to discuss future options relating to the school;
 - An opportunity for the governing bodies to provide feedback on the options presented to them;
 - » Following the initial meetings with governing bodies, headteachers and local members, the Council carried out a review of secondary education across South and Mid Powys, and developed a business case which considered the case for change in both areas, assessed and costed a range of options and included recommendations relating to the secondary schools under review.
 - » The business case and its recommendations were considered by the SORP on the 20th January 2016, and the SORP agreed draft recommendations in respect of the all schools under review.
 - » Feedback meetings were held with the governing bodies, local members and the headteachers on the 27th January 2016 to discuss the SORP's draft recommendations and to give the governing bodies a further opportunity to present additional evidence.

- » On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet considered the SORP's recommendations, together with the business case and additional evidence presented by the governing bodies following the feedback meeting. Cabinet resolved to commence formal consultation on the following Proposal:

Close Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools on the 31st August 2017, and establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;

From the 1st September 2017, deliver post-16 provision (academic and vocational) via the NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;

From the 1st September 2017, close the Welsh stream at Brecon High School and deliver Welsh-medium secondary education at Builth Wells High School; and

Close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.

- ¹³ Powys County Council set out reasons for change in the County in the consultation document which in brief are repeated below:

Falling pupil numbers year on year

Continued reductions in Welsh Government funding

Budgetary problems, leading to staff reductions and increased class sizes

Poor quality of education and learning outcomes in some schools and an unacceptable Estyn profile across the secondary sector as a whole

Too many surplus places in schools

Old school buildings which are of poor quality and an associated backlog of maintenance

Most sixth forms in Powys are small, making it difficult to provide a broad range of subjects

Year-on-year reduction in funding for Post-16 provision means that the number of subjects offered is also reducing. Pupils currently have to travel between existing school sites to access a broad range of academic and vocational (post 16) courses during the school day, with associated costs.

- ¹⁴ Reasons for change to Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools were also given:

Falling pupil numbers over the last five years at both schools although numbers are projected to increase slightly;

Low numbers in some year groups making it difficult to provide the full curriculum;

Too many surplus places in schools (36% in Brecon and 20% in Gwernyfed), which Welsh Government believes leads to inefficiencies that impact on quality of education;

Old school buildings which are of poor or bad quality and an associated backlog of maintenance. Brecon High School has been categorised as a Condition D building, which means that its condition is 'Bad Life expired and / or serious risk of imminent failure' and Gwernyfed High School has been categorised as a Condition C building, which is defined as 'Poor. Exhibiting major defects and / or not operating as intended';

Small sixth forms at both schools. Year-on-year reduction in funding for Post-16 provision means that the number of subjects offered is also reducing. Pupils currently have to travel between existing school sites to access a broad range of academic and vocational courses during the school day, with associated costs;

Limited post 16 choice of subjects, meaning that some pupils need to travel outside of Powys;

Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School were judged by Estyn to have 'adequate performance' and 'adequate prospects for improvement' in their last Estyn inspections in 2012 and 2013 respectively;

Brecon High School was placed in 'Special Measures' by Estyn;

Gwernyfed High School was placed in the category of 'Estyn monitoring'. The school was recently judged to have made good progress in respect of the key issues for action following the Estyn visit in February 2016. The school has now been removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring;

Brecon High School is forecasting a significant budget deficit;

The number of pupils in the Welsh-medium stream in Brecon is unviable – there are currently 30 pupils in the Welsh stream in KS3 and KS4, and the school is unable to provide the appropriate range of subjects through the medium of Welsh

The Consultation

- ^{1.5} Powys County Council commenced an eight week consultation period on 6th April 2016 on its proposed changes to Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools and through engagement with members of the public and other stakeholders, including pupils, staff, governors and community organisations. The consultation formally ended on 1st June 2016, although paper copies of the questionnaire were accepted for a further week to allow time for receipt by second class post. During this period, stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through:
- » A consultation questionnaire: paper questionnaires were widely circulated and the questionnaire was also available online;
 - » Meetings with School Governors
 - » Meetings with School Staff
 - » Workshops with Secondary School Pupils
 - » Workshops with Primary School Pupils
 - » Public meetings
 - » Written submissions: stakeholders had the opportunity to provide their views by writing to Powys County Council or directly to ORS
- ^{1.6} Comprehensive notes were taken by ORS for each of these meetings and workshops. These notes form the basis of the findings in this report.
- ^{1.7} In addition, social media sites were reviewed by ORS for comments on the proposal.
- ^{1.8} Opinion Research Services (ORS), a spin-out company from Swansea University with a UK-wide reputation for social research and major statutory consultations, was appointed by Powys County

Council to facilitate aspects of the consultation process and to provide an independent report of the formal consultation programme.

Nature of Consultation

Accountability

- ^{1.9} Consultation should promote accountability and assist decision making: public bodies should give an account of their plans or proposals and they should ensure that all responses are taken into account in order to:
- » Be informed of any issues, viewpoints, implications or options that might have been overlooked;
 - » Re-evaluate matters already known; and
 - » Review priorities and principles.
- ^{1.10} Nevertheless, a consultation is not a vote; and influencing public policy through consultation is not simply a ‘numbers game’ in which the loudest voices or the greatest numbers automatically determine the outcome, since all of the various consultation methods have to be assessed.
- ^{1.11} All types of consultation responses are important: as part of Powys County Council’s consultation on secondary school transformation we received a range of responses from individuals and organisations as a result of the following activities:
- » The open consultation questionnaire;
 - » School Governors’ Meetings;
 - » School Staff Meetings;
 - » Secondary School Pupils Meetings;
 - » Primary School Pupils Meetings;
 - » Focus Groups with Special Needs
 - » Public Meeting
 - » Public meeting;
 - » Written responses and submissions;
 - » Responses via Social Media.
- ^{1.12} This report identifies where strength of feeling may be particularly intense while recognising that interpreting consultation is not simply a matter of counting responses.

Interpreting Outcomes

- ^{1.13} Importantly, the different consultation methods cannot just be combined to yield a single course of action that reconciles everyone’s differences and is acceptable to the whole of the local population – for two main reasons:
- » First, the various consultation methods differ in their nature and their outcomes cannot be just aggregated into a single result; and

- » **Second, the populations in different areas will inevitably have different perspectives on the reconfiguration options and in our experience there is no formula in any consultation process that can reconcile everyone's differences in a single way forward.**

- ^{1.14} It is also important to recognise that the outcomes of the consultation process will need to be considered alongside other information available about the likely impact of the proposed option. Whilst the consultation process highlights aspects of this information that stakeholders consider to be important, Powys County Council will need to consider the appropriate emphasis to be placed on each element. In this sense there can be no single 'right' interpretation of all the consultation elements and other information available to Powys County Council in its decision-making process. ORS is clear that its role is to analyse and explain the opinions and arguments of those who have responded to the consultation, but not to recommend any option or variant.
- ^{1.15} Whilst this report brings together a wide range of evidence for Powys County Council to consider, it does not provide a single answer for the future (whether short- or long-term) of secondary education in South Powys. It is for the Cabinet to take high-level policy decisions based on their understanding of the services for which they are responsible and other relevant considerations, including equalities. In their deliberations, the members of Powys County Council will review the evidence and considerations that have emerged during consultation while also taking account of all the other relevant evidence.

Report of Consultation Outcomes

- ^{1.16} This full report of the consultation outcomes considers the feedback received through each of the different elements of the consultation process and provides a comprehensive evidence base to help inform the decision-making process for the Council. The report traverses public, professional and stakeholder opinions and feelings in considerable detail to achieve a comprehensive understanding – and it is the journey, as well as the destination, that will matter to those wishing to understand the assumptions, arguments, conclusions and feelings about current and future secondary education provision in Powys. Verbatim quotations are used not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of view. ORS does not endorse the statements made, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly.
- ^{1.17} We recognise that considering the feedback from each element of the consultation in turn can at times be repetitive given that similar issues often emerged across the different strands – but it is important that this full report provides an accurate reflection of all of the feedback received. However, the executive summary concisely reviews the full range of feedback received, and brings together the overall perspectives and the common themes that have emerged fairly quickly. We trust that the summary is a sound guide to the consultation outcomes and how they might be interpreted, and that both the summary and full reports will be helpful to all concerned.

2. Executive Summary

Summary of Main Findings

Introduction

^{2.1} We trust that this executive summary is a sound guide to the consultation outcomes and how they might be interpreted, but readers are encouraged to read the full document for detailed insights. The full report traverses public, professional and stakeholder opinions and feelings in considerable detail to achieve a comprehensive understanding and it is the journey, as well as the destination, that will matter to those wishing to understand the assumptions, arguments, conclusions and feelings about changes to secondary schools in South Powys. We trust that the summary and full reports will be helpful to all concerned.

The Consultation Process

^{2.2} The consultation comprised a number of elements intended to provide several opportunities for residents and stakeholders to become involved and to share their opinions on the proposals. These elements are outlined below.

The Open Consultation Questionnaires

^{2.3} The Main, Young Persons' and Primary consultation questionnaires were developed to include relevant summaries of background information on the Council's Case for Change and each of the main proposals for English and Welsh medium education, including post-16 education. The following key topics were covered in the consultation questionnaires:

- » English Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For English Medium Education
- » Welsh Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For Welsh Medium Education
- » Considering Equalities
- » Information About Respondents

^{2.4} The questionnaires were available online through the Council's dedicated website and the URL was also printed on the paper copies. Paper copies were made available in locations identified as relevant, including local libraries, leisure facilities, County Hall and all affected Primary and Secondary schools. Respondents had the option to submit their completed questionnaire directly to ORS via a freepost mailing address or to the Council.

Questionnaire responses

- ^{2.5} All questionnaire responses in which at least one of the consultation questions was answered and received by ORS by the close of the consultation period were included in the analysis. One additional week was given for submissions sent by second class post or returned directly to PCC contact points.
- ^{2.6} A total of 1047 questionnaires were analysed, of which 625 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 148 to the Young Persons' questionnaire, and 274 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.
- ^{2.7} Of the total number of questionnaires received, 6 indicated that they were representing organisations or groups.

Meetings and Workshops

- ^{2.8} Each meeting or workshop received a standard presentation from Powys County Council (henceforth PCC) on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers. The sessions were held and attended as follows:

Governors meetings at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, involving 24 governors over the two sessions (10 at Brecon and 14 at Gwernyfed);

Meetings with school staff at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools where most, if not all, of the schools' staff members attended;

Secondary school pupil workshops: both secondary schools were invited to select a number of children aged 11 to 18 years to participate in deliberative workshops. Sessions were held in each school for groups of pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5. 177 pupils attended; 60 in Gwernyfed and 117 in Brecon;

Primary school Pupil Workshops: all Brecon and Gwernyfed feeder primary schools were invited to select a number of children aged between six and 11 to attend deliberative workshops - one for each high school catchment area. Over 130 children participated; and

Public Meetings were held at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. Around 175 people attended over the two sessions. According to figures provided by PCC, 1,013 members of the public attended the two sessions; 219 at Brecon and 794 at Gwernyfed.

Submissions and Social Media

- ^{2.9} During the formal consultation process, 29 **statutory written submissions** were received concerning the proposals for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. These were from: Assembly Members and Members of Parliament; Estyn, other political groups; school Governing Bodies; Town and Community Councils; and other affected local organisations. In addition, 409 **other submissions** were received from local residents and non-statutory organisations. The vast majority of submissions were sent in by those within the Gwernyfed catchment area.
- ^{2.10} Five **social media** (Facebook) pages contained updates, comments or tweets referring to PCC's proposal and/or its perceived impacts, and this report presents content posted during the consultation period.

Main Issues Raised

The Case for Change

The Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.11 62% of parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School or associated feeder school pupils agreed with the Council's case for change. More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (53%) and Employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (52%) also agreed. However, less than half of respondents agreed that the Council is right to make changes in 5 of the 8 stakeholder groups. Most notably, parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed High School or feeder school pupils (33%) and other residents (34%) showed lower levels of support.
- 2.12 The first element of the proposal is to establish a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate on the two existing sites.
- 2.13 A quarter of parents, carers or guardians of children in Brecon HS/feeder schools (23%), and a fifth (20%) of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agreed with this element of the proposal. Only 5% of parents, carers or guardians of children who attend Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools agreed with this element of the proposal.
- 2.14 The second element of the proposal is the construction of a new building for the proposed new secondary school with an aim to open in 2019/2020.
- 2.15 Agreement with this element of the proposal was particularly higher among parents, carers or guardians of Brecon HS/feeder pupils (64%). However, there were lower levels of support among all other stakeholder groups. Two fifths (40%) of those who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) showed agreement with the proposal to create a new building for the proposed new secondary school, while around a third or more of those who are Governors of a school in Powys (35%) and members of staff in the Powys school/education system (32%) agreed. Just 5% of parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder pupils agreed.
- 2.16 The third element of the proposal is to locate the proposed new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require schools transport.
- 2.17 Again, parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School/feeder schools pupils (71%) indicated higher support than other stakeholder groups. Just 4% of parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed High School/feeder school pupils agreed.
- 2.18 The fourth element of the proposal is for all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges.
- 2.19 At least 80% of respondents in all stakeholder groups disagreed with this element of the proposal.
- 2.20 Respondents who disagreed with any elements of the proposal were asked why. The most frequently occurring arguments were that Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable; that the proposals will result in increased travel times/distances; that the proposals will negatively affect the community, and that Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools.

The Young Person's Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.21 Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that their education was suffering due to a number of issues identified by the Council potentially affecting their education.
- 2.22 Not having enough different subjects available at KS4 and post-16: Over half (53%) of Brecon HS students agreed while only 8% of those in Gwernyfed HS agreed.
- 2.23 Problems with class sizes (too big/small): Around half (49%) of Brecon HS students agreed and just 2% of Gwernyfed HS students agreed.
- 2.24 Problems due to the quality of the school buildings: Almost three quarters (72%) of Brecon HS students agreed; only 2% of Gwernyfed HS students agreed.
- 2.25 Disruption due to having to travel between sites for lessons during the day (post-16): Around a fifth (21%) of respondents in Brecon HS agreed, while 5% of those in Gwernyfed agreed.
- 2.26 Not having enough up-to-date IT equipment: Over half (54%) of Brecon HS pupils agreed; around 1 in 10 (8%) of Gwernyfed HS pupils agreed.
- 2.27 Not having enough up-to-date other school equipment such as text books, laboratory or PE equipment: Half (52%) of respondents in Brecon HS agreed, 2% of those in Gwernyfed agreed.
- 2.28 Half (51%) of Brecon High School and feeder school students agreed with the Council's case for change, while less than 1 in 10 (8%) of Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed.
- 2.29 More than a quarter (28%) of Brecon HS/feeder students agreed that a new English-medium secondary school should be established for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017. 0% of Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed.
- 2.30 65% of Brecon HS/feeder school students agreed with the proposal to construct a new building for the proposed new school. Only 2% of Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed.
- 2.31 Three quarters (74%) of Brecon HS/feeder students agreed with the proposal to locate the proposed new school building in Brecon to minimise the number of pupils requiring school transport, while only 1 in 20 (5%) Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed.
- 2.32 More than a fifth (22%) of Brecon HS/feeder students agreed with the provision of post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC group of colleges. 8% Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed.
- 2.33 The most common reason for disagreement with the proposal among young people in Brecon HS/feeder schools was that they didn't want to lose their Sixth Form or believed that Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools. Others commonly expressed concern over the standards of education at/accountability of NPTC in Brecon, or state that the proposal may result in a lack of subject choice for Post-16 students.
- 2.34 Those in Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools most frequently disagreed with the proposals due to increased travel times/distances, or argued that Gwernyfed is a good/financially stable school and should not be closed. Others suggested that the proposals will result in a lower standard of education.

Primary Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.35 Two thirds (66%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the Council's case for change, while less than 3 in 10 (28%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed.
- 2.36 A third (34%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to establish a new 11-16 English-only school to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed. Only 1 in 10 (10%) of respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed with the proposed changes.
- 2.37 While over half (57%) Brecon feeder respondents agreed with the proposed change to construct a new building for the proposed new school, only 6% of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.
- 2.38 More than two thirds (69%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to locate the new school building in Brecon to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport. Only 6% of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.
- 2.39 The proposed change of 16+ education being provided by the college in Brecon was opposed by around two thirds (64%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools, and more than three quarters (77%) of those from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed.
- 2.40 Respondents who disagreed with any elements of the proposal were asked why this was. Brecon feeder school pupils most commonly argued that Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools, and that the Council needs to maintain current provision of schools. Others suggested that the proposal will negatively affect Welsh speakers/Welsh as a language and that Welsh needs to be taught in schools.
- 2.41 Those in Gwernyfed feeder schools were most likely to disagree due to increased travel times/cost, and argued that Gwernyfed is a good and financially stable school. Respondents also commonly objected because they did not want to go to Brecon High School.

Views on the Case for Change

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.42 BHS pupils recognised their school's age and poor condition, as well as the relatively poor educational practices in evidence there. Some important examples of the latter were that teachers are frequently teaching subjects outside their areas of expertise and an over-use of supply teachers. Therefore, most understood and supported PCC's reasons for considering changes to the way in which it delivers secondary school education in the area.
- 2.43 Although GHS pupils agreed that change is needed at the Brecon site, they rejected PCC's case for their own school. Specifically, they argued that low pupil numbers are not an issue because: smaller schools and class sizes are preferable to larger ones in terms of educational standards; the school naturally has fewer pupils due to its rural location, not because it is in some way deficient; and it is a situation that has partly arisen as a result of this consultation, which has discouraged pupils from attending GHS.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.44 Pupils at both workshops identified the age and poor condition of the two schools - and particularly Brecon - as a motive behind establishing a new school. Pupils in the Brecon catchment workshop also acknowledged the high running costs of both schools and the need to save money. In addition, specific issues in relation to Gwernyfed High School (henceforth GHS) were mentioned, notably its falling pupil numbers and lack of subject availability at A-level.

- 2.45 Pupils at the Gwernyfed catchment session recognised PCC's aim to improve educational standards, facilities and mutual support - but many felt that there is currently little wrong with their local high school, and that any proposed changes are unjustified.

Additional Learning Needs Stakeholders and Pupils

- 2.46 Stakeholders felt that the main issue with ALN education is the lack of funding: they therefore struggled to understand how a larger school could improve anything. On the other hand, pupils were optimistic that a new school would offer better teaching quality and support, a wider range of subjects and the opportunity to meet different people, including others with ALN.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.47 In terms of the case for change, some respondents felt that the Council is being disingenuous in its framing of the consultation. They claimed that the primary purpose of the proposals is to eradicate BHS's debt and access capital funding - effectively sacrificing one school for another new one. Many doubted the legality of this.

Quality of Education

Governors

- 2.48 Governors at both meetings, but especially in Gwernyfed, felt aggrieved that the consultation document fails to acknowledge the positive improvement trajectory of their schools in terms of both educational standards and leadership.
- 2.49 Moreover, many took offence at what they saw as an implicit assumption in the document that teaching quality needs to improve - and there was some scepticism that this would indeed happen within a larger school, or at least that it would not happen in Gwernyfed's case given it has recently been outperforming Brecon.

Staff

- 2.50 Participants at both meetings were unconvinced that reorganisation alone improves educational standards - and neither set of staff felt that their schools' current improvement trajectories are sufficiently recognised in the consultation document.
- 2.51 Furthermore, in their view, the consultation documentation unfairly suggests a connection between poor educational outcomes and the quality of the present teaching staff - and does not recognise the role PCC has allegedly played in falling educational standards across Powys as a whole, especially with respect to lack of support for schools.

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.52 Gwernyfed pupils were strongly opposed to the proposed closure of their school: they described it as a 'happy' and 'safe' community-focused school in attractive surroundings with a good reputation - and they reasoned that given only BHS needs improving, it is unfair to 'tar Gwernyfed with the same brush'. Indeed, pupils felt that merging their school with 'a bad one' would have a detrimental effect on its current high educational standards.
- 2.53 Furthermore, pupils in both areas recognised that BHS has a 'bad reputation' and there was concern that locating the new site there would either allow these issues to continue or fail to eradicate the stigma associated with the existing school.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.54 There was a great deal of support for GHS and thus strong opposition to its proposed closure. Pupils explained that Brecon High School (henceforth BHS) is considered '*to be the problem*' - in contrast to GHS, which was described as '*a good school*'. Furthermore there was concern that a merger of BHS and GHS would negatively impact on the latter's performance.

Public Meetings

- 2.55 Participants at the meetings were unconvinced that reorganisation into a larger school alone will improve educational outcomes for pupils, and there was disquiet in both areas that PCC has not recognised the positive upward trajectory of both schools in its consultation materials.
- 2.56 The perception that pastoral care is better within smaller 11-18 high schools was noted by a former pupil of GHS, who described how the dedication, understanding and support they received from familiar teachers was invaluable in helping them achieve their educational aims. They also discussed the importance of a sixth form in terms of personal development and fostering a sense of responsibility.
- 2.57 Once again, it was said that concerns around stability, options choices and especially educational quality within Powys may result in parents and learners choosing an education elsewhere.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.58 Llangorse and Erwood Community Councils doubted the wisdom and indeed legality of combining two schools with varying educational standards and cultures into one larger school - particularly when the underlying rationale for the proposal is, in its view, to eradicate BHS's debts. Gwernyfed Community Council was also concerned that a new school would not be subject to Estyn inspection for several years following the removal of BHS's special measures status, effectively ensuring a lack of standards monitoring at that school.
- 2.59 Furthermore, stakeholders were worried that an effective 'merger' cannot guarantee current educational and extra-curricular standards are maintained for GHS pupils let alone improved. It was also suggested that a larger school cannot provide proper pastoral care in the same way a smaller one can - and that the widely held view that schools with a minimum of 600 are preferable is no longer generally accepted.
- 2.60 Some responses suggested that PCC is removing a leadership team on an upward trajectory at Gwernyfed in favour of a new and untried formula - and is neglecting the fact that the school itself has improved significantly over the past few years in terms of educational standards and outcomes in developing its proposals.
- 2.61 Estyn is unconvinced that the proposals will demonstrate an improvement in current standards and outcomes for pupils. Moreover, Estyn state that current standards at the schools are not adequately explained.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.62 Despite one submitter agreeing that a critical mass of 600 pupils is necessary for the schools' future success, many challenged the assumption that this number is needed to make a school viable and felt that no evidence had been provided to show that that 'bigger' is 'better'. On the contrary, it was reasoned that Gwernyfed is a good school and that its size simply reflects its rural location.
- 2.63 Respondents were sceptical that merging GHS and BHS would improve educational quality at the former, particularly for pupils affected by uncertainty or transition to the new school at important exam

stages. Moreover, it was argued that PCC has failed to provide any evidence to suggest the proposals would be of benefit, and that its aim for the new school to be *'as good'* as the current ones in terms of standards is unacceptable. In fact, it was felt that merging a *'failing school'* with Gwernyfed would cause standards to slip there which, parents said, would encourage them to send their children out of county or into neighbouring English schools rather than to Brecon.

- 2.64 Being part of a larger school was thought to be disadvantageous to pupils in terms of increased bullying and absenteeism, both of which could affect performance. In addition, the loss of close relationships between pupils and teachers as well as having to get used to new teaching styles within larger classes could, it was said, have a negative impact.
- 2.65 Furthermore, there were concerns that the current close ties between GHS and local businesses that provide important work experience would be jeopardised, further affecting pupils' development.
- 2.66 There was particularly strong support for GHS and a lack of understanding as to why PCC is proposing to close it. Indeed, the current subject range, quality of teaching and strong leadership at the school were praised and thought to reflect the: positive relationships between staff and pupils; excellent academic results (especially compared to other schools); positive progress made since the last Estyn report; and satisfactory staff recruitment and retention record. The current small size of Gwernyfed was also considered to be an asset in continuing high standards in that it allows teachers to dedicate more time to students. In addition, parents described the invaluable support the school has provided to pupils with Additional Learning Needs.
- 2.67 Moreover, despite one respondent describing the management team at Brecon High School as *'failing'*, a few responses commended the staff there for their hard work in trying to improve the school and recognised that there have been improvements since its placement in special measures.

Social Media

- 2.68 Social media users frequently commented on the quality and *'well-rounded'* education provided at GHS, as well as the excellent pastoral care offered there.

Finance and Funding

Governors

- 2.69 The Gwernyfed Governors were keen to understand PCC's concerns about the financial management of their school given it is currently in surplus. They also sought clarity around how funding arrangements for both schools would be organised if the proposals are approved - especially in the context of how school budgets are presently managed and ongoing concerns around the implications of the historical debt burden at Brecon.
- 2.70 There was particular concern around what the Governors termed *'parity of educational opportunity'*. They worried that Brecon's resources would be significantly higher than Gwernyfed's under any new arrangement because of historical circumstances whereby the former has *'lived outside its means'* to maintain a larger staffing structure, whereas the former has made reductions to ensure a balanced budget.
- 2.71 Concerns around the capital funding being spent on developing NPTC's facilities were prevalent at the Brecon meeting.

Staff

- 2.72 Participants at both staff meetings suggested that finance not quality is the driver for the proposals.
- 2.73 Staff participants at Brecon argued that the school's current financial situation has been caused by systematic failures and historical mismanagement by PCC - and in some part by the uncertainty raised by the ongoing consultation process around BHS's future - and should not reflect badly on its current staff and leadership.
- 2.74 Furthermore, they questioned whether the Council is reflecting the current picture at Brecon by using outdated financial figures in its consultation document, and complained about a lack of support for a head teacher who is attempting to move the school in the right direction in a financial sense.
- 2.75 It was also said that the projected financial savings are not sufficient to compensate for the 'chaos' the proposals will cause if implemented.

Public Meetings

- 2.76 Participants were of the view that the proposals are simply about saving the most amount of money possible and not about improving pupil outcomes - and PCC was accused of wishing to close GHS to wipe out BHS's debts and moving too quickly to make changes in an attempt to secure Welsh Government capital funding for rebuilding the latter.
- 2.77 The need to address Brecon's buildings issues were not disputed, but the vision of building a brand new learning campus without any certainty around long-term Welsh Government capital funding was - as was how the new debt burden will be managed in future.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.78 The balance of views suggested that the savings being proposed do not compensate for the cost to communities (especially in the Gwernyfed catchment area) if the proposals are approved - and some questioned whether or not the savings would, in fact, be swallowed by unforeseen costs or interest on capital loans.
- 2.79 For Gwernyfed catchment residents, the fact their school runs a balanced budget and that a large repayment to the Big Lottery Fund would be required in the event of closure made the proposed saving difficult to accept.
- 2.80 It was argued that the closure of BHS and the writing off of its debt supports the widely-held view that the proposals are driven by financial considerations rather than making improvements to the quality of education and pupil wellbeing. Furthermore, there was concern that once the school's financial situation has been rectified, further changes will stall.
- 2.81 Finally in terms of finances, the cost of providing more pupil transport was thought to represent '*removing one problem, and creating another*'. It was suggested that the money would instead be better spent improving the quality of education in the existing schools

Social Media

- 2.82 Some social media users questioned the motives behind PCC's proposals, suggesting that they are primarily financial insofar as Brecon High School's debts will be eradicated if a new school is established. In this context, GHS was thus seen as something of a 'sacrificial lamb'.

Buildings and Estates

Staff

- 2.83 Staff at both meetings suggested that Powys should look again at the feasibility of keeping both current school sites by considering alternative options (such as an all-through school for Brecon).
- 2.84 There was also a great deal of scepticism around the reasons for the proposals: Gwernyfed staff in particular suggested that they are driven by the need to secure Welsh Government capital funding streams for a new building in Brecon and not by a need to develop better educational standards and outcomes for pupils.

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.85 The short- and long-term future of the school buildings themselves were discussed by secondary school pupils: at Brecon reassurance was sought that the land would be put to good use if the proposals are approved, while there were concerns about how development on the Gwernyfed site may impact the local leisure centre at the sessions there. Brecon pupils also questioned whether whether PCC can afford to build a new school - as well as how it can safeguard BHS pupils in the short-term given the poor condition of the BHS buildings.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.86 Primary school pupils were keen to understand what would become of the GHS building if it were to close.

Public Meetings

- 2.87 Discussions on buildings and estates focused primarily on the lack of surplus capacity at the proposed new school to grow and meet future pupil number projections.
- 2.88 Brecon participants also sought clarification on whether NPTC's facilities will have the capacity and resources to cater for an additional range of subjects and increased number of students at post 16 - and those at Gwernyfed asked for information about how existing community facilities provided by the school sites will be maintained for community use.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.89 The Gwernyfed Campaign Group was concerned that PCC will dispose of Gwernyfed's building and community assets well below their market value and sought more information about the valuation process. They also desired reassurance that the Council would, in the event of sale, put contingency plans in place to ensure that community facilities are maintained and accessible to local people in future.
- 2.90 There was widespread acceptance that BHS requires a new building, but its current Governing Body was concerned *over the lack of capacity at the proposed new school and the ability of the school to meet the future needs of the community. They are also concerned around the security of the funding available and the timeframe for building the new school and impacts on the current building in the interim.*

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.91 Respondents sought more clarity around the possible options for the disposal of the GHS buildings and grounds if the school is to close. Some expressed concern around site falling into disrepair, while others

doubted that PCC would be able to retain the co-located community leisure facilities for community use.

- ^{2.92} Respondents were largely in favour of a new school for Brecon but there were worries around planning and the short timeframe which led some to question whether any development would happen in the near future. There was a clear sense that PCC is culpable for the decline in the quality of BHS's school buildings and that capital funds should be invested into improving or replacing them using a phased approach.
- ^{2.93} Moreover, it was stressed that improvements to or a new school for Brecon should not be dependent on the closure of Gwernyfed - though many suspected that the conditions of accessing Welsh Government capital funding will require a new build.

Social Media

- ^{2.94} Social media users commented on the poor condition of the school buildings at Brecon, and argued that the town needs a brand new school regardless of the outcome of the consultation - and in addition to the retention of GHS. In contrast, the GHS school buildings, facilities and surroundings were viewed very positively: people considered it a 'travesty' that they should be lost, although some suspected plans to convert the site into a 'super primary school' for the area.
- ^{2.95} The proposed new school was also discussed in the context of: its size and capacity; and future-proofing to cater for new housing developments and population growth.

Governance and Staffing of a New School

Governors

- ^{2.96} Governors at Gwernyfed were keen to understand the relationship between PCC, the Shadow Governing Body and Senior Management Team in implementing any possible changes - and stressed that the former should maintain an advisory role and not seek to involve itself in the day-to-day running of the school. They were also concerned about maintaining standards during the transitional period, the potential for staff redundancies and the process for making any redundancies should they be necessary.

Staff

- ^{2.97} Gwernyfed staff principally underlined the challenge they believe a new Shadow Governing Body (when formed) will face in implementing a new school entity in an 'unachievable' timeframe, particularly with respect to developing timetables and negotiating contracts.
- ^{2.98} Furthermore, Gwernyfed were keen to understand the relationship between PCC, the Shadow Governing Body and Senior Management Team in implementing any possible changes - and stressed that the former should not seek to involve itself in the day-to-day running of the school.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- ^{2.99} Stakeholders desired more clarity around the composition of the Shadow Governing Body and how PCC will ensure sufficiently strong leadership to enable the best possible start for the proposed new school - especially given that the current Gwernyfed Governors' vehement opposition to the Council's proposals means it is highly likely that most will leave their posts.

- 2.100 The challenge of a single leadership team ensuring consistent quality across two very different sites was also raised as a concern.
- 2.101 Estyn want more assurance around how the proposals will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management in the proposed new school. Estyn raise concerns around the risks associated in trying to establish a new leadership team and staffing structure in the proposed timeframe, and question whether this will result in tangible improvements to governance and leadership.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.102 Historical issues around the leadership and management of BHS were noted as a cause for concern. Indeed, addressing any leadership and governance deficiencies - including support from PCC - was considered more important than new bricks and mortar.
- 2.103 Establishing the right leadership team was considered critical to the success of a school, but respondents were concerned that PCC has offered little reassurance as to how they would ensure the right people are appointed.

The Implementation Process

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.104 There was some scepticism among secondary school pupils around the proposed timescales for the opening of the proposed new school based on previous experiences of implementation delays in improving the area's primary schools.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.105 Estyn states that PCC has failed to develop a robust risk management plan associated with the timescale for implementation.

Pupil Impacts

Governors

- 2.106 Gwernyfed Governors suggested that one of the most tangible impacts of the proposals for their school's pupils will be the unequal opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities at the Brecon campus due to transport difficulties - an inequality that will be most keenly felt by the most disadvantaged families.
- 2.107 Governors at Brecon noted the excellent example sixth form students set to younger pupils - and that pupil support (both educational and pastoral) is generally far superior when provided by teachers with knowledge of those they have educated for many years.

Staff

- 2.108 Gwernyfed staff highlighted the psychological and social impacts of the recent history of proposed local school closures on young people (and indeed the wider community). Families have apparently moved from the area due to the uncertainty, which has also apparently been very 'damaging' to children's mental wellbeing.

Secondary School Pupils

- ^{2.109} Brecon pupils were supportive of a new secondary school and were hopeful that it would bring important educational improvements such as: subjects being set-based rather than mixed ability; a wider range of subject options; more permanent teachers; and better facilities. However, they were also mindful of resistance to the proposals within the Gwernyfed catchment area, which led them to question whether the two schools should or could be merged successfully. In particular, the increased travel for pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment area was recognised as an issue - as was the possibility that many pupils from that area would likely attend a school elsewhere rather than the proposed new one at Brecon.
- ^{2.110} These issues and concerns were confirmed in the Gwernyfed workshops, where pupils were overwhelmingly opposed to PCC's proposals on the following grounds: Brecon is too far to travel to and access (especially for those in remote areas with no public transport), which has not been sufficiently considered due to *'the difference between what the government and pupils think are acceptable travel times'*; and the additional travel time to and from school would impact on pupils' ability to undertake extra-curricular activities (and on their parents who might have to travel further to collect them) - and would leave little time for homework and 'down time'.
- ^{2.111} Many other reservations were expressed and reassurances sought about attending a larger school. These included: Brecon and Gwernyfed pupils not 'getting on well', possibly resulting in conflicts; pupil increases leading to misbehaviour and larger classes, which would place further strain on teachers and affect educational standards; whether the wellbeing centre at BHS would remain successful within a larger school; whether the school uniform would change and, if so, whether parents would they be expected to pay for it; and whether the termly inter-school sports tournament would be affected.

Primary School Pupils

- ^{2.112} Pupils in the Gwernyfed catchment workshop were particularly concerned about the impact of attending a new secondary school in Brecon, concerns that were also shared by Brecon catchment pupils, though to a lesser extent. Specifically, the location of the new school raised issues around travel, transport and after/out-of-school activities - mainly in relation to: increases to journey times, particularly in terms of time spent on buses and the inconvenience involved in getting to and from school should the bus be missed; and the impact on pupils' social lives and their ability to undertake after-school extra-curricular activities. Given these concerns, it was suggested by some that PCC should consider establishing a new school in a location between the two current facilities.
- ^{2.113} Some pupils in both catchment areas were concerned about the following aspects of attending a larger school: an increase in bullying and the ability of the new school to deal with it effectively; larger class sizes leading to distractions and insufficient teacher time (and thus not necessarily meaning a better education); developing relationships with new teachers; and being split-up from existing friends and making new friendships.
- ^{2.114} There were also general worries in the GHS catchment workshop about the timing of having to move to a new school (if approved). Many workshop pupils would be studying for their GCSEs around this time, which they felt would be unsettling and disruptive.
- ^{2.115} Despite the general concerns about and opposition to the proposals though, some participants in both workshops acknowledged some potential benefits to pupils of having one larger school. In particular they felt that the two existing schools: would be 'stronger' together; would offer opportunities to make new friends; and could be combined into a modern building with better facilities.

Additional Learning Needs Stakeholders and Pupils

- ^{2.116} Although one stakeholder reasoned that being exposed to and getting to know other pupils, especially those with ALN, could be beneficial, others were sceptical as to whether a larger school would benefit pupils with ALN: their main concern was that being around so many more pupils would increase anxiety and stress levels. There was also worry around staff, particularly around ALN teacher to pupil ratios and that new staff may not be sufficiently qualified in or knowledgeable about ALN, resulting in some pupils 'slipping through the net'.
- ^{2.117} In contrast, many pupils were positive about the thought of attending a larger school: they felt it would: enhance the quality of their education by employing more teachers, offering a wider range of subjects and providing a larger support unit; and offer more socialisation opportunities.
- ^{2.118} Conversely, there was some apprehension around having new teachers - and a few participants felt that they would receive better support from a smaller school where pupils and teachers can get to know each other well- and there was also some scepticism about how well pupils from Brecon and Gwernyfed would integrate because they *'don't really like each other'*. This, along with a general increase in pupils, led to fears of more bullying within the proposed new school.
- ^{2.119} There were strong concerns among stakeholders that increased travel and use of public transport could cause anxiety and stress among ALN students, many of whom rely on routine and consistency. Furthermore, it was said that: pupils without sufficient support at home (such as young carers) would be affected by the logistics of their starting day earlier and pick-ups/drop-offs; and that it would be unacceptable for pupils with specific issues such as incontinence to be expected to travel further. However, most pupils already have to travel to school and did not consider it to be a significant issue.
- ^{2.120} Stakeholders identified the importance of effective transitional management if the proposal is to go ahead; they emphasised that ALN pupils may find the changes particularly stressful. Suggestions as to how PCC could (and should) help pupils and their families with the transition included: sufficient, ongoing communication; engagement with parents throughout the whole process; thorough assessments of pupils to ensure they receive the correct support; multi-agency working (for example between the school, social services and mental health services); providing as much continuity as possible; and beginning transitional support as early as possible.
- ^{2.121} Pupils also discussed the types of things they would find useful in navigating around and accessing facilities within a new school - such as maps, signposting, lifts and ramps.

Public Meetings

- ^{2.122} Participants highlighted a number of concerns around the impact of the proposed changes on pupils' wellbeing, particularly in relation to: additional travel distance and time and their consequences for: reduced sleep, homework and recreational time; academic attentiveness; and extra-curricular participation both within and outside young people's home communities; the mechanics and implications of schools providing more daytime extra-curricular activities; reduced pastoral care within a larger school; The loss of role models, support and mentoring for younger pupils if sixth forms are removed; and fractured friendship groups.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- ^{2.123} Respondents complained that PCC's proposals represent the removal of choice for some parents and pupils within the current Gwernyfed catchment area.

- ^{2.124} Respondents also questioned the rationale of transporting pupils additional distances and the impacts this will cause for farming families (in terms of the time available for children to assist with the day-to-day running of farms) and to young people's attainment levels, access to educational and other opportunities, general well-being and connections to their communities. Indeed, it was suggested that the prospect of additional travel time to Brecon may prompt Gwernyfed parents and pupils to consider furthering their education in Herefordshire, in contravention to several local and national policies designed to protect and meet the needs of rural Welsh communities. Estyn want more detail about how PCC will engage with parents who may chose a school other than the proposed new school to reduce this risk.
- ^{2.125} It was especially emphasised that the proposals create an unequal playing field in terms of pupil access to and participation in after-school activities - and that those from lower socio-economic backgrounds in the Gwernyfed area will be double disadvantaged in accessing to the full range of extra-curricular activities because of restricted transport.
- ^{2.126} Estyn state that PCC need to demonstrate how any disruption to learners would be minimised if the proposal is approved, and would like to see a clearer risk management strategy from PCC relating to possible negative impacts that additional travel time would have on learners. They also want to see greater clarity on the exact provision planned for those learners having to travel more than one hour.

Written Submissions (Public)

- ^{2.127} Many written responses expressed concern - and indeed anger - around the negative impact additional travel would have on pupils, which some argued directly contradicts the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It was said that many pupils in the Gwernyfed catchment area already spend long periods of time travelling to and from school, and that any increase would be unacceptable. Indeed, there was concern that longer days and time spent travelling between the two sites would severely impact on their quality of life by: restricting their social lives; impacting on their ability to attend after-school clubs; and causing tiredness. The lack of reliable public transport and access issues for pupils in more isolated, rural areas was also predicted to result in increased non-attendance at school.
- ^{2.128} The burden of potentially having to transport their children to and from a school much further away so they can attend after-school clubs was noted by pupils' parents and family members, many of whom said they have neither the time nor financial means to do so. There were also concerns that farming families would be impacted by the proposals, as their children would not be home from school in time to assist in the running of the farms and develop their future farming careers.
- ^{2.129} Comments were made on the effect continued uncertainty around the future of their local primary and secondary schools is having on pupils' wellbeing. Not knowing where they will study for their GCSEs and potentially having to move between school sites was described as stressful for pupils, while other worries included: losing friendship groups; not being able to make new friends because of the 'rivalry' between the two schools; and a larger school resulting in fewer available places for sports competitions and other events.
- ^{2.130} Moreover, parents from the Gwernyfed area were of the view that their children's health would be put at risk through: spending more time on public transport as opposed to walking to and
- ^{2.131} from school; having longer days with less sleep; not having access to the school nurse who is local to their area; and potentially being exposed to negative influences in the Brecon area (such as drug use).

Social Media

- 2.132 Concerns were expressed around transportation, particularly in relation to: the implications of longer journeys to and from school for GHS pupils in terms of tiredness, time for homework and revision, the ability to undertake extra-curricular activities and the potential for bullying on school buses; additional expense for families and PCC; and the potential environmental impacts of increased travel.
- 2.133 For these reasons, many social media users suggested that GHS parents may choose not to send their children to a new high school in Brecon, instead preferring other Powys schools, out-of-county schools or schools in England. Either of the latter two options, it was said, would result in a detrimental loss of revenue for PCC.

Staff Impacts

Governors

- 2.134 Governors at Brecon raised the threat of losing the best teachers if A-levels are removed, which would impact upon the quality of teaching and support available to all pupils.

Staff

- 2.135 Of most concern to staff was the impact of continuing job insecurity on their own and colleagues' mental, emotional and financial wellbeing - and the lack of support offered by PCC in relation to this. They also suggested that the retention of current staff will be a real challenge in the short-term unless there is some recognition of their positive contribution to the schools and some clarification around job security, redundancy and redeployment can be given.
- 2.136 Furthermore, another important concern was that the loss of sixth form provision from BHS will result in a teacher 'exodus' because of their general enjoyment of teaching at this level and the loss of career development opportunities.
- 2.137 Participants were also keen to see the possible financial, logistical and time-related impact of teacher travel between sites factored into the current proposals - as well as a recognition that such an increase in travel will have on staff stress levels (and thus sickness levels).

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.138 Secondary School Pupils worried that the proposals would put teachers' job security into doubt and that such uncertainty may result in some choosing to leave, further impacting on the current quality of education for pupils.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.139 Primary school pupils asked: whether current teachers from Brecon and Gwernyfed would be employed at the proposed new school; whether they would need to reapply for their jobs; and how PCC plans to recruit to a new school bearing in mind travel times.

Public Meetings

- 2.140 It was said at the public meetings that the recruitment and retention of teaching staff is already difficult because of job insecurity - and that the possible removal of the challenge of teaching at A-level will further exacerbate this.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

2.141 Stakeholders questioned whether the proposed timetable for forming the new school entity is feasible given that negotiations around staff appointments and contracts may be complex and time-consuming. Furthermore, it was said that: uncertainty around job security could lead to the imminent loss of high quality staff; PCC's Human Resources department is currently too overstretched to cope with changes of this magnitude; and that the Council must clarify whether the whole range of potential staff and pupil travel costs has been taken into account.

Written Submissions (Public)

2.142 Without the challenge of teaching at A-level and with the added pressure of job insecurity affecting morale, it was feared that Powys will struggle to attract and retain the best teachers - leading to a drop in overall teaching standards. There were also responses around teachers potentially being required to travel between the two sites: people asked whether this would detract from time spent in the classroom - and whether they would be reimbursed for additional travel costs.

2.143 PCC was criticised for its lack of support for staff, and it was suggested that the Council should try to help staff overcome the issues within their schools rather than continually threaten closure. There were also questions around whether PCC has capacity to develop and process new staff contracts, as well as time to recruit new members of staff before the proposed opening in September 2017.

Social Media

2.144 Comments were made on staff uncertainty and redundancies (and the cost the latter would entail) at both Brecon and Gwernyfed:

Have they even budgeted for all the redundancy pay outs they will need to make when these new schools open on one site? (Save Powys Schools)

2.145 Furthermore, there was concern about the ability of the proposed new school to attract quality teaching staff without a sixth form.

Community Impacts

Secondary School Pupils

2.146 An important issue for many pupils was the impact the proposed closure of GHS would have on its affiliated local clubs. Indeed, there was concern that many of the area's young people would no longer be able to attend these clubs due to getting home later from school and that numbers would further dwindle with no local high school. In addition, it was thought that local businesses and the area's sense of community would suffer hugely in the absence of GHS.

Primary School Pupils

2.147 Primary school Pupils were concerned about the impact of the proposed closure of GHS on its associated clubs, especially the Rugby Club. Indeed, there is apparently a great deal of uncertainty around their future insofar as the area's children would likely choose to attend clubs around their new school rather than in their local area.

2.148 There was also worry about how communities and friendships would be affected by the proposal: that is, existing friendship groups may break up, especially as some pupils would be likely to attend schools

other than Brecon depending on their location. Some participants also explained that their siblings currently attend Gwernyfed and that they wish *'to follow family footsteps.'*

Additional Learning Needs Stakeholders and Pupils

- 2.149 Stakeholders emphasised the importance of keeping ALN services within communities because of providers' local knowledge and better understanding of the needs of pupils and families. It was also argued that attending a school further away could weaken pupils' links to their local communities, which could lead to: mental health problems such as anxiety, especially for those with spectrum disorders who rely on the structure and routine of being within their local areas; young people not being home in time to attend local after school-clubs; and some pupils requiring help and support from their local communities later on in life, but encountering difficulties in doing so if they have become disconnected.
- 2.150 Furthermore, it was reasoned that pupils are *'entitled to be in their communities'* and that integrating with pupils within their local areas is an important part of their socialisation.

Public Meetings

- 2.151 Both sets of participants raised concerns about the future prosperity, wellbeing and cohesion of their communities should the proposals be approved.
- 2.152 Participants at Brecon focused mainly on the negative impacts of losing the sixth form and Welsh language stream at BHS, commenting that pupils attending schools outside their local area will find it difficult to attend extra-curricular activities, resulting in alienation and a general *'erosion of community cohesion'*.
- 2.153 At Gwernyfed, meeting attendees were strongly opposed to the proposed closure of their local school, which they felt would eventually also lead to the loss of its associated community clubs and groups (the latter being essential for well-being and cohesion).
- 2.154 Another significant issue at Gwernyfed was that approval of the changes would be very much against the will of the people and would result in the further depletion of essential services. This, it was said, will result in families *'voting with their feet'* and leaving the area - leading to further falling pupil numbers (and financial premiums) and broken, ageing communities.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.155 Stakeholders stressed the case for retaining GHS in part because of the disproportionately negative impact its loss would have on community cohesion, culture and wellbeing.
- 2.156 A particular worry was the detrimental impact closing GHS would have on the area's sporting, arts and other community groups, many of which make significant use of the school buildings currently - and the lack of mention in the consultation document about specific mitigations against this impact. Furthermore, Painscastle Community Council and the Gwernyfed Campaign Group both raised the prospect of a decline in Young Farmers Club membership as a result of GHS's proposed closure and the dispersal of its pupils to various schools.
- 2.157 The economic impact of the school's loss on local businesses and the housing market was also highlighted as a key concern - as was the expectation that families will *'vote with their feet'* and leave the area (or indeed not be attracted there in the first place) because of the lack of secondary education provision, leaving behind broken, ageing communities.

- 2.158 Estyn suggest that PCC should do more to evidence what steps it would take to mitigate the risks identified in its equalities and community assessments.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.159 A range of community impacts were identified by respondents from the Gwernyfed area, whose submissions reflect the important role the high school plays within the local community. There was deep concern that, should it close, the impact on the local area would be deep and far-reaching. Specific worries were that: educated, talented young people will leave the area, leaving an older population and a low-skilled local community; pupils and their parents will use facilities in the Brecon area, putting the Gwernyfed catchment area's economy at risk; an area without a local high school is discouraging to families; and that local facilities such as the leisure centre, sport clubs and cultural groups will face an uncertain future. Consequently, it was predicted that the proposed closure of GHS would effectively divide the community.
- 2.160 In addition, the range of facilities that would be made available at Brecon Leisure Centre while the new school is being built was questioned: reassurance was sought that there would be sufficient capacity for adequate provision in the interim period.
- 2.161 Essentially, PCC's was criticised for generating urban solutions to rural problems: its proposals were considered more suited to densely populated urban areas and the Council was accused of failing to consider issues specific to the rurality of Powys communities - such as difficult transport networks and naturally smaller schools.

Social Media

- 2.162 Many social media users described Gwernyfed High School (henceforth GHS) as an essential part of the community, and suggested that its removal would be to the detriment of the local area and its residents.

Post-16 Education

Governors

- 2.163 The main argument put forward by both sets of Governors is that the proposals discriminate against Brecon and Gwernyfed learners by removing parental/learner choice at post-16 level. It was frequently said that, if the proposal is approved, BHS and GHS pupils alone in Powys will lose the choice between sixth form and tertiary education - and indeed the ability to 'mix and match' their subjects. This is particularly important in the context of the apparent value placed on the sixth form system in the area and the fact that tertiary education will not suit all pupils, some of whom value the structure of a sixth form.
- 2.164 Many concerns were raised around the perceived poor quality of NPTC's post-16 provision - as well as the College's capacity to offer as many subjects as stated, deliver courses from beginning to end and offer adequate pastoral support to pupils. Indeed, there was significant worry that, should NPTC fail to retain enough students on particular courses (or lose the staff members delivering them), those remaining would have to travel to Neath to continue their education - which would again be potentially difficult for disadvantaged families and those living in very rural areas.
- 2.165 The suggested implication of these concerns is that Powys learners will be lost to other Welsh counties or to England because of their reluctance to entrust their post-16 education to NPTC.

2.166 Finally in terms of post-16 education, Governors in both areas suggested that replacing the current successful and well-regarded South Powys consortium model with an untested provider is a risk to pupils' education.

Staff

2.167 Staff participants made a number of points around the continuity and quality of post-16 education in the area. They suggested that NPTC lacks the capacity and resources to provide at least comparable education provision to what is currently provided by the schools - and sought reassurances that pupils will never be expected to travel to Neath to complete their education (which has apparently happened in the past).

2.168 Lack of accountability and quality assurance in relation to NPTC's performance was also a concern, and overall staff felt that removing the option of school-based sixth form in favour of the proposed tertiary model would lead to an unnecessarily uncertain future for pupils.

2.169 There was also significant worry about continuity for pupils; that is, being taught at the critical A-level stage by teachers with whom they are familiar and who know 'what makes them tick'. Moreover, there was a sense that younger pupils would suffer as a result of a lack of sixth form, whose pupils act as role models and have a significant positive influence on others.

2.170 Staff also noted the unfairness of removing post-16 parental and learner choice within the area, a unique situation in the context of Powys as a whole and one that may result in the loss of Powys pupils to educational establishments in, for example, Hereford and Merthyr Tydfil where more courses are offered and the quality of education is assured. This, in turn, would seriously jeopardise the sustainability of NPTC's Brecon-based provision.

Secondary School Pupils

2.171 Pupils in both areas considered it unfair to take away pupils' right to choose where they study, especially in the case of those who prefer to learn in a school environment.

2.172 BHS pupils were particularly opposed to the proposal for the area's post-16 education to be delivered by NPTC. They urged PCC to retain a sixth form at the proposed new school site for the following reasons: sixth form pupils provide inspiration, encouragement and set a good example for younger year groups; sixth forms offer more continuity in terms of pupil/teacher relationships and educational support; it is advantageous to provide post-16 education locally because after-school support can be easily accessed as teachers more often than not live nearby; college teachers not being 'local' may affect the quality of education and pastoral support; a range of important (and CV-friendly) responsibilities and opportunities are offered in sixth forms that colleges do not provide; friendship groups can be educated together; and the current South Powys Consortium is working well.

2.173 One of the most significant concerns among pupils in both catchment areas was the perceived poor standard of NPTC's provision. The Neath and Brecon campuses were both said to be lacking in: teaching quality; proper management (especially in relation to teachers leaving before the end of term and not being replaced); facilities; and capacity to accommodate more pupils. Participants thus expressed strong reservations as to whether NPTC can deliver what is promised; indeed, some felt they would prefer to attend colleges and schools elsewhere - such as in Merthyr or Hereford - with proven track-records and good quality assurance.

2.174 Indeed, some pupils explained that uncertainty around the future of their school has led many to apply for or consider Hereford or Merthyr Colleges regardless of the consultation outcome. As such, they said

that the number of post-16 education pupils at the NPTC campus in Brecon may not increase by as much as PCC suggests.

Primary School Pupils

^{2.175} The proposal for post-16 education to be delivered via the NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon was not met with a great deal of opposition, though pupils in the Brecon catchment workshop were more sceptical and questioned: why the new school would not have its own sixth form; why PCC cannot run the college; whether the college would offer a sufficient range of subjects; and why the Council feels NPTC would provide better post-16 education than the proposed new school. There was also some concern about being unfamiliar with the college teachers.

^{2.176} However, some pupils recognised the benefits of having a better range of subjects available at A-Level.

Additional Learning Needs Stakeholders and Pupils

^{2.177} Most stakeholders saw issues with the provision of post-16 education for ALN pupils, particularly in terms of access to a range of subjects. Therefore, participants predicted that college-based study would help improve ALN pupils' educational quality. It was also hoped that encouraging and enabling more of them to attend college would free space in schools like Penmaes.

^{2.178} Despite this though, NPTC's apparently poor reputation and lack of suitable courses in the Brecon area led some to question whether it would be able to 'deliver' for ALN students. Other reservations included: whether college-based education only is the most appropriate option for such a large area; potentially less focus on the pupil wellbeing within the college compared to schools; and the implications of increasing numbers of pupils requiring transport for college.

^{2.179} The importance of transitional support for post-16 pupils, as well as partnership working between the college and adult services, was also discussed by stakeholders.

^{2.180} Some ALN pupils recognised the advantages of college-based education: participants who were planning to attend college explained that they were doing so because of the range of options and flexibility available to them. However, most who were almost 16 years of age said they would prefer to continue their studies at Ysgol Penmaes because of the help offered to SEN students there.

Public Meetings

^{2.181} Meeting participants were extremely concerned that the NPTC group does not currently have the capacity to deliver at least equal or better quality post-16 provision than is currently offered in South Powys in terms of teaching quality, subject and teacher availability and facilities such as science labs and common rooms.

^{2.182} Participants also noted the lack of assurance around sustainability and that all the advertised courses will continue to be delivered locally and not transferred to Neath or cancelled altogether once commenced due to student or teacher shortages - and about the lack of accountability in such an event.

^{2.183} All this is compounded by a sense that Brecon and Gwernyfed pupils are not being offered the same choice of post-16 provision (that is, a sixth form in addition to a tertiary college) as others are across the county.

^{2.184} In light of the above, it was strongly suggested that the current arrangement - close collaboration between sixth forms and the college - is maintained.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- ^{2.185} Many comments made by statutory stakeholders underline a sense of inequity that parents and pupils in south Powys will not have the same choice of post-16 delivery models as those in the rest of the county. Furthermore, there is a sense that entrusting local post-16 education to an untried and untested provider with limited accountability to PCC is a risk. Particular concerns were around: a perception of poor educational standards and outcomes at NPTC; reduced access to teachers and the support and pastoral care they can offer within a sixth form environment; the possibility that NPTC could withdraw provision from the Brecon campus at any time should student numbers render it unviable; and whether the promised breadth of A-level choice will materialise in reality.
- ^{2.186} Indeed, several respondents were of the view that PCC's estimates of potential NPTC student numbers are optimistic given many are likely to look outside Powys (and even Wales) for their post-16 education - and even if accurate could not sustain the proposed 25 A-level courses.
- ^{2.187} Estyn state that there is insufficient evidence around how the reorganisation of post 16 education into a single site at Brecon will improve quality and outcomes for learners. Furthermore, the risks to the first cohort of year 12 pupils entering the tertiary system have not been adequately assessed.
- ^{2.188} The balance of opinion among statutory stakeholders was that the current South Powys Consortium model of post-16 education provides better quality for pupils, even if it offers less subject choice. They thus strongly desired maintaining the status quo; that is, both BHS and GHS continuing to deliver academic A-levels, with support from NPTC in the delivery of vocational options.

Written Submissions (Public)

- ^{2.189} Some respondents complimented the quality of post-16 education at the two current schools and could not understand how the loss of their sixth forms could be of any benefit to pupils. Others rejected PCC's claim that the current range of A-Level subjects is insufficient; on the contrary, it was argued that some pupils do not want or need greater choice, while others would prefer to settle for a more limited range of subjects delivered in smaller, good quality sixth forms than risk their educational future with an apparently untested provider in the form of NPTC. There were, however, a few comments around the poor choice of A-level subjects, inadequate facilities ('outdated' science labs for example) and poor teacher retention within the current high schools.
- ^{2.190} Many responses highlighted serious concerns about NPTC's educational standards and capacity to deliver the broad range of courses promised at the Brecon campus. The College's apparently poor reputation and lack of local accountability were also criticised; in relation to the latter, people commented on their own and others' experiences of courses being cancelled due to low numbers. Furthermore, current facilities (such as the science laboratories) at the College in Brecon were considered poorer than those at GHS in particular.
- ^{2.191} A further reservation was whether sufficient good quality staff could be recruited to teach for only '*a couple of hours a week*'. Also, there was worry that they would not be as available and supportive as sixth form teachers who have built up a relationship with their pupils over a number of years.
- ^{2.192} Respondents typically did not wish to see post-16 education provided by an out-of-area organisation, leaving PCC with reduced control and influence; in fact, some accused the Council of abandoning their responsibilities in this respect. There was also some distrust of NPTC's intentions and fear that its main focus is profit over educational quality. Respondents also questioned what would happen if the College decides it is not financially viable to continue its Brecon-based provision in future.

- 2.193 In addition to the above, it was claimed that the lack of local school-based sixth forms would encourage some parents to send their children to out-of-county colleges and schools, including those over the border in England. This, it was claimed, would not only impact on post-16 pupil numbers in Powys, but also on students' right to be educated in their own country. There was also concern around additional transport costs, which it was feared families and pupils would be responsible for.
- 2.194 Respondents also championed the benefits of having sixth form pupils within schools: they were described as role models for younger pupils and were thought to offer a great deal in terms of tutoring and mentoring. Furthermore, the continuity of education offered by school-based sixth forms was considered essential in terms of improving pupil performance and encouraging those who wish to further their education.
- 2.195 Alternative suggestions from written submitters included: merging Brecon and Gwernyfed sixth forms; and teachers travelling to different sites or carrying out 'Skype tutorials' to reduce travel and disruption for pupils, while still providing a range of subjects.

Social Media

- 2.196 Social media users frequently discussed the potential quality and sustainability of the education proposed to be provided by NPTC in Brecon. Moreover, the College's ability to provide the requisite number of staff to deliver a full range of A-levels was also called into question - as was the ability of its teachers to develop relationships with pupils in the same way those at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools have been able to do.
- 2.197 Other concerns were around governance, accountability and finances. With specific regard to the latter, several participants questioned the proposed £24 million spend on a new building to house the NPTC sixth form provision.

Welsh Medium Education

The Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.198 More than half (55%) of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in Welsh education. More than two fifths of those representing an organisation based in or covering Powys (44%) and Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed, as did around a third of members of staff in Powys school/education system (34%) and around a quarter (27%) of other residents.
- 2.199 While around two fifths (38%) of pupils and parents/carers/guardians of pupils in Powys overall agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified in Welsh education, and 39% of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils specifically agreed, only around a quarter (24%) of pupils/parents/carers and guardians Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils agreed.
- 2.200 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream.
- 2.201 Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (48%) and around two fifths of Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream. More than a third (35%) of pupils, parents, carers or guardians of Powys pupils also agreed, while only around a quarter (26%) of other residents agreed.

- 2.202 Around two fifths (38%) of parents/carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream, compared to only around a fifth (19%) of parents/carers and guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils.
- 2.203 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.
- 2.204 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (54%) agreed with the proposal. Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (49%) and members of staff in Powys schools/education system (46%) also agreed.
- 2.205 While two fifths (40%) of pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils overall agreed with this proposal, parents, carers or guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils had slightly higher levels of agreement (49%), while only around a fifth (21%) of parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils agreed with this proposal.
- 2.206 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at Builth Wells.
- 2.207 Around a third of employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (35%), members of staff in the Powys schools/education system (30%) and Governors of schools in Powys (30%) agreed.
- 2.208 However, more than half of all respondent groups disagree with the proposal. Other residents (61%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (60%), and Governors of schools in Powys (57%) were particularly likely to disagree, with well over half of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of Brecon (62%) and Gwernyfed (57%) HS/feeder school pupils disagreeing with the proposal.
- 2.209 Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.
- 2.210 More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (57%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education) (56%) and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (51%) agree with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Nearly half of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) and pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils (45%) also agree.
- 2.211 Nearly three fifths of parents, carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils (58%) agreed, compared with 3 in 10 (30%) of parents, carers and guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils.
- 2.212 Those who disagreed with any elements of the proposal were asked why. The most common reasons for disagreement with the proposal among Brecon and Gwernyfed questionnaire respondents was that it will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs. Some suggested parents will be deterred from educating their children in Welsh, and that Welsh as a language will suffer. Respondents commonly expressed support for keeping Welsh provision at Brecon HS.

Young Person's Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.213 Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with that the Council is right to respond to issues raised around Welsh medium education in South Powys. Around half (48%) of Brecon HS/feeder school students agreed, while only 1 in 10 (11%) of those in Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools agreed.

- 2.214 Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with each element of the proposal.
- 2.215 45% of young people in Brecon HS/feeder schools agreed with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single stream in South/Mid Powys. Just over 1 in 10 (13%) of those in Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools agreed.
- 2.216 Half (51%) of Brecon HS/feeder students agreed with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as a part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school, compared with a quarter (25%) of those in Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools.
- 2.217 27% of respondents in Brecon HS/feeder schools agreed with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream in Builth Wells. Only 12% of those in Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools agreed.
- 2.218 Over three fifths (62%) of respondents in Brecon HS/feeder schools supported the proposal to increase provision of subjects via the medium of Welsh. However, this proposal only received support from less than a third (29%) of Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools.
- 2.219 Young people in Brecon and Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools commonly argued that the council should keep Welsh provision at Brecon, and that the proposed changes will lead to longer travel times and increased travel costs. Others suggested that the proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh.

Primary Consultation Questionnaire

- 2.220 Around two fifths (42%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools, and just over a fifth (23%) of those in Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed that the Council is right to make changes to Welsh medium education.
- 2.221 Two thirds (66%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to teach pupils wanting to learn in Welsh from a single school. Less than a third (30%) of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.
- 2.222 Over a third of those from Brecon feeder schools (36%) agreed with the proposed change for pupils wanting to learn Welsh to do so in Builth Wells, as did around a quarter of those from Gwernyfed feeder schools (26%). Around half of respondents from Brecon (50%) and Gwernyfed (47%) feeder schools disagreed with this.
- 2.223 Nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to increase the number of different subjects available in Welsh to pupils 16+. A third (35%) of Gwernyfed feeder respondents also agreed.
- 2.224 Respondents who disagreed with the proposals were asked why this was. Many in Brecon feeder school students simply stated that they did not want to be moved to Builth Wells, and that the council should maintain Welsh provision at Brecon High. Respondents from both Brecon and Gwernyfed feeders commonly argued that the proposals will lead to increased travel times/cost and that Welsh should be available to all pupils.

Governors

- 2.225 Brecon Governors were angry that PCC has not developed a long-term vision to support the development of Welsh medium education in their area - and argued that the proposals will negatively

impact on the likelihood of local parents choosing Welsh medium education in the future, thus in turn impacting on the future sustainability of primary feeder schools such as Ysgol Y Bannau.

- 2.226 Furthermore, they suggested that the proposals will do nothing to stop the flow of local pupils accessing Welsh medium education out-of-county (at Ystalyfera in Neath Port Talbot for example) - and that this can only be arrested through the provision of quality education through the medium of Welsh at BHS.
- 2.227 As a result of these two factors and low pupil numbers in general, the Governors questioned the assumption in the consultation document around creating a critical mass and increased Welsh medium offer at Builth Wells High School.
- 2.228 The Governors also complained about the tenor of the consultation document, arguing strongly against the insinuation that the standard of Welsh medium education at Brecon is comparatively poor. Moreover, they suggested that if the Welsh stream at Brecon could be maintained and expanded to include only a few more subjects, local parents (including those from Sennybridge) would be happy to send their children there for reasons of convenience and that quality is better than quantity.

Staff

- 2.229 Participants desired a more honest appraisal of the likely pupil numbers and breadth of courses that will be offered at Builth Wells - as well as more information about primary school provision in the area - so that parents can make better informed choices around their children's future. Indeed, some argued that there is a lack of evidence that the proposal will create a critical mass at Builth Wells and encourage sufficient numbers to make it feasible, especially in the short-term.
- 2.230 There was considerable anger among Brecon staff members that the school's Welsh stream has lost many pupils to Builth Wells as a result of the consultation process: parents apparently proactively removed their children for 'fear that the Welsh medium unit would close'. Furthermore, the provision of out of school transport to enable pupils from Sennybridge to attend Ystalyfera was noted; participants were unclear as to how this was allowed to happen in preference to encouraging people to send their children to Brecon and growing Welsh medium provision locally - particularly in the primary school sector.
- 2.231 In addition, the lack of support offered by PCC to BHS's bid to obtain Welsh language status 2b was noted as another contributory factor to the decline of Welsh medium education at the school.
- 2.232 It was also said that PCC is not being as creative, proactive and supportive in terms of developing Welsh medium education as other counties across Wales.

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.233 The proposal to provide Welsh medium education at Builth Wells High School and close the Welsh stream at Brecon was met with significant opposition from BHS pupils, who queried why said stream could not be included within the proposed new school. They said that the consultation and resulting uncertainty around the future of Welsh medium education in Brecon has already caused parents to start moving their children to Builth, further exacerbating the problematic issues of low pupil numbers within the Welsh stream at Brecon.
- 2.234 The potentially negative impact of the proposal on Ysgol y Bannau's pupil numbers was a worry; it was suggested that parents (especially English-speaking parents) may be discouraged from sending their children to a Welsh medium primary school without any secondary provision locally. Furthermore,

Brecon pupils argued that the knock-on effect of fewer people learning Welsh would result in a decline in the Welsh language locally.

- 2.235 Travel was another main concern insofar as Builth was considered too distant from Brecon. Using public transport to and from difficult to access areas was predicted to be particularly problematic, as was the lack of flexibility for pupils wishing to continue participating in after-school clubs or needing time off for, say, GP appointments.
- 2.236 The fragmentation of friendship groups and the depletion of local extra-curricular clubs were also thought to be potential consequences of removing the Welsh stream from Brecon.
- 2.237 Despite the overwhelming negativity though, a few pupils from Brecon acknowledged that removing the Welsh-stream from their high school would make good financial sense and allow more money to be spent on educational improvements.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.238 The plans to continue Welsh-medium education in Builth Wells High School but not at Brecon was met with criticism, mainly from Ysgol y Bannau pupils. They were chiefly concerned about: the lack of Welsh medium secondary education locally discouraging parents from sending their children to Ysgol y Bannau – leading to a decline in the Welsh language in the Brecon area; the distance between Brecon and Builth and the logistics of being so far from home if, for example, they became ill while at school; and the cost to PCC of having to transport pupils from Brecon to Builth.

Public Meetings

- 2.239 There was grave concern that the transferal of the Welsh stream to Builth Wells High School would be to the detriment of Welsh culture in the Brecon area and also to a lesser degree in Gwernyfed. Moreover, participants in Brecon suggested that the proposals will make local parents think twice about choosing Welsh medium primary education for their children if there is no local high school Welsh medium provision available - with the overall effect that numbers of Welsh medium pupils will decline and ultimately affect the viability of both the Welsh medium stream at Builth Wells and of Ysgol y Bannau.
- 2.240 Brecon participants also argued that the council's recent transport policy for Welsh medium education (that is, paying for pupils to be transported to Builth or even out-of-county to Ystalyfera) has damaged the prospect of strengthening provision at BHS and could be judged as pre-determination of the consultation outcomes. It was also said that expecting pupils from Brecon's core Welsh-speaking area of Crai, Sennybridge and Trecastle to travel over 30 miles to Builth is unrealistic and will contribute further to the out-of-county pupil exodus given Ystalyfera is closer. A suggestion was thus made that PCC should: *look at not paying for children to go outside the county from Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge to bring the numbers up here in Brecon and keep the pupils in the county?* (Brecon Public)
- 2.241 There was also some scepticism that the anticipated critical mass of Welsh medium pupils will not materialise at Builth, meaning the promised wider range of subjects to be provided there will not either.
- 2.242 Overall, Brecon participants felt that the BHS Welsh stream has been intentionally downgraded in favour of Builth (as particularly highlighted by the aforementioned provision of free school transport for Welsh medium pupils to Builth and Ystalyfera) and that its loss is contrary to the will of local people, who recognise the essential contribution the Welsh stream pupils have made to both the school and the local community.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.243 Stakeholders argued that removing the Welsh stream from BHS without a significantly improved alternative Welsh medium offer elsewhere will lead to reduced number of parents choosing to educate their children through the medium of Welsh. This, it was felt, will inevitably impact on the cultural and linguistic fabric of south Powys.
- 2.244 It was also said that a likely reduction in Welsh medium primary pupil intakes at Ysgol Y Bannau and Sennybridge (which in itself was considered highly regrettable) may starve Builth Wells High School of the critical mass of pupils it needs to expand its dual stream provision and ensure sustainability.
- 2.245 Furthermore, a dual stream by its very nature was considered somewhat uncertain in terms of sustainability - and a possible reason for some parents' decision to send their children to a more 'secure' Welsh medium educational environment at Ystalyfera. Indeed, Ysgol y Bannau commented on parents' willingness to allow their children to travel long distances to secure a quality Welsh medium education, and suggested that the establishment of a Welsh medium secondary school for south and mid Powys would be welcomed and well-supported.
- 2.246 Overall, respondents were keen to see Welsh medium provision supported in the Brecon area at least until a fully bilingual 2a/2b school can be established to serve mid and south Powys.
- 2.247 Estyn suggest that PCC's assumption that a greater critical mass of Welsh medium pupils will lead to a broader curriculum and greater differentiation of pupils is reasonable, but would like greater detail on how this will improve on current standards. Estyn state that the proposals do not address the immediate need to address inequity in choice for Welsh medium learners at post 16.
- 2.248 Estyn also highlight that PCC has not given sufficient consideration to alternative provision should the proposal for a new dual stream school in Builth Wells not be approved.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.249 Equity of choice and access to Welsh-medium education was regarded as a right - and moreover essential to ensure the continued vibrancy of the language in Brecon and its surrounding areas. As such, PCC was accused of being discriminatory in discouraging Welsh language use among young people in the area; the expectation was that many pupils, especially from South Powys, would attend or transfer to their local English medium school instead of travelling long distances on public transport to Builth Wells High School. It was thus suggested that the projected number of pupils entering the Welsh stream at Builth has been overestimated.
- 2.250 The removal of the Welsh stream from BHS was thought to make little sense when Ysgol y Bannau - a category 1 Welsh language primary school - is located in such close proximity. Indeed, many concerns were expressed around the negative impact of the proposal on pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau - as well as on facilities and community life in the area.
- 2.251 Some responses criticised PCC for its recent policy decisions and a lack of support and funding for BHS - all of which have apparently undermined the Welsh stream there. Several respondents also said that the case for change document is somewhat disingenuous and misleading insofar as constant uncertainty around the future of the school's Welsh stream has, in fact, been a significant contributing factor to its declining pupil numbers and educational quality.
- 2.252 The balance of views called for the preservation of the Welsh stream at Brecon and there were suggestions to: increase pupils numbers by ensuring local primary school pupils (including Sennybridge) attend BHS; invest the money saved on pupils travelling to Builth into the recruitment of good quality

Welsh medium teachers; and allow teachers to travel between the two sites to enable both to remain open. Others said they would accept a lesser range of subjects if at least some Welsh medium education could be retained at Brecon.

- 2.253 There was also general support for strengthening Welsh-medium provision across Powys as a whole: while some proposed Welsh-medium staff pooling across primary and secondary schools, others called for PCC to commit to establishing a fully Welsh-medium secondary school to serve South and Mid Powys.

Social Media

- 2.254 Brecon's social media users were especially concerned about PCC's proposed changes to Welsh medium education, particularly in relation to travel distances, arrangements and costs. The possible negative impact of the proposals on pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau was also noted.

Alternative Suggestions

Secondary School Pupils

- 2.255 Pupils urged PCC to provide a new building for BHS only, and to spend any additional funding on improving Gwernyfed instead of closing it. Indeed, they asked '*why this was not the main option*' under the proposals. A less popular alternative was to merge the two schools into one site, but to locate it at Gwernyfed instead.
- 2.256 There was at least some opposition and concern across both catchment areas to the closure of the two schools, and one Gwernyfed pupil asked: '*why are the schools in South Powys proposed to close and none in North Powys?*' Those who were opposed to the closures explained that they would prefer PCC to save money in other service areas and repair the two schools instead.

Primary School Pupils

- 2.257 Pupils proposed some alternative suggestions that they felt would result in less disruption for GHS and the pupils within its catchment area. These included: retaining GHS in its current form and focussing on improving BHS without a merger; merging BHS with another school; merging GHS with Crickhowell High School; and reversing the proposal so that the single site school would be located in Gwernyfed rather than Brecon.
- 2.258 Pupils in both workshops questioned why the money earmarked for the proposed new school could not be spent on repairing and maintaining the two schools instead of building a new one. This, to many, was a preferable option.
- 2.259 Finally, building two new schools on the respective sites was suggested - to be funded by the savings made from not having to transport pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment to Brecon.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

- 2.260 In addition to the retention of the status quo (excepting the need to build a new school at Brecon), several stakeholders urged PCC to give further consideration to alternative options – the most frequently mentioned being a through-school at Brecon.

Written Submissions (Public)

- 2.261 Several respondents called on PCC to consider a through-school model for Brecon (and a couple suggested the same for GHS) - while another suggested a similar model to John Beddoes and Newton for Gwernyfed, whereby GHS would become part of a campus school.
- 2.262 Greater partnerships and shared resources (for example through federation or combining sixth forms) were also proposed: these, it was hoped, would mitigate against the critical mass issues cited in the case for change.
- 2.263 Several people would like to see PCC adopt better and more creative uses of information technology across sites within a federation or consortium model in order to allow pupils to access a better range of subjects without having to travel long distances.

Social Media

- 2.264 Some social media users had ideas or proposals of their own, for example: reintroducing an agricultural college for long-term sustainability; the development of a new three to 18 'through school'; and retaining a dedicated sixth form within the proposed new building and renting a portion of it to NPTC for vocational provision.

Consultation Process

Governors

- 2.265 The Brecon Governors voiced concern about PCC's apparently insufficiently transparent decision-making processes and lack of external scrutiny - and said that the Council's Cabinet would be going against the will of the local population if it endorses the proposals in their current form.
- 2.266 There was also concern that the Council has failed to take previous feedback and inputs from the BHS Governing Body into account when formulating its proposals.
- 2.267 Some wanted to know how PCC has evaluated and weighted the potential impacts of the proposals on communities, what mitigations have been considered and why some alternative options (such as a through school model for Brecon) have been discarded when, in the view of Governors', they are perfectly workable.

Staff

- 2.268 Many staff members suggested a lack of detail in the consultation document, which was thought to contain too many vagaries and implicit assumptions:

In the consultation document there seems to be a lot of presumption. We'll try to make sure this happens/that happens. The schools will make the decisions. Not the Council... (Gwernyfed Staff)

Public Meetings

- 2.269 A number of people at the Gwernyfed meeting voiced distrust of the council based on its alleged mismanagement and poor implementation of the previous primary schools reorganisation consultation in their area.
- 2.270 Participants also sought reassurance that the balance of opinion will be considered and that the consultation process will be in line with the Welsh Government's legal requirements and compliant with wider relevant legislation - which was doubted by several attendees.

2.271 A lack of confidence in the democratic process was also evident from the comments made at Gwernyfed, where people accused PCC of: not listening to public concerns; not wishing to have constructive discussions; and having already made up its mind to proceed with the proposals.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

2.272 Many of the comments made underline a sense of mistrust and a lack of confidence in PCCs decision-making and implementation processes, in some cases based on its alleged mismanagement of the previous primary schools reorganisation consultation in the Gwernyfed catchment area.

2.273 A number of concerns were raised either around inaccurate or missing/incomplete information in PCC's documentation in relation to, for example, budgets, predicted spend and the financial cost of the proposed project. Moreover, stakeholders raised concerns around the transparency and technical precision of the options appraisal processes, citing inconsistencies and mistakes that erode their faith in the accuracy of the consultation document.

2.274 Estyn raised issue with the lack of measures in the proposals to mitigate the four key risks identified by the proposals, namely; 1. That the leadership and governance are not in place by September 2017, 2. The challenges associate with transferring the first cohort to NPTC. 3. The new dual stream welsh school for mid-Powys is not approved and 4. The possibility that the proposed new school will fail to improve standards.

2.275 Other concerns were around: the lack of consultation with affected pupils and parents in 'other' schools such as Crickhowell; the lack of consultation generally at a formative stage; and possible pre-determination (for example on the basis that PCC has already agreed to provide free school transport to pupils wishing to enter the Welsh stream at Builth Wells).

Written Submissions (Public)

2.276 There was an evident sense of distrust in the way PCC has developed its case for change. Many felt that the consultation process is at best cosmetic, whereas others alleged a pre-determined outcome and cited both bias (against GHS) and errors in the consultation document.

2.277 Some respondents were keen to see the decision-making process involving not only the PCC Cabinet, but all elected members. There was also criticism of: PCC's performance at the consultation meetings; the objectivity of the consultation questionnaire; and the inaccessibility of the online version of the consultation document.

2.278 More generally, respondents demonstrated a loss of confidence in PCC and sought reassurance that their views and the strength of opposition to the proposals would be heeded. Their responses also underlined the need for early dialogue with affected communities in developing options for schools reorganisation, especially in light of the recent primary schools process.

Social Media

2.279 Many social media users commented on the consultation process, describing it as something of a 'done deal'. The fact that the ultimate decision as to whether the proposals are approved or rejected will be taken by the PCC Cabinet (as opposed to the whole Council) was also referenced several times: several social media considered this to be undemocratic.

2.280 In terms of public meetings, the Brecon public meeting was considered a success by social media users. However, some users were unhappy with the conduct of the Gwernyfed consultation event held on

20th April 2016, particularly with respect to the answers (or perceived lack thereof) provided to questions from the floor.

Projections, Facts and Figures

Governors

2.281 The Brecon Governors raised a number of objections to specific evidence and assumptions in the consultation document underpinning the case for change, particularly in relation to: the difference between offer and take-up of Welsh medium subjects; the omission of an 'up-to-date assessment of the progress the high school has been making'; outdated figures on BHS's financial situation; and the apparently misleading insinuation that the school fails to offer post-16 Welsh medium education (when it was agreed this provision, post 16, would be provided at Builth Wells as part of the South Powys Consortium).

Staff

2.282 Participants at both staff meetings challenged a number of specific statements around the reasons for falling pupil numbers put forward in the case for change.

Secondary School Pupils

2.283 On the issue of pupil numbers, the secondary school participants argued that it would be 'very unlikely' that those in the Gwernyfed catchment area would attend the new school in Brecon, instead preferring to 'go over the border' to England - and they felt that the closure of GHS would discourage parents of young children from settling in the area, again exacerbating the issue of low pupil numbers.

Public Meetings

2.284 Participants at the Gwernyfed meeting felt that not enough consideration has been given during the options appraisal to maintaining both sites in some form.

2.285 Gwernyfed participants also said that local demographics (many families with school-age children for example) and population growth in light of local housing development should have been factored in to the pupil number assumptions in the case for change, specifically around the viability of maintaining the Gwernyfed site.

Written Submissions (Statutory Stakeholders)

2.286 The Gwernyfed Campaign Group questioned the validity of PCCs pupil number projections, quoting miscalculations within the consultation document. They group (as well as Councillor Melanie Davies, Talgarth Town Council and Felinfach Community Council) also insisted that projected numbers are projected to rise in coming years:

2.287 In any case, the Gwernyfed Community Council challenged the assumption that surplus places are harmful to schools' viability: they were considered perfectly acceptable providing school budgets are managed effectively. Furthermore, the Gwernyfed High School Governing Body suggested that uncertainty around the future of GHS has had a negative impact on admission numbers - but that the school has now re-established its intake and is in a stable position once more.

2.288 Finally in terms of pupil numbers, it was said that the proposals themselves may, in fact, serve to further exacerbate the issue of falling pupil numbers given that many parents in the Gwernyfed

catchment area will choose to send their children out of county, into England or to private school (Christ College) in preference to the proposed new school in Brecon.

2.289 Estyn want further clarity around the projected pupil numbers and capacity of the proposed new school

Written Submissions (Public)

2.290 The projections, facts and figures underpinning PCC's case for change were challenged in many of the written responses. For example, while the consultation document cites falling pupil numbers and surplus school places, it was argued that uncertainty around the future of BHS and GHS has been partly responsible for these trends. Conversely, it was said that positive investment in the two schools would attract families to the area - thus increasing pupil numbers once more.

2.291 It was also suggested that future housing developments in the local area will increase student numbers and address the surplus places issue. Furthermore, some responses highlighted PCC's own projections, which show that a single new school could be oversubscribed within a very short time and suggested that the Council should consider the longer-term picture by supporting secondary schools at both Brecon *and* Gwernyfed. On the other hand, others asked how PCC can possibly predict where Gwernyfed parents will send their children given that other high schools may be closer or easier to access than Brecon. As such, they felt that the number of pupils projected to attend the new school could have been overestimated.

Overall Comments

2.292 While there was a great deal of support for a new school to replace the ageing Brecon High, participants and respondents across all consultation methodologies clearly and overwhelmingly rejected PCC's proposal to:

Close Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools and establish a new English-medium 11–16 secondary school to operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;

And close both sites upon the opening of a new-build campus in Brecon in 2019/20.

2.293 Furthermore, there was almost universal opposition among consultees to the delivery of academic and vocational post-16 provision via the NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon only; as well as the closure of the Welsh stream at Brecon High School in favour of delivering Welsh medium education provision from Builth Wells High School.

2.294 The reasons underpinning these views have been fully recorded both in the summary of findings above and in the detailed chapters that follow. The table below, though, shows people's main objections to the proposals across all consultation strands.

Figure1: Table Summary of main themes

The Case for Change		
Some support for change and recognition of underlying evidence: non-specialist teaching; over-use of supply teachers; poor condition of school buildings; high running costs; falling pupil numbers; limited A-level choice.	Rejection of PCC's case for GHS: small rural schools deliver better standards and outcomes through quality teaching, positive pupil/teacher relationships, strong leadership and satisfactory staff retention and recruitment. It is a happy, safe and community-focused school with	Some assertions that the underlying reason for the proposals is to eradicate BHS's debt and access capital funding - effectively sacrificing one school for a new one. The legality of this was questioned.

	attractive buildings and surroundings.	
Quality of Education		
Failure by PCC to acknowledge improvements in educational standards and leadership at the schools or provide convincing arguments that the proposals will increase educational quality, especially at Gwernyfed.	Scepticism that a larger school would lead to better quality: GHS is an appropriate size for its rural location and smaller 11-18 schools provide good pastoral support as a result of teachers knowing pupils throughout secondary school.	Merging a high performing school (GHS) with a school in special measures (BHS) would be to the detriment of overall standards at the former.
Educational performance in a larger school might be affected by increased bullying and absenteeism; the loss of close pupil/teacher relationships; and pupil difficulties adjusting to new teaching styles.	The proposals would replace a successful senior leadership team at Gwernyfed with a new and untried team.	PCC has failed to support schools across Powys and has had a role, therefore, in any fall in educational standards.
Finance and Funding		
More information is needed from PCC around how the proposed new school would be funded bearing in mind current financial differences: GHS in surplus and BHS's debt burden.	BHS's resources would be much higher than GHS's under the proposed new arrangement owing to the historical legacy of living beyond its means in the former's case and working to budget in the case of the latter.	Finance (and the need to eradicate BHS's debt) and not quality of education or pupil wellbeing is driving PCC's proposals.
PCC's vision of a brand new learning campus is unviable without certainty around long-term Welsh Government capital funding and how the new debt burden will be managed in future.	Outdated financial data for Brecon in the consultation document.	BHS's financial situation has been caused by PCC failures, mismanagement and lack of support – as well as uncertainty over the School's future.
Proposed financial savings proposal will not compensate for the cost to communities in the GHS catchment area.	A large repayment would be required to the Big Lottery Fund in the event of GHS's closure.	The money spent on more pupil transport would be better spent on improving educational quality in the existing schools.
Buildings and Estates		
BHS needs a new building - but concerns around: security of funding; the timeframe for building the new school; and the safety of the existing building in the interim.	PCC is responsible for the decline in the quality of BHS's buildings and a main driver for the proposals is to secure Welsh Government capital funding for a new building in Brecon.	Will the GHS school buildings fall into disrepair - and will PCC dispose of the school's building and community assets at well below market value?
What will happen to the GHS leisure facilities – and how will the existing facilities at both school sites be maintained for community use?	How can PCC afford to build a new school?	Lack of surplus capacity at the proposed new school to meet future pupil numbers. A new school should be future-proofed to account for population growth.
Will NPTC's facilities have the capacity and resources to cater for an increased number of students?	How will BHS's land be put to good use if the proposals go ahead?	A new school in Brecon should not depend on closing GHS.
Governance and Staffing of a New School		
More information needed on the relationship between PCC, the Shadow Governing Body and Senior Management Team in implementing	Clarity required over the composition of the Shadow Governing Body and how PCC will ensure strong leadership and management - especially given	Will a single leadership team be able to deliver consistent quality across two very different sites?

possible changes. PCC should have an advisory role only.	past issues at BHS.	
Suggested timeframes are challenging, particularly in terms of timetabling, negotiating staff contracts and implementing a staff redundancy process if necessary.	Maintaining standards during transition could be problematic.	Scepticism over PCC's ability to deliver secondary school reorganisation to timetable in view of past experiences in the primary sector.
Post 16 Education		
Proposals discriminate by removing parental/learner choice for pupils in Brecon and Gwernyfed alone in the whole of Powys. Other areas have the choice between school and tertiary college for post-16 learning.	NPTC's provision is thought to be poor in terms of: resources (e.g. science labs/common rooms); capacity to offer subject choice in Brecon; pastoral care; proper management; and provision and support for ANL pupils.	Replacing the well-regarded South Powys consortium model with an untested out-of-area provider is a risk. The consortium model should remain even if it offers less choice at A-level - with NPTC in support for vocational courses.
Lack of accountability should NPTC cancel courses in Brecon once started because of teacher shortages. PCC criticised for abandoning its responsibilities.	In the case of teacher shortages, will students have to travel to Neath to continue their studies (a difficult option for disadvantaged and rural families)?	Sixth form pupils would be lost from schools where they currently encourage, support, mentor and inspire younger pupils.
After-school subject and pastoral support would be jeopardised because tertiary college staff would be more likely to travel daily into the Brecon area.	A lack of continuity due to pupils being taught at A-level by teachers unfamiliar to them.	Post-16 learners may be lost to establishments outside Powys with proven track records for sixth form provision. This would jeopardise the sustainability of NPTC's Brecon base for A-level study.
Additional transport costs to families, especially in the Gwernyfed catchment area.	The proposed £24 million spend on a new building for the NPTC sixth form is excessive.	College-based study may help improve the quality and range of education for ALN pupils.
Welsh Medium Education		
PCC has failed to develop a long-term vision for, and support the development of, Welsh medium education in Brecon.	Proposal would lead to local parents opting out of Welsh medium education or choosing out-of-county provision (at e.g. Ystalyfera) - thus threatening the 'critical mass' of Welsh learners at Builth Wells High School.	Proposal would jeopardise the sustainability of primary feeder schools like Ysgol y Bannau as parents decide against Welsh medium primary education knowing that there is no Welsh stream at BHS. This would also negatively impact Welsh medium provision at Builth Wells.
PCC transport support for Sennybridge pupils to attend Ystalyfera school instead of Brecon should be discouraged in future to encourage attendance at the Brecon Welsh medium stream.	Builth is too far from the Brecon area: the distance would ensure difficult access to out-of-school activities and appointments. The cost of travel to PCC will be significant.	The lack of support from PCC for Brecon HS's bid for 2b status was unacceptable.
The consultation and continuing uncertainty has led to the loss of Welsh medium pupils from Brecon to Builth: PCC has pre-determined the consultation outcome.	The contribution of the Welsh stream to the school and local community would be lost.	PCC should commit to a Welsh medium secondary school to serve South and Mid Powys.
Other Pupil Impacts		
Unequal access to extra-curricular activities for GHS pupils at the proposed Brecon campus owing to	Potential harm to pupils' connections to their local communities and other implications of extra travel, for	Increased travel for GHS pupils contradicts the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Many

transport difficulties - particularly affecting the most disadvantaged families and those living in areas with poor public transport.	example: less time for sleep, homework and 'down time'; less attentiveness in class; health and well-being (no longer walking to school); and absenteeism.	already have long travel times to school, and further increases may lead them to choose other (closer) schools outside Powys - a potential loss of revenue for PCC.
Negative psychological and social impact of the recent history of proposed school closures on young people and the community - families have moved from the area as a consequence.	Impact of continuing uncertainty on pupils' wellbeing, including increased stress and worry over: losing and making new friends; inter-school rivalries; the possibility for poor discipline in larger classrooms; fewer opportunities to take part in sports competitions and other events; and GHS pupils being exposed to negative influences in the Brecon area and bullying on school buses.	Practical issues such as: whether the school uniform would change and, if so, whether parents would be expected to pay for it; and how the proposals will affect inter-school sports tournaments.
Continuity of support (both educational and pastoral) from teachers known to pupils over many years would be at risk under the proposal.	A larger school might be more difficult for ALN pupils and new staff may be insufficiently knowledgeable about ALN. On the other hand it might offer ALN pupils a larger support unit and more social opportunities.	A need identified for early and continuing support for pupils and families - especially those with ALN - during a transition period.
The timing of the proposals may be potentially disruptive for pupils studying for significant examinations (GCSE).	Current close ties between GHS and local businesses that provide work experience would be jeopardised, further affecting pupils' development.	Brecon pupils supported a new secondary school that would set lessons by ability; with wider subjects choice, better teacher retention and better facilities. Other negative implications of extra travel to school by bus: additional expense for families and PCC; environmental impacts.
Other Staff Impacts		
Job insecurity is affecting the mental and financial wellbeing of teaching staff. PCC criticised for lack of support.	Cost of teachers' travel between sites should be factored into proposals.	Increased travel will increase staff stress levels and sickness leave and reduce contact time with pupils.
Does PCC have the capacity to develop and process new staff contracts and recruit new staff before the proposed opening?	Cost implications of staff redundancies and whether these have been factored into budget savings calculations.	Loss of school sixth forms will lead to challenges in staff recruitment and retention.
Community Impacts		
Threat of GHS closure to affiliated local sport, arts and community groups and clubs: pupils will be more likely to choose clubs near school than in their local area, impacting negatively on community cohesion.	Potentially negative impacts of closing GHS on local businesses, the housing market, culture, services, prosperity, social cohesion and wellbeing will mean families move from or will be deterred from relocating to the area. This will result in an ageing community.	Important to keep ALN services within communities to support pupils and families. The proposals threaten the wellbeing of these pupils by disconnecting school from community and local opportunities for socialising.
Educated, talented younger people will leave the area, resulting in an older population.	Communities and friendships will be affected by pupils being educated away from their local communities.	PCC criticised for generating urban solutions to rural problems and failing to consider issues appropriate to rural communities.
Some Alternative Suggestions		

Keep both schools: provide a new building for BHS only and improve Gwernyfed instead of closing it.	Merge the two schools on the GHS site.	Look at alternative options to keep both schools open such as an all-through school model.
Implement a model similar to John Beddoes and Newtown with GHS as a campus school.	Greater partnerships and shared resources (for example through federation or combining sixth forms) to create critical mass.	Adopt creative uses of information technology across sites within a federation or consortium model to allow pupils to access a wider range of subjects without travelling long distances.
Retain a dedicated sixth form within the proposed new building and rent a portion of it to NPTC for vocational provision.	Reintroduce an agricultural college.	
Consultation Process		
Lack of external scrutiny – and concern that the process will be in line with the Welsh Government’s legal requirements and compliant with wider relevant legislation	PCC must listen to the will of the population when making its decision.	PCC has failed to take previous feedback and inputs from BHS Governing Body into account in formulating the proposals – the decision is a ‘done deal’.
How has PCC evaluated and weighted the potential community impacts; what mitigations have been considered and why alternative options were discarded?	Consultation document thought to: lack detail and accuracy; contain too many errors, vagaries and assumptions; and to be biased against GHS.	Distrust of PCC, based mainly on its ‘mismanagement’ of the primary schools reorganisation process.
Criticism of: PCC’s performance at consultation meetings (especially at Gwernyfed); the objectivity of the consultation questionnaire; and the inaccessibility of the online version of the consultation document.	That the ultimate decision will be taken by the PCC Cabinet (as opposed to the whole Council) is undemocratic.	
Projections, Facts and Figures		
Some evidence for the case for change in the consultation document is incorrect.	Projected pupil numbers challenged in view of housing plans for the area, which will see populations rise - particularly affecting plans for GHS.	No assurance that GHS pupils would attend a school in Brecon in favour of going over-the-border to Herefordshire.
Uncertainty around the future of GHS has in itself led to falling numbers, with parents choosing schools in England over Brecon.	Surplus places are acceptable as long as school budgets are managed properly.	PCC projections show that a single new school could be oversubscribed very quickly, although the number of projected pupils might have been overestimated by PCC as parents vote with their feet and choose schools elsewhere.

^{2.295} Moving forward, interpreting the overall ‘meaning’ of the consultation outcomes is neither straightforward nor just ‘numerical’ - for the different methods, groups and outcomes have to be respected and cannot be simply ‘summed’ into an unambiguous consensus.

^{2.296} It is also worth reiterating that consultation is not a ‘numbers game’ - and that the key issue is not whether most people agree or disagree with the proposals but whether the reasons for their popularity or unpopularity are rational and convincing. People’s reasoning has been well documented throughout this report, and it is this that the PCC Cabinet will primarily wish to consider when making its judgements.

^{2.297} In this context, it is not the role of ORS to make policy recommendations or to go beyond the fact-based interpretation above. In the light of the evidence presented, the PCC Cabinet will consider all the

consultation outcomes, alongside all the other evidence, in order to make its decisions. Ultimately, an overall interpretation of the consultation will depend upon the Cabinet itself: its members will consider all elements and determine which seem the most telling, by considering the relative merits of the various opinions as the basis for public policy.

3. The Open Consultation Questionnaires

Foreword

3.1 This chapter concerns the Main, Young Persons' and Primary School Consultation Questionnaires. These were designed by ORS in partnership with the Council and were available for completion by any interested stakeholders through paper copies as well as online.

Overview

3.2 A consultation document covering the proposed changes was produced and made publicly available on the Council's dedicated website. The website also included links to detailed information about the processes undertaken by the Council so far, including communities, equalities and Welsh language impact assessments.

3.3 The Main, Young Persons' and Primary consultation questionnaires were developed to include relevant summaries of background information on the Council's Case for Change and each of the main proposals for English and Welsh medium education, including post-16 education. The following key topics were covered in the consultation questionnaires:

- » English Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For English Medium Education
- » Welsh Medium Education – Case For Change
- » The Proposal For Welsh Medium Education
- » Considering Equalities
- » Information About Respondents

3.4 The questionnaires were available online through the Council's dedicated website and the URL was also printed on the paper copies. Paper copies were made available in locations identified as relevant, including local libraries, leisure facilities, County Hall and all affected Primary and Secondary schools. Respondents had the option to submit their completed questionnaire directly to ORS via a freepost mailing address or to the Council.

3.5 This chapter details the methodologies and responses to all the consultation questionnaires. Questionnaires can provide considerable information about the views of particular groups and individuals at local levels. However, it is important to note that it was open to any interested stakeholders, individuals or organisations both within and outside of Powys regardless of their affiliation with, or usage of education services.

3.6 The results, therefore, are not representative of any particular population, including that of the Council's authority area. However, within the context of the consultation it provides an appropriate and important opportunity for the public to provide their opinions.

- 3.7 Of course, it is for Powys County Council to determine what appropriate emphasis to be given to different elements within the consultation, while bearing in mind that the outcome of the consultation should not be just a ‘numbers’ game. In other words, the question is not ‘*Which findings should determine our decision?*’ but ‘*What evidence or considerations have emerged that should influence our deliberations about the future reorganisation of schools in mid and south Powys?*’

Questionnaire responses

- 3.8 All questionnaire responses in which at least one of the consultation questions was answered and received by ORS by the close of the consultation period were included in the analysis. One additional week was given for submissions sent by second class post or returned directly to PCC contact points.
- 3.9 A total of 1047 questionnaires were analysed, of which 625 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 148 to the Young Persons’ questionnaire, and 274 to the primary school consultation questionnaire.
- 3.10 Of the total number of questionnaires received, 6 indicated that they were representing organisations or groups.

Findings of the Main Consultation Questionnaire

Respondent Profile of Consultation Questionnaire

- 3.11 Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the respondent profile from the 619 individuals who responded either online or by post to the main open consultation questionnaire. Figures for Powys's population are also outlined for comparison.
- 3.12 Figures for Powys's population are based on ONS 2015 Mid-Year Population Estimates (for age and gender) and Census 2011 data (for ethnicity and disability). ORS prefers to report ONS Mid-Year population estimates (over Census 2011 data) where possible as we believe this more accurately reflects the current state of the population. Where this is not possible due to data being unavailable (e.g. for ethnicity and disability data), Census 2011 data has been used as an alternative. As a result, the total number of occurrences in the population across the two data sources will not match exactly.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics for the main consultation questionnaire and Powys's population
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic		All Responses		Powys population 16+	
		Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	Number of occurrences	% of population
BY AGE	Under 25	27	5.7%	12,372	11.1%
	25 to 34	56	11.7%	12,230	11.0%
	35 to 44	145	30.2%	13,538	12.2%
	45 to 54	159	33.1%	19,506	17.6%
	55 to 64	58	12.1%	19,238	17.3%
	65 to 84	35	7.3%	29,611	26.7%
	85+	0	0.0%	4,547	4.1%
	Total valid responses	480	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	139	-	-	-	
BY GENDER	Male	126	26.1%	54,573	49.1%
	Female	357	73.9%	56,469	50.9%
	Total valid responses	483	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	136	-	-	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	454	97.8%	108,539	98.6%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic	5	1.1%	453	0.4%
	Asian or Asian British	4	0.9%	890	0.8%
	Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	0	0.0%	109	0.1%
	Any other ethnic group	1	0.2%	92	0.1%
	Total valid responses	464	100%	110,083	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	155	-	-	-	
BY DISABILITY	With disability	16	3.3%	26,357	24.3%
	No disability	465	96.7%	81,971	75.7%
	Total valid responses	481	100.0%	108,328	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	138	-	-	-

Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL, NURSERY OR COLLEGE IN POWYS	Has children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	354	72.5%
	No children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	134	27.5%
	Total valid responses	488	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	131	-
BY CHILDREN ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Has children entitled to free school meals	15	4.5%
	No children entitled to free school meals	318	95.5%
	Total valid responses	333	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	134	
	<i>Not known</i>	152	-
BY CHILDREN HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	Has children with SEN	27	8.1%
	No children with SEN	308	91.9%
	Total valid responses	335	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	134	
	<i>Not known</i>	150	-
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY RECEIVING A WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION	Has children receiving Welsh medium education	45	13.5%
	No children receiving Welsh medium education	289	86.5%
	Total valid responses	334	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	134	
	<i>Not known</i>	151	-
BY WELSH SPEAKER	Speaks Welsh	164	35.8%
	Does not speak Welsh	294	64.2%
	Total valid responses	458	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	161	

Interpretation of the Data

- 3.13 The results for the Consultation Questionnaire are presented in a largely graphical format. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of respondents making relevant responses.
- 3.14 Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with a ‘traffic light’ system in which green shades represent positive responses, red shades represent negative responses, and beige and purple shades represent neither positive nor negative responses.
- 3.15 The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the ‘extremes’, for example, strongly agree or strongly disagree.
- 3.16 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the volume an asterisk (*) denotes any value less

than half of one per cent. In some cases figures of 2% or below have been excluded from graphs to avoid potential identification of individual responses.

- 3.17 The number of valid responses recorded for each question (base size), is reported throughout. As not all respondents answered every question, these base sizes vary between questions. Every response to every question has been taken into consideration.
- 3.18 Where there are low response rates among stakeholder groups for particular questions, results have been displayed as a number, rather than (or in addition to) a percentage in the text.
- 3.19 All open-ended responses have been classified using a standardised code frame. This approach helps ensure consistency when classifying different comments and the resulting codes represent themes that have been repeatedly mentioned in a more quantifiable manner. The various comments provided by a respondent to any single text question may present a number of different points or arguments, therefore in many cases the overall number of coded comments counted in a particular question can actually be higher than the number of people responding to that open-ended question.

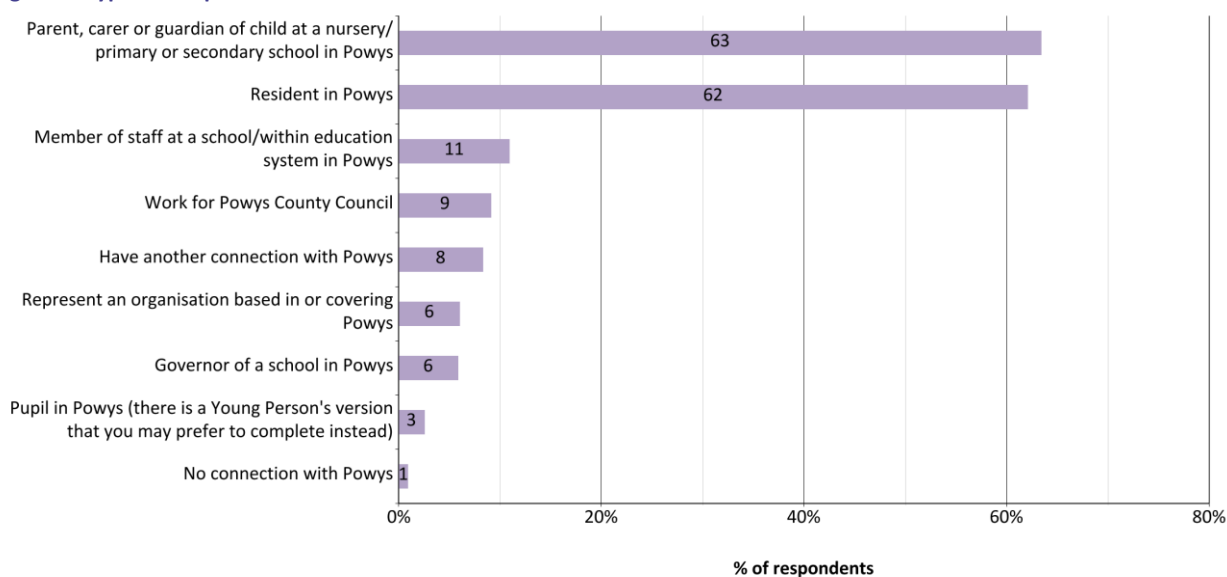
Further analysis by sub-groups

- 3.20 For some questions, further analysis revealed differences in responses by key demographic and other variables e.g. respondents' local authority. Such analysis highlights how sub-groups within key variables (e.g. within 'age', those aged 35-44) provided different answers compared to the overall average.
- 3.21 Where results are particularly higher or particularly lower for certain sub-groups, in comparison to the overall score they are further discussed in commentary text.

English Medium Education

Which of the following apply to you?

Figure 1: Types of respondent



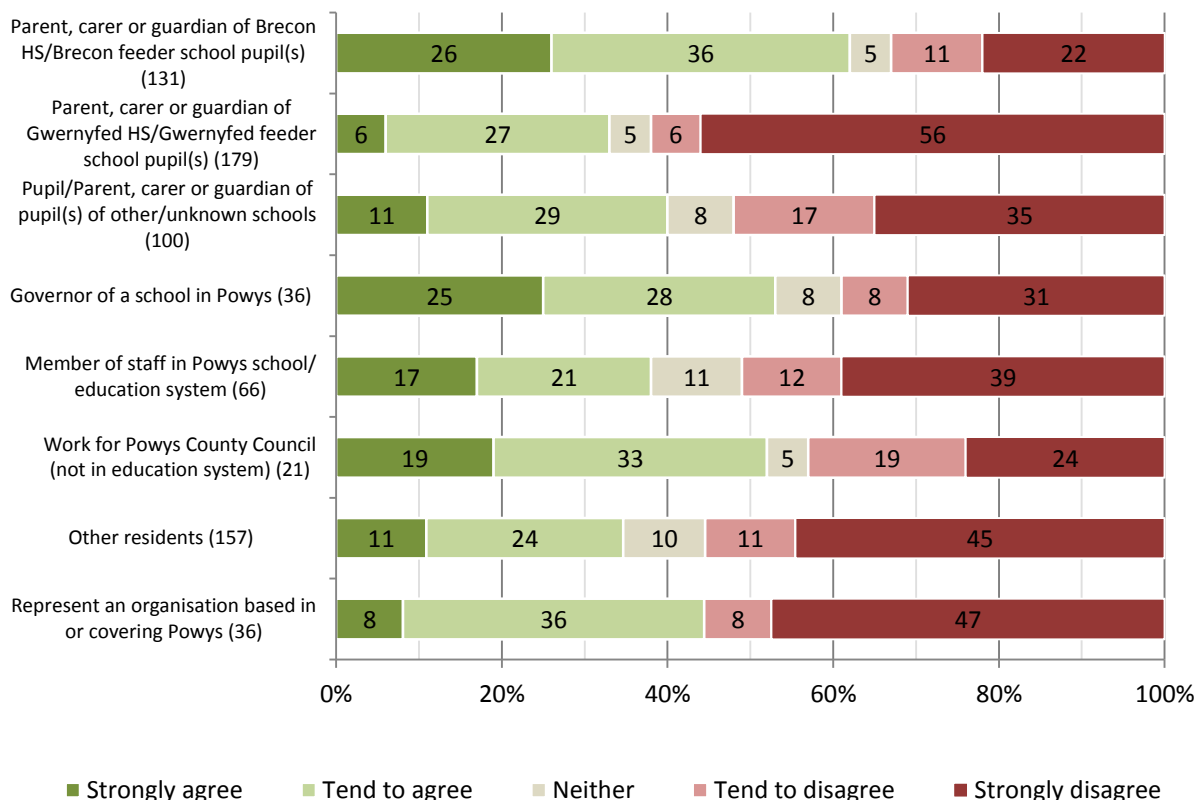
Base: All Individuals (610)

- 3.22 More than three fifths of respondents said they were a parent, carer or guardian of a child at a nursery/primary or secondary school in Powys (63%) and/or a resident in Powys (62%). Around 1 in 10 (11%) respondents to the consultation are members of staff at a school or within the education system in Powys, while just under 1 in 10 (9%) work for Powys County Council or have another connection with Powys (8%).
- 3.23 Because of the differences in the proportions of these stakeholder groups, results have not been combined to produce “overall” findings. It is not appropriate to report overall figures because the stakeholder groups with a greater number of responses will have a larger influence on the overall average, and potentially conceal the difference of opinions between stakeholder groups. Consequently, the results to the closed questions of the questionnaire overleaf have been reported separately by stakeholder groups.
- 3.24 It is also not appropriate to report results quantitatively where the rate of response is especially low. Consequently, where this appears and is appropriate to do so, some stakeholders have been grouped together.
- 3.25 Views from parents, carers or guardians of children vary depending on whether their child or children attend Brecon High School/associated feeder primary school, Gwernyfed High School/associated feeder school or an ‘other/unknown’ school, and so these results have been displayed separately.
- 3.26 Almost all school age respondents responded to the separate Young Persons’ consultation questionnaire. The small number of Powys school pupils who responded to the main consultation were from unknown schools, and so their responses have been grouped with parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other/unknown schools.
- 3.27 Those who reported that they were residents in Powys, and were not members of any other stakeholder group, have been combined with those who have ‘no connection with Powys’ and those who ‘have another connection with Powys’ into the group ‘Other residents’.

In the context of the problems outlined on the previous page, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 2: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

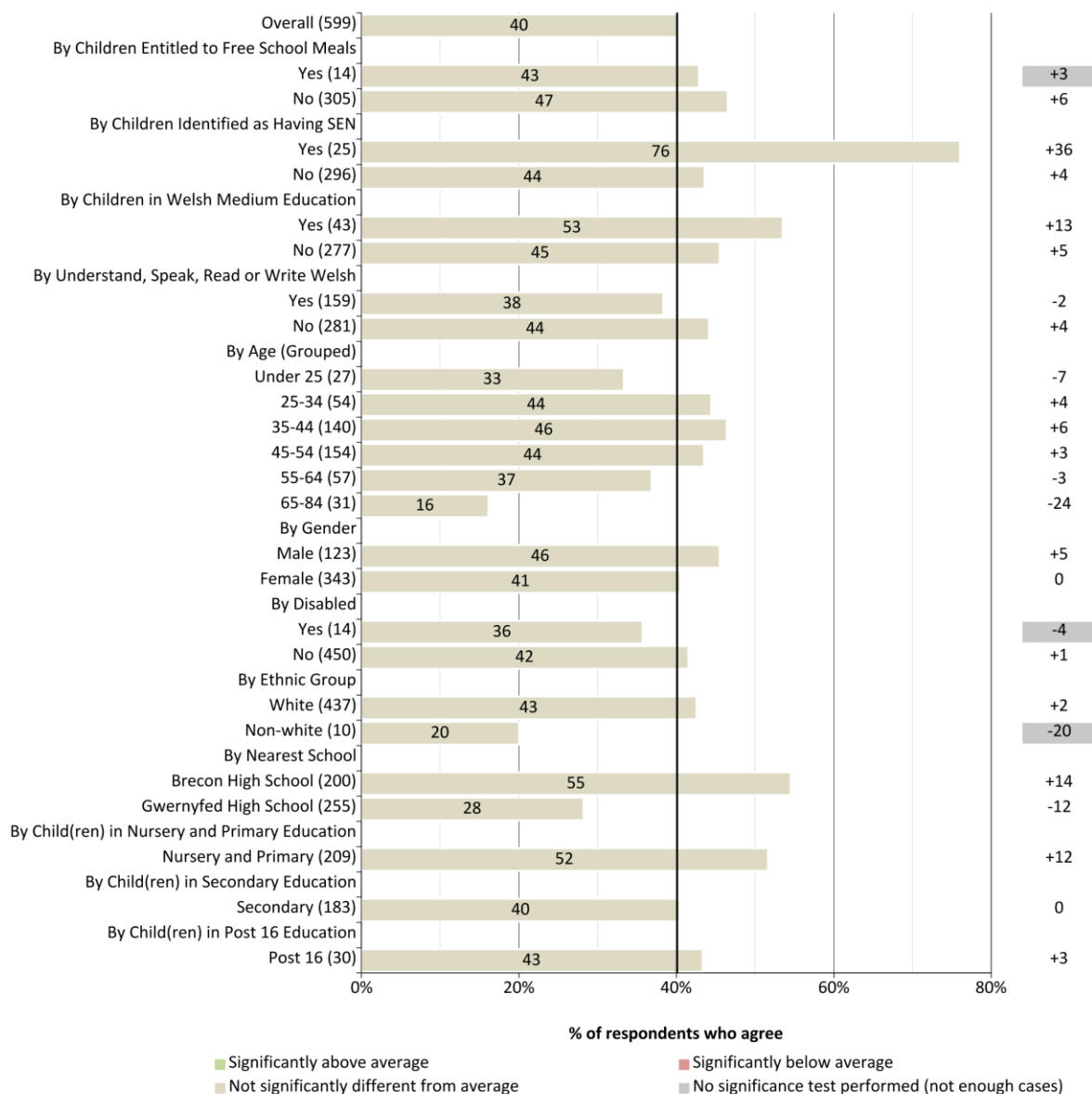
3.28 Respondents were given a short explanation of some of the general and post-16 specific issues that the Council had identified as affecting English medium secondary education in Brecon and Gwernyfed schools. These issues included falling pupil numbers, leading to empty school places in both schools; poor quality of buildings with costly maintenance; quality of education; Estyn monitoring feedback; and financial considerations. Post-16 issues included a narrow choice of subjects in the 6th forms at both schools; learners travelling between sites during the school day to access subjects; a reduction in the Welsh Government grant funding post-16 provision, and learners going outside the county for their education, affecting the local economy.

3.29 In this context, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified.

3.30 Over three fifths (62%) of parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School or associated feeder school pupils agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the above issues. More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (53%) and employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (52%) also agreed.

3.31 However, less than half of respondents agreed that the Council is right to make changes in 5 of the 8 stakeholder groups. Most notably, parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed High School or feeder school pupils (33%) and other residents (34%) showed lower levels of support.

Figure 3: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues. (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.32 This chart shows how the responses for this score vary across different sub-groups of respondents for those who *agreed*. Results highlighted in grey should be treated with caution, due to a low number of responses from that particular sub-group.

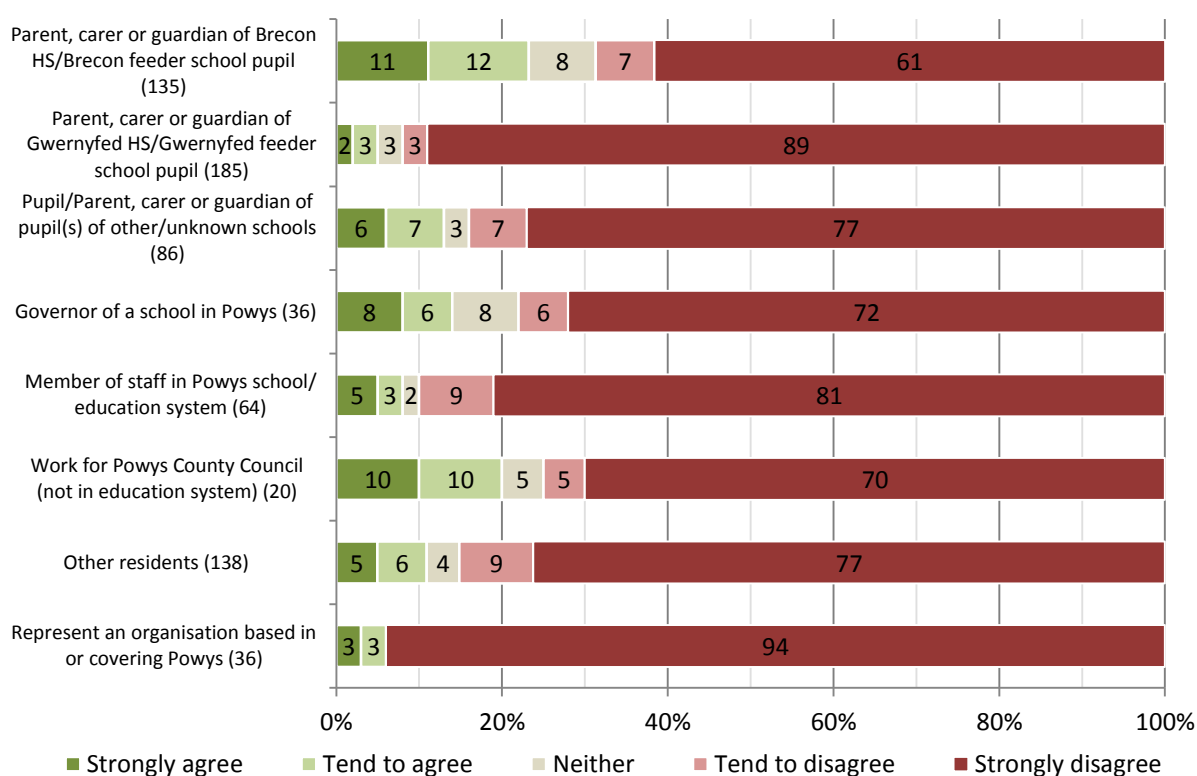
3.33 Respondents with children identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) were particularly likely to agree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues (76%), as were those whose nearest high school is Brecon (55%), or with Children in Welsh Medium Education (53%) or Nursery and Primary education (52%).

3.34 Those living nearest Gwernyfed High School (28%) and those aged 65-84 (16%) were least likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

To establish a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate on the two existing sites.

Figure 4: Levels of agreement and disagreement for establishing a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017,

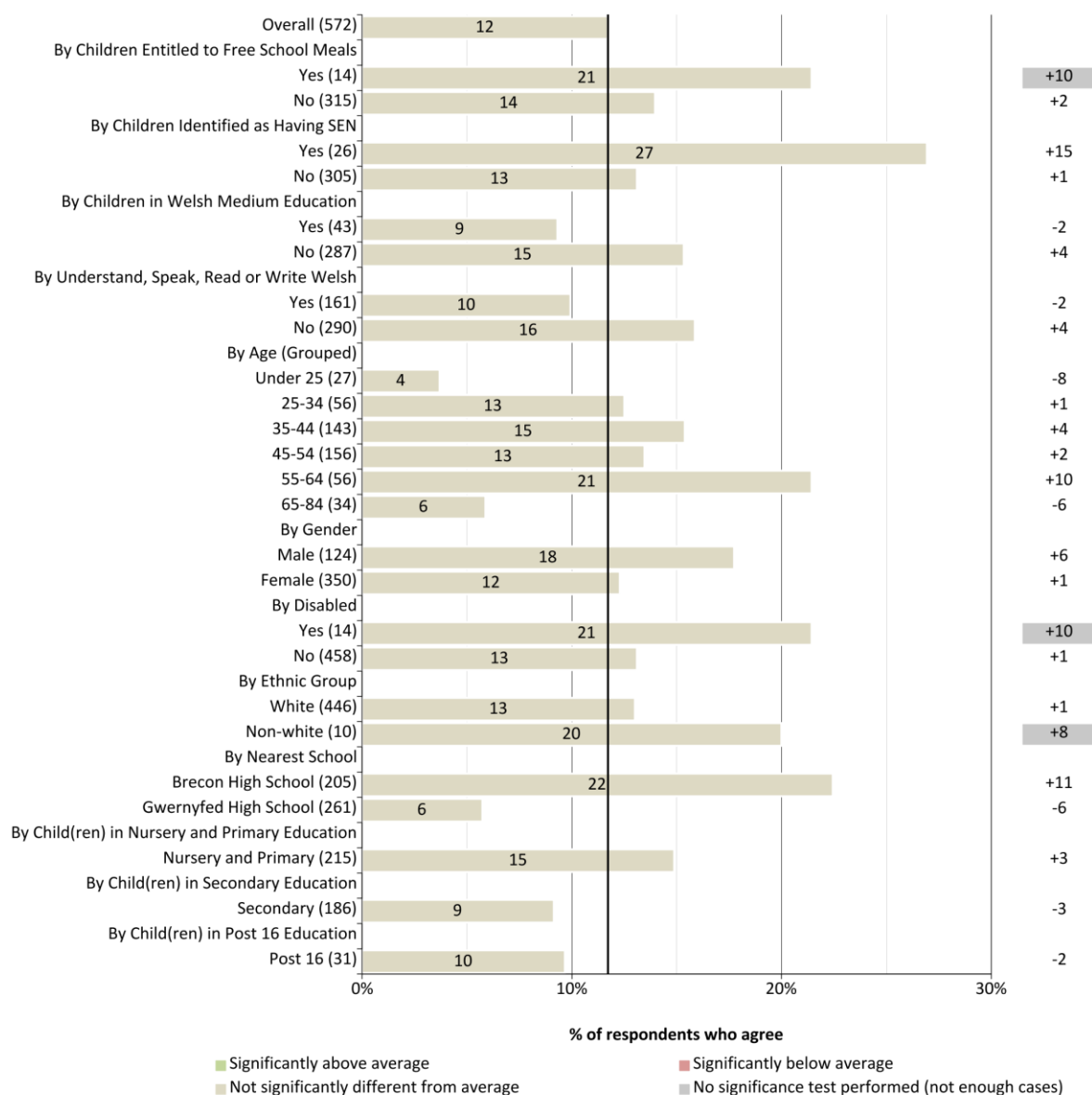


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.35 Respondents were then provided with a description of the four elements of the Council's proposal, as well as an explanation of how the Council believed the proposal would address the issues identified in the previous section.
- 3.36 The first element of the proposal is to establish a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate on the two existing sites.
- 3.37 The highest levels of agreement with this element of the proposal were from parents, carers or guardians of children who attend Brecon High School or a Brecon feeder school (23%). A fifth (20%) of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agreed with this element of the proposal.
- 3.38 Around 1 in 10 school Governors (14%), pupils and parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other/unknown schools (13%), other residents (11%), or members of staff in a Powys school/education system (8%) agreed with this element of the proposal, while only around 1 in 20 respondents who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (6%), or are parents, carers or guardians of children who attend Gwernyfed high school or associated feeder school (5%) agreed with this element of the proposal.

3.39 More than 9 in 10 of those representing an organisation based in or covering Powys (94%), parents, carers or guardians of children who attend Gwernyfed high school or associated feeder school (92%) and members of staff in the Powys school/education system (91%) disagreed with the establishment of a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools.

Figure 5: Levels of agreement and disagreement for establishing a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017 (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

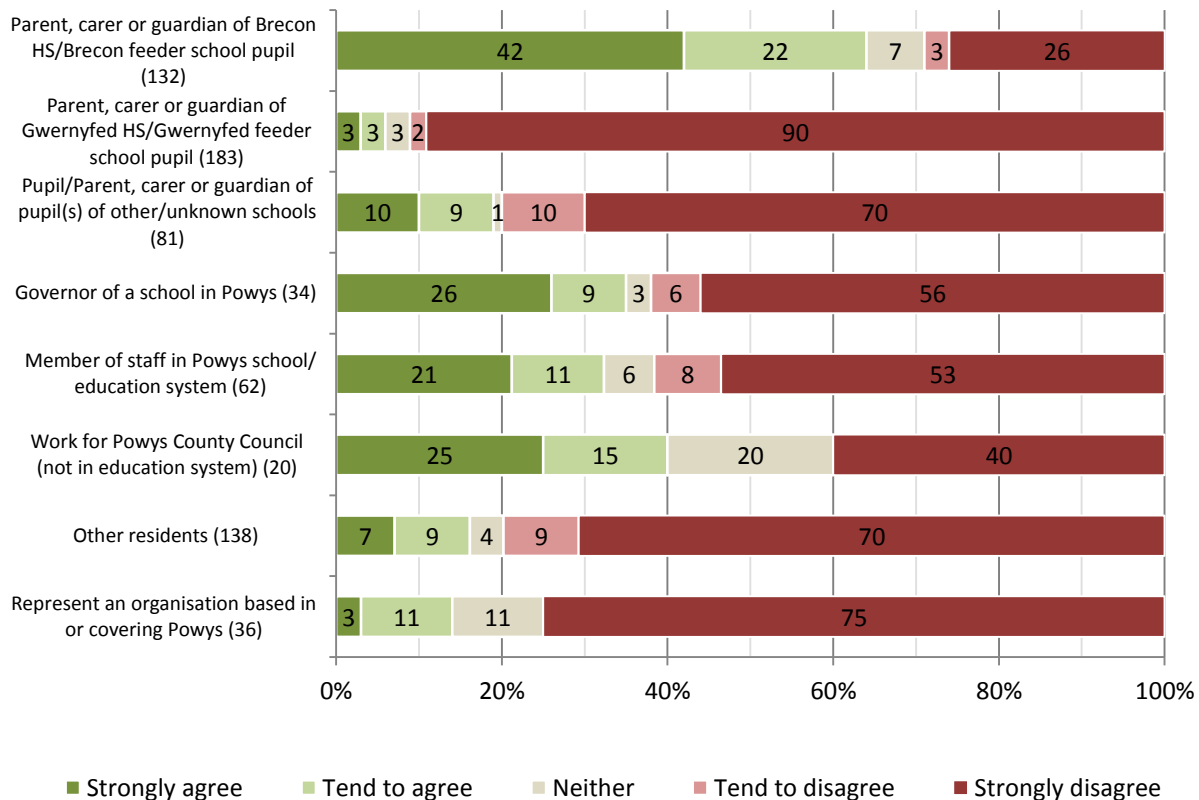
3.40 Respondents with children identified as having SEN (27%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to establish a new dual-site English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16, as well as respondents living nearest Brecon High School (22%), or who are aged 55-64 (21%).

3.41 Respondents nearest Gwernyfed High School (6%), those aged 65-84 (6%) and those aged under 25 (4%) were least likely to have agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

To construct a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20.

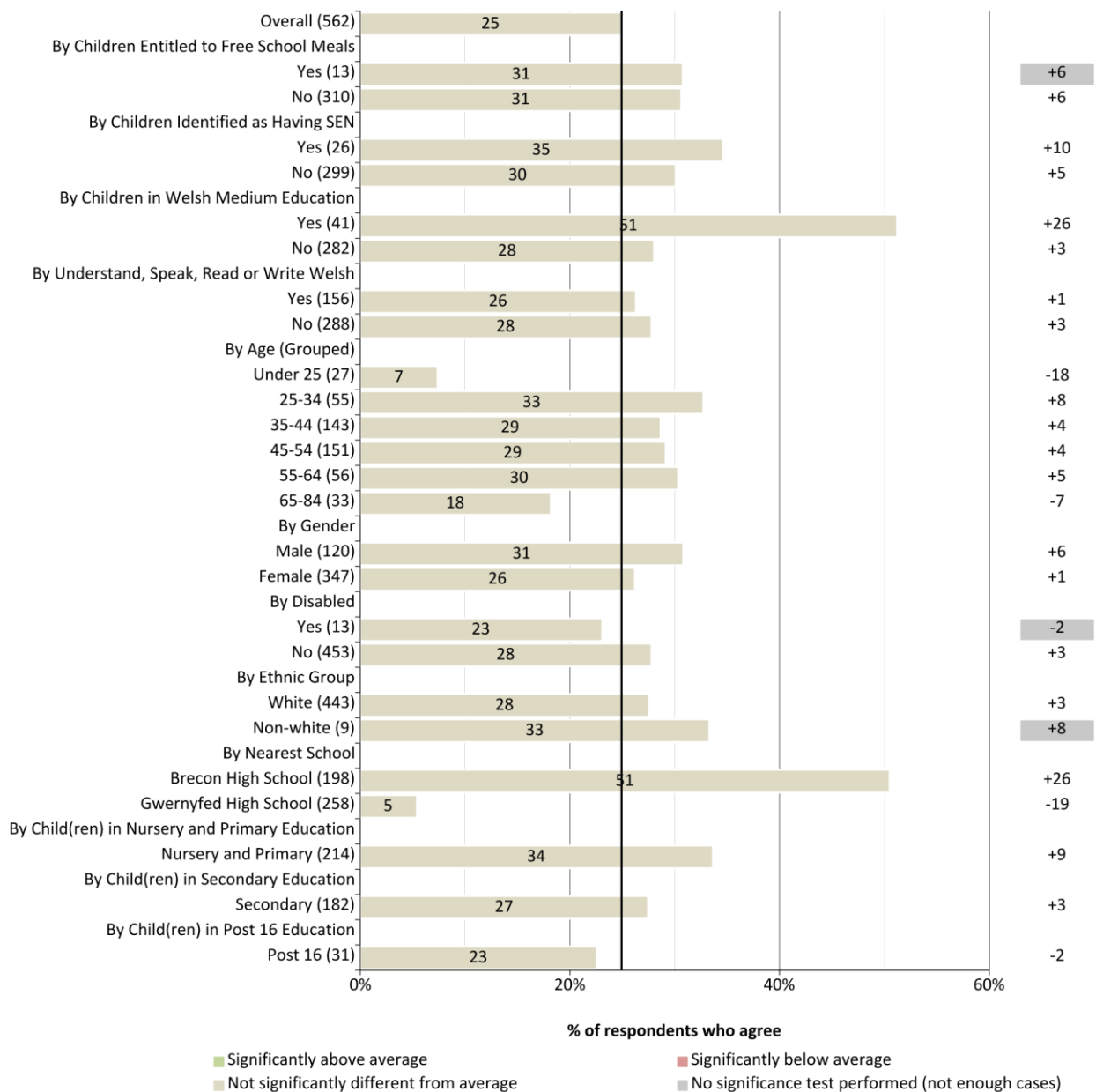
Figure 6: Levels of agreement and disagreement for constructing a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.42 The second element of the proposal is the construction of a new building for the proposed new secondary school with an aim to open in 2019/2020.
- 3.43 Agreement with this element of the proposal was particularly higher among parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School/feeder school pupils, with more than three fifths (64%) agreeing with this proposal.
- 3.44 However, there were lower levels of support among all other stakeholder groups. Two fifths (40%) of those who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) showed agreement with the proposal to create a new building for the proposed new secondary school, while around a third or more of those who are Governors of a school in Powys (35%) and members of staff in the Powys school/education system (32%) agreed.
- 3.45 Less than a quarter of the all remaining stakeholder groups agreed with this element of the proposal, including pupils/parents, carers or guardians of pupil(s) of other/unknown schools (19%), Other residents (17%), and those representing an organisation based in or covering Powys (14%). Only 5% of parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed High School/feeder school pupils agreed with the construction of a new building for the proposed new secondary school.

Figure 7: Levels of agreement and disagreement that for constructing a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20 (Demographic sub-group analysis)



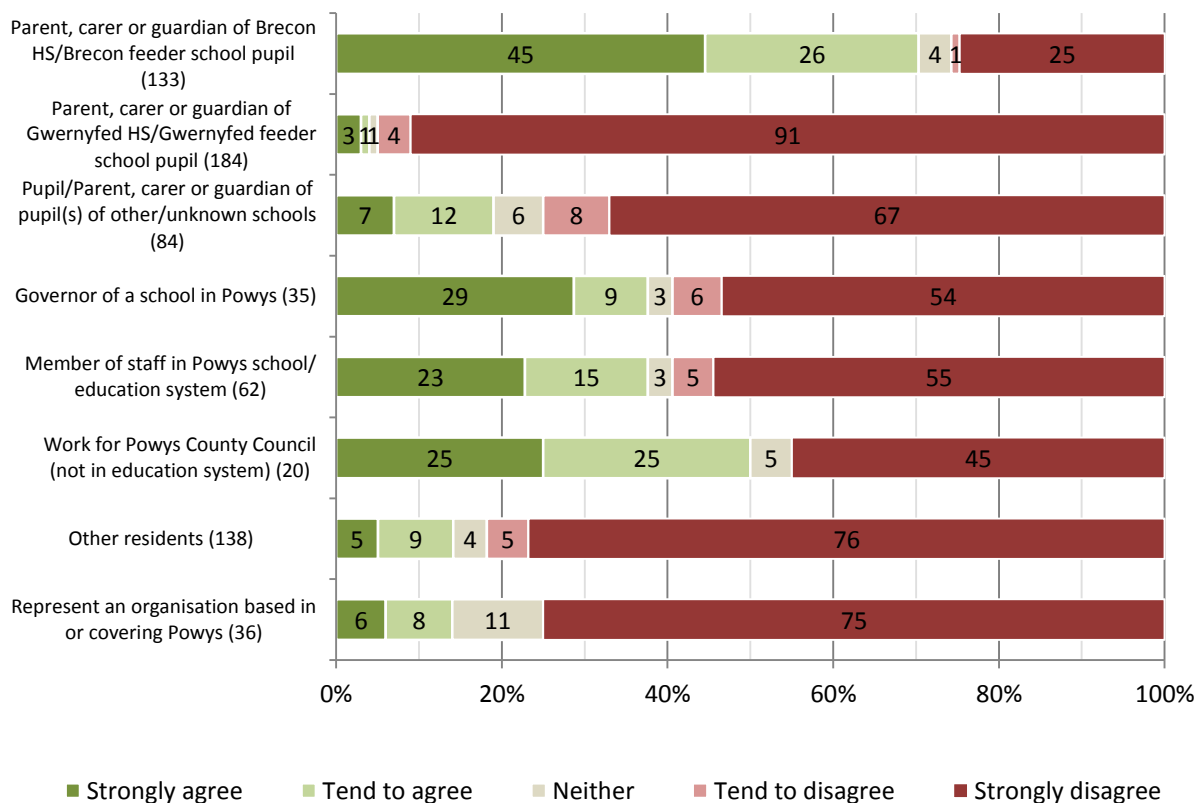
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.46 Respondents with children in Welsh medium education (51%) and who live nearest to Brecon High School (51%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to construct a new building for the proposed new secondary school and, to a lesser extent, as were those with children identified as having SEN (35%) or with children in nursery and primary school (34%).
- 3.47 Respondents aged under 25 (7%) and those living nearest Gwernyfed High School (5%) were least likely to have agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

To locate the new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport.

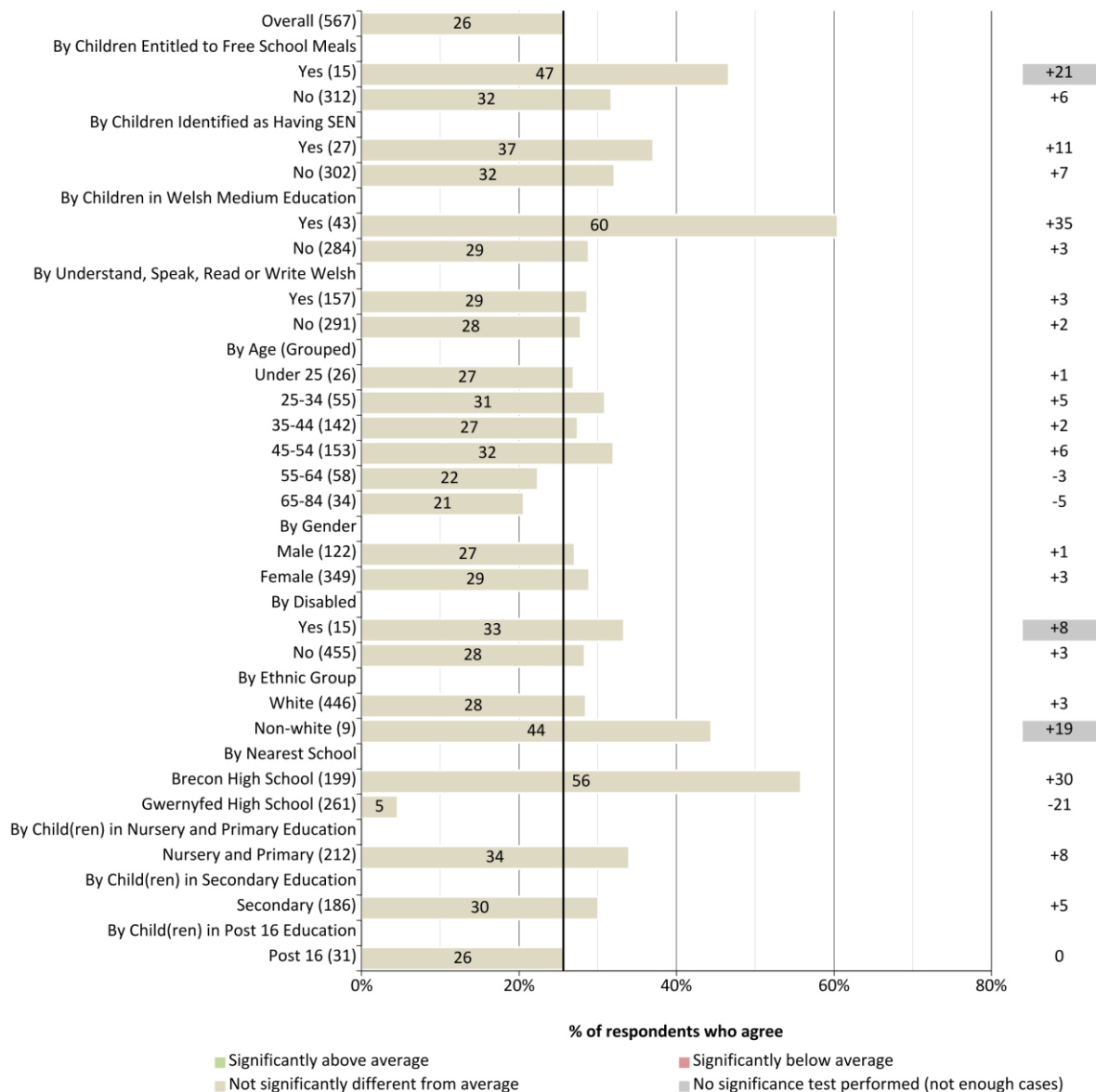
Figure 8: Levels of agreement and disagreement for locating the new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.48 The third element of the proposal is to locate the proposed new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require schools transport.
- 3.49 Again, parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School/feeder schools pupils indicated higher support than other stakeholder groups. Almost three quarters of these respondents (71%) agreed with the proposal to locate the new school building in Brecon.
- 3.50 Half (50%) of those who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) also agreed with this element of the proposal. Almost two fifths of respondents who are members of staff in the Powys school/education system (37%) or Governors of a school in Powys (37%) also agreed.
- 3.51 Lower levels of agreement were found among respondents that represented an organisation based in or covering Powys (14%) and other residents (14%). While parents, carers and guardians of Brecon High School/feeder school pupils were most likely to agree with this proposal, parents, carers and guardians of Gwernyfed High School/feeder school pupils were least likely to do so. Just 4% agreed with this proposal, while 95% disagreed, including just over 9 in 10 (91%) who strongly disagreed.

Figure 9: Levels of agreement and disagreement for locating the new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

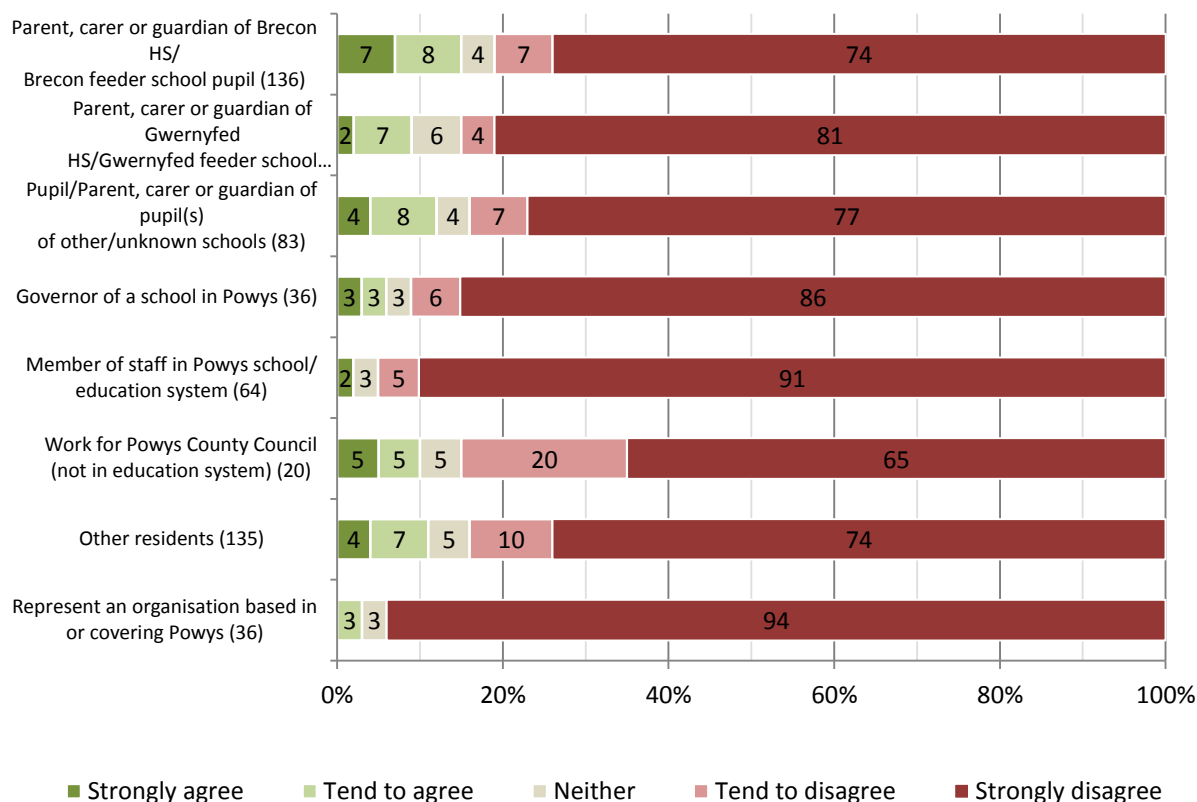
3.52 Respondents with children in Welsh medium education (60%) were particularly to agree with the proposal to locate the proposed new school building in Brecon, as were those nearest Brecon High School (56%) and with children identified as having Special Educational Needs (37%).

3.53 Respondents living nearest to Gwernyfed High School (5%) were least likely to agree with this.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

For all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges.

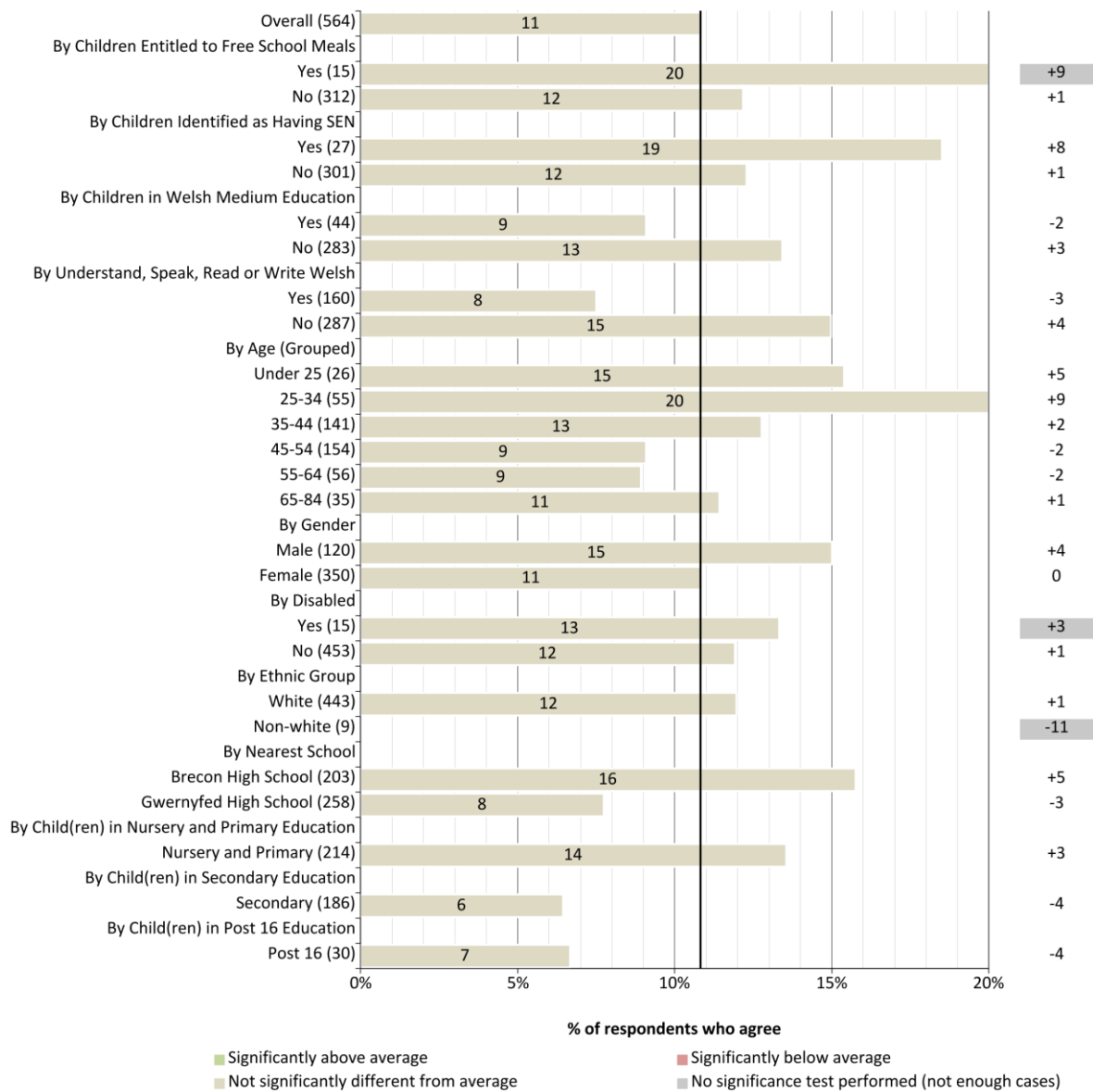
Figure 10: Levels of agreement and disagreement for all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.54 The fourth element of the proposal is for all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges.
- 3.55 At least four fifths of respondents in all stakeholder groups disagreed with this element of the proposal. Those who were most likely to agree were parents, carers or guardians of Brecon High School/feeder schools pupils (15%). Around 1 in 10 pupils and parents of pupils of other/unknown schools (12%), other residents (11%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (10%) and parents, carers and guardians of Gwernyfed high school/feeder school pupils (9%) also agreed with the proposal.
- 3.56 Lower levels of support were found among Governors of schools in Powys (6%), respondents who represent an organisation based in or covering Powys (3%), and just 2% of members of staff in the Powys school/education system agreed with this proposal, while a large majority (95%) disagreed.

Figure 11: Levels of agreement and disagreement for all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges (Demographic sub-group analysis)



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.57 While levels of agreement were low among all sub-groups, respondents aged 25-34 (20%), and those with children identified as having SEN (19%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal for all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal, please explain why.

- 3.59 Respondents who expressed disagreement with any element the proposal were asked to explain why this was. All responses provided to the open-ended questions have been read, and then classified (coded) using a standardised approach (code frame). This approach helps ensure consistency when classifying different comments and the resulting codes represent themes that have been repeatedly mentioned in a quantifiable manner. The responses provided by a resident to a single text question may present a number of different points or arguments, therefore in many cases the overall number of coded comments counted in a particular question can actually be higher than the number of people responding to that open-ended question (i.e. each resident may have made comments about two or more different topics).
- 3.60 Of the 437 respondents who were asked this question, 3,045 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 12: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	47%	204
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	44%	191
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	38%	164
Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form	35%	154
Concerns over standards of education of NPTC in Brecon/lack of subject choice for Post-16 students/NPTC will not be accountable to anyone	34%	149
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	34%	147
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	29%	127
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington, etc.	28%	123
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	27%	120
Do not close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	27%	118
Proposals will negatively impact extra-curricular activities/clubs and groups will be limited	23%	100
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	18%	77
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	16%	71
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer 'new families' will move in	15%	67
I do not want to go to Brecon High School (non-specific)	14%	60
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	13%	58
Proposals will negatively affect pupils' health and wellbeing (i.e. make them tired, unhappy, inattentive in school)	13%	57
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	13%	55
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	12%	54
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	11%	50
Proposals are financially motivated/a 'money grab' by the council	11%	47
Proposals will negatively affects rural area/rural communities (non-specific)	10%	45

Disagree with proposals as they are just a ploy to write off Brecon's debts	9%	40
Disagree as we need to keep the Welsh language in Brecon/Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/ Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	9%	39
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	8%	37
Disagree that proposals will improve standards/proposals won't work	8%	37
Powys County Council have promised schools for years and never delivered/have no faith that this situation will be any different	8%	35
Sixth Form students needed in schools to provide guidance/inspiration/role models for younger students/being in the same school helps Sixth Formers to mature	8%	35
Disagree with proposed changes to Sixth Form as pupils need continuity/need to remain in the same school from 11-18	7%	31
Unhappy with Powys' lack of evidence for proposals i.e. being unable to answer questions in consultation meetings/figures in consultation document lacking anything to back them up	7%	31
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	7%	30
Disagree with assertions that 600+ students is optimum for schools/believe smaller schools are better	7%	30
Disagree with proposals due to large number of housing developments planned in surrounding areas	6%	27
Any financial issues are due to the County Council themselves/Powys County Council are responsible for not intervening e	6%	26
Proposals negatively impact people living in Hay-on-Wye/distance will be too much	6%	25
Disagree with moving Brecon due to it negatively affecting people who live in the countryside/Gwernyfed specifically chosen due to countryside/want our children in a rural environment/don't want our children taught in town	6%	25
Disagree with removal of A-Level subjects from schools as it will negatively impact recruitment and retention of teachers	5%	24
Concerns over provision of Sciences in NPTC i.e. insufficient number of laboratories/no offer of Chemistry	5%	22
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	5%	20
Gwernyfed is valuable for its beautiful/historic/listed buildings	4%	17
Decisions are being made by councillors who do not understand/cannot relate to the issues	2%	10
Proposals are not in line with the Future Generations Act (2015)	1%	6
'Other'	39%	169

^{3.61} Just less than half (47%) of respondents who disagreed with any elements of the proposal did so because they felt that 'Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed'. Typical examples of such comments are as follows:

Gwernyfed High School must not be closed because it has a good standard of education and has robust financial credentials.

I strongly disagree with all aspects of the ill thought out proposal. Brecon needs a new high school but there is no problem Gwernyfed. Standards are good [and] budgets are kept.

Gwernyfed high school is an excellent school with fantastic exam result, great teachers and is within its budget and shouldn't be closed because of Brecon HS's failures.

- 3.62 More than two fifths (44%) of respondents disagreed with the proposals due to concerns around increased travel times or distances. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Having been a student of Gwernyfed who lived in Bryngwyn, it already took around 50 minutes each way to get to the school. Moving it [to] Brecon would more than likely double this travel time meaning children could have 9-10 hour days...

Gwernyfed should not close ... pupils in many cases already have a long commute to school and home without adding more miles to their journey it is not good for their health and wellbeing also after school clubs would make a child even later home in turn affecting their learning and studying time.

The travelling [the] majority of children will endure is not correct for any child.

- 3.63 Around two fifths (38%) of respondents disagreed because they felt that 'proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community'. These concerns were often raised alongside concerns over the effect on the local economy of Gwernyfed.

Gwernyfed is also a part of the community in the area - if you close this down many businesses will suffer, classes held at the school will be lost, and we will lose our sense of community!

Gwernyfed High School must not be closed because ... It is the hub of a diverse community, covering a large area, that relies heavily on the school's facilities for a wide range of activities. ... No meaningful investigation and assessment has been carried out into the socio-economic and cultural effects of closing Gwernyfed High School.

Gwernyfed is more than just a school it is an integral part of the community and its closure would be devastating.

- 3.64 35% of respondents said that 'Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Post 16 education needs to be offered at the new school.

Crickhowell high has a sixth form, Builth will have a sixth form - why won't Brecon?!

Sixth form should be part of the school, not in a college where older people - some in their 70's - attend.

- 3.65 Additionally, many respondents (34%) raising considerations around post-16 provision also expressed concerns about the standards of education of NPTC in Brecon, its accountability to the Council, or about the range of subject choice that would be available to Post-16 students.

The college has a very poor reputation. They are known to pull courses part-way through. They are known to have poor quality teaching.

NPTC 6th form is not good enough and will not have the qualified teachers as Brecon 6th form already does. It is an incredibly stupid idea to get rid of the 6th forms already there and replace them with a new one with worse facilities, teachers, and other things.

I do not feel that NPTC will be able to fully implement all the subjects choice they say - the current building is too small, the laboratory is too small, there is no music provision or drama or arts provision.

Welsh Medium Education

- 3.1 As the proposed changes to Welsh medium education would affect stakeholders from across South/Mid Powys, respondents to the main Brecon and Gwernyfed consultation and Builth and Llandrindod consultation were asked identical questions regarding the proposals for Welsh medium education. Because of this, ORS has merged responses to questions regarding the Welsh medium proposals from both questionnaires into one all-inclusive dataset.
- 3.2 There is an additional break down by parents, carers and guardians of pupils who attend Brecon High School/associated feeder schools, Gwernyfed High School/associated feeder schools, and pupils and parents, carers and guardians of pupils from other/unknown schools (not including Builth Wells High School/feeder schools or Llandrindod High School/feeder schools).
- 3.3 Table 2 below provides a breakdown of the respondent profile from the 796 individuals who responded either online or by post to the main open consultation questionnaires for Brecon and Gwernyfed or Builth and Llandrindod. Figures for Powys's population are also outlined for comparison.

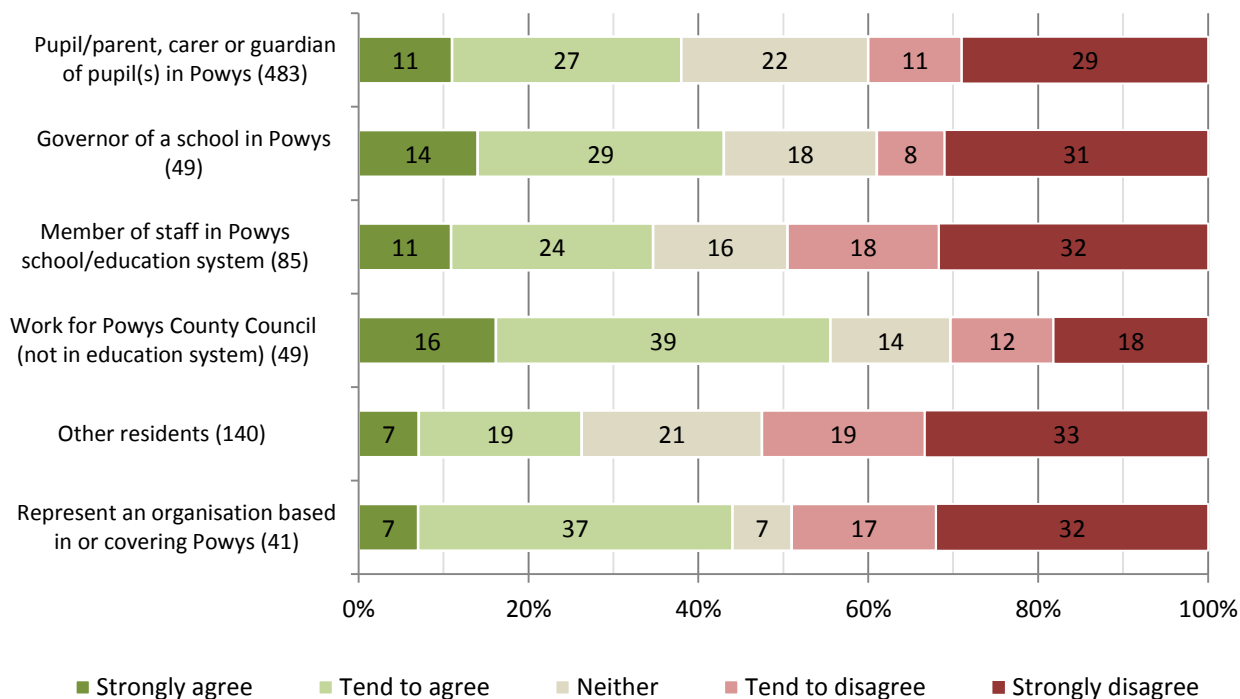
Table 2: Socio-demographic characteristics for the main consultation questionnaires and Powys's population
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic	All Responses		Powys population 16+		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	Number of occurrences	% of population	
BY AGE	Under 25	30	4.9%	12,372	11.1%
	25 to 34	76	12.4%	12,230	11.0%
	35 to 44	197	32.1%	13,538	12.2%
	45 to 54	207	33.7%	19,506	17.6%
	55 to 64	67	10.9%	19,238	17.3%
	65 to 84	36	5.9%	29,611	26.7%
	85+	1	0.2%	4,547	4.1%
	Total valid responses	614	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	<i>182</i>	-	-	-	
BY GENDER	Male	155	24.9%	54,573	49.1%
	Female	468	75.1%	56,469	50.9%
	Total valid responses	623	100.0%	111,042	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	<i>173</i>	-	-	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	589	98.0%	108,539	98.6%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic	6	1.0%	453	0.4%
	Asian or Asian British	4	0.7%	890	0.8%
	Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	1	0.2%	109	0.1%
	Any other ethnic group	1	0.2%	92	0.1%
	Total valid responses	601	100%	110,083	100.0%
<i>Not known</i>	<i>195</i>	-	-	-	
BY DISABILITY	With disability	22	3.6%	26,357	24.3%
	No disability	596	96.4%	81,971	75.7%
	Total valid responses	618	100.0%	108,328	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	<i>178</i>	-	-	-

	Characteristic	All Responses	
		Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL, NURSERY OR COLLEGE IN POWYS	Has children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	478	75.6%
	No children currently in school, nursery or college in Powys	154	24.4%
	Total valid responses	632	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	164	-
BY CHILDREN ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Has children entitled to free school meals	22	4.9%
	No children entitled to free school meals	426	95.1%
	Total valid responses	448	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	-
	<i>Not known</i>	195	-
BY CHILDREN HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	Has children with SEN	41	9.1%
	No children with SEN	410	90.9%
	Total valid responses	451	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	-
	<i>Not known</i>	192	-
BY CHILDREN CURRENTLY RECEIVING A WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION	Has children receiving Welsh medium education	72	15.9%
	No children receiving Welsh medium education	380	84.1%
	Total valid responses	452	100.0%
	<i>Not applicable</i>	153	-
	<i>Not known</i>	191	-
BY WELSH SPEAKER	Speaks Welsh	210	35.5%
	Does not speak Welsh	382	64.5%
	Total valid responses	592	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	204	-

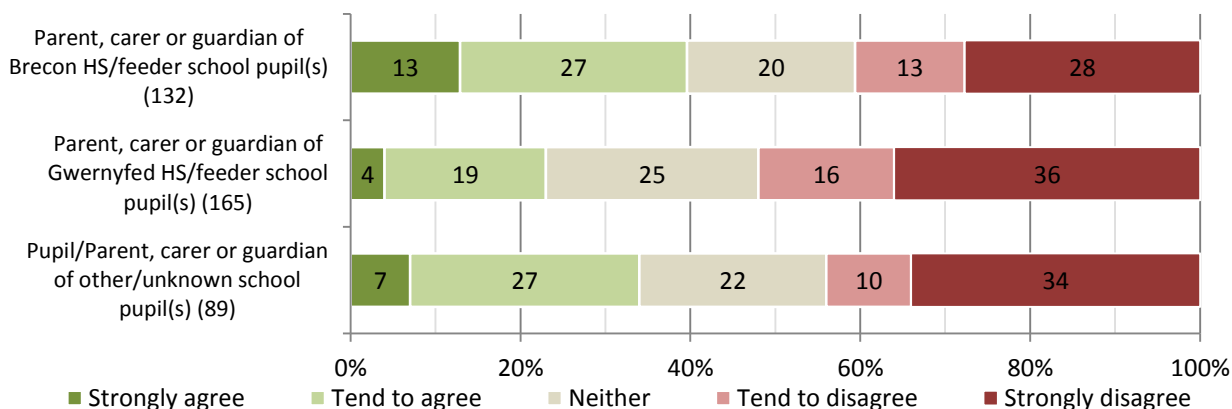
In the context of the problems outlined above, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 13: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 14: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues (separated by schools).

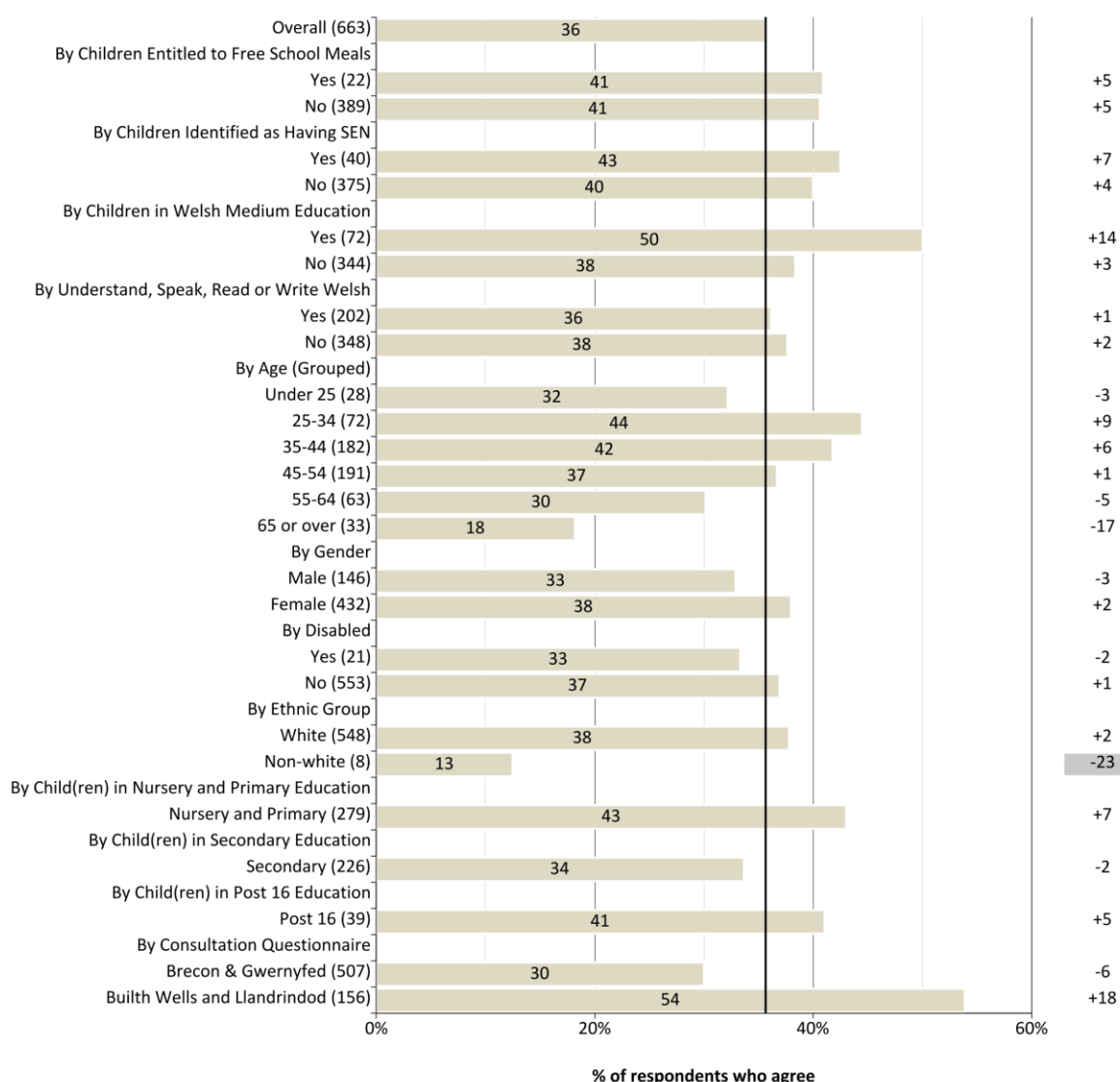


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.4 More than half (55%) of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in Welsh education. More than two fifths of those representing an organisation based in or covering Powys (44%) and Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed, as did around a third of members of staff in Powys school/education system (34%) and around a quarter (27%) of other residents.

- 3.5 While around two fifths (38%) of pupils and parents/carers/guardians of pupils in Powys overall agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified in Welsh education, and 39% of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils specifically agreed, only around a quarter (24%) of pupils/parents/carers and guardians Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils agreed.
- 3.6 More than half of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils (52%) disagreed.

Figure 15: Levels of agreement and disagreement that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues (Demographic subgroup analysis).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

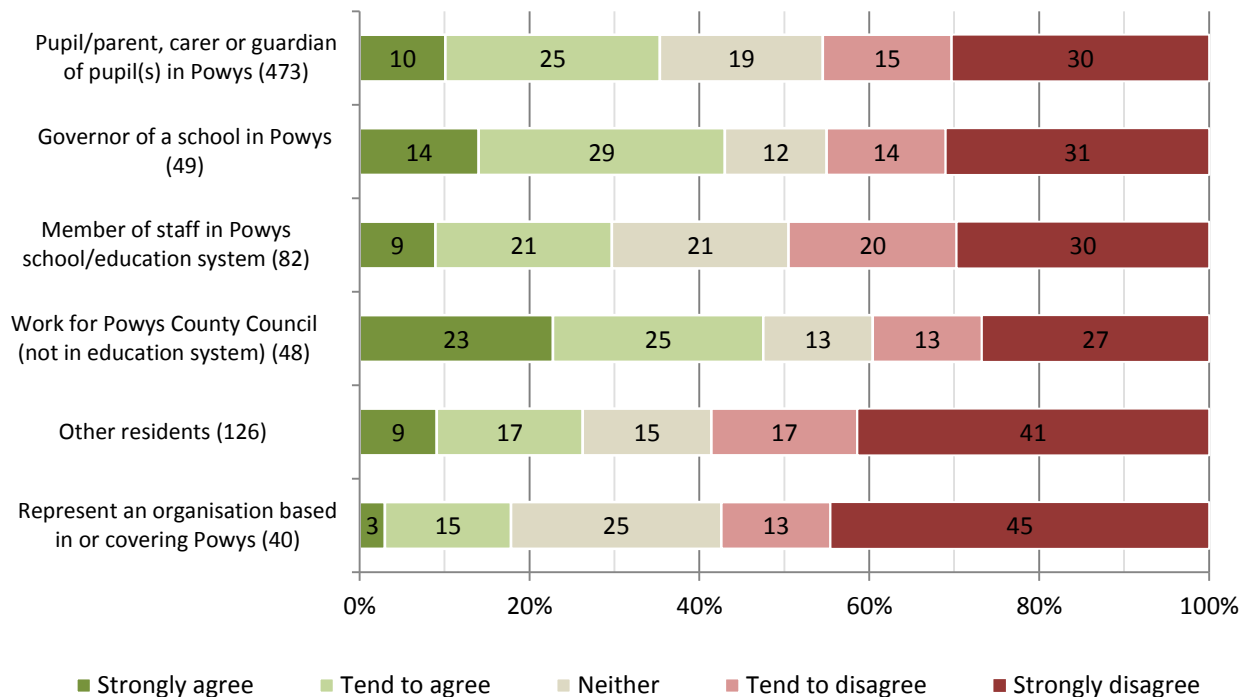
- 3.7 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (54%) and respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (50%) are particularly likely to have agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues in Welsh education. Respondents aged 25-34 (44%), 35-44 (42%) and respondents with children in Nursery and Primary Education (43%) or with children who have Special Educational Needs (43%) were also particularly likely to agree.

3.8 Respondents aged 65 or over (18%) were particularly less likely to agree, as were respondents to the Brecon & Gwernyfed Consultation Questionnaire (30%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

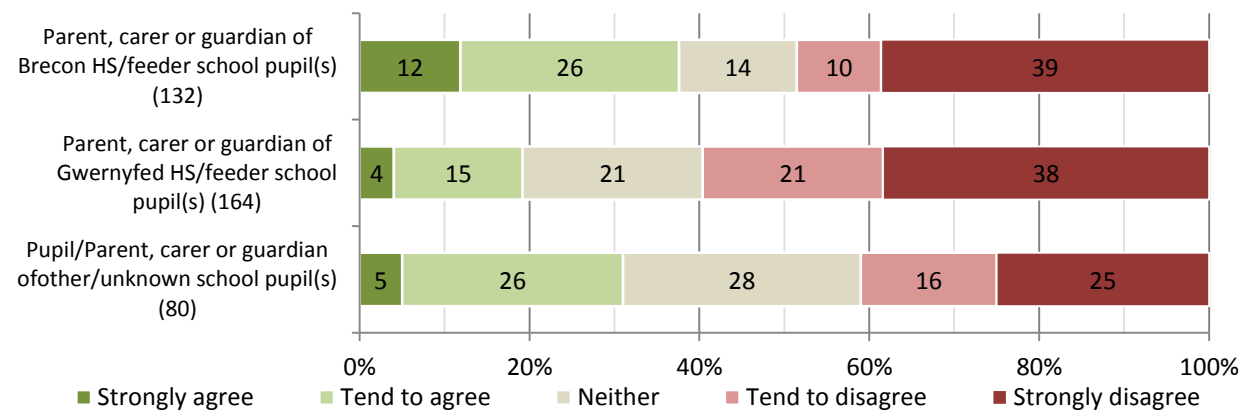
To consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys to enable a wider range of subjects and a better learning and linguistic experience.

Figure 16: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys to enable a wider range of subjects and a better learning and linguistic experience.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

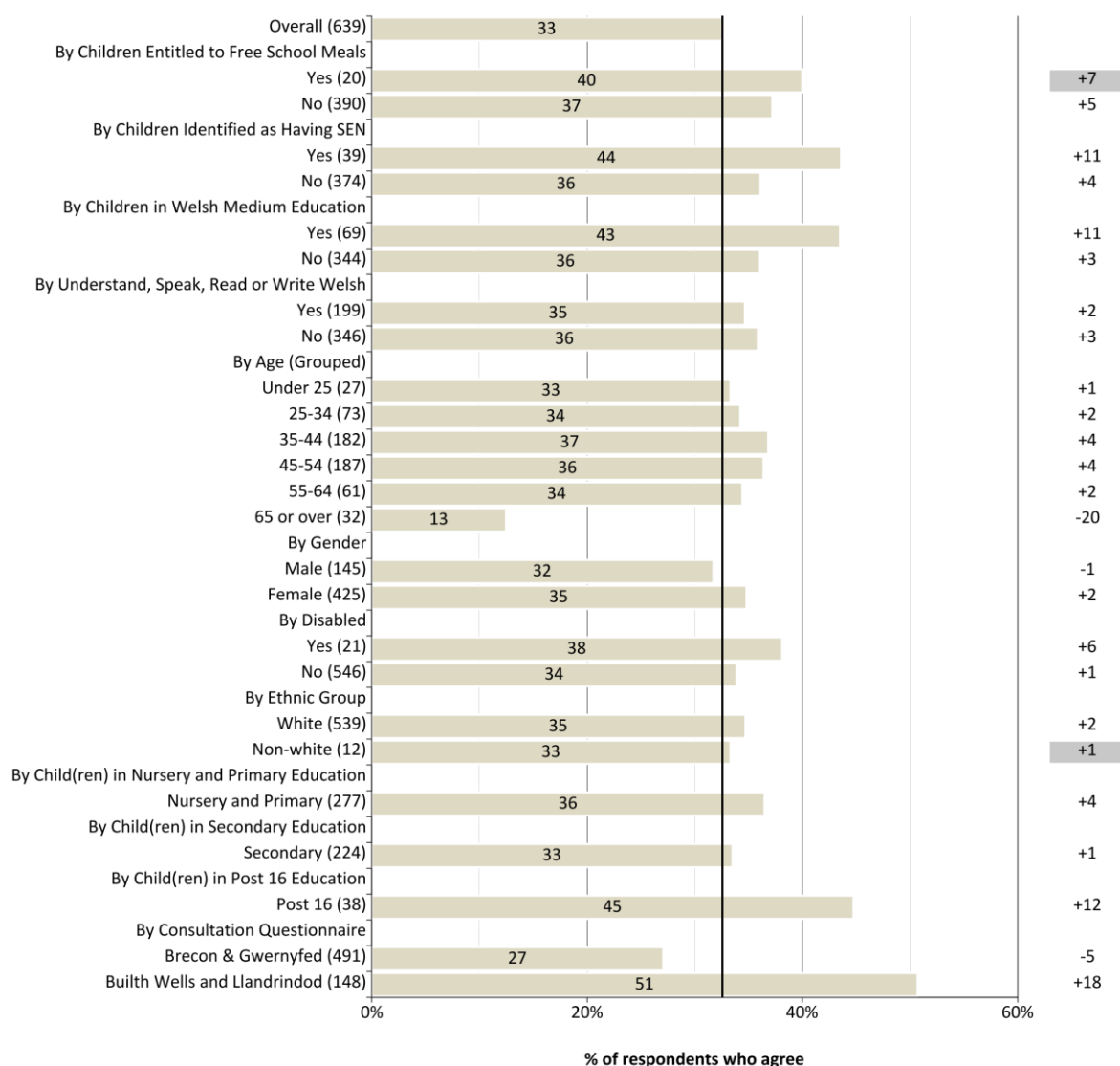
Figure 17: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys to enable a wider range of subjects and a better learning and linguistic experience (separated by schools).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.9 Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (48%) and around two fifths of Governors of schools in Powys (43%) agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream. More than a third (35%) of pupils, parents, carers or guardians of Powys pupils also agreed, while only around a quarter (26%) of other residents agreed.
- 3.10 Around two fifths (38%) of parents/carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils agreed with the proposal to deliver Welsh medium education from a single Welsh stream, compared to only around a fifth (19%) of parents/carers and guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils.

Figure 18: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys (Demographic subgroup analysis).

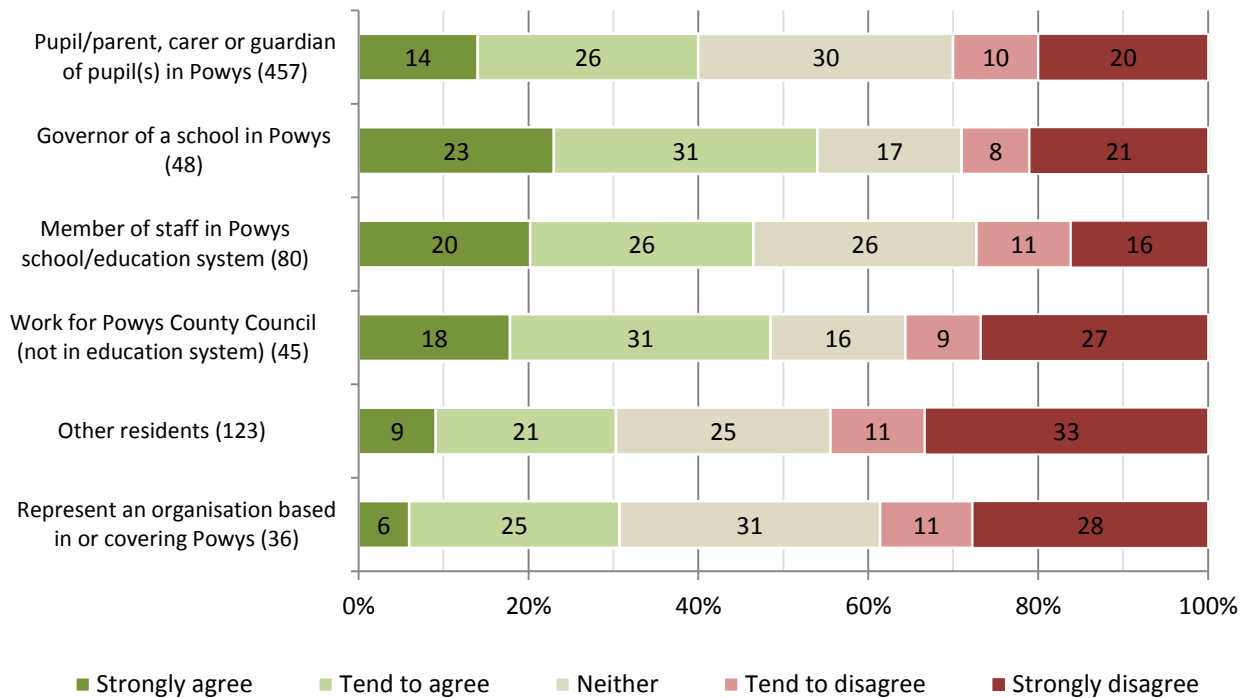


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.11 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (51%) and respondents with children in Post 16 Education (45%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys. Respondents with children identified as having Special Educational Needs (44%) or with children in Welsh Medium education (43%) were also particularly likely to agree.
- 3.12 Those aged 65 or over (13%) were particularly less likely to agree.

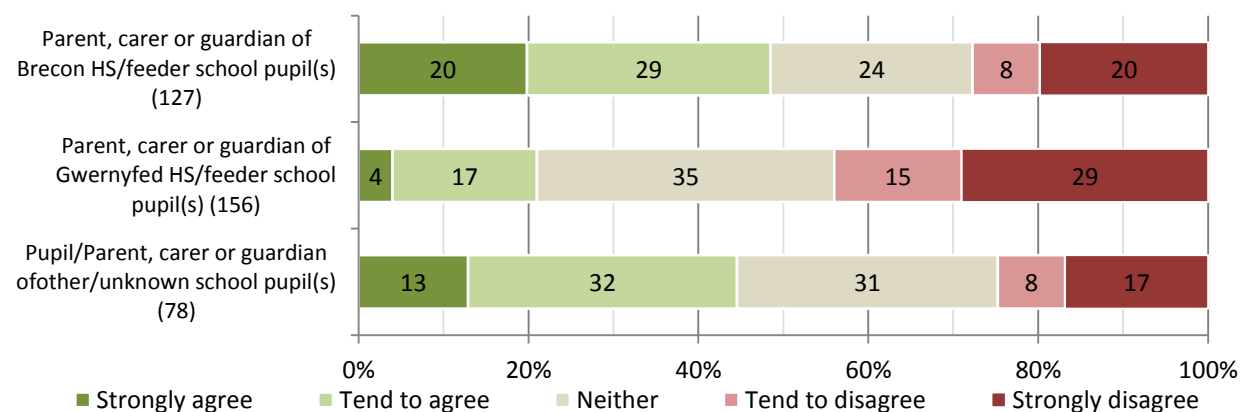
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?
 To provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.

Figure 19: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 20: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school (separated by schools).

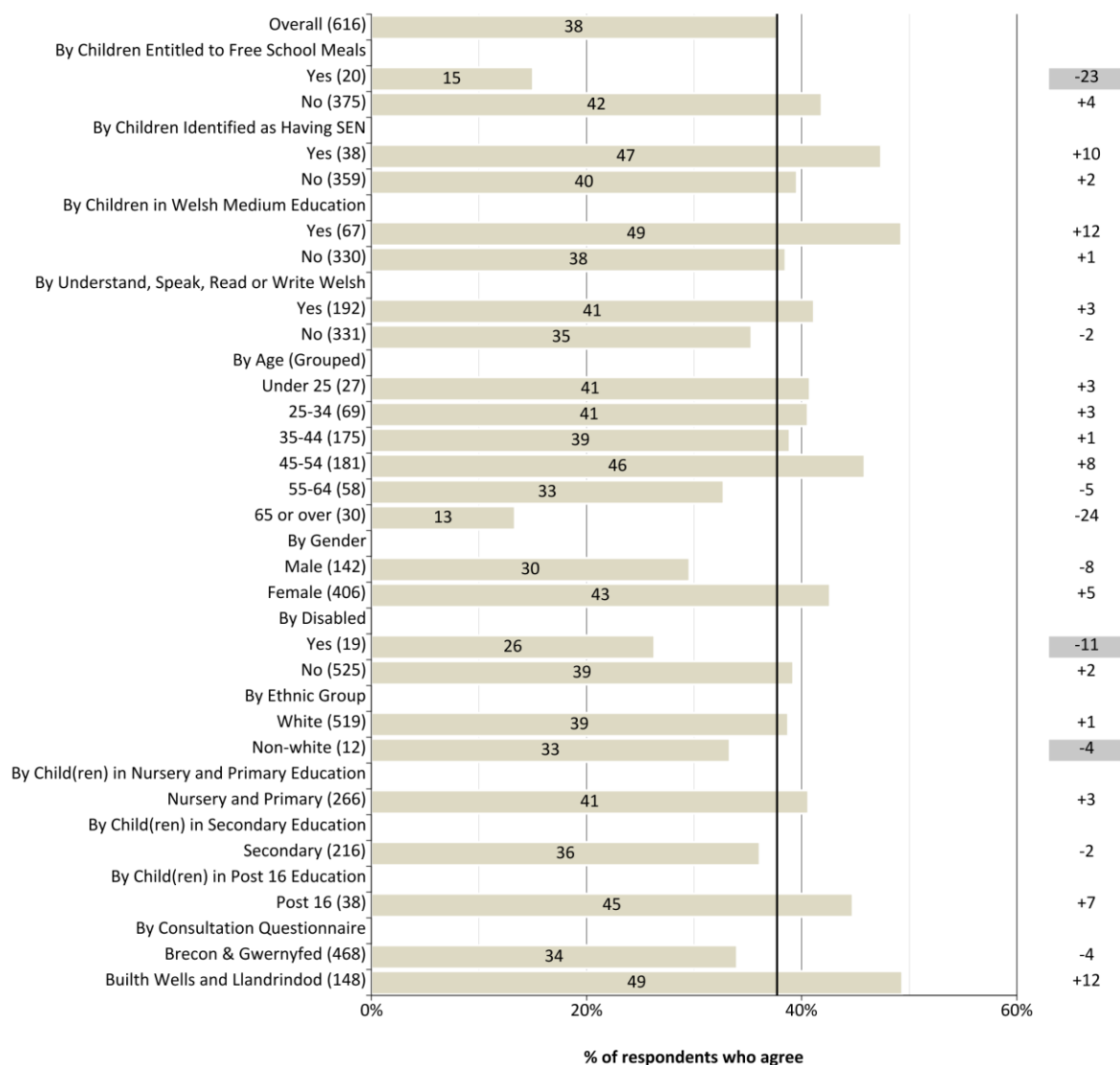


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.13 Governors of schools in Powys were most likely to agree with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual category 2b/c dual stream school, with over half (54%) agreeing with this proposal. Almost half of respondents who work for Powys County Council (not in education system) (49%) and members of staff in Powys schools/education system (46%) also agreed.

3.14 While two fifths (40%) of pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils overall agreed with this proposal, parents, carers or guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils had slightly higher levels of agreement (49%), while only around a fifth (21%) of parents, carers or guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils agreed with this proposal.

Figure 21: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school (Demographic subgroup analysis).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

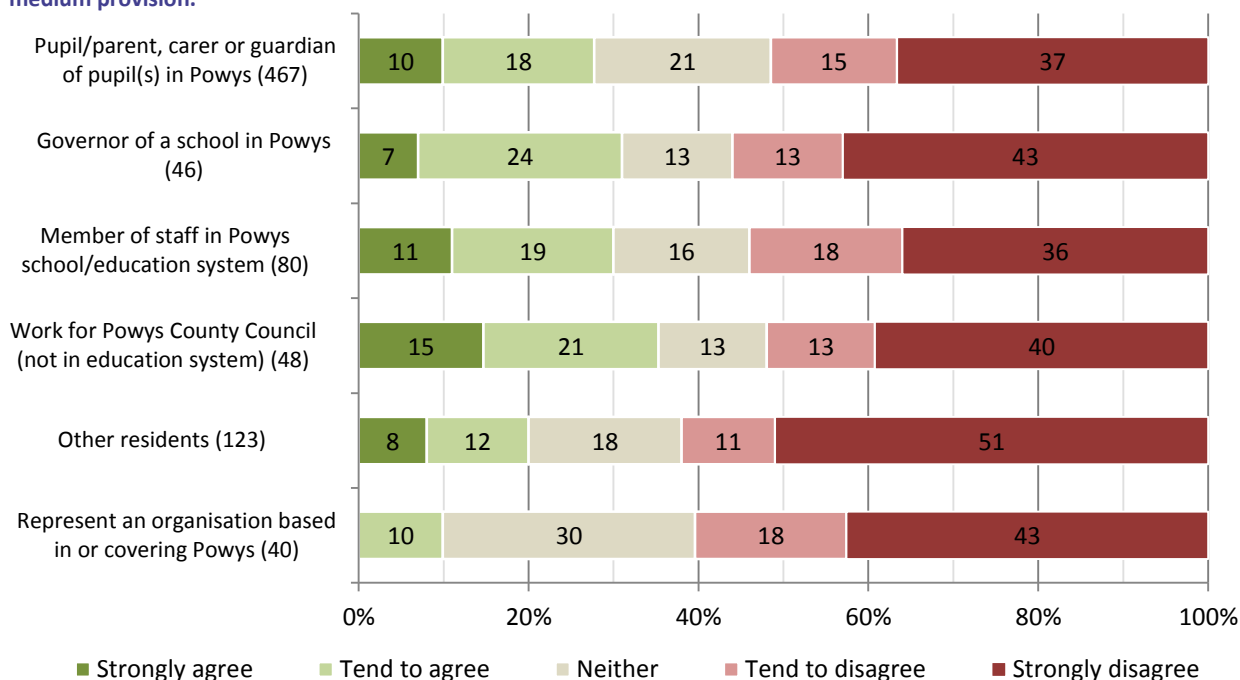
3.15 Again, respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (49%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school. Respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (49%) or identified as having Special Educational Needs (47%) were also particularly likely to agree, along with respondents aged 45-54 (46%) and respondents with children in Post-16 Education (45%).

3.16 Male respondents (30%) and respondents aged 65 or over (13%) were particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

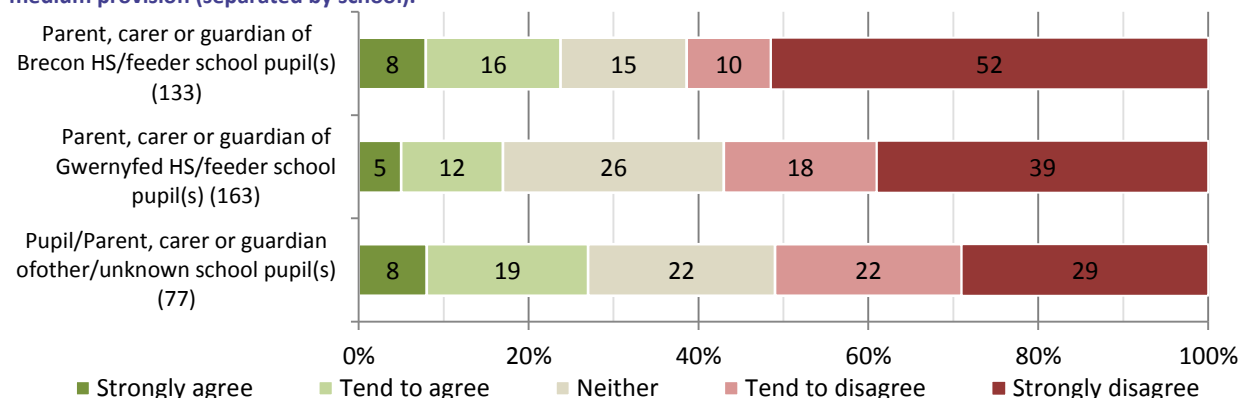
To locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (subject to secondary consultation) due to its central location and enhanced Welsh medium provision.

Figure 22: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (subject to secondary consultation) due to its central location and enhanced Welsh medium provision.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 23: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (subject to secondary consultation) due to its central location and enhanced Welsh medium provision (separated by school).

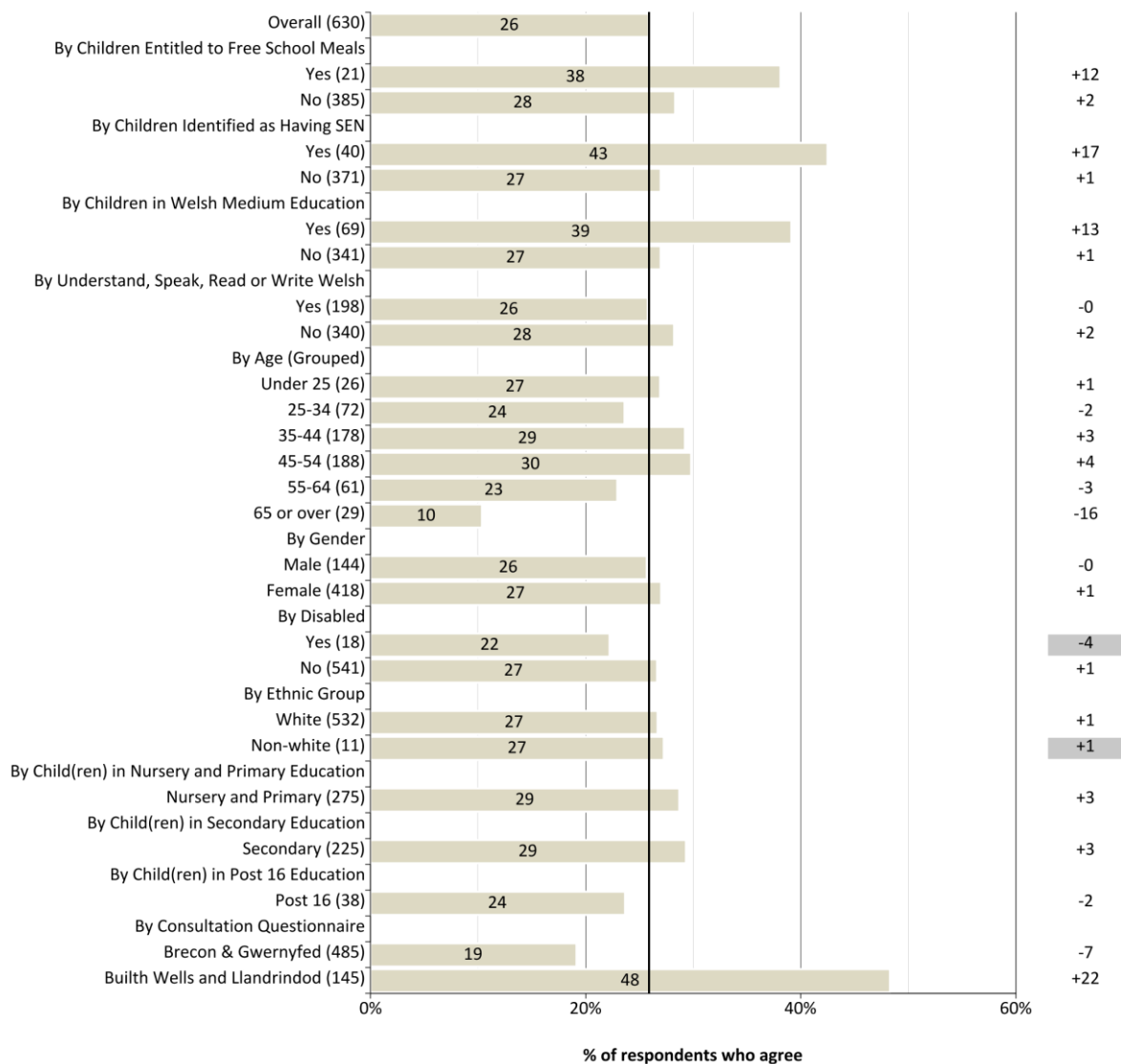


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.17 Around a third of employees of Powys County Council (not in education system) (35%) and members of staff in the Powys schools/education system (30%) and Governors of schools in Powys (30%) agreed with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school.

- 3.18 However, more than half of all respondent groups disagreed with the proposal. Other residents (62%), representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (60%), and Governors of schools in Powys (57%) were particularly likely to disagree, with well over half of pupils/parents/carers and guardians of Brecon (62%) and Gwernyfed (57%) HS/feeder school pupils disagreeing with the proposal.

Figure 24: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (Demographic subgroup analysis).



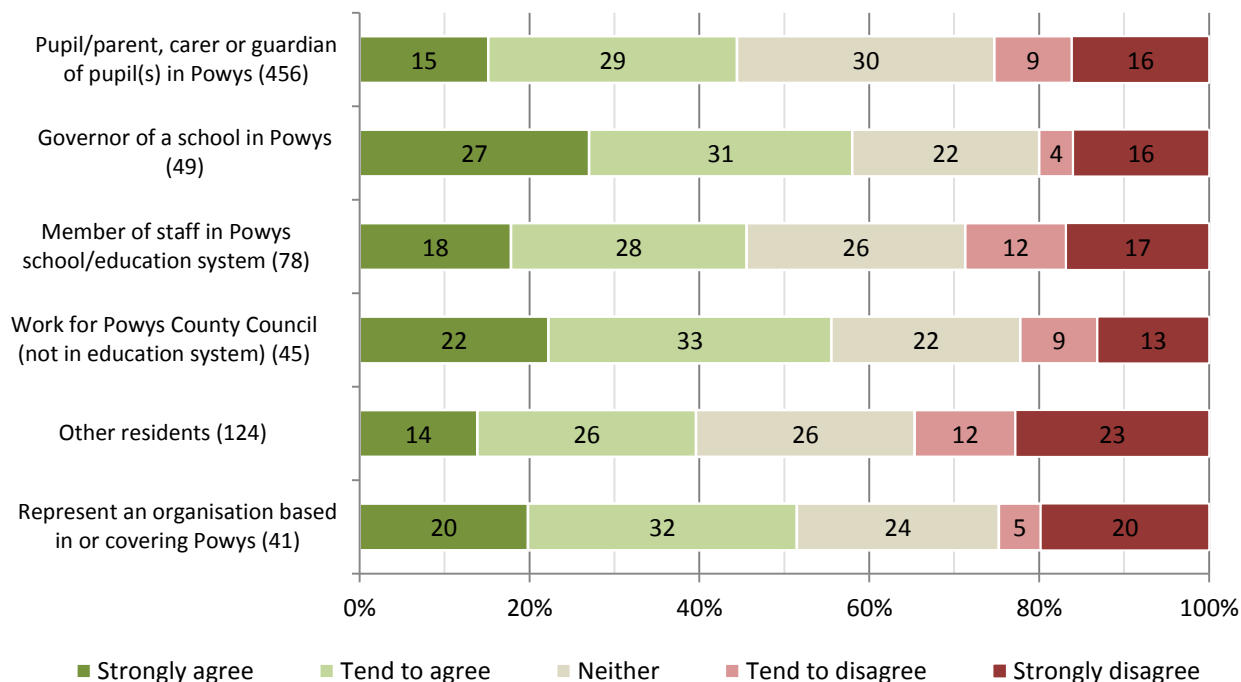
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.19 Respondents to the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Consultation Questionnaire (48%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school. Respondents with children identified as having Special Education Needs (43%), in Welsh Medium Education (39%) or entitled to free school meals (38%) were also particularly likely to agree.
- 3.20 Respondents aged 65 or over (10%) and those who responded to the Brecon & Gwernyfed Consultation Questionnaire (19%) were particularly less likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

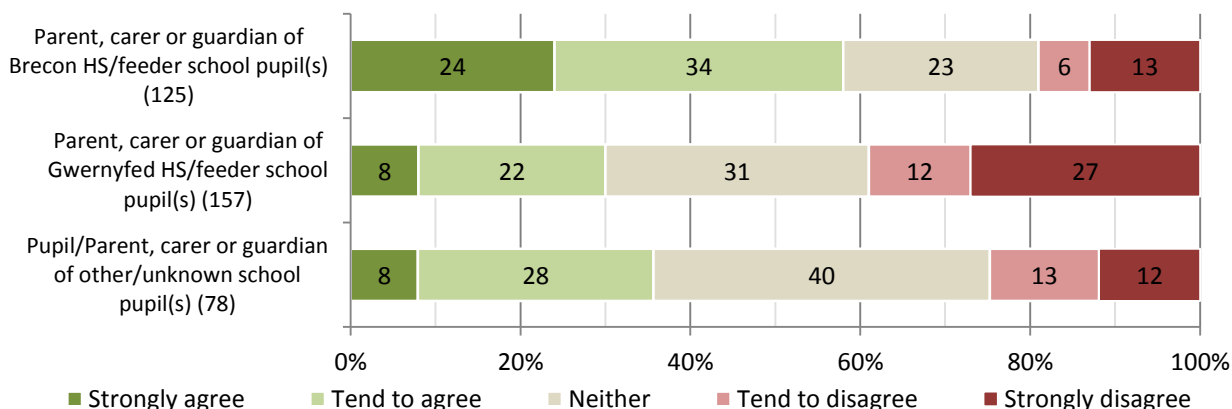
To increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.

Figure 25: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh.



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

Figure 26: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh (separated by school).

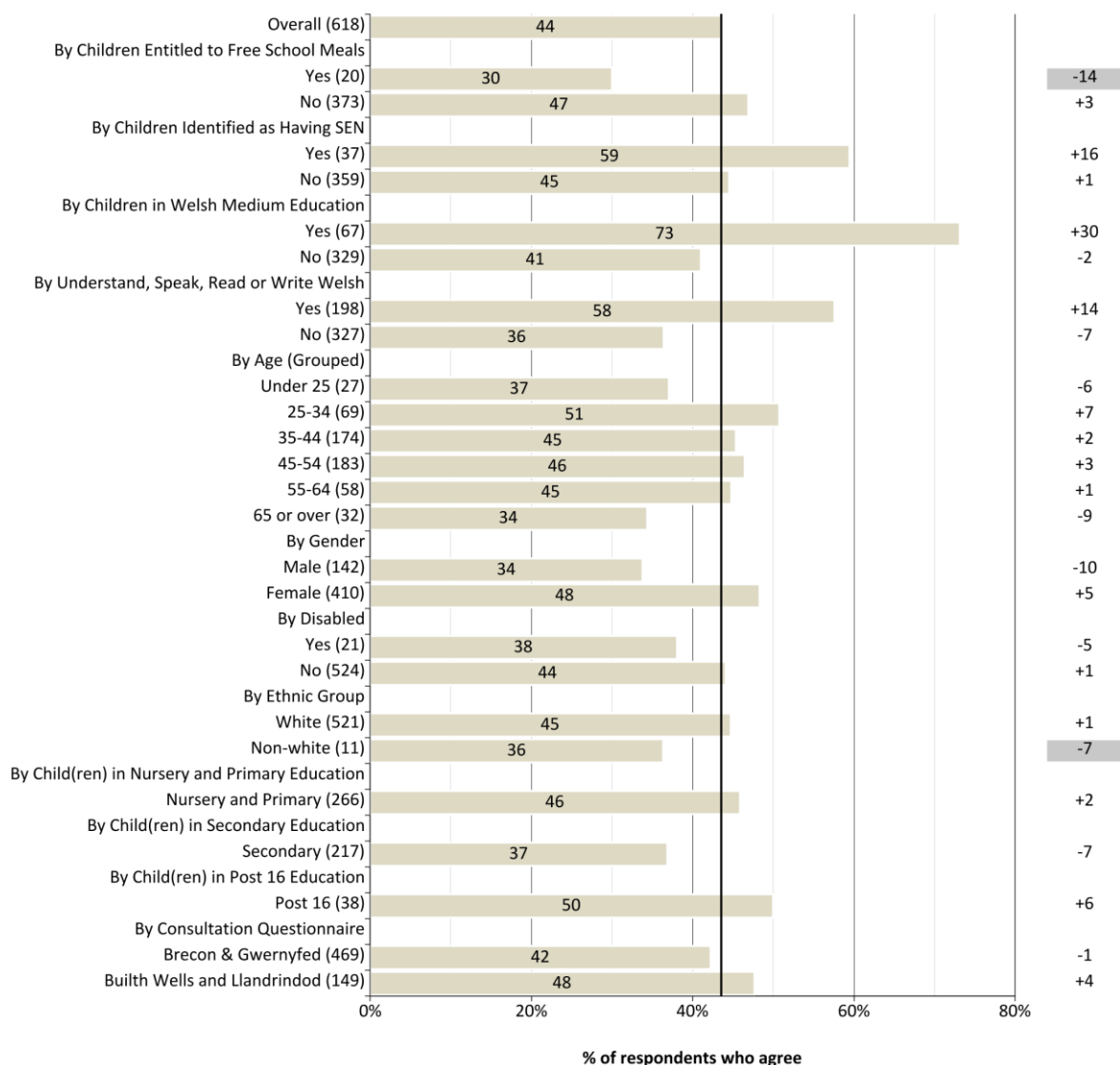


Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

^{3.21} More than half of Governors of schools in Powys (57%), employees of Powys County Council (not in education) (56%) and representatives of organisations based in or covering Powys (51%) agreed with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Nearly half of members of staff in the Powys school/education system (46%) and pupils/parents/carers/guardians of Powys pupils (45%) also agreed.

- 3.22 Nearly three fifths of parents, carers and guardians of Brecon HS/feeder school pupils (58%) agreed, compared with 3 in 10 (30%) of parents, carers and guardians of Gwernyfed HS/feeder school pupils.

Figure 27: Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh (Demographic subgroup analysis).



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.23 Respondents with children in Welsh Medium Education (73%) were particularly likely to agree with the proposal to increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh. Respondents with children identified having Special Educational Needs (59%) and those who understand, speak, read or write Welsh (58%) are also particularly likely to have agreed.
- 3.24 Respondents with children entitled to free school meals (30%), male respondents (34%) and those aged 65 or over (34%) were least likely to agree.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal for Welsh medium education, please explain why.

- 3.26 Respondents who expressed disagreement with any element the proposal were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.27 Responses to this question have been filtered by consultation; only comments made by individuals in response to the Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools Consultation Questionnaire appear in the table below.
- 3.28 Of the 228 respondents who answered this question, 615 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 28: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	42%	96
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	34%	78
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	28%	64
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	22%	51
Don't want Welsh provision to be moved to Builth (non-specific)	21%	47
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	14%	33
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	11%	25
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	10%	23
Proposals will negatively affect the free time of students/time for extra-curricular activities	8%	19
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	7%	16
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	5%	12
Proposals will negatively affect pupils from South Powys	4%	10
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh/don't want my children speaking Welsh	3%	7
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	2%	4
Proposals will negatively affect pupils who go on to study at University/higher levels	<1%	1
Schools are too close to the English border/don't need to learn Welsh due to proximity to English border	<1%	1
'Other'	44%	100

- 3.29 42% of respondents disagreed because they felt that 'proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

[It's] unfair for pupils to travel over 30 miles to attend welsh stream education.

I disagree simply on geography. Builth Wells is far too much distance for a child to travel to school every day, particularly if they live in the more rural areas and already have a long journey to school. How is the child supposed to attend extra-curricular activities, or maintain friendships outside of school, or even find time for homework and a bit of relaxation?

Families will be forced out of Welsh medium education, due to travelling times, health and wellbeing and finance. Welsh medium education would not be seen or be available to all it would create communities that have no Welsh medium education access.

- 3.30 34% of respondents think the Council should 'Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

I believe Powys should be ensuring excellent standards of Welsh medium education in Brecon, to retain all those from Ysgol y Bannau and Pontsenni who currently switch to English medium, or go, at considerable expense, to Ystalyfera (and recently to Builth Wells, out of fear of the consequences of the proposals).

I understand the reason for change, but think Brecon is a more sensible place for Welsh medium education in the long term for the area, and would reduce the amount of pupils going out of county i.e. Ystalyfera.

- 3.31 28% of respondents disagreed because they felt that 'proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Parents, faced with a daily trek to Builth or Llandrindod will opt for English medium secondary education in Brecon and/or Gwernyfed. Thus the number of children being educated through Welsh will inevitably decline.

We are supposed to be developing the Welsh language across the county. Remove the Welsh stream from Brecon causing long commutes for pupils from the south of the county and you will see a decreasing concentration of Welsh language in the south Powys community.

- 3.32 22% of respondents disagreed because they think 'Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol y Bannau will be negatively affected'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

There is no sense removing the Welsh- medium stream from Brecon High School when Ysgol Y Bannau is across the road. Have you thought of the repercussions for this Primary school?

I think it's absolutely disgraceful to move the Welsh stream from a location right opposite a Welsh language primary school! There is also a Welsh stream primary school just 15 minutes down the road ... Builth have just one Welsh stream primary school - yet they are having preferential treatment!

Brecon has a strong tradition and proud history of Welsh medium education. It also has the only Welsh medium primary school, purpose built less than twenty years ago ... The numbers at Ysgol y Bannau will inevitably suffer as parents are unwilling to make the decision to bus their children all the way to Builth.

Equalities

*Are there any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that you believe that the County Council should take into account in the decision making process?
If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?*

- 3.33 Respondents were asked whether there were positive or negative impacts relating to equalities were then asked if they had any supporting evidence or suggestions to reduce negative impacts or increase positive impacts.
- 3.34 150 responses were classified using a standardised code frame, from which 295 separate comments were coded. Once classified, only a small number of comments for this question were applicable to impacts relating to equalities, and codes raised from these comments have been presented below. Comments which did not relate to the question have been separated into an 'other/comments not relating to equalities' category.

Figure 29: Impacts relating to equalities

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Proposals will lead to increased travel times/costs	35%	53
Proposals will negatively impact Welsh Speakers	27%	41
Generally disagree with proposals/maintain current provision	12%	18
Proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account	10%	15
Children have the right to quality education in their local area i.e. in the language they wish to learn	7%	11
Schools should be equal for English and Welsh speakers/shouldn't be biased towards English or Welsh speakers	7%	11
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negative impact on social life	5%	7
Proposals will segregate societies/divide communities	4%	6
Proposals will result in pupils losing time with family/negative impact on home life	3%	5
'Other/comments not relating to equalities'	85%	127

- 3.35 When asked if they believed there were any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that the County Council should take into account in the decision making process, 36% of respondents commented on the fact that 'proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased costs'. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Disadvantaged families from the Gwernyfed area will struggle to attend such events as parent's evenings and collect children from clubs with having to travel so far. Will they be given a bus too?

I believe there are negative impacts on pupils from Gwernyfed. Their physical and mental wellbeing will be affected by spending more time travelling, resulting in less free time to participate in other activities. Their mental wellbeing will be affected due to friendship groups being disrupted as pupils transfer to schools outside the catchment area, as well as how feelings of isolation will affect them when they return home to an area with no clubs or YFC.

- 3.36 28% of respondents argued that ‘proposals will negatively impact Welsh speakers’. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

In order to access education in their native tongue some pupils will have to travel for excessive amounts of time under the new proposals. This will curtail social life, time with family and extra-curricular activities.

Excluding Welsh speaking and post 16 pupils and expecting them to make long journeys to receive an education - when you building a brand new school on their doorsteps is immoral. I hope those with the power to decide sleep well.

It is not equal in my view that the proposal is forcing Brecon learners to travel for their education away from a 21st century school, their friends & families when the English learners do not have to travel.

- 3.37 10% of respondents suggest that ‘proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account’. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

Long bus journeys to and from school discriminates against those with disabilities which make travel difficult. The provision of a new school and facilities for the people of Brecon, at the expense of ... those same facilities for the people in the Gwernyfed area, discriminates against the latter group based on geographical bias.

I can imagine for people with a disability, all the extra travel (an hour for some kids?!) will be too much.

I think families with disabilities/on low incomes would be unlikely to travel long distances to attend their children's parents' evenings.

- 3.38 7% of respondents said that ‘Children have the right to quality education in their local area i.e. in the language they wish to learn’. Typical examples of these comments are as follows:

People in Wales have the human right to be educated in their mother tongue. They also have the human right to live their lives using their mother tongue. By not providing the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh in their own community, children in Brecon are being denied this choice. I believe this is contrary to the Human Rights Act, the Welsh Language Act, and the Equality Act 2010.

Depriving school children in the Gwernyfed catchment area of their right to access a high quality education in their local area if the Proposal goes ahead.

Further Comments

Are there any further comments that you would like to make, or any alternative proposals you feel the Council should consider?

3.39 Those responding to the questionnaire by post had the opportunity to enclose additional comments on separate sheets of paper. However, people responding online were limited in their responses to the open textboxes in the questionnaire. In order to give those responding online the opportunity to submit any additional comments, a 'further comments' question was included. Additional comments received by post tended to be longer and more comprehensive than those received online and they have been included in the 'Written Submissions' chapter of the report. Those received online are reported below. 174 respondents gave additional comments, from which 580 separate comments were coded.

Figure 30: Further comments

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Maintain 6th Form/don't want to lose our 6th Form	22%	38
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	18%	32
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	16%	27
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	15%	26
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	12%	21
Agree with proposals for new school building/want a new school to be built	11%	20
Don't close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	11%	20
Powys County Council are disregarding public opinion/consultation is just a tick-box exercise/more notice needs to be ta	11%	20
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	11%	19
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	11%	19
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	10%	18
Proposals are financially motivated/a ploy to write off Brecon's debt	10%	18
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	10%	17
Concerns about standards of education of NPTC Brecon/lack of accountability to students from NPTC	9%	15
Suggestion: Brecon should become an all-through school/merge with a local primary school to provide education from 3-18	7%	13
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington, etc.	7%	13
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer new families will move in	7%	12
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	7%	12
Decisions are being made by councillors not local to the area/who do not understand the issues or areas involved i.e. cabinet is mostly from North Powys	6%	11
Proposals will negatively affect pupils' health and wellbeing (i.e. make them tired, unhappy, inattentive in school)	6%	10
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	5%	9
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after	5%	9

school activities/extra-curricular activities		
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	5%	8
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	5%	8
Proposals won't save enough money/savings will be minimal	4%	7
Proposals will negatively affects rural area/rural communities (non-specific)	4%	7
Proposals will leave schools unprepared for an increasing school population e.g. from local housing developments/increasing birth rate	3%	6
Proposals have caused uncertainty in the schools/futures of the pupils	3%	5
Suggestion: use a federated staff system/share teachers between schools, not students	2%	4
Suggestion: Gwernyfed should become an all-through school/merge with a local primary school to provide education from 3-18	1%	2
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	1%	2
'Other'	44%	77

- 3.40 More than a fifth (22%) of those making further comments mentioned 6th Form provision, requesting that provision be maintained or objecting to the potential loss of the 6th Form.

If Brecon does not have a 6th form Powys will be threatening the education and prospects of students in the area.

Post 16 education in our county must surely be delivered through Sixth Forms. Students at both Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools have made it clear that they will vote with their feet if faced with the uncertainties of NPTC rather than Sixth Form education; they will flock to Hereford or Merthyr.

- 3.41 Around a fifth (18%) made comments suggesting that the proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning. These concerns ranged considerably, but often made references to the possibility of disruption caused by the changes affecting educational attainment, or lower standards of post-16 or Welsh education in the area.

If this proposal goes ahead, my child will have had his entire KS2 career disrupted, his KS3 years uncertain with all the associated de-motivational & disruptive events and finally, just as he progresses into KS4, he will be physically moved into a new environment which will be struggling to establish itself at exactly the time he should be consolidating and succeeding. Education is best where individuals are valued, relationships made and paths to future are built on solid foundations. Bigger does not mean better...and new buildings do NOT guarantee stability and success. KEEP GWERNYFED HS OPEN.

I agree the schools do need improvement but to put huge numbers of children in schools to save money will not in the long term give our children a good education. Classes will be overcrowded and the teacher/child ratio will lack leaving children who are struggling or excelling will not be picked up upon.

I do not accept that the criteria that has been used to formulate the proposals are relevant to the local area. The so-called 'critical mass' of pupils/school size is an import from English urban models that are not relevant to a lower density rural location, I do not accept that offering 25 'A' level

subjects in a single location is desirable or practical. Given that it is proposed that a minimum of 12 students would be in each subject - this would require a critical mass of 300 students. However, there is no guarantee that even with this number students would choose to study subjects equally and the likelihood is that subjects would not be available to those who chose them. 'A' levels should be offered across a less broad range with other subjects restricted to Further or Higher Education. If my grandchildren were required to travel to Brecon their parents would opt to send them to a closer English school where they would not be offered opportunities for Welsh medium education or subjects.

If Powys is to be taken seriously and prove to be a viable option for young economically active young people and families there needs to be an inclusive 11-18 school within the Brecon catchment area. We are in danger of creating a hole in the middle of Wales where the educational experience is an inadequate preparation for life post 18, it doesn't offer parity with the experience of young people from other parts of Wales and our children are at a disadvantage before they have even entered adulthood. Powys must invest in the future before it is too late. Already many young people are being failed by system that does not work and in a modern 21st century Wales is sadly lacking.

- 3.42 As with elsewhere in the consultation, a common concern here was that the proposals would lead to longer travel times or increased travel costs, and the effects that this could have on children's social lives and educational attainment.

You think it is right to force pupils to travel vast distances to go to school, miss out on social and sporting opportunities and become exhausted.

The travel time for the children will have a really negative effect on the children's ability to concentrate and also have broad interests. A lot of children from farms love to help with the animals and farm chores, and many have animals such as horses that they love to look after. All this is excellent for responsibility and developing a work ethic. If the children are on the bus for 2 hours minimum per day there will be no time for these lovely family orientated activities that make rural life so wholesome.

My family have recently moved to Powys and one of the factors that drew us to Powys was the good education at Gwernyfed High School and that my children would be able to walk to school. I feel as a parent it is very important that my children are not stuck on a bus for a few hours in the morning and after school. Walking to school keep them active and means me as a parent could carry on with my work day fairly uninterrupted.

Does the council acknowledge that the proposed closure of Gwernyfed will - in addition to increased transport costs with associated environmental, have an impact on pupils who can no longer cycle or walk to school with the health and other benefits that this provides?

- 3.43 15% objected due to perceived negative effects on the community, or made comments stressing that schools are a vital part of the community.

Each school should be reviewed individually. These proposals would have a huge impact on the economic viability and sustainability of the Gwernyfed catchment area. Families with young children would not be attracted to the area without a local secondary school. Gwernyfed school is at the heart of the community and to lose the school would rip the heart out of the community. Powys CC

needs to come up with a dynamic plan to protect the future of Gwernyfed, as well as address the problems faced by Brecon.

Please consider the major impact that the closure of Gwernyfed would have on the local sports clubs available in our area. The loss of the Sports Hall, AstroTurf pitch, tennis courts, sports field etc would result in the closure of many of the clubs that currently use these facilities. Adults and Parents may not have the time and/or money to transport themselves or their children to similar clubs in Brecon. Merger of the two schools at a site in Brecon will also have a catastrophic effect on the feeling of being part of a community for those who live so far from the school. It is part of growing up to meet up with your school friends at local weekend events etc. However, if you live in, say, Rhosgoch and your best friend is from, say, Crai, your opportunity to continue your friendship outside of school hours will be at best severely restricted, if possible at all.

- 3.44 However, over 1 in 10 respondents (12%) made comments which agreed that Brecon High School needs improvements, but felt this should not be done at the expense of Gwernyfed.

John Williams and the management team at Gwernyfed have shown that it is possible to run a successful school and manage their budget effectively. Why has Brecon High School not been assisted to do the same? It has just been allowed to get further and further into debt. Brecon High School needs a lot of time and money spent on it, but not at the expense of a successful school like Gwernyfed, and its community. The reason for closing Gwernyfed is purely financial, to dig Brecon High School out of a mess of their own creating. I also have my doubts that we'll ever see this new 'super school' as PCC will never be able to find enough money to actually build it - just like our community is still waiting for the new primary schools that were promised several years ago

Brecon desperately needs a new building and has done for some years. This should not be confused with a plan to merge 2 schools that do not want to be merged.

Initially, I thought the idea of a 'superschool' with more subjects could be a good thing. But the more time has gone on and as more details have emerged such as:-Removing 6th form -Sacking all teachers and staff and making them reapply for their jobs -Making some pupils travel for an hour each way every day -Denying many Gwernyfed kids of access to after school activities -Creating prolonged uncertainty and worry in both schools, when kids and teachers have exams and Estyn monitoring to deal with I have completely changed my mind. Yes Brecon high needs a new building, but not to the detriment of Gwernyfed kids and future A level students.

Findings of the Young Persons' Consultation Questionnaire

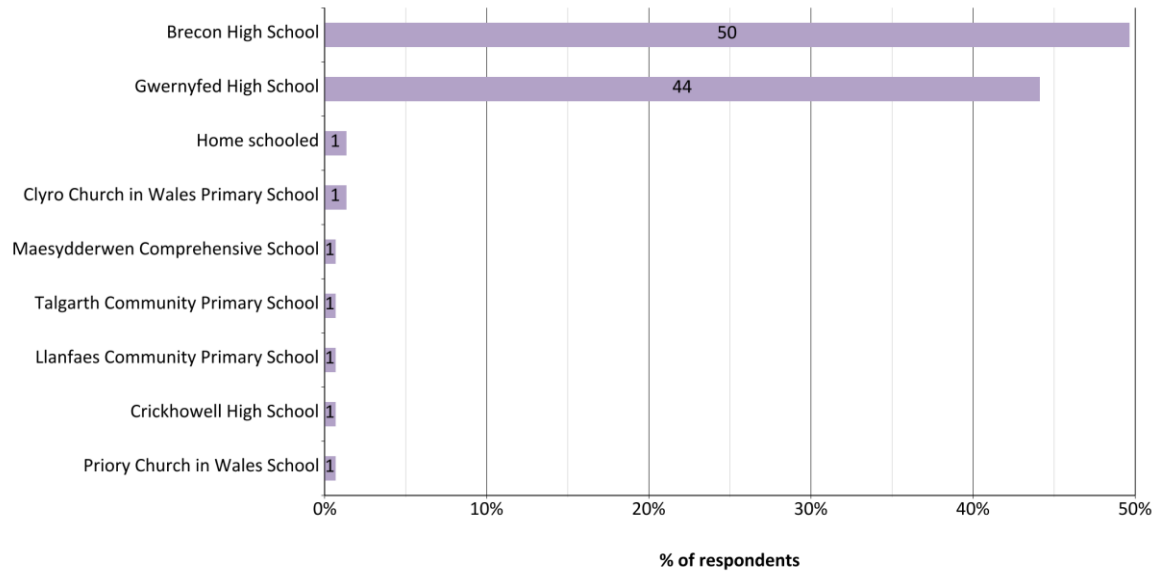
Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics for the young persons' consultation questionnaire
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

Characteristic	All Responses		
	Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses	
BY KEY STAGE	Key Stage 1	1	0.7%
	Key Stage 2	5	3.5%
	Key Stage 3	67	46.5%
	Key Stage 4	51	35.4%
	Key Stage 5	20	13.9%
	Total valid responses	144	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	4	-
BY GENDER	Male	58	43.6%
	Female	75	56.4%
	Total valid responses	133	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	15	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	128	94.8%
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3	2.2%
	Asian or Asian British	2	1.5%
	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	2	1.5%
	Any other ethnic group	0	0.0%
	Total valid responses	135	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	13	-
BY DISABILITY	With disability	6	4.4%
	No disability	129	95.6%
	Total valid responses	135	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	13	-
BY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	With SEN	10	7.7%
	No SEN	120	92.3%
	Total valid responses	130	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	18	-
BY ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Eligible to receive free school meals	11	8.5%
	Not eligible to receive free school meals	119	91.5%
	Total valid responses	130	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	18	-

About Your Education

Which school do you currently go to?

Figure 31: Which school do you currently go to?



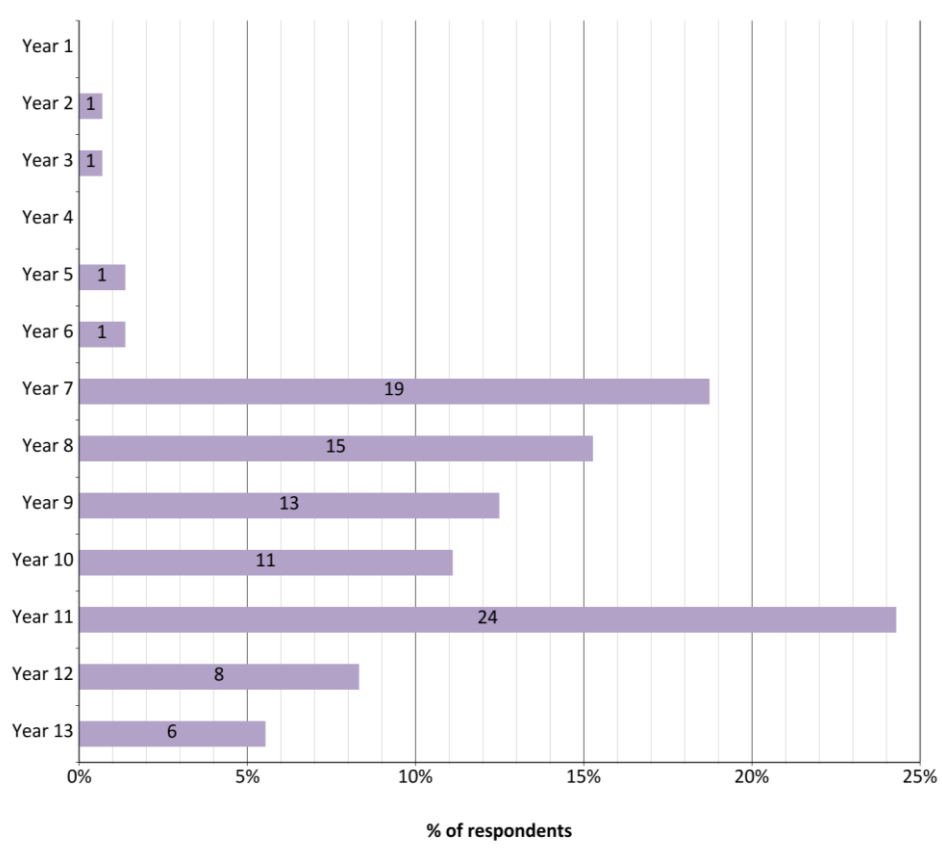
Base: All Individuals (145)

3.45 Half (50%) of respondents to the Young Person's consultation questionnaire were attending Brecon High School, while more than two fifths (44%) were attending Gwernyfed. Two respondents were home schooled, while two more responded from Clyro Church in Wales Primary School, accounting for 1% of responses. The consultation also received one response each from Maesydderwen Comprehensive School, Talgarth Community Primary School, Llanfaes Community Primary School, Crickhowell High School and Priory Church in Wales School.

3.46 Three individuals did not specify which school they attended.

What year group are you currently in?

Figure 32: What year group are you currently in?

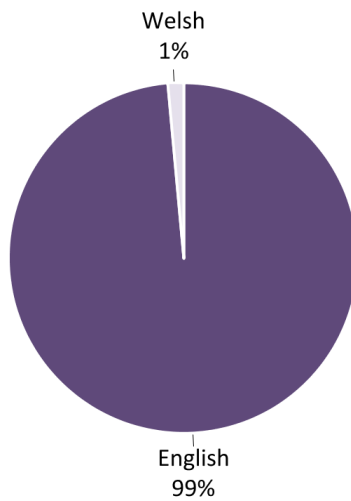


Base: All Individuals (144)

^{3.47} The year group with the highest proportion of respondents was Year 11. Almost a quarter of respondents (24%) were Year 11 pupils. Almost a fifth (19%) were from Year 7, while 15% were from Year 8, and just more than 1 in 10 were in Year 9 (13%) and Year 10 (11%). Less than 1 in 10 (8%) respondents were from Year 12, while just over 1 in 20 (6%) were from Year 13 pupils.

Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

Figure 33: Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

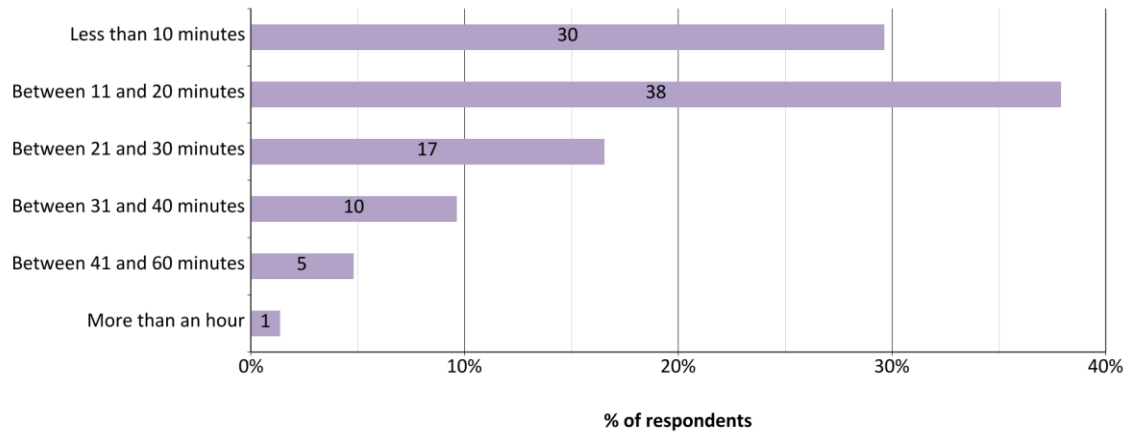


Base: All Individuals (142)

^{3.48} Almost all respondents (99%) received their lessons mainly in English, while just 1% had lessons mainly in Welsh.

How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?

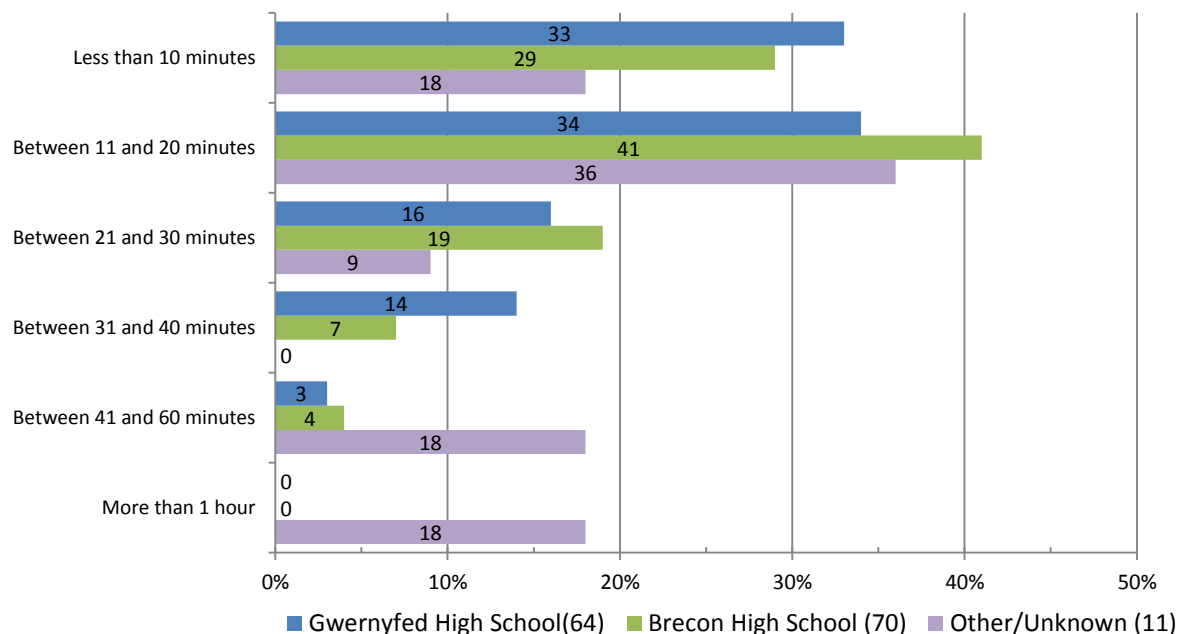
Figure 34: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?



Base: All Individuals (145)

3.49 Just less than a third (30%) of respondents' journeys between school and home are less than 10 minutes in duration, while more than two thirds (68%) are less than 20 minutes. More than four fifths (84%) of journeys are under half an hour, while just over 1 in 10 (14%) are between half an hour and an hour, and 1% of respondents spend more than 1 hour going to and from school (one way).

Figure 35: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)? Results by school

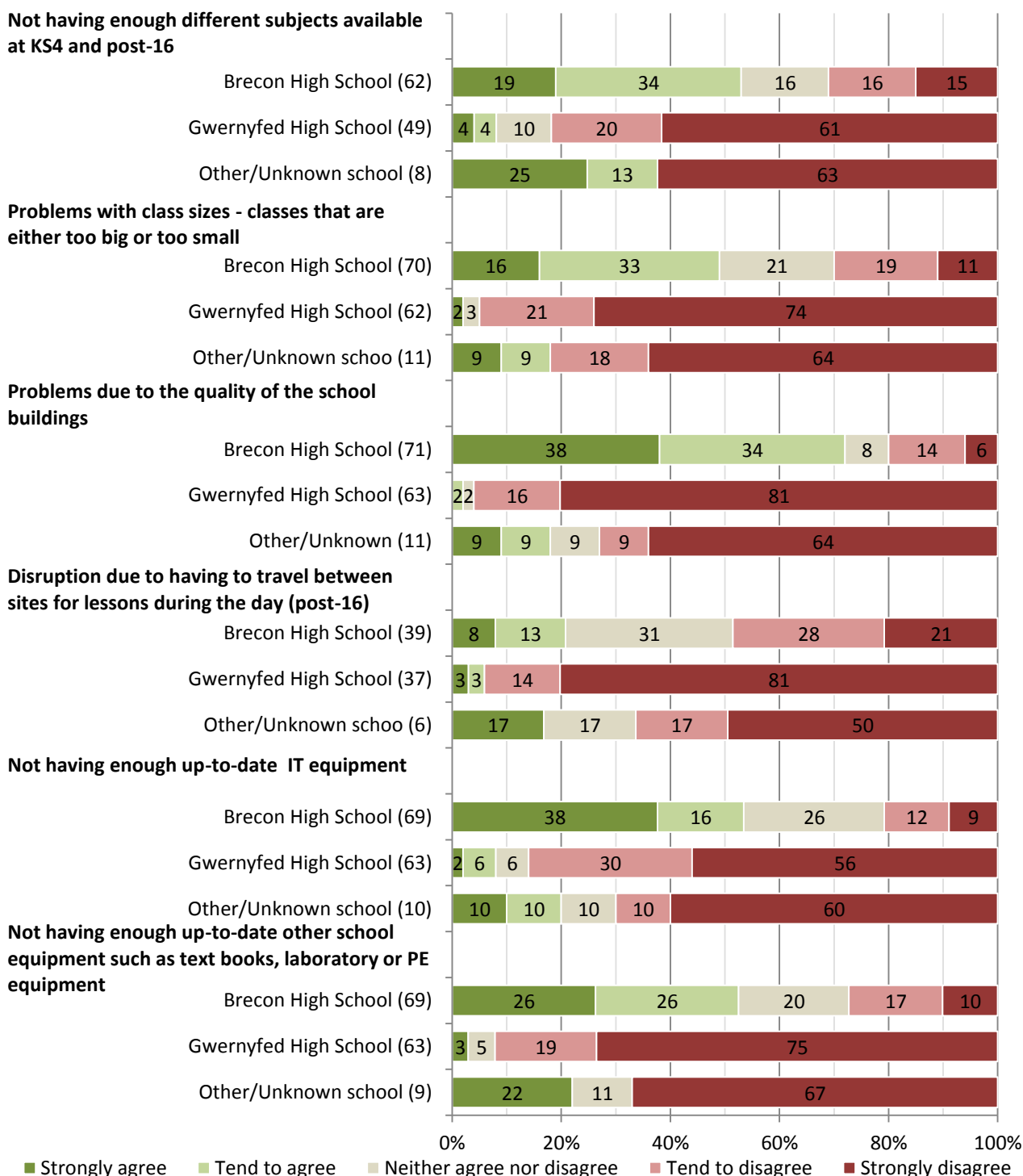


Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.50 There was some variation in journey duration between the schools. More than four fifths (84%) of journeys are under half an hour, while just over 1 in 10 (14%) are between half an hour and an hour, and 1% of respondents spend more than 1 hour going to and from school (one way).

Do you agree or disagree that your education is suffering because of any of the following?

Figure 36: Issues affecting education



Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

³⁵¹ The questions above were intended to identify whether students from Gwernyfed or Brecon High Schools felt that their education was suffering due to any of the issues identified by the Council. As a result, those who responded from feeder schools have been merged into the 'other/unknown' category for this question.

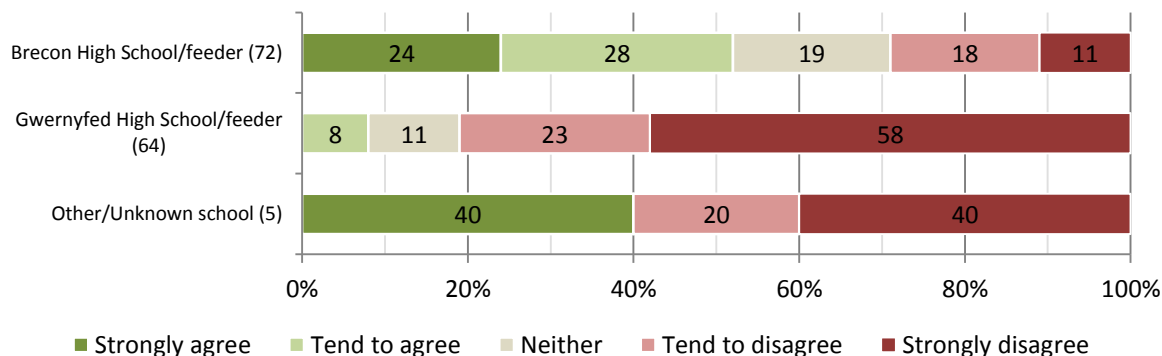
- 3.52 Fewer than 1 in 10 respondents (8%) who attend Gwernyfed High School agreed that their education is suffering from not having enough different subjects available at KS4 and post-16, while more than four fifths (82%) disagreed. Of respondents from Brecon High School, more than half (53%) agreed that their education is suffering because of a lack of different subjects available at KS4 and post-16, while less than a third (31%) disagreed.
- 3.53 Just 2% of students that attend Gwernyfed High School agreed that their education is suffering because class sizes are either too big or too small; almost all (95%) Gwernyfed students disagreed with this. Around half of Brecon High School students (49%) agreed that there are problems with class sizes, while less than a third (30%) disagreed that class sizes are a problem.
- 3.54 Similar to the proportion that agreed that there are problems with class sizes affecting education, only 2% of Gwernyfed students identified problems with the quality of school buildings that are causing their education to suffer. By contrast, almost three quarters (72%) of Brecon students agreed that their education is suffering because of problems due to the quality of school buildings.
- 3.55 When asked about disruption caused by having to travel between sites for lessons during the day, 1 in 20 (5%) Gwernyfed students agreed that their education is suffering because of this disruption. More than a fifth (21%) of students from Brecon agreed that disruption due to travelling between sites for lessons during the day causes their education to suffer.
- 3.56 Less than 1 in 10 (8%) Gwernyfed students agreed that their education is suffering from not having enough up-to-date IT equipment. Over half (54%) of Brecon students agreed that their education is suffering due to a lack of up-to-date IT equipment.
- 3.57 Again, only 2% of Gwernyfed students felt their education was suffering from not having enough up-to-date school equipment like text books, laboratory or PE equipment. This compared to more than half (52%) of Brecon students who felt that this was the case.

English Medium Education

In the context of the problems outlined on the previous pages, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 37: In the context of the problems outlined on the previous pages, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?



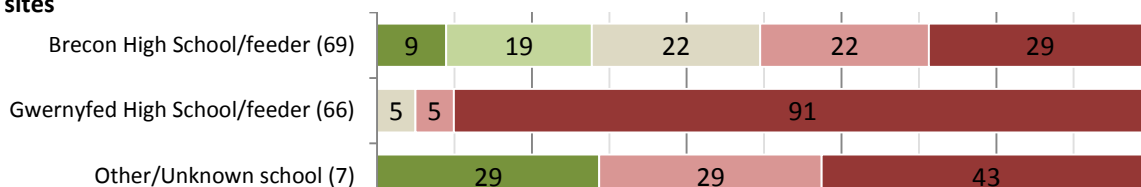
Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- ^{3.58} As in the main questionnaire, respondents to the Young Persons' questionnaire were given a short explanation of some of the general and post-16 specific issues that the Council had identified as affecting English medium secondary education in Brecon and Gwernyfed schools. Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues identified.
- ^{3.59} Less than 1 in 10 (8%) of Gwernyfed HS/feeder respondents felt that the Council is right to make changes in response to the issues with English medium education that it has identified. Meanwhile, 51% of Brecon High School and feeder school students agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues.

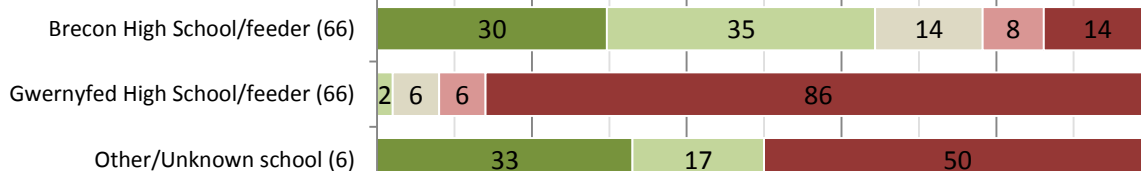
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

Figure 38: Levels of agreement with various elements of the proposal

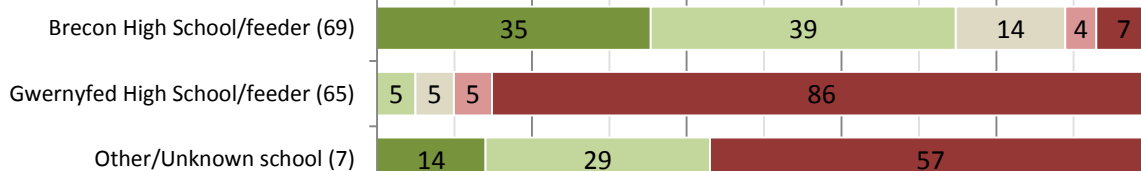
To establish a new English-medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate on the two existing sites



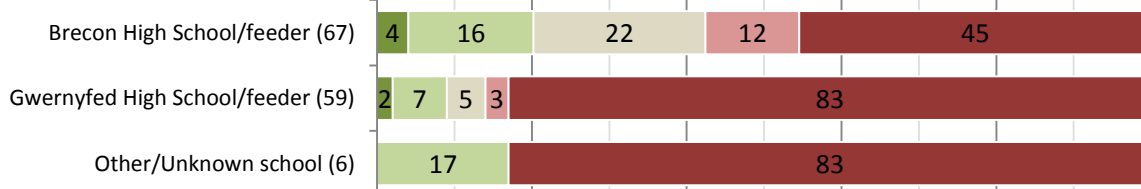
To construct a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20



To locate the new school building in Brecon as it is a population centre and to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport



For all post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.60 Respondents were provided with a description of the four elements of the Council’s proposal, as well as an explanation of how the Council believed the proposal would address the issues identified in the previous section. They were then asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the four elements of the proposal.

- 3.61 0% of Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed that a new English-medium secondary school should be established for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, while a large majority (95%) disagreed with this element of the proposal. More than a quarter (28%) of Brecon HS/feeder students agreed with the establishment of new English-medium school operating over the Brecon and Gwernyfed school sites to replace the existing schools.
- 3.62 The second element of the proposal is the construction of a new building for the proposed new secondary school to be opened in 2019/2020. Only 2% of Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed with this proposal, compared to more than 9 in 10 (92%) that disagreed.
- 3.63 While the proposal for opening a new school operating over both sites was only agreed with by 28% of Brecon HS/feeder students, the construction of a new building for the proposed new school was supported by two thirds (65%) of Brecon HS/feeder students.
- 3.64 1 in 20 (5%) Gwernyfed HS/feeder students supported the location of the proposed new school building in Brecon to minimise the number of pupils requiring school transport, while nearly three quarters (74%) of Brecon HS/feeder students supported locating the new school building in Brecon.
- 3.65 Less than 1 in 10 (8%) Gwernyfed HS/feeder students agreed with the provision of post-16 academic and vocational education to be provided by NPTC group of colleges. Somewhat higher levels of agreement were found among Brecon HS/feeder students, where more than a fifth (21%) of students supported the proposed provision of post-16 courses.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal, please explain why.

3.66 Respondents who expressed disagreement with any elements of the proposal were asked to explain why this was.

3.67 As responses differed between those who attended Brecon High School/feeder or Gwernyfed High School/feeder, these coded responses have been reported separately. The table below shows results for the 34 respondents from Brecon High School and associated feeder school pupils, from whose responses 93 separate comments have been coded according to the code frame.

Figure 39: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Brecon HS/feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form	79%	27
Concerns over standards of education of NPTC in Brecon/lack of subject choice for Post-16 students/NPTC will not be accountable to anyone	35%	12
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	15%	5
Sixth Form students needed in schools to provide guidance/inspiration/role models for younger students/being in the same	15%	5
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	12%	4
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	9%	3
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	9%	3
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	9%	3
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington, etc.	6%	2
Disagree with proposed changes to Sixth Form as pupils need continuity/need to remain in the same school from 11-18	6%	2
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	3%	1
Proposals are financially motivated/a "money grab" by the council	3%	1
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer new families will move in	3%	1
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	3%	1
Do not close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	3%	1
I do not want to go to Brecon High School (non-specific)	3%	1
Disagree with moving Brecon due to it negatively affecting people who live in the countryside/Gwernyfed specifically chosen due to countryside/want our children in a rural environment/don't want our children taught in town	3%	1
Concerns over provision of Sciences in NPTC i.e. insufficient number of laboratories/no offer of Chemistry	3%	1
Disagree that proposals will improve standards/proposals won't work	3%	1
'Other'	50%	17

3.68 Some of the most frequent comments which arose when Brecon HS/feeder school respondents were asked why they disagreed with the proposed changes related to post-16 education. Specifically, the most common comments expressed a desire for 6th form provision to be maintained. Some of these

comments pointed to the positive influence students in 6th form can have for younger students and the added value they can provide to schools.

Without the older 6th form students, some of the productions, fundraising events and other activities would not happen as, at the moment, they organise or play an important role in the school activities.

It's very good and advantageous to have a 6th Form for the younger pupils in the school to look up to for help and guidance and they encourage the younger pupils to do well.

- 3.69 Relatedly, some of these students voiced concerns over the standard of education at NPTC and more generally compared college education unfavourably to sixth form education.

Post-16 provision is extremely important for a lot of pupils and the college is not up to standard.

I disagree that all post-16 education should be provided by NPTC because it would be better to continue to be taught by the same teachers from pre-16 because they will know my academic level and capability.

- 3.70 Others felt that the proposed changes could negatively affect Welsh Speakers specifically, and conveyed the vital nature of Welsh provision.

Welsh should be available for everyone

I feel the Welsh medium stream should be kept as it is a crucial part of our school environment.

- 3.71 The table below shows results for the 59 respondents from Gwernyfed High School and associated feeder school pupils, from whose responses 361 separate comments have been coded according to the code frame.

Figure 40: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Gwernyfed HS/feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	64%	38
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	49%	29
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	41%	24
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	36%	21
Proposals will negatively impact extra-curricular activities/clubs and groups will be limited	29%	17
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	25%	15
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	24%	14
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	22%	13
Concerns over standards of education of NPTC in Brecon/lack of subject choice for Post-16 students/NPTC will not be accountable to anyone	22%	13
Do not close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	22%	13
I do not want to go to Brecon High School (non-specific)	20%	12
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many	19%	11

pupils per class		
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	17%	10
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington, etc.	15%	9
Proposals will negatively affect pupils' health and wellbeing (i.e. make them tired, unhappy, inattentive in school)	15%	9
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	12%	7
Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form	12%	7
Concerns over provision of Sciences in NPTC i.e. insufficient number of laboratories/no offer of Chemistry	10%	6
Proposals negatively impact people living in Hay-on-Wye/distance will be too much	8%	5
Proposals are financially motivated/a 'money grab' by the council	7%	4
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	7%	4
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer 'new families' will move in	7%	4
Powys County Council have promised schools for years and never delivered/have no faith that this situation will be any different	7%	4
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	7%	4
Gwernyfed is valuable for its beautiful/historic/listed buildings	7%	4
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	5%	3
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	5%	3
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	5%	3
Disagree with assertions that 600+ students is optimum for schools/believe smaller schools are better	5%	3
Disagree with proposals as they are just a ploy to write off Brecon's debts	5%	3
Disagree with removal of A-Level subjects from schools as it will negatively impact recruitment and retention of teachers	3%	2
Proposals will negatively affects rural area/rural communities (non-specific)	3%	2
Disagree with moving Brecon due to it negatively affecting people who live in the countryside/Gwernyfed specifically chosen due to countryside/want our children in a rural environment/don't want our children taught in town	3%	2
Any financial issues are due to the County Council themselves/Powys County Council are responsible for not intervening earlier	3%	2
Unhappy with Powys' lack of evidence for proposals i.e. being unable to answer questions in consultation meetings/figures in consultation document lacking anything to back them up	3%	2
Disagree with proposed changes to Sixth Form as pupils need continuity/need to remain in the same school from 11-18	2%	1
Sixth Form students needed in schools to provide guidance/inspiration/role models for younger students/being in the same school helps Sixth Formers to mature	2%	1
Disagree that proposals will improve standards/proposals won't work	2%	1
Disagree as we need to keep the Welsh language in Brecon/Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	2%	1
Proposals are not in line with the Future Generations Act (2015)	2%	1
'Other'	44%	26

3.72 One of the most frequently raised areas of disagreement involved the change in travel arrangements. 64% disagreed with the proposals due to increased travel times/distances.

From school, it only takes about 5 minutes to get home, and then I have enough time to do all my jobs on the farm and fit my homework in.

My parents both work on the hay side of Gwernyfed, so if I missed the bus, I wouldn't make it to school.

If I went to Brecon, this would be 34 miles (17 miles one way) round trip for each after-school activity. This would add up to 170 miles per week, instead of 70, if I went to school in Brecon. This is not practical, due to the time and cost to me and my family, and what is it doing to the environment? My mum has to pick me up at the moment, as my dad has lost his driving licence due to health reasons. She would not be able to travel to Brecon there and back four times a week. I will lose approximately 2 hours a day of revision time, due to being on a bus. My exam results will deteriorate. My brother will be unable to attend after-school revision classes. Why don't they finish sorting out the primary schools before tackling the secondary schools? Why can't a new school at Brecon be built, combining mount street infants and juniors and Brecon secondary school? This could work.

- 3.73 Gwernyfed HS/feeder students showed high levels of support for and satisfaction with the standards of their schooling. Around half (49%) of Gwernyfed HS and feeder students made comments which praised Gwernyfed High School, made reference to its financial stability in comparison to Brecon and/or opposed the closure of the school.

It is simply ridiculous, Gwernyfed high school, a function, successful school with a high pass rate at both GCSE and a level, is being sacrificed for the complications and mistakes made at Brecon high. This proposal will solve short term problems but will create massive implications for the community and the education and welfare of the students. Powys is unrealistic and is only trying to reprimand the mess made by those in Brecon high school, nothing to do with Gwernyfed.

It doesn't make any sense to me that, under Powys' proposals, a school that has excellent results will have to close, and a school such as Brecon high school - which is in special measures and in massive debt (£1.4 million) - will be keeping a high school. Gwernyfed's standards of education are really good. For example, the GCSE results in 2014 showed 96% achieved 5 level A-C grades. Also in the same year, 100% of A-level students went to their first choice university. Is this the type of school that Powys should close? NPTC, who will be taking over A-levels, are only used to working in urban areas; it will struggle to provide all the choice of subjects that it says it will, because there won't be enough children going there. I don't want a lot of choice.*

- 3.74 Many respondents voiced concerns for the standards of education or learning under the proposals. There was a common belief that standards and performance would drop under the proposals due to the disruption caused by the changes, for example with teaching staff, and the provision for post-16 education.

I am happy at Gwernyfed, have made friends, enjoy going to school and have a good relationship with teachers, all of which helps me to achieve good results. I do not want to spend year 10 and 11 in a school which is being closed down. A lot of my teachers would not stay on at the new school, nor would some of my friends. I do not believe I would get a good or consistent standard of teaching in this situation [...] I would like to have a sixth form in school, where the subjects I chose would be taught by teachers I know and trust, who also know me. NPTC might offer more subjects, but I have heard lots of stories about courses being changed and cancelled. Also they do not offer

the academic subjects I would expect to have at A-level, like chemistry. I heard they don't even have a lab that can be used. I know it is probably cheaper to have 25 people doing an A-level course in one place, rather than in two or three different places, but that doesn't mean that the students will achieve a better result – probably they will do worse. I thought this proposal was supposed to be about giving us better opportunities and better education, but it seems to me that it is just about what costs less.

It will be extremely disruptive to the pupils, and will interfere with their education. I also don't believe that a bigger school will provide education that is any better than smaller schools, and I don't believe that a larger school has any more reason not to be in special measures than smaller schools.

I believe the current teachers I have are very good and I would much prefer to have a slightly smaller variety of A-levels but taught to a higher quality allowing me to fulfil my potential.

- 3.75 Nearly two fifths (36%) of Gwernyfed HS/feeder respondents to this question expressed support for the current provision of secondary education, expressing disagreement generally with the proposed changes.

By impacting our education such a way, the proposal violates article 12 of the UNCRC and article 28. We have a right to be heard, and a right to education and pupils who would experience the move between sites would lose their right. Also, one of Powys's priorities is supposed to be the well-being of future generations act under which wales wants improved communities. Gwernyfed is a loving and interesting community.

I disagree with running the school on two sites as it will be disruptive for the pupils in the schools. The pupils who are doing GCSE's and A-levels would be disrupted due to changes that would have to be made.

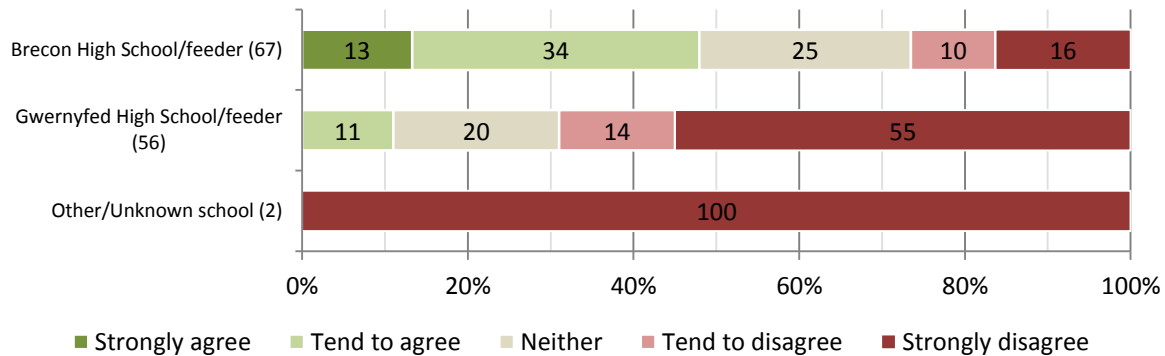
I strongly disagree with all of the elements of the proposal, because it causes a massive concern with the pupils' education, in both high schools - particularly for young students who wish to study A Levels.

Welsh Medium Education

In the context of the problems outlined on the previous page, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?

Figure 41: In the context of the problems outlined on the previous page, Powys Council believes a number of changes are needed. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these issues?



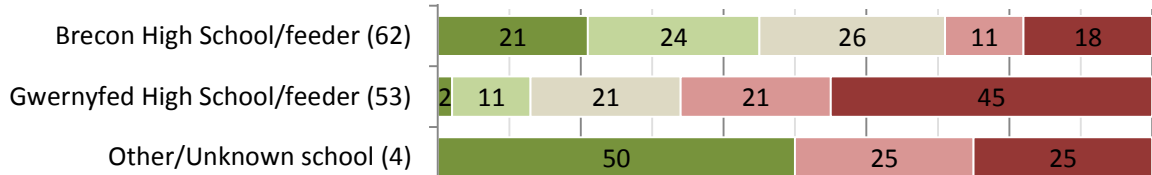
Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- ^{3.76} Just over 1 in 10 Gwernyfed HS/feeder students (11%) agreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to the issues they have identified with Welsh medium education, while around half (48%) of Brecon High School/feeder students agreed the Council is right to make changes.

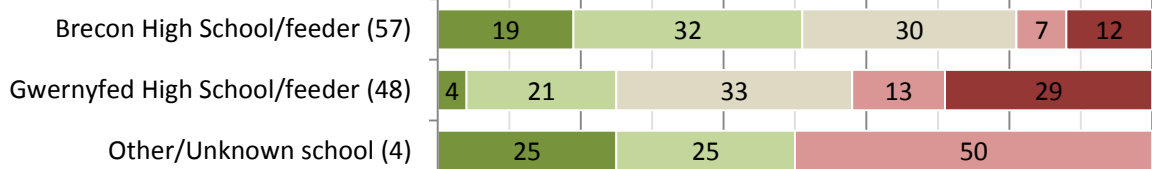
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements of the Proposal?

Figure 42: Levels of agreement with various elements of the proposal

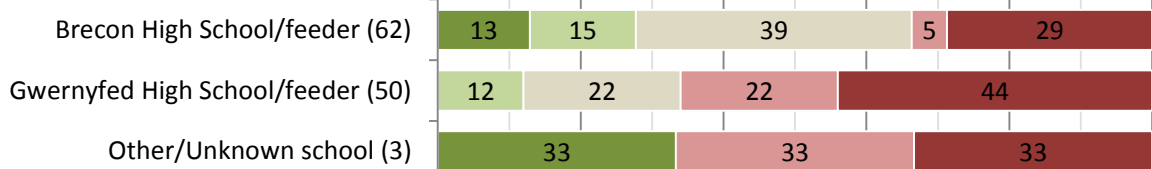
To consolidate Welsh medium education and deliver it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys to enable a wider range of subjects and a better learning and linguistic experience



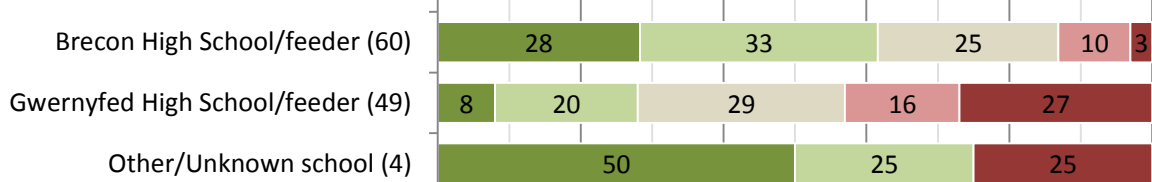
To provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school



To locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school



To increase provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Base: All Individuals (number of respondents shown in brackets)

3.77 When asked about the consolidation of Welsh medium education into a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys, just over 1 in 10 (13%) Gwernyfed High School/feeder students agreed, while more than two fifths (45%) of Brecon High School/feeder students agreed with this element of the proposal.

- 3.78 Around a quarter (25%) of Gwernyfed High School/feeder pupils agreed with the provision of Welsh medium education as part of a dual-stream school. This compares to around half (51%) of Brecon HS/feeder students who agreed with the provision of Welsh medium education in a dual-stream school.
- 3.79 The location of the Welsh medium stream school was the element of the proposal which received least support from both Gwernyfed and Brecon High School/feeder pupils. Just over 1 in 10 (12%) Gwernyfed HS/feeder pupils agreed that the Welsh medium stream should be located at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school, while just over a quarter (27%) of those in Brecon agreed with this proposed location.
- 3.80 The Welsh medium proposal which received the highest levels of support generally in the Young Persons consultation was to increase provision of subjects via the medium of Welsh. However, while this element of the proposal received support from more than three fifths (62%) of Brecon High School/feeder students, it only received support from less than a third (29%) of Gwernyfed High School/feeder students.

If you disagree with any elements of the Proposal for Welsh medium education, please explain why.

- 3.81 16 respondents from Brecon HS/associated feeder schools responded to this question explaining why they disagreed with elements of the proposal. From these responses, 35 comments were classified according to the code frame, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 43: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Brecon HS/feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	50%	8
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	38%	6
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	38%	6
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	19%	3
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	13%	2
Do not want Welsh provision to be moved to Builth (non-specific)	13%	2
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	6%	1
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	6%	1
Proposals will negatively affect the free time of students/time for extra-curricular activities	6%	1
'Other'	31%	5

- 3.82 8 of 16 respondents in Brecon HS/feeder schools wanted to keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School:

The Welsh stream should be part of the school in Brecon. Welsh speaking students shouldn't have to travel to Builth. We should be encouraging the Welsh language in all our schools!

- 3.83 6 respondents disagreed with the proposals due to longer travel times/increased travel costs.

I disagree with the proposal to close the Welsh Stream because it will mean travelling a long distance. It will reduce the number of people speaking Welsh in Brecon. Ysgol y Bannau will not have enough pupils and could close.

- 3.84 6 respondents argued that the proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh, and that Welsh as a language will suffer as a consequence.

Better provision for Welsh medium students is clearly necessary, but doing this as a part of Brecon High School would be better for all of the students involved. It makes no sense to send all of the Welsh medium children from Ysgol-Y-Bannau all the way to Builth High School for an education system that should be possible to provide at Brecon, which is just across the road. Also, as part of a potential new build at Brecon, a bigger, better Welsh medium stream would be far easier, with more teachers and better facilities than at the moment, therefore making Welsh speaking students more welcome and even giving more students from further away, who have had to move as far as Ystalafera of change to learning in English, an opportunity to continue their education in a more sensible and practical way.

- 3.85 From the 27 responses from Gwernyfed HS/associated feeder schools, 55 comments were classified according to the code frame, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 44: Reasons for opposition to the various elements of the proposal – Young people who go to Gwernyfed HS/feeder

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	33%	9
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	26%	7
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	19%	5
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	15%	4
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	15%	4
Do not want Welsh provision to be moved to Builth (non-specific)	11%	3
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	7%	2
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	4%	1
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	4%	1
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	4%	1
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	4%	1
Proposals will negatively affect pupils who go on to study at University/higher levels	4%	1
'Other'	59%	16

- 3.86 9 of 27 respondents who go to Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools are concerned that the proposed changes to Welsh medium education will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs.

Builth is too far to travel for a lot of students in Gwernyfed area.

I believe the Welsh medium is important and is vital to those keeping the language alive - unfortunately, I would not be educated in the Welsh medium. However, having a single site at Builth wells high school will cause an increase in travel costs for those scattered around the Brecon area. I

am aware Ystalyfera is close, but for the students at Brecon being involved in this proposal, surely they would attend Builth?

3.87 7 respondents want the Council to 'maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals'. For example:

I believe that if you, the council are so hell-bent on building a school on the Brecon site, that you should offer a choice of whether the pupils would like to learn in Welsh or English.

3.88 5 respondents fear that the proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer.

Welsh speakers should have same chance as English speakers. It's only fair. Why can't it happen in the same school? just spend more money on teachers instead of stupid things like this consultation.

3.89 However, 4 respondents 'disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh'.

Not many people enjoy doing Welsh therefore pupils will not want to go

3.90 4 respondents from Gwernyfed HS/feeder schools stated that they want to keep Welsh provision at Brecon.

The Welsh medium stream has been at Brecon High School for years and should not be removed as students will not be able to travel from Brecon to Builth every day. Ysgol Y Bannau is just across the road, and it makes sense for students from this primary school to move into the Welsh stream in Brecon High. Some students will be forced to give up the language after studying it for years, meaning less qualifications in the long run.

Equalities

*Are there any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that you believe that the County Council should take into account in the decision making process?
If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?*

- 3.91 Due to the low number of responses to this question, all coded responses to this question from schools have been reported combined. Only 30 respondents to the Young Persons questionnaire gave a response when asked whether they believe that there are any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that the Council should take into account in the decision making process.
- 3.92 Comments which did not relate to the question have been separated into an 'other/comments not relating to equalities' category.

Figure 45: Impacts relating to equalities – All coded responses

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Generally disagree with proposals/maintain current provision	23%	7
Proposals will result in pupils losing friends/negative impact on social life	13%	4
Proposals will lead to increased travel times/costs	13%	4
Proposals will negatively impact disabled children/proposals need to take disabled children into account	7%	2
Children have the right to quality education in their local area i.e. in the language they wish to learn	7%	2
Proposals will segregate societies/divide communities	7%	2
Proposals will negatively impact Welsh Speakers	3%	1
Proposals will result in pupils losing time with family/negative impact on home life	3%	1
Schools should be equal for English and Welsh speakers/shouldn't be biased towards English or Welsh speakers	3%	1
'Other/comments not relating to equalities'	80%	24

- 3.93 The most frequent coded responses refer generally to disagreement with the proposals or express a desire to maintain current levels of provision.

Don't close the school!

- 3.94 Many of the remaining comments about equalities expressed concerns more generally that bullying would result as a negative consequence of other equalities issues that they had raised. These concerns were often focussed on the mixing of children from different school and the increase in pupil numbers.

I would no longer be able to do after school extracurricular activities. The cultural difference between town kids and country kids would increase bullying.

With more children in a school, discrimination against others will be harder to control, and more pupils introduces a wider diversity of races/beliefs/sexual orientations which, in turn, opens up a gateway for bullying. I know we all like to think it won't happen but some children are careless, and do not know any better.

- 3.95 Indeed, one respondent felt that the size of the new school could also impact on bullying.

If people want to make the school bigger, there is a larger risk of bullying and discrimination towards different people. The bigger the school the more likely this is to happen.

^{3.96} 4 of the 30 respondents also raised the impact of increased travel times and costs to those living further from the school.

I have a human right to attend a local school and not spend 3hrs a day on a bus

The proposed changes would require me to spend approximately one hour each way, so this will add two hours to a school day. It will also mean that I am unable to participate in any after school clubs as I wouldn't be able to get home. I am currently studying for my GCSE's and a number of my teachers kindly provide after school revision, I would not be able to attend if this were provided in Brecon.

Further Comments

^{3.97} 18 respondents from the Young Persons' consultation gave further comments about the proposals. From these responses, 34 comments have been coded, the details of which are outlined below.

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	29%	6
Maintain 6th Form/don't want to lose our 6th Form	19%	4
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	14%	3
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	14%	3
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	10%	2
Agree with proposals for new school building/want a new school to be built	10%	2
Don't close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	10%	2
Concerns about standards of education of NPTC Brecon/lack of accountability to students from NPTC	10%	2
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	10%	2
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	10%	2
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	5%	1
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	5%	1
Decisions are being made by councillors not local to the area/who do not understand the issues or areas involved i.e. cabinet is mostly from North Powys	5%	1
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	5%	1
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	5%	1
Proposals will negatively affect pupils' health and wellbeing (i.e. make them tired, unhappy, inattentive in school)	5%	1
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington, etc.	5%	1
Proposals will lead to reduced free time/affect pupils home lives/time for after school activities/extra-curricular activities	5%	1
Other	67%	14

- 3.98 6 of the 18 respondents expressed a preference for the current provision of schools or otherwise disagreed with the proposals.

You messed around with all of my key stage 2 by closing my primary school, and promising new schools that never happened. Now you want to do the same to my high school time. It simply isn't fair or right.

I am disgusted with the behaviour of the council. I am not prepared for my education to be affected by the decisions they make. The teachers at Gwernyfed are excellent, they understand the way we learn and help us develop our learning by helping us in the way that we understand. If Gwernyfed was to close then I would not go to Brecon sixth form, I would go to Hereford or Merthyr college, as they can guarantee my education. I know that the majority of my year would make the same decision as we had a discussion in class and we all decided that Brecon college will not fulfil our potential. My sister has been in Gwernyfed since year 7 and has successfully finished school with 1 A and 11 A stars and 2 distinctions in GCSE's and 1 B, 2 A stars and 1 A in A level. She is now in York University studying Chemistry. She would not have been able to have achieved those results without the supportive nature of the teachers. I did not choose to come to Gwernyfed to then be merged with a school I clearly avoided when I made my decision of what High school to go to.

- 3.99 A further 4 respondents were concerned specifically with the provision of 6th form education.

If there was no 6th form in Brecon high school, I would not be able to be Head girl. Also I want to do science A-levels and I'm worried that the college would not do them.

Brecon needs a sixth form that isn't NPTC - when I looked at going there, they were unreliable and quite frankly useless in providing information about courses and exactly what subjects were on offer. A sixth form in a high school gives students more of a familiar surroundings and enables a better education. A massive "super school" will disrupt students' education, as there will be less one-on-one teaching, and teachers will have more workload - therefore education will decrease in standard. Gwernyfed should not be brought into this at all, as that is the high school for the Three Cocks area and should have nothing to do with Brecon's closure.

Findings of the Primary Consultation Questionnaire

^{3.100} In addition to the Main and Young Persons' consultation questionnaires, a questionnaire was developed with simplified questions and explanations that were more appropriate for Primary School children.

Table 4: Socio-demographic characteristics for the primary consultation questionnaire
(Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding)

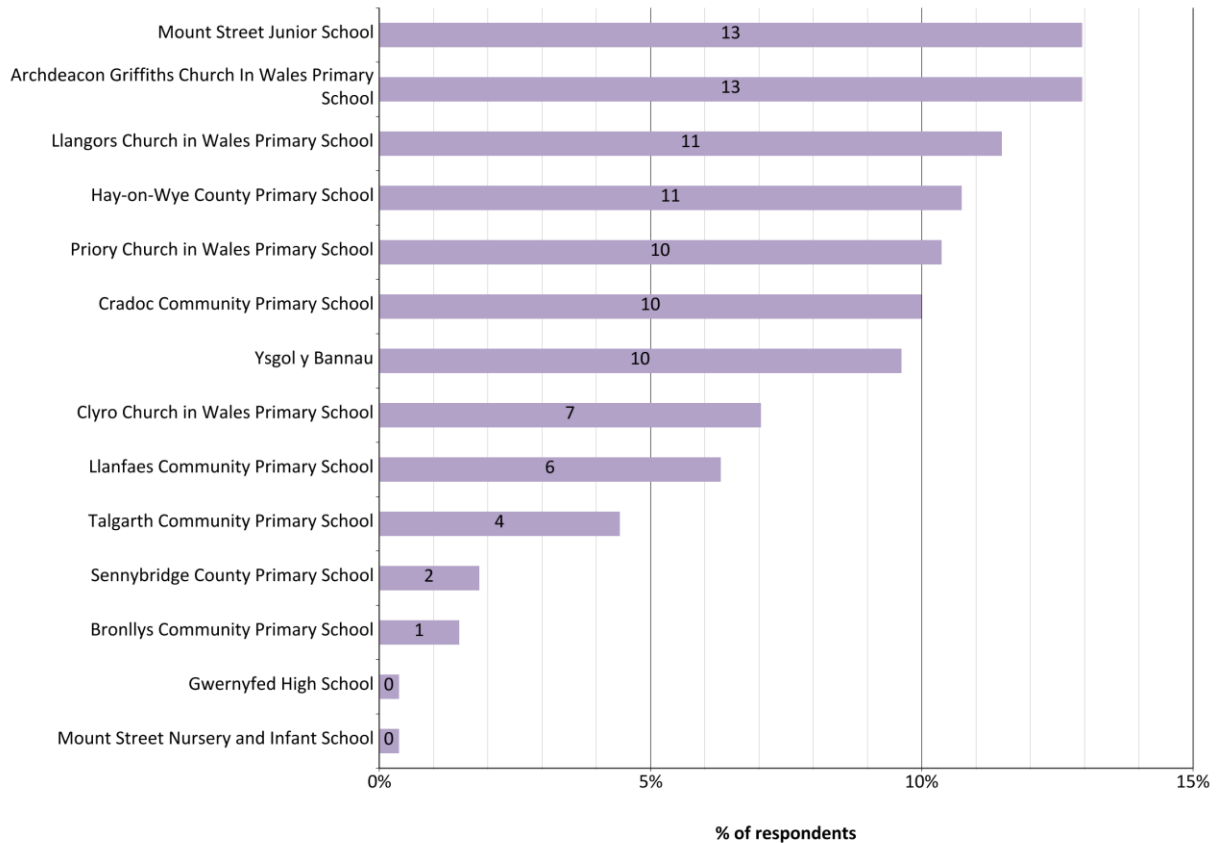
	Characteristic	All Responses	
		Number of Responses	% of Valid Responses
BY KEY STAGE	Nursery/reception	16	6.0%
	Key Stage 1	34	12.7%
	Key Stage 2	210	78.4%
	Key Stage 3	0	0.0%
	Key Stage 4	1	0.4%
	Multiple	7	2.6%
	Total valid responses	268	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	6	-
BY GENDER	Male	120	46.0%
	Female	141	54.0%
	Total valid responses	261	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	13	-
BY ETHNIC GROUP	White	247	96.9%
	Asian or Asian British	6	2.4%
	Any other ethnic group	2	0.8%
	Total valid responses	255	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	19	-
BY DISABILITY	With disability	5	1.9%
	No disability	252	98.1%
	Total valid responses	257	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	17	-
BY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	With SEN	10	3.9%
	No SEN	246	96.1%
	Total valid responses	256	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	18	-
BY ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS	Eligible to receive free school meals	28	11.0%
	Not eligible to receive free school meals	227	89.0%
	Total valid responses	255	100.0%
	<i>Not known</i>	19	-

^{3.101} It is worth noting that many of the responses to the primary consultation questionnaire appear to have been completed by parents of primary school children. Some of these were giving answers on behalf of their primary school age child, but others voiced their own concerns as parents. ORS identified as many as 35 responses where this appeared to be the case, although in reality this number may be higher. These responses have been included in the analysis.

About Your Education

Which school do you currently go to?

Figure 46: Which school do you currently go to?



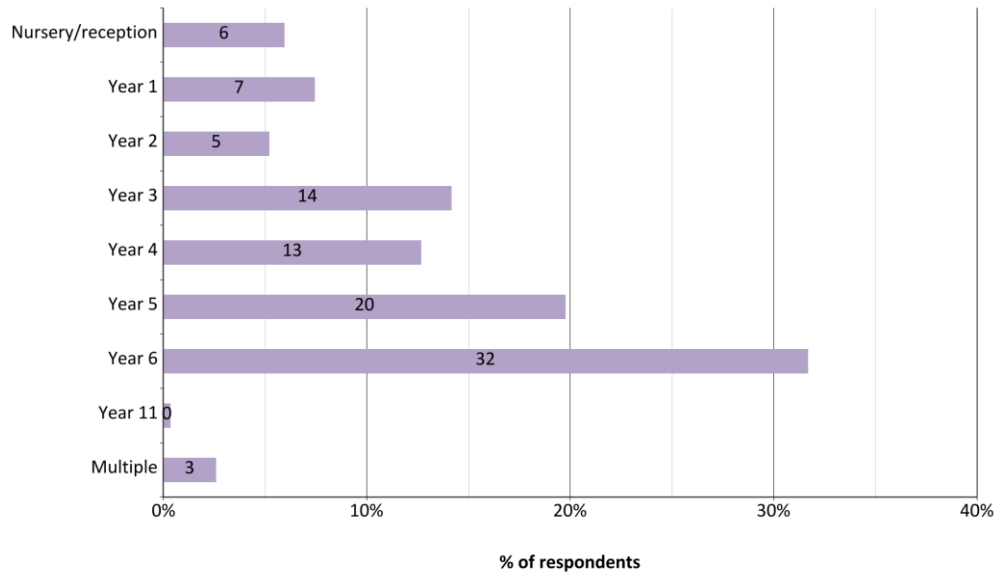
Base: All Individuals (270)

^{3.102} Around 1 in 10 respondents currently attend Mount Street Junior School (13%), Archdeacon Griffiths Church in Wales Primary (13%), Llangors Church in Wales Primary (11%), Hay-on-Wye County Primary (11%), Priory Church in Wales Primary (10%), Cradoc Community Primary (10%) and Ysgol y Bannau (10%). Less than 1 in 10 pupils attend Clyro Church in Wales Primary (7%), Llanfaes Community Primary (6%) and Talgarth Community Primary (4%). ORS also received 5 responses from Sennybridge County Primary (2%), 4 responses from Bronllys Community Primary (1%), and 1 respondent each from Gwernyfed High and Mount Street Nursery and Infant School.

^{3.103} 4 individuals did not answer this question.

What year group are you currently in?

Figure 47: What year group are you currently in?

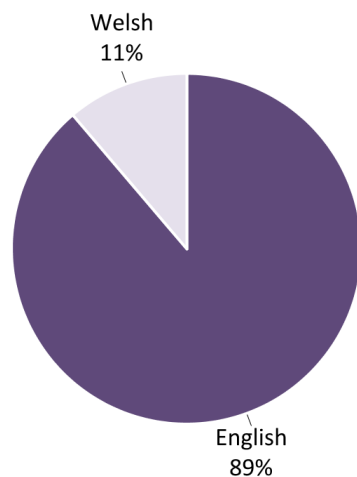


Base: All Individuals (268)

- 3.104 Almost a third (32%) of respondents are currently in Year 6, while 2 in 10 (20%) are in Year 5. More than 1 in 10 respondents are in Years 3 (14%) and 4 (13%), and less than 1 in 10 are in Years 1 (7%) and 2 (5%) or in nursery/reception (6%).
- 3.105 1 student in Year 11 responded to the primary consultation, while 7 respondents submitted multiple year groups. This may have been due to parents completing the questionnaire on behalf of multiple children, or students writing down their current year group as well as the year group they were moving into. 6 respondents did not answer this question.

Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

Figure 48: Are your lessons mainly in English or Welsh?

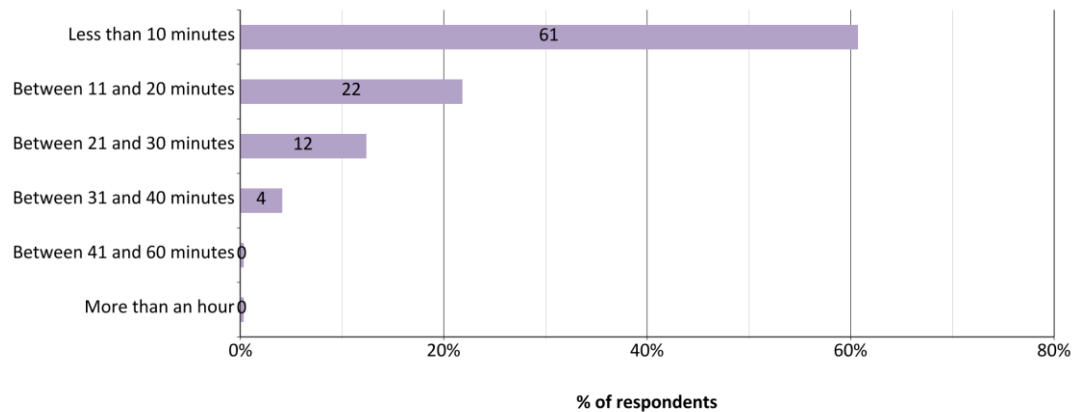


Base: All Individuals (267)

3.106 Almost 9 in 10 (89%) respondents are taught mainly in English, while 11% are taught mainly in Welsh.

How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?

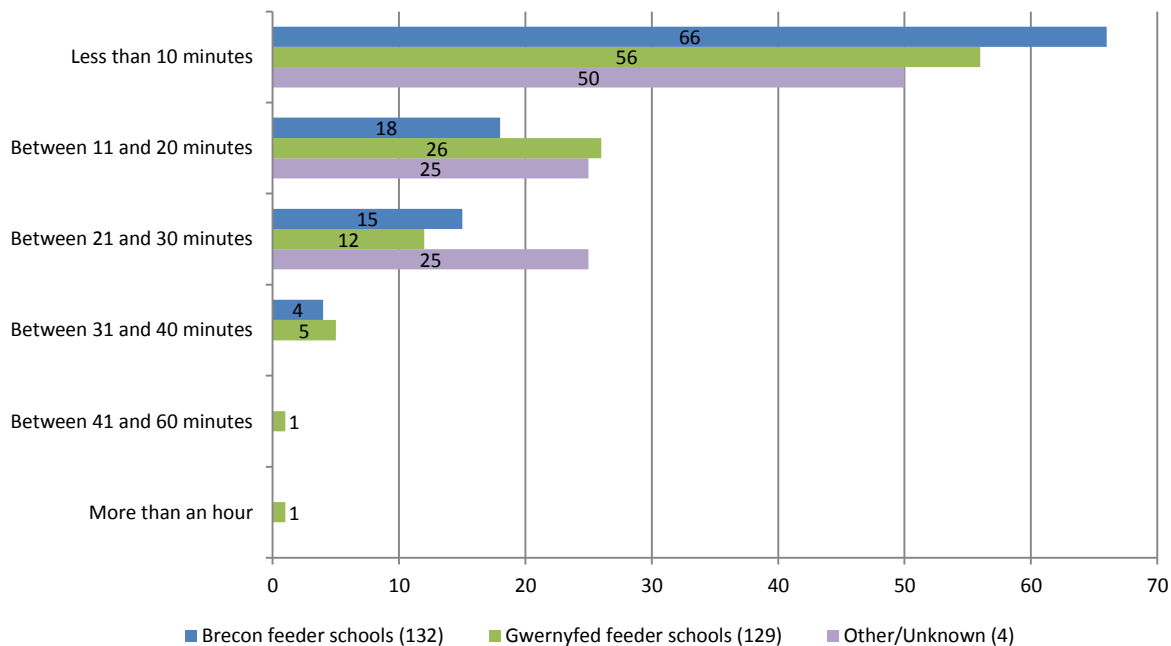
Figure 49: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)?



Base: All Individuals (265)

3.107 Around three fifths (61%) of respondents said that it takes them less than 10 minutes to travel between school and home (one way). More than four fifths (83%) of respondents travel for less than 20 minutes. 1 in 10 (12%) travel for between 21 and 30 minutes, and just 4% of respondents travel for between 31 and 40 minutes. Only 1% of respondents travelled for more than 40 minutes between school and home (one way).

Figure 50: How long does it normally take you to travel between school and home (one way)? Results by school type



Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

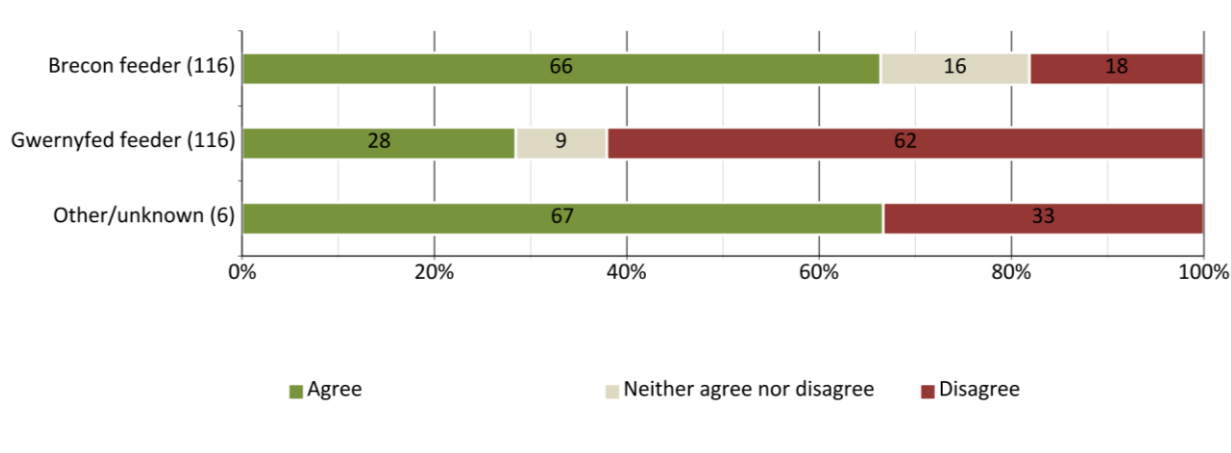
3.108 Around two thirds of respondents in Gwernyfed (66%) and over half of those in Brecon (56%) feeder schools travel for less than 10 minutes to/from school (one way).

English Medium Education

Thinking about the problems on the previous page, the Council believes a number of changes are needed.

Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?

Figure 51: Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?



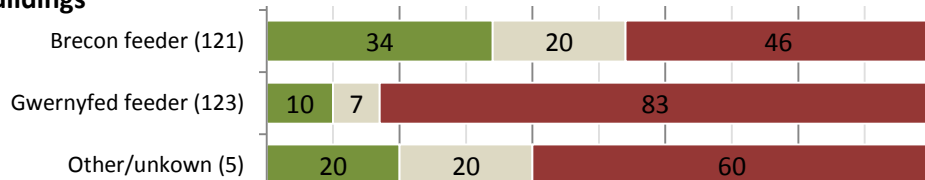
Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.109 Respondents were given a short list of current problems with English education in Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. Respondents were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems.
- 3.110 Due to differences in responses between pupils attending schools which act as feeder schools to Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, these results have been reported separately for comparison. 6 responses to the primary school consultation either did not fall into these categories or did not specify which school they attended, and so have also been reported separately into an 'other/unknown' category. Due to the low level of response from this 'other/unknown' category, these results should be treated with caution, and these have been reported as numbers, rather than percentages, in the text.
- 3.111 Two thirds (66%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed while less than 3 in 10 (28%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed.
- 3.112 More than 6 in 10 (62%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed that the council is right to make changes to respond to the problems listed; only 2 in 10 (18%) of those from Brecon feeder schools disagreed.
- 3.113 4 of the 6 respondents from other or unknown schools agreed.

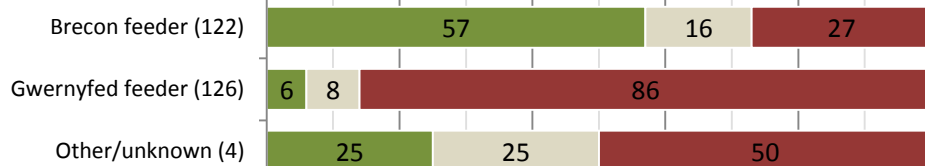
Do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

Figure 52: Do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

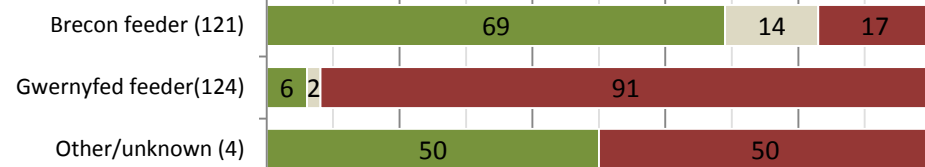
To create a new English-only secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, which would continue to operate from the two existing school buildings



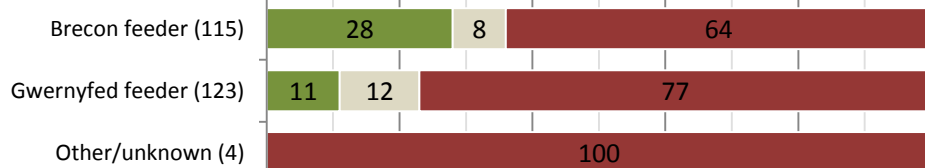
To construct a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20



To locate the new school building in Brecon to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport



For 16+ education to be provided by the college in Brecon



Legend: Agree (Green), Neither agree nor disagree (Light Green), Disagree (Red)

Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

^{3.114} Respondents were provided with a description of the four proposed changes, as well as an explanation of how the Council believed these would address the issues they had identified. Respondents were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed with these 4 elements of the proposal.

^{3.115} Results are described overleaf.

- 3.116 Respondents from Brecon feeder schools are more likely to have agreed with each of the proposed changes than those from Gwernyfed feeder schools. More than three quarters of respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed with all elements of the proposal.
- 3.117 A third (34%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to establish a new 11-16 English-only school to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed. Only 1 in 10 (10%) of respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed with the proposed changes.
- 3.118 8 in 10 (83%) Gwernyfed feeder respondents disagreed with this proposed change, along with nearly half (46%) of Brecon feeder respondents (46%).
- 3.119 While over half (57%) Brecon feeder respondents agreed with the proposed change to construct a new building for the proposed new school, only 6% of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.
- 3.120 Nearly 9 in 10 (86%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed with this proposed change, and over a quarter (27%) of Brecon feeder respondent disagreed also.
- 3.121 More than two thirds (69%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to locate the new school building in Brecon to minimise the overall number of pupils that require school transport. Only 6% of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.
- 3.122 Almost all (91%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed, compared with less a fifth (17%) of those from Brecon feeder schools.
- 3.123 The proposed change of 16+ education being provided by the college in Brecon was opposed by at around two thirds (64%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools, and more than three quarters (77%) of those from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed.
- 3.124 More than a quarter (28%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with this proposed change, and only around 1 in 10 (11%) of respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools agreed with post 16 education being provided at the college in Brecon.

If you disagree with any of the proposed changes, please explain why.

3.125 Respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposed changes were asked to explain why this was.

3.126 As responses differed between those who attended Brecon feeder or Gwernyfed feeder schools, these coded responses have been reported separately. The results below show the 69 respondents from Brecon feeder schools who answered this question, from which 189 different comments have been classified according to the code frame.

Figure 53: Reasons for opposition to the proposed changes (Brecon feeder schools)

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form	36%	25
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	35%	24
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	19%	13
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	12%	8
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	10%	7
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	10%	7
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	9%	6
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	9%	6
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	9%	6
Concerns over standards of education of NPTC in Brecon/lack of subject choice for Post-16 students/NPTC will not be accountable to anyone	9%	6
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	7%	5
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	7%	5
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	7%	5
Proposals will negatively impact extra-curricular activities/clubs and groups will be limited	6%	4
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington etc.	4%	3
Do not close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	4%	3
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	3%	2
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer new families will move in	3%	2
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	3%	2
I do not want to go to Brecon High School (non-specific)	3%	2
Disagree with assertions that 600+ students is optimum for schools/believe smaller schools are better	3%	2
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	1%	1
Powys County Council have promised schools for years and never delivered/have no faith that this situation will be any different	1%	1
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	1%	1
Disagree with proposed changes to Sixth Form as pupils need continuity/need to	1%	1

remain in the same school from 11-18		
Gwernyfed is valuable for its beautiful/historic/listed buildings	1%	1
Disagree as we need to keep the Welsh language in Brecon/Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	1%	1
Other	57%	39

3.127 Some of the most frequent responses, made by more than a third of respondents (36%) in Brecon feeder schools, concerned the loss of 6th form provision. Examples of such comments include:

I want to stay in school, not go to a college.

A Levels should be taught in schools with highly qualified teachers. I do not believe that a Further education College will provide the same level of teaching or accountability as it is privately owned.

I would rather stay in the same school to do everything, I don't want to go anywhere else to do my a-levels.

3.128 More than a third (35%) of respondents said that they 'Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools'. Typical examples of comments include:

I think both schools should just be kept as they are.

I want to remain in Brecon, and continue to learn Welsh.

I feel that the money would be better spent in building a new school in Brecon and keeping the 2 schools as they are.

3.129 Around a fifth (19%) respondents said that the proposals will 'negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools'. For example:

I don't want to travel nearly 2 hours every day so I can continue to learn in Welsh!

My next school must talk to me in Welsh. It must be in Aberhonddu town [Brecon]. I don't want to go to Builth.

3.130 Around 1 in 10 respondents (12%) in Brecon feeder schools showed support for the current provision at Gwernyfed High school. Typical examples of such comments include:

I want to go to school in Gwernyfed, I had a look around the school when my brother went for an open evening and it looks like a really good school. I like the idea of a smaller high school as it won't be as scary a move from primary to high school.

^{3.131} Of the 95 respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools who answered this question, 383 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 54: Reasons for opposition to the proposed changes (Gwernyfed feeder schools)

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances	64%	61
Gwernyfed is a good school/is financially stable/and should not be closed	37%	35
I do not want to go to Brecon High School (non-specific)	33%	31
Do not close Gwernyfed school/keep Gwernyfed open	31%	29
Proposals will negatively impact extra-curricular activities/clubs and groups will be limited	26%	25
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	20%	19
Proposals will result in fewer students attending Powys schools/more students will go elsewhere for their education i.e. to England/Kington etc.	20%	19
Disagree with proposals/schools are fine as they are/need to maintain current provision of schools	17%	16
Gwernyfed is valuable for its sports facilities/community facilities	14%	13
Sixth Forms should stay at all High Schools/don't want to lose our 6th Form	13%	12
Disagree with proposals due to overcrowding of classes/there will be too many pupils per class	9%	9
Appreciate/agree that Brecon High School needs improvements, but not at the expense of Gwernyfed	9%	9
Disagree as proposals will negatively affect the community/schools are a vital part of the community	9%	9
Proposals will result in a lower standard of education/learning (non-specific)	6%	6
Proposals will lead to fewer families remaining in the area/fewer new families will move in	6%	6
Concerns over standards of education of NPTC in Brecon/lack of subject choice for Post-16 students/NPTC will not be accountable to anyone	5%	5
Invest money into current facilities/spend the money for new sites on current school buildings	5%	5
Gwernyfed is valuable for its beautiful/historic/listed buildings	4%	4
Proposal is biased/flawed/decisions already made	3%	3
Negatively affect Welsh Speakers/Welsh as a language/Welsh needs to be taught in schools	3%	3
Disagree with proposals due to increased travel costs	2%	2
Proposals are financially motivated/a money grab by the council	2%	2
Proposals will negatively impact local businesses/local economy	2%	2
Powys County Council have promised schools for years and never delivered/have no faith that this situation will be any different	2%	2
Proposals negatively impact people living in Hay-on-Wye/distance will be too much	2%	2
Proposals will negatively affects rural area/rural communities (non-specific)	2%	2
Disagree with moving Brecon due to it negatively affecting people who live in the countryside/Gwernyfed specifically chosen due to countryside/want our children in a rural environment/don't want our children taught in town	2%	2
Proposals will not save enough money/savings will be minimal	1%	1
Disagree with proposed changes to Sixth Form as pupils need continuity/need to remain in the same school from 11-18	1%	1
Proposals will negatively affect pupils' health and wellbeing (i.e. make them tired, unhappy, inattentive in school)	1%	1
Unhappy with Powys' lack of evidence for proposals i.e. being unable to answer	1%	1

questions in consultation meetings/figures in consultation document lacking anything to back them up		
Other	41%	39

3.132 Nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents in Gwernyfed feeder schools said that they ‘disagree with proposals due to increased travel times/distances’. For example:

Making primary school children travel to a high school at least 10+ miles away with a journey lasting at least 30-45 minutes at the beginning and end of each day will have a detrimental effect on their ability to concentrate on their learning. They will certainly be at a disadvantage compared to other children living locally.

I think Brecon is too far from Talgarth to travel every day.

3.133 Nearly two fifths (37%) of respondents praised Gwernyfed High School and/or showed opposition to its closure.

Gwernyfed is doing perfectly fine in debts and results.

Gwernyfed is a brilliant school and they are doing well on their own.

I think Gwernyfed is a good school. I would like to go there.

3.134 A third (33%) of respondents simply expressed that they did not want to go to Brecon High School.

I don't want to go to Brecon because I want to go to the same school that my brother, my sister, and my mum went to.

My friends don't live near Brecon and I don't want to be in Brecon.

3.135 Nearly a third (31%) of respondents in Gwernyfed feeder schools state that they want to keep Gwernyfed High School open.

Why can't Gwernyfed stay open and Brecon School have a new building on its own?

I go to gymnastics every night on a Monday and I wouldn't be able to do it anywhere else. So please don't shut it down!

3.136 Around a quarter (26%) of the Gwernyfed feeder school pupils who responded to this question raised concerns about the potential negative impact to extra-curricular activities.

If Gwernyfed closed I would have to travel over 1 hour on a bus to school in Brecon. My parents think that this is too much time spent travelling and I would be very tired and bored when I could be doing after school clubs or sports.

What will the plan be for the sports centre at Gwernyfed? The council say there will be discussions around this, but really we know that the council will sell the land and the leisure centre will not be relocated nearby as finances are not available.

3.137 Around a fifth of respondents (20%) said that the proposals would negatively impact on their friendships or social lives, and a further 20% said that the proposals would result in fewer students attending Powys schools.

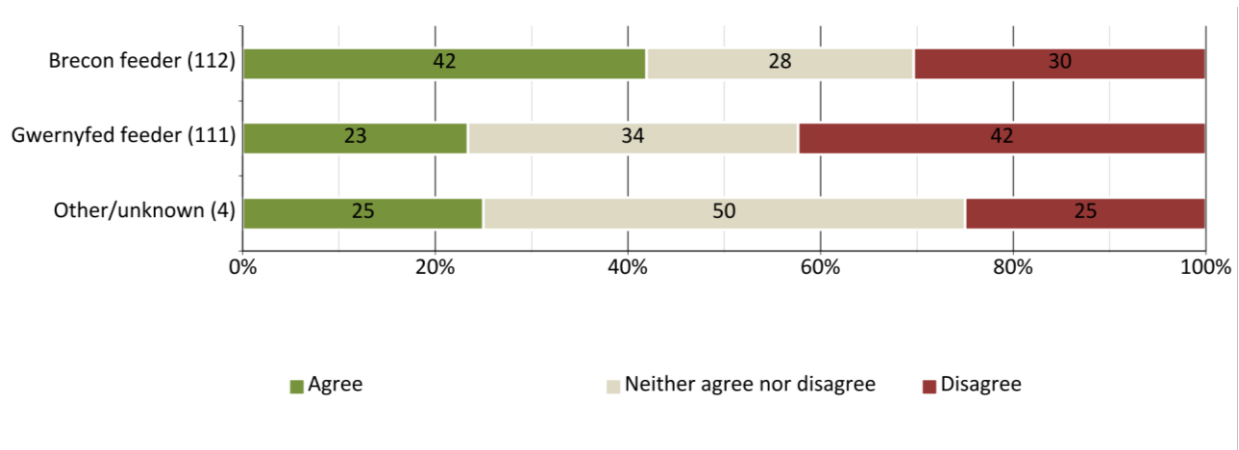
I may have to go to Kington school instead as it is closer. My friends would all be split up and go to different school such as Builth, Fairfield and Brecon. We would spend very little time with each other. This would really upset me.

Welsh Medium Education

Thinking about the problems on the previous page, the Council believes a number of changes are needed.

Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?

Figure 55: Do you agree or disagree that the Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems?



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

- 3.138 Respondents were given a brief overview of issues with Welsh education in South Powys and in Brecon High School specifically. Respondents were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes to respond to these problems.
- 3.139 Two fifths (42%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed, while just over a fifth of respondents from Gwernyfed feeders (23%) agreed that the Council is right to make changes.
- 3.140 Just over two fifths (42%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed, as did 3 in 10 (30%) of those from Brecon feeders.
- 3.141 Around 3 in 10 or more respondents from Brecon (28%) and Gwernyfed (34%) feeder schools neither agreed nor disagreed.

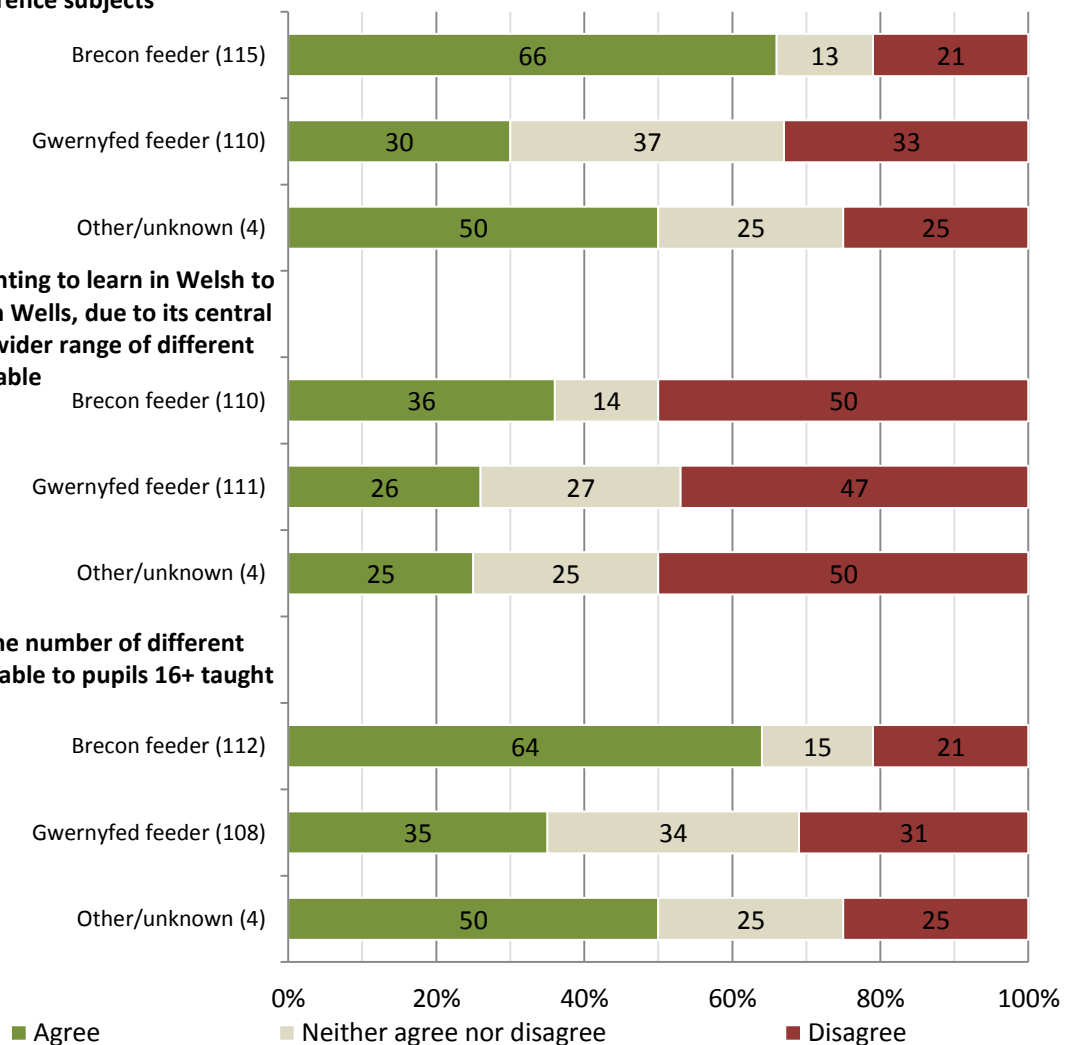
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

Figure 56: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes?

To teach pupils wanting to learn in Welsh from a single school to allow a wider range of difference subjects

For pupils wanting to learn in Welsh to do so in Builth Wells, due to its central location and wider range of different subjects available

To increase the number of different subjects available to pupils 16+ taught in Welsh



Base: All Individuals (number of individuals shown in brackets)

3.142 Respondents were then given a brief description of the proposed changes to Welsh education, and were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each proposed change.

3.143 Two thirds (66%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to teach pupils wanting to learn in Welsh from a single school. Less than a third (30%) of Gwernyfed feeder respondents agreed.

3.144 A third (33%) of respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed, as did around a fifth (21%) of Brecon feeder respondents.

3.145 Around half of respondents from Brecon (50%) and Gwernyfed (47%) feeder schools disagreed with the proposed change to situate a single Welsh medium school in Builth Wells.

- 3.146 Over a third of those from Brecon feeder schools (36%) agreed with this proposed change, as do around a quarter of those from Gwernyfed feeder schools (26%).
- 3.147 Nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents from Brecon feeder schools agreed with the proposed change to increase the number of different subjects available in Welsh to pupils 16+. A third of Gwernyfed feeder respondents also agreed.
- 3.148 3 in 10 (31%) respondents from Gwernyfed feeder schools disagreed with this, as do 2 in 10 (21%) of those from Brecon.

If you disagree with any elements of the proposed changes to learning in Welsh, please explain why.

- 3.149 Respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposed changes to Welsh medium provision were asked to explain why this was.
- 3.150 Due to low response rates and similar concerns raised both Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment areas, responses to this question are reported together. Of the 47 respondents who answered this question, 99 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 57: Reasons for opposition to the proposed changes (Brecon feeder schools)

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Do not want Welsh provision to be moved to Builth (non-specific)	38%	18
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	34%	16
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	28%	13
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	9%	4
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	6%	3
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	6%	3
Welsh needs to stay in Brecon due to the Welsh Primary School/Ysgol Y Bannau will be negatively affected	6%	3
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh/don't want my children speaking Welsh	4%	2
Proposals will negatively affect the free time of students/time for extra-curricular activities	4%	2
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	2%	1
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	2%	1
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	2%	1
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	2%	1
Other	45%	21

- 3.151 Around two fifths (38%) of respondents said that they opposed Welsh provision being moved to Builth. Typical examples of comments include the following:

I think to put Welsh in Brecon High + not go to Builth

The children who learn in Welsh should not go to Builth because it's too far away

3.152 Relatedly, almost a third (34%) of respondents also said that the Council should 'keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School'; for example:

This year I will be representing Powys in the Urdd Eisteddfod. Please support me by keeping the Welsh in Brecon so I can carry on entering Urdd Eisteddfod in high school. Closing Brecon Welsh stream will stop me.

I do not think that the council have been fair on Brecon High School because they have made people think that the Welsh stream was closing for a long time so mums and dads have put their children in different schools. I really want to carry on my Welsh education in Brecon.

3.153 More than a quarter (28%) of Brecon feeder school respondents said that 'proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs':

Builth is miles away from my home. I will spend a long time on a bus every day. After school clubs will be impossible to attend!!

It is unfair to make children who currently go to school in Ysgol Y Bannau travel to Builth daily to go to school, it is too far.

3.154 Of the 31 Gwernyfed feeder school respondents who expressed disagreement with the proposed changes to Welsh medium education, 50 different comments have been classified, the details of which are outlined below.

Figure 58: Reasons for opposition to the proposed changes (Gwernyfed feeder schools)

Coded comment	% of respondents	Base
Proposals will lead to longer travel times/increased travel costs	32%	10
Welsh should be available in all schools/to all pupils	29%	9
Disagree with being taught just in Welsh/don't want to be taught in Welsh	10%	3
Proposals will negatively affect English speakers/English speaker's educations will suffer	10%	3
Maintain current provision/disagree with any school closures/disagree with proposals	6%	2
Keep Welsh provision at Brecon/maintain Welsh stream at Brecon High School	6%	2
Do not want Welsh provision to be moved to Builth (non-specific)	6%	2
English is most pupils first language/most people need to speak English	3%	1
Pupils are entitled to a school within their local community	3%	1
Proposals will deter parents from educating their children in Welsh/Welsh as a language will suffer	3%	1
Proposals will negatively impact the friendships/social lives of students	3%	1
Proposals will negatively affect pupils who go on to study at University/higher levels	3%	1
Schools are too close to the English border/don't need to learn Welsh due to proximity to English border	3%	1
Other	42%	13

- 3.155 10 of the 31 Gwernyfed feeder school respondents (32%) felt that the proposed changes would lead to increases in travel times or costs.

They would be spending a long time travelling, which would make them tired. Why can't you do it over two sites?

The Welsh pupils in Brecon and Gwernyfed High schools will have to travel further to get to school.

- 3.156 9 respondents argued that Welsh medium provision should be available at all schools or be available to all pupils.

Pupils should be able to learn in Welsh in whatever school they go to, and there should also be the same range of subjects in Welsh as there is in English in every school.

Further Comments

- 3.157 17 respondents to the primary consultation made further comments about the proposals. Most commonly, responses voiced support for continued provision at Gwernyfed and reiterated general opposition to the proposals.

Could not the available money be spent on a new school for Brecon and upgrading the Gwernyfed site? It seems that the council has embarked on a plan and does not have the ability to listen and change direction.

Why should a big school with large grounds for the children have to stop and just sit there doing nothing because a school doesn't have the right support to keep itself up? Gwernyfed has lasted longer than Brecon's old school and it will probably outlast long after the new school. This is because Gwernyfed has a better construction than Brecon. My parents say that Brecon is a bad school with no character and if Brecon will build another one then it will probably have no character as well.

- 3.158 Others raised concerns specifically regarding Welsh provision in the area.

Keep Welsh in Brecon please. Ysgol y Bannau - Welsh school, is just across the road from the high school! It's important to learn in Welsh, the language of our country.

I am worried about the effect on Ysgol-y-Bannau if the Welsh stream is removed entirely from Brecon. I think that wherever there is a Welsh language primary school, there should be secondary education in Welsh nearby too.

I am going to waste over a quarter of a day every week for the remainder of my school life to be able to keep learning Welsh! It's stupid! I live in Wales and learning to speak Welsh is something I'm proud of but you're making it almost impossible for me to do this becoming the Welsh stream to Builth. You're not giving me or my mum a lot of choice either with taking the A-levels out of a school environment in GHS and BHS. You are also breaking up friendship groups from primary school too!!

Suggested Alternative Proposals

- 3.159 Many respondents from the Main, Young Persons and Primary consultation questionnaires suggested alternative proposals to those put forward by the Council among their responses to open response questions. Some of the suggestions were alternatives to elements of the proposal, while others suggested entirely different approaches. The content of these alternative proposals has been summarised below.
- 3.160 While there was some support among alternative proposals for the merging of schools, many suggested that alternate schools should be merged together. Commonly, respondents suggested that there was a demand for the merging of primary and secondary provision in one site. Some suggested that this should be done at the proposed site for the new school in Brecon, while provision at Gwernyfed could be maintained or also merged into a through school.

[T]he Gwernyfed building needs work but why can't this Capital be met by a more considered approach at Primary level with Gwernyfed being an all through school. I have never understood the need for 2 major financial projects which will result in 2 schools a mile apart in Hay and Clyro. Where is the sense in that. It still leaves a gap in the middle of the catchment area with no primary at all which could be accommodated at Gwernyfed perhaps. Why can't Brecon become all through and leave Gwernyfed alone? Major work is needed on the 2 Mount Street schools just down the road from Penlan and there are 2 other schools in Llanfaes and Priory. Why can't some thought go into one all through school in Brecon instead of maintaining all the current sites?

The existing school should be added to provide an all through school 3-18 years for the area. That would negate the building of a new primary school in Hay and Talgarth, allowing the spare capacity at Gwernyfed to be utilised.

...there should be provision of 11 to 18 year old provision - or younger, if you bring in pupils from other primary schools to the one location.

Brecon could provide an all-round school, closing the primary schools and make the savings required to raise the money the council needs.

Leave Gwernyfed high school alone. Build a new school in Brecon which incorporates Mount Street Primary school. 4-18 school in Brecon. 11-18 school in Gwernyfed.

PCC should give serious consideration to a through school model in Brecon - a 4 to 18 provision on a new site, which includes a WM stream. It meets the needs to establish new buildings for 2 schools in need of new buildings; it can still create a capital receipt on 2 sites; it keeps more pupils in the local area, who will benefit from new facilities; it will mean WM pupils do not have increased travel; it will reduce the travel implications of the current proposal.

Why not merge Ysgol y Bannau with Brecon High School as the Welsh language stays in Brecon, Brecon will have their new building and no loss to the communities of the Gwernyfed catchment area.

Build a new school in Brecon but not at the expense of Gwernyfed. Combine Brecon high with a primary school from Brecon.

- 3.161 Others suggested that 6th form provision should be considered in any new school building, citing the benefits that 6th forms can have for pupils and the school in general, as well as expressing reservations about post-16 provision at NPTC, and some suggest a sixth form over the two existing sites.

I agree that there needs to be a new school ... However, I feel strongly that the new school should be an 11-18 provision. I believe that any new school should be 11-18 for many reasons. I am unsure of the academic quality offered by NPTC College.

Brecon needs a new secondary school, and there is opportunity to access Welsh Government funding. However, it should be on the basis of 11-18 provision. This would leave learners to choose an FE route if most suitable, but would not force them. Sixth form retention is good for the school and for staff. The Cabinet has not presented any compelling case that a tertiary model will be best for Brecon learners.

I think the school sixth form should still be an option - should be enough pupils if they are from the 2 schools.

If NPTC can provide 25 a/as levels, then so can the schools: by all means, combine Brecon and Gwernyfed sixth forms - some subjects in each school.

We agree that Brecon High School urgently needs a new school building to make it fit for purpose. However, we think that the new school should be 11 to 18 and include a Welsh medium stream. A sixth form within a school has considerable benefits to both the sixth form pupils, in terms of teacher support, both academic and pastoral, and to other pupils within the school in terms of role modelling. If going to the considerable expense of building a new school with a wide range of facilities, such as science laboratories, why not make those new facilities available to sixth form students as well? It seems wasteful to duplicate these facilities in a separate sixth form college just next door.

Can BHS and Gwernyfed not share a sixth form - staff/pupils move between the two sites. Gwernyfed is much nearer than Crick/Builth, where pupils currently travel to. This would help with the costs/range of academic subjects offered for a-levels.

Why cannot both Gwernyfed and Brecon be able to have a joint provision, to offer the range of subjects to its pupils? This will help to ensure pupils will stay in the local area, with a reduced transport requirement, compared with what is being proposed.

- 3.162 Often made in addition to demands for 6th form provision at the new school, several respondents put forward the case for maintaining Welsh medium provision in South Powys. Some comments from pupils at Ysgol y Bannau suggested that teachers at Ysgol y Bannau might be willing to help teach subjects at Brecon High School in Welsh.

Why haven't you considered an 11-18 bilingual transformational school in Brecon?

South Powys (and I mean South Powys!) needs a proper facility for educating its children through the medium of Welsh in their local area. It helps them to keep their identity and join in local activities that supplement their education. I feel the council are flogging a dead horse here. Why not consider a Welsh unit within Gwernyfed to age 16?

Make Brecon Welsh stream, develop a new Welsh and SEN school there - this change should be enough to call it a new school and have the debt written off.

I feel Welsh medium education would be better served by the creation of more Welsh streams in Brecon's catchment primaries, to run in conjunction with the fully immersive Welsh medium education currently on offer at Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon's Welsh medium primary, situated across the road from Brecon High School and in fact opposite the site of the proposed new school. This would achieve the aim of creating a "critical mass" of pupils to go onto secondary education more successfully than the option proposed, which would effectively curtail the growth of the Welsh language in the Brecon area for good.

I think the new Welsh medium stream should be included in the new "super school" being built in Brecon. This way Welsh medium pupils can also benefit from the glossy new environment and the higher standards of teaching you believe will be achieved there. Builth is currently in special measures, is no better than Brecon high, and the only reason they have higher numbers of pupils in the Welsh stream is because PCC scared Brecon based parents into sending their children there by saying the stream was closing in Brecon high. Brecon high school has a Welsh medium primary school directly opposite. Utilise this! Stop spending money transporting pupils to Ystralyfera and Builth. Insist these pupils go to Brecon high. Don't feed pupils from Sennybridge to Ystralyfera, send them to Brecon. Invest the money from transport into some new teachers at Brecon high and you will soon have a thriving Welsh stream again.

Only those who are really passionate about the Welsh language, only those whose first language is Welsh, will send their children to Builth. A lot of parents who currently have children in Ysgol y Bannau will not send their children to the Welsh stream once they reach secondary school age. So it needs to be carefully considered whether the savings made can justify that the Welsh language will slowly die out in this region or whether the provisions should be made here in Brecon up to the age of 16 at least and to then provide a 6th form in Builth, if not possible any other way. Only this way there is hope that more and more people will send their children to the Welsh stream.

Why not have Welsh medium education in both Brecon and Builth, but share the teachers, so that a few teachers spend some days in each school, saving hundreds of thousands of pounds on bussing children around?

Brecon is central and it has been for 40 years [...] teachers from Ysgol Y Bannau will help at Brecon High School.

Brecon was the first Welsh medium centre. Teachers from Ysgol Y Bannau are offering to teach subjects at BHS through the medium of Welsh.

- ^{3.163} One respondent offered an alternative suggestion regarding the management of the proposed new school.

Why involve Gwernyfed High School in your closure plans? By all means build a replacement school in Brecon for Brecon pupils but do not close a successful, thriving, rural school to bail out a failing one. I suggest that the Governing Body of Gwernyfed should be asked to take over as Governing Body of the new Brecon school too, as they have a proven track record of ensuring that a tight rein is kept on the finances to keep within budget, which would avoid Brecon school having to be bailed out yet again!

- ^{3.164} Some proposed different options for where and at what point in the process the new school should be built. Multiple respondents to the primary consultation suggested that a new school site should be situated between Gwernyfed and Brecon.

I feel that the new school build should occur prior to the school merger, so staff and pupils can all move across together rather than wait for an indefinite time.

I have my doubts that running a school on two sites so far apart will be practical. I think the new school should be built in Brecon first, so that all parents in the area can choose if they want to send their children to Brecon. This should help stop the falling numbers at Brecon.

By moving the Brecon Children to an out-of-town campus, their attendance would improve and, supposedly, their education.

Why should it be in Brecon? Why not halfway between the two schools, which would be Talgarth or Bronllys?

- 3.165 Many different combinations of school closures were suggested as an alternative to the Council's proposals. Some suggested the merging or closure of Builth and Brecon, while others wanted investment in Gwernyfed High School instead.

Close Builth and leave Llandod open and offer Welsh for those who want it at these schools. It is unreasonable to expect Llandod catchment to travel to Builth. Close Builth. Obvious.

Close Brecon and demolish site. Invest in and expand Gwernyfed. Bus Brecon pupils to Gwernyfed.

Gwernyfed is a successful school and unique in its character. Why not consider the site at Gwernyfed to expand?

Gwernyfed is functioning. Brecon school is falling apart. Close Brecon 12-15 year department and split the pupils between Gwernyfed and Crickhowell. Replace the buildings for a sixth form college A-level site.

Brecon and Builth should be merged, they're the lower performing schools.

PCC should consider closing Crickhowell school and moving the pupils to an upgraded Brecon school as it was previously. Currently many of the Crickhowell pupils are coming to the school from out of County and do not live in this Council's area. PCC should be considering the needs of pupils living within Powys.

- 3.166 Others suggested other ways that the schools themselves could raise or save money, including tendering out work involving the schools to local or competitive contractors, raising funds by finding alternative uses for existing school buildings, or better advertising the Welsh stream.

Costings need to be made on keeping Gwernyfed open - I understand that it is an old building, but I think the council puts too much emphasis in finding 'one contractor' these days. Money is tight, and there are some brilliant local tradesmen in the surrounding area - why do we not source quotes for competitive rates?

Has the council considered alternative uses for a new school building in Brecon that could enhance its financial viability - e.g. meeting space(s) for government and others (especially public and business partners who might contribute to learning), leisure facilities, evening meeting spaces for community groups - how about even a day care centre as part of the complex for elderly patients that pupils (especially in 16+ groups) could help support - improving social cohesion and empathy and understanding for the whole community?

They should still be able to go to a Welsh school here, in Brecon, but maybe the council can make sure that more children go to the Welsh stream by advertising the school. If more children go to the school, then it's not so expensive to run.

^{3.167} Additionally, there were some calls to make savings elsewhere, either by making cuts to other public services, cuts to salaries and expenses of Council workers, merging the Local Education Authority with other Councils, privatising 'back office' work or lobbying the Welsh Government for additional funding.

Other local authorities have faced similar financial challenges to Powys and have made difficult decisions leading to wholesale cuts to public services, but have recognised that some services (education being one) are fundamentally crucial to the long term economic and social fabric of the county, and have protected funding for those services. Powys must do the same, and make cuts elsewhere to solve its financial problems.

To cut spending in the council to make the necessary changes. Cut expense budgets, drastically reduce paid holidays - council workers going on month long holidays to the Caribbean - who do they think they are rock stars? Cut salaries to what they are actually worth, ensure a 37.5 hour week is actually worked, cut final salary pensions - basically make pay & conditions in the council - especially in the higher echelons in line with other industries - i.e. fair and commercial. Council workers are paid as if they deserve danger money!

Privatise all secretary work and any non-teaching work to save pension. Merge LEA with other councils to save paying for too many big wigs salaries. Don't give teachers fuel allowance to travel to place of work.

If finance is the problem, then I suggest that the Council should lobby the Welsh Assembly Government to increase the amount of money allocated for education; if that is still insufficient, then the Council should persuade the government in Westminster to increase the funds given to Wales - the Barnett formula is outdated and discredited. We citizens, who elect the Councillors, expect a more determined approach based on the needs of the local community, and we expect our wishes to be carried out by the Council - that is why we elect them in the first place.

^{3.168} Throughout the consultation, some respondents suggested that the Council should invest in a new school in Brecon for current pupils of Brecon HS only, and leave Gwernyfed as it is.

I feel that the money would be better spent in building a new school in Brecon and keeping the two schools as they are.

Organisation Responses

3.169 Each response from an organisation typically represents the views of many individuals, and feedback from these organisations has therefore been reported separately in this report.

Overview

3.170 Organisations that responded were informed on the questionnaire that their views may be published, and were asked to provide further details about their organisation, including what the organisation represents, the specific group or department, the area the organisation covers and how the views of members were gathered. Not all organisations supplied this information, but the names of organisations have been included in the report where provided.

3.171 Results for the closed questions have been presented below to provide a contrast between views from organisations and individuals. As it is not appropriate to report percentages where the sample size is so small, responses from organisations have been summarised to provide an outline of their views and feedback, and counts – rather than percentages – of responses to the closed questions of the consultation questionnaire are provided below.

Brecon & Gwernyfed Organisation Responses

3.172 Of the 625 total responses to the main Brecon & Gwernyfed open consultation questionnaire, 6 indicated that they had been submitted on behalf of an organisation.

3.173 2 of 6 organisations agreed that the Council is right to make changes to respond to the identified issues with English medium education.

3.174 In terms of the specific elements of the proposal, 5 organisations responded to the question of establishing a new English medium secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 to replace Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools from August 2017, operating on the two existing sites. All 5 organisations that responded to this question disagreed with this element of the proposal.

3.175 2 of 6 organisations agreed with the proposal to establish a new building for the proposed new secondary school, with an aim to open this in 2019/20, while 4 of 6 disagreed with this proposal.

3.176 Minimising the number of overall pupils requiring school transport by locating the new school building in Brecon was also supported by 2 of 6 organisations, while 4 of 6 organisations disagreed with this location.

3.177 5 of 6 organisations disagreed that all post-16 academic and vocational education should be provided by NPTC Group of Colleges, while 1 organisation gave a neutral answer.

3.178 Regarding Welsh medium education, 1 of the 5 organisations that gave a valid answer to this question agreed that Powys County Council is right to make changes by responding to the issues identified in the consultation document. However, 2 of 5 disagreed that the Council was right to make changes, and a further 2 organisations neither agreed nor disagreed.

3.179 4 organisations responded to the question of consolidating Welsh medium education, and delivering it from a single Welsh medium stream in South/Mid Powys. 1 organisation agreed, while 1 organisation disagreed and 2 organisations gave a neutral response.

- 3.180 The proposal to provide Welsh medium education as part of a Bilingual Category 2B/C (dual-stream) school was agreed with by 2 of 4 organisations, while 2 organisations neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 3.181 Only 3 organisations responded to the proposal to locate the Welsh medium stream at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school (subject to separate consultation) due to its central location and enhanced Welsh medium provision. 1 organisation disagreed with this proposal while the remaining 2 organisations gave neutral responses.
- 3.182 1 of 4 organisations agreed with the proposed increased provision of post-16 subjects via the medium of Welsh, while 1 organisation disagreed with this proposal and 2 neither agreed nor disagreed.

English Medium Education

3.183 Post 16 education

Brecon Town Council recognises the need for a sixth form. Provision should be for ages 11-18. Sixth form provision should be at Brecon High School and not at NPT college.

Brecon Town Council

Brecon / Gwernyfed services need new school in Brecon but it must be 11-18 as college provision is not up to standard on that site. That should be principle in Brecon as it is in rest of Powys. If the 2 schools amalgamate the number would be sufficient for a good sixth form.

School governor / member Powys County Council

3.184 After school clubs/activities

I represent at least 20 adults who play football regularly on a Monday night. Many of us are in our 40's and 50's without this resource many would not be able to continue to be both physically and socially active.

Monday night football, Hay and Clyro

[R]eputable research has proven, time and time again, of the educational, social and emotional value of play, leisure and recreation through after-school and holiday activities for young people, who spend two-thirds of their lives out of school. There is scant reference to this in the consultation document, and therefore, if the proposal to close Gwernyfed is taken forward, because of distance and lack of public transport, young people will effectively be denied these valuable activities after school

Penyrheol Baptist Chapel and stable refurbishment group

In April 2015, as a result of responsibility for the Sports Hall transferring to Gwernyfed High School, the Club actively explored alternative options for facilities should this be necessary. As a result of these enquiries we can confirm that the Club would be forced to fold should the High School close and the sports facilities no longer be available. ...[T]he Brecon venue was not available on any weekday evenings and is prohibitively expensive making it unaffordable to many Club members which would again cause the Club to close.

Brecon Volleyball Club.

Welsh Medium Education

3.185 Welsh medium provision in South Powys.

Brecon High School should offer full Welsh medium provision in order to nurture and enhance the Welsh language and culture in the community.

Brecon Town Council

The biggest cohort of Welsh speaking community in south Powys is Brecon - Cray - Trecastle - Sennybridge area, not Builth. Pupils living in Cray or Trecastle would have to travel 31 miles to Builth to receive Welsh medium education.

School governor / member Powys County Council

Equalities

3.186 Welsh language

Welsh language act. Now local authorities have a duty to have policies in place and provide services accordingly to choice of language. I am sure Powys would not be fulfilling that responsibility if pupils have to travel 2 (31 miles) to access Welsh medium education.

School governor / member Powys County Council

The closure of Gwernyfed will have a detrimental effect upon the Welsh Language as many parents have indicated that they will send their children to England for their education.

Hay Castle Trust

3.187 Impacts on community

It will also mean that we find it difficult to attract skilled workers and young families to the area.

Hay Castle Trust

Further Comments

Brecon Town Council recognises the urgent need for the development of modern, fit-for-purpose secondary educational facilities in Brecon to serve the town and its young people, and calls on Powys County Council to do all it can to access the opportunities available under the Welsh Government's Twenty First Century Schools Programme.

Brecon Town Council

Interesting Comments

Smaller, local community schools are the way forward in this rural economy. Creating a framework where schools have to have a minimum of 600 pupils seems ridiculous as well as a false economy. Economic models created to deal with urban situations should not be applied to rural areas. These models are destructive and suffer from short term economic vision. We are also concerned that the closure of Gwernyfed School will have a severe negative impact upon the growth and encouragement of Welsh learners in the area.

Hay Castle Trust

4. Governors Meetings

Main issues and themes from the Governors meetings

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 4.1 The governors meetings were held on Monday 18th April 2016 (Gwernyfed) and Wednesday 27th April 2016 (Brecon) at the respective high schools. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers. 24 governors attended the two sessions; 10 at Brecon and 14 at Gwernyfed.
- 4.2 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the governors meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.

Main Themes Raised at the Governors Meetings

Quality of Education

- 4.3 Governors at both meetings felt aggrieved that the consultation document fails to acknowledge the positive improvement trajectory of their schools in terms of both educational standards and leadership:

There has been no recognition of the progress the school has made. It could be perceived to be deliberate; almost to put the school down... (Brecon Governors)

It's a school that has a head now that everyone supports. We're in a very different position... (Brecon Governors)

On the basis of improving standards you would agree that the Fisher Family Trust's figures have us as the eighth most improved school in Wales. (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.4 Indeed, those at Gwernyfed were particularly keen to understand PCC's concerns in relation to educational and leadership standards:

One of the particular points drawn out in the Estyn revisit is the strong progress that's been made by the school to improve the consistency of middle leadership...the restructuring of the middle leadership team has led to well defined roles and responsibilities, opportunities for professional development ...the middle leadership of this school is strong and increasing in strength. So I have to ask, therefore, 'what's wrong with the leadership team as it stands in this school at the moment?' We've picked up and we've got the leadership that will drive us forward into the future... (Gwernyfed Governors)

I was concerned that this document is overall predicated on the changes that it is proposing to our high school on the need to improve learning and educational outcomes and I was interested to find out what the Cabinet felt were the reasons for it (Gwernyfed Governors)

This school is quite clearly on an improving journey...we are trying to understand the concerns that you at the Council have about the areas where we are obviously not coming up to expectations. (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.5 Moreover, many took offence at what they saw as an implicit assumption in the document that teaching quality needs to improve - and there was some scepticism that this would indeed happen within a larger school, or at least that it would not happen in Gwernyfed's case given it has recently been outperforming Brecon:

You talk in the document the Shadow Governing Body being expected to appoint high quality teaching and support staff to be able to supply an excellent learning experience. Could you explain to us then any concerns you may have about the quality of teaching here with the staff that we have in Gwernyfed? The implication is that by saying you will be appointing high quality teaching and support staff is that you haven't got them at the moment... (Gwernyfed Governors)

What we're trying to establish...is that the implication that comes through the documentation is that current standards in learning outcomes and in teaching are not how they ought to be...we would be keen to understand the areas in which we have fallen short in managing the quality of teaching. We think, and we've had some Estyn reports, and a county council core visit report that indicate that the level of teaching is good. But clearly it isn't because if it were then you wouldn't want to improve it or you wouldn't be putting forward such drastic proposals (Gwernyfed Governors)

You are talking about improving standards and quality of teaching and about linking that directly with pupil numbers...how can you guarantee that the quality of teaching and experience for the Gwernyfed pupils will be better than it is now? It is important to prove that our pupils benefit as well as the Brecon pupils (Gwernyfed Governors)

You talked about distributed merit and making the best of the resources but we're looking at a situation where we're going into a larger school. Now that distribution could, you'll be arguing, mean the quality coming towards this school...increased expertise will be coming in this direction. However, the implication is also clearly where this school has been performing higher than the other half of the equation, then that quality would be being exported. Now, do you see any situation in which the process of exporting the quality available in this school might impact negatively on the learning experience of the pupils here? (Gwernyfed Governors)

Finance and Funding

- 4.6 The Gwernyfed Governors were keen to understand PCC's concerns about the financial management of their school given it is currently in surplus:

We are managing our finances...so what concerns do you have about the financial management of Gwernyfed? I would suggest that if you look at the finances and the standards and staff improvement and retention, that despite falling pupil rolls and the financial climate for this school, we have continued to deliver on the loan measure and on staff improvement. In this document you record that in 2019/20 whilst we will have a very small surplus; Brecon will have a deficit of nearly £1.9 million. So looking at how this school is managed financially, you have no concerns about the management of this school? (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.7 They also sought clarity around how funding arrangements for both schools would be organised if the proposals are approved - especially in the context of how school budgets are presently managed and ongoing concerns around the implications of the historical debt burden at Brecon:

I understand that the debt burden will be wiped clean...the cost base in Brecon would not be worked out which means that going forward to the new phoenix school would have one campus already

poised to run a balanced budget and another half of the school not in that position. Now do you recognise that there may be impact? Obviously that new school would instantly be required to make savings because its cost base would be inherited (Gwernyfed Governors)

Brecon High School has got a deficit budget and loan. Will all the high school's finances and arrangements be wiped clean when it closes or will anything be carried forward? What will happen with that loan position? (Gwernyfed Governors)

There was particular concern around what the Governors termed 'parity of educational opportunity'. They worried that Brecon's resources would be significantly higher than Gwernyfed's under any new arrangement because of historical circumstances whereby the former has 'lived outside its means' to maintain a larger staffing structure, whereas the former has made reductions to ensure a balanced budget:

One school on two sites and you have to allow a parity of educational opportunity...you will have one school that has a pared back staffing structure to allow a balanced budget, and Brecon are operating with a larger budget which will be ring-fenced - is that parity? (Gwernyfed Governors)

If you're delivering both key stages on both sites and you have to deliver a parity of educational opportunity and the students in this school are working with a teaching staff that have been pared back to balance the budget and Brecon is operating with a generously funded teaching body which is all ring-fenced, will there be parity of educational opportunities? (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.8 Concerns around the capital funding being spent on developing NPTC facilities at Brecon were prevalent at the Brecon meeting:

The document says the estimated cost of a new school building is approximately £20 million. The paragraph below for the beacon school campus project is approximately £44 million. So what are we spending the £24 million on that's not to do with the schools? So the college benefits from a £24 million of benefit and the school gets £20 million! (Brecon Governors)

If you're going to spend £24 million on a college with 150 pupils, it's an awful lot of money per pupil isn't it? How many vocational students would you expect to have? (Brecon Governors)

Governance and Staffing of a New School

- 4.9 Governors at Gwernyfed were keen to understand the relationship between PCC, the Shadow Governing Body and Senior Management Team in implementing any possible changes - and stressed that the former should maintain an advisory role and not seek to involve itself in the day-to-day running of the school:

From a professional point of view there's a concern in the document that the roles are getting very mixed. My understanding is that Powys County Council is there to support and advise the Governing Body and the head teacher in the decision-making process...the shadow governing body will make the decisions in line with the new head teacher about what subjects are offered and where staff will be based. There's a little bit of a mist in that document. It's the clear definition of roles which isn't there at the moment...there's a strategic day-to-day running of the school and we've got to clear that up I think (Gwernyfed Governors)

You're going to have a new top leadership team; you can't define how that team will be led... (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.10 They were also concerned about maintaining standards during the transitional period, the potential for staff redundancies and the process for making any redundancies should they be necessary:

You don't evidence; it's aspirational and it's vague. I don't see how you can guarantee us that as the leadership team struggles to find its feet that the quality and drive and standards that we are producing here will be produced across two sites in the first instance by a new team who will be working out how to make two sites in a new school - unpopular in the community - work (Gwernyfed Governors)

Can you confirm whether jobs would be ring-fenced for the staff in the two schools? (Gwernyfed Governors)

If there are compulsory redundancies within the new structure...would the redundancy come back to the Council in both phases or will it come back to the Governing Body? (Gwernyfed Governors)

Pupil Impacts

- 4.11 Gwernyfed Governors suggested that one of the most tangible impacts of the proposals for their school's pupils will be the unequal opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities at the Brecon campus due to transport difficulties – an inequality that will be most keenly felt by the most disadvantaged families:

There are some sacrifices that become impossible when a journey ceases to be an additional six miles...to a twenty mile round trip. That impacts on very many things (Gwernyfed Governors)

As soon as you ask parents from here to be picking up from after-school activities in Brecon you begin to discriminate against those who either can't afford the time or the fuel to make that journey. There's no further discrimination other than the basic rule of poverty against the parents in Brecon. The situation does not change for them. But the situation changes significantly for numbers of parents and children (from Gwernyfed) and you acknowledge that in this document. You suggest that will be made up by doing everything at lunchtime but children have to eat and have to relax and they can't spend every lunchtime and they can't fit it all into an hour either. So why do you choose to discriminate against some pupils and particularly the poorer pupils and families? (Gwernyfed Governors)

You refer in your SWOT analysis to this new school being an opportunity to develop an inclusive educational model meeting the needs of vulnerable learners. In 2013 Estyn did their full inspection and judged that all pupils at Gwernyfed had equal access to the curriculum and to all aspects of school life irrespective of ability. In the document you also indicate that there would be a disadvantage to Gwernyfed pupils in accessing particularly after-school activities (Gwernyfed Governors)

Whilst I reflect on the desirability of social, artistic, sporting out of school activities, my family's experiences have been central to their academic achievements. My daughter's attendance at the art club contributed to her A result at GCSE. Her attendance at mathematics vision club contributed essentially to her achievement of a grade C at GCSE. My belief in the essential nature of after-school activities...it's about achieving their potential academically. You may believe it's only another four miles but if you are reliant on the school bus this is irrelevant. You can't stay. That is bound to be discriminatory...exclusively against the economically disadvantaged parents in this catchment. (Gwernyfed Governors)*

- 4.12 Governors at Brecon raised the threat of losing the best teachers if A-levels are removed, which would then impact upon the quality of teaching and support available to all pupils:

There is a definite worry that we will lose some of our best teachers because they like teaching at A-Level... So the under-16 provision would not be as high as it is (Brecon Governors)

Are you potentially going to lose some of the best teachers or not be able to retain the teachers? (Brecon Governors)

- 4.13 They also noted the excellent example sixth form students set to younger pupils - and that pupil support (both educational and pastoral) is generally far superior when provided by teachers with knowledge of those they have educated for many years:

You also lose the culture of younger children learning from older children being role models and mentoring the younger ones. It would be a total disaster if we lose the sixth form... (Brecon Governors)

Its knowledge of your pupils isn't it? If you have a through line, you know their strengths and weaknesses and you know them all the way through the school so when they get to choose their subjects at A-level you know which pupils are going to do well in your subject. And you can support them. I have nothing against a sixth form college, but the ones that are best that I've come across are ones that are a building; they're part of a community. And that's what we're talking about isn't it? Schools are not just there to turn out grades and people pass...they are part of a greater community but they're also a community in themselves. And the sixth forms provide that cohesion for that community. They are a hugely important part of a school. (Brecon Governors)

Post-16 Education

- 4.14 The main argument put forward by both sets of governors is that the proposals discriminate against Brecon and Gwernyfed learners by removing parental/learner choice at post-16 level. It was frequently said that, if the proposal is approved, BHS and GHS pupils alone in Powys will lose the choice between sixth form and tertiary education - and indeed the ability to 'mix and match' their subjects. This is particularly important in the context of the apparent value placed on the sixth form system in the area and the fact that tertiary education may not suit all pupils, some of whom value the structure of a sixth form:

I'm interested to know why you think you will be able to get away with discriminating against some of the learners when aspiring to an inclusive education model (Gwernyfed Governors)

Brecon is being relegated to a localised post-16 black hole, when Crickhowell's sixth form is presumably expanding; Builth is retaining its sixth form... (Brecon Governors)

I'm not suggesting that a college option isn't an option but it should be one of a mixed economy as it is currently rather than the only option. It would be different if you were suggesting that's what you're going to offer to Builth, Llandrindod, Crickhowell and Ystradgynlais - and, indeed, Montgomeryshire too. Because currently you are limiting the choices, the options to just two groups of learners (Gwernyfed Governors)

Why are you prepared as a Council to bring forward a proposal that deliberately discriminates against post-16 learning pupils within the catchment areas of Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools by withdrawing from them, alone in the whole of the County, the option of taking their A-Levels in a school environment? (Gwernyfed Governors)

Regardless of the relative merits of tertiary versus sixth form, the overwhelming opinion of parents in this area is that they value the sixth form system; they see it as an absolute asset. It's not what the parents of this area or the pupils actually want... (Brecon Governors)

There is a real worry about removing the choice for our pupils regarding sixth form provision. If you remove it the ability to mix and match disappears... The pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed will lose the choice that Builth pupils will retain; that Crickhowell pupils will retain. For me that choice is really important because one of the outcomes here is about retaining learners within Powys and not losing them over-the-border. And I don't think this model is going to achieve that because pupils are saying to us they would prefer to go to Hereford, Merthyr or Abergavenny. They didn't want to go down to NPTC and if that was their only choice ... We've been prepared to mix and match and I can't see why that model can't continue into the future... (Brecon Governors)

It's not just a question of choice in terms of number of subjects. It's also about the type of provision. A tertiary college doesn't suit all pupils. Some of our young people when they reach sixth form are not ready for the more independent style of learning and would rather stay in a school environment. We won't have that choice if we lose (the sixth form). (Brecon Governors)

- 4.15 Many concerns were raised around the perceived poor quality of NPTC's post-16 provision - as well as the College's capacity to offer as many subjects as stated, deliver courses from beginning to end and offer adequate pastoral support to pupils:

The fact remains that there is a big quality assurance mark hanging over our local tertiary college provision in this area. Whether it's earned or not there is a problem with perception in this area regarding post-16 provision... (Brecon Governors)

What happens if NPTC say 'we've taken the hit for too long and we're out of here' - do you have any assurances from NPTC that they will be here forever? (Gwernyfed Governors)

I wonder whether anyone can guarantee that there will be the breadth of subjects on offer? And will there be staff here not only to deliver the course from beginning to end but also to offer support. Or will they be coming in on the bus from Neath Port Talbot to deliver the lectures and then buzzing off somewhere else? (Brecon Governors)

Indeed, there was significant worry that, should NPTC fail to retain enough students on particular courses (or lose the staff members delivering them), those remaining would have to travel to Neath to continue their education - which would again be potentially difficult for disadvantaged families and those living in very rural areas:

If you don't get the numbers for some of the options... then the pupils will have to go down to Neath Port Talbot. Some will be able to do that, because they'll be supported but here again we are in potential discrimination territory because there will be families who cannot afford a student being able to (travel). There has been one instance I'm aware of where a course has been withdrawn in Brecon and the students have been told they have to go to Neath (Gwernyfed Governors)

I'm fully supportive of the Brecon campus. I went there as a girl so I am really proud of the college in Brecon but I've got really grave concerns about delivering the number of A-Levels at that campus. I don't believe there are any biology and chemistry labs; that's just one example. We're talking about mechanics, builders, hairdressers, cooks etc. I know that campus and where are you going to put all the bodies? I would like to see expansion for that type of education in our area. I'd like to see electricians and plumbers...but I have concerns with the proposal that if we're not running the A-

Levels that are appropriate and if students end up having to go down to Neath, how are they actually going to get there? Are we going to pay for people to go on the bus down to Neath? Because my children can't get there from my village on public transport because we haven't got any (Gwernyfed Governors)

I live in an area with no public transport and I want to know that if the children from my ward have to end up going to somewhere else like Neath, to obtain their A levels will their transport be paid for by Powys County Council as it is at present to go to the Brecon campus? It's important to know that the people from my area won't end up in rural deprivation because a decision has been taken by PCC. (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.16 The suggested implication of these concerns is that Powys learners will be lost to other Welsh counties or to England because of their reluctance to entrust their post-16 education to NPTC:

You are convinced that NPTC will attract, from the start, 150 post-16 learners? Learners said they won't choose it. Out of 117 pupils (Year 10) polled across both Brecon and Gwernyfed last year, 27 students would choose to access Brecon, 70 in Hereford and a small minority would choose not go into post-16 education at all as they would not feel confident in doing so outside the school environment. What happens if NPTC say 'we've taken the hit for too long and we're out of here' - do you have any assurances from NPTC that they will be here forever? (Gwernyfed Governors)

- 4.17 Finally in terms of post-16 education, Governors in both areas suggested that replacing the current successful and well-regarded South Powys consortium model with an untested provider is a risk to pupils' education:

You want to change the system for Brecon and Gwernyfed and so you are clearly of the opinion that what is currently being delivered post-16 in Gwernyfed is not working. Are you aware that every student in Gwernyfed last year and for at least the previous three years went to their first choice university without going through clearing? I think that works. And in the consortium, the pupils have the choices they want (Gwernyfed Governors)

In the context of the South Powys consortium they are providing the range and number of A-Levels required...have you asked the pupils what they think of that, because we have and they say it enhances their learning experience. So they don't see it as a problem... (Gwernyfed Governors)

Welsh Medium Education

- 4.18 Brecon Governors were angry that PCC has not developed a long-term vision to support the development of Welsh medium education in their area - and argued that the proposals will negatively impact on the likelihood of local parents choosing Welsh medium education in the future, thus in turn impacting on the future sustainability of primary feeder schools such as Ysgol Y Bannau:

A number of pupils in Year 8 last year didn't want to move to Builth so they moved into the English stream (Brecon Governors)

It might lead to slightly more sustainability but my worry is that there are no plans in terms of being able to grow the Welsh medium provision. And related to this is the real risks that parents will decide, actually I'm not prepared for my child to travel, and are they then going to leave and go back to the English medium and that goes back to the point, well what's the point of going into Welsh medium in the first place? This poses a risk for Ysgol y Bannau... Why is it there's been no

thought about increasing the Welsh medium provision in this area to make it more sustainable? We haven't had a hope have we? (Brecon Governors)

Brecon High School hasn't had a hope in the last few years because of the numbers in Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge... (Brecon Governors)

We are going to lose people going into the Welsh medium education because of these proposals, which I'm sure you don't intend (Brecon Governors)

[Parents] may not [choose Ysgol y Bannau] if they're not going to get the continued benefits of an ongoing Welsh education. If they live in Llanfaes they might say 'I'll send them to Llanfaes then'. (Brecon Governors)

- 4.19 Furthermore, they suggested that the proposals will do nothing to stop the flow of local pupils accessing Welsh medium education out-of-county (at Ystalyfera in Neath Port Talbot for example), and that this can only be arrested through the provision of quality education through the medium of Welsh at BHS - or, for some, through the provision of a Welsh medium secondary school to serve mid and South Powys:

I represent the Sennybridge area, which is a feeder school for this school and the Welsh medium stream there is doing well and is consistently around 38 to 40 children... I was the one who got transport to Ystalyfera about eight years ago and it was the right and proper thing to do at that time because this school wasn't providing sufficient subjects. Now since that time, as far as I'm aware, parents of Welsh medium pupils in secondary school have never been consulted as to where they want to go. At the moment there are about 30 pupils from Sennybridge and one or two from Ysgol y Bannau going down to Ystalyfera. It concerns me that are we going to continue to insist, through lack of consultation, that the children have to travel down to Ystalyfera? And some of the parents have sent emails to me loud and clear that they would prefer to educate their children through the medium of Welsh here in Brecon...it's leaching money out of the county and also massive transport bills. Where are we going to go from that? Are we going to continue forever and a day down that line or are we going to say enough is enough, we've got to support education in the County? (Brecon Governors)

- 4.20 As a result of these two factors and low pupil numbers in general, the Governors questioned the assumption in the consultation document around creating a critical mass and increased Welsh medium offer at Builth Wells High School:

How many more pupils do you think there are going to be going through Ysgol y Bannau per academic year? What does ten pupils per year translate to in terms of increasing the breadth of Welsh medium education at Builth Wells High School? (Brecon Governors)

The consultation document states that KS4 will increase in breadth and as a consequence also the KS5... If the council thinks this is going to lead to increased provision, it's not. The reality is the number of pupils who want to study in the Welsh medium already have the opportunity to go to Builth Wells (Brecon Governors)

How many A-levels are being provided at year 12 this September in Builth Wells High School? I know the answer and it's two. And both of those courses are being run back-to-back...year 12 and year 13 are going to be in the same lesson... I also know that they are going to add a third. They're going to put Cymraeg in. How are the numbers going to allow for any kind of increase when it's so small now? (Brecon Governors)

- 4.21 The Governors also complained about the tenor of the consultation document, arguing strongly against the insinuation that the standard of Welsh medium education at Brecon is comparatively poor. Moreover, they suggested that if the Welsh stream at Brecon could be maintained and expanded to include only a few more subjects, local parents (including those from Sennybridge) would be happy to send their children there for reasons of convenience and that quality is better than quantity:

I'm concerned that the tenor of the document is that the standard of Welsh medium education here is not as good; that we're not able to provide the number of subjects - because we haven't got the number of children - as what would be provided in Builth. That is quite insulting to our very good Welsh medium teachers. We may not be able to provide subjects across the board but we have been trying to develop [and] a lot of parents have made it quite clear that they were happy with the quality and the quantity wasn't so important and if we could provide a number of subjects through the medium of Welsh they would be more than happy...rather than sending their children to Builth. It sounds like it will be counter-productive...it's not going to be the critical mass that you had hoped for. I can see that on paper it looks like a good idea but in reality it's not what the parents and pupils themselves want. So in the end if we have two smaller units and we can persuade children to come from Sennybridge and if we get some certainty, then the parents will decide to come over the road to the High School. That's why a lot of them went there in the first place because it sorts out their logistics. The school is next door; they don't have to rethink everything when they reach age 11. They've taken that decision... Some of the best students have come from the Welsh medium...we've had some really high achievers from the Welsh stream. If we could maintain our stream I do believe we could build it up again. What we need is certainty, which we haven't had over the past few years (Brecon Governors)

Through default because they haven't been offered sufficient facilities for Welsh education closer to home [parents] have no alternative but to go to Ystalyfera. And now the current parents, whose children have done extremely well in primary education in Sennybridge School, are concerned that their children have to go to Ystalyfera. It's an urban school so the after-school activities have very little in common with the children from the rural areas that I represent and they are concerned about that as well. (Brecon Governors)

Consultation Process

- 4.22 The Brecon Governors voiced concern about PCC's apparently insufficiently transparent decision-making processes and lack of external scrutiny - and said that the Council's Cabinet would be going against the will of the local population if it endorses the proposals in their current form:

Who judges whether the things that are put in place are sufficient to mitigate the impact...I have a concern about the lack of external scrutiny... (Gwernyfed Governors)

I think the whole premise of this consultation top trumps choice over locality...that's what you're trying to convince everybody of. I've watched all the consultation meetings and I'm yet to have any proof that it's actually what the people of Powys want. It's what YOU want... It's a convincing argument on paper perhaps but I'm not convinced that there's any proof that it's actually what the people want (Brecon Governors)

You had a primary school in Beguildy and all the farmers came out on their tractors to protest about the closure of the school and it didn't seem to make any difference what the local people did. There were 350 people affected by the closure and after closure people were left with a village at the end of a road and pupils were spread in all different directions. And the saving to the Council was only

£65,000. And then like the John Beddoes school which has been in special measures for a while; they went up to the town hall to protest and the decision was taken to get rid of the school. Will all the consultation have a bearing on the decision? What worries me is the option of doing nothing - we leave the kids in a school that's falling to pieces? (Brecon Governors)

- 4.23 There was also concern that the Council has failed to take previous feedback and inputs into account when formulating its proposals:

We had a consultation on Welsh medium education last year, we submitted our views and nothing has really changed on that but you still brought a consultation document ignoring all our views. We asked us for our vision last November; we submitted our vision and you didn't take anything of that on board either. And we did put some serious input into it at the same time as improving standards. What [name] said was that 'at the end of the day we've got to save money and there's not enough money' and so I'm just concerned that whatever we do, say or submit the Authority has already made a decision based on cost. I am really disappointed that all the submissions we've put in to date - about Welsh Medium education and our vision for the future - have been totally ignored. And from that it smells that you've got pre-conceived ideas because you didn't take anything on board when you wrote that document. (Brecon Governors)

- 4.24 Some wanted to know how PCC has evaluated and weighted the potential impacts of the proposals on communities, what mitigations have been considered and why some alternative options (such as a through school model for Brecon) have been discarded when, in the view of Governors', they are perfectly workable:

In considering the impact of this, presumably the Council will look at whether you can't mitigate against that impact. Therefore, would you be making an alternative proposal? Are you ruling out the possibility that should the impact be such that you can't mitigate against it would you consider an alternative option? (Gwernyfed Governors)

What about weighting? If an impact is going to be significant - and this document mentions the significant impact on the communities of this area - now that seems to me to be pretty significant particularly as you're interested in strong communities. Does that have greater weight than the benefit of saving £300k per year? Perhaps think about and let us have some answers on some weighting issues because not everything is equal... (Gwernyfed Governors)

You said it yourself in the documentation; that option AB which is a through school model has its benefits in transition between primary and secondary...but it was discounted. Well in my previous school, I was working with 13 primary schools alone and the one before that which was 750 11-16 pupils we were dealing with 20 primary schools. It's a totally do-able option as far as I'm concerned (Gwernyfed Governors)

What about the through school model? The Governing Body here has put a proposal together. Why can't that be considered both for the Gwernyfed area and the Brecon area? You could easily have a joint sixth form provision with Gwernyfed and Brecon and continue to work with NPTC to continue to give that choice... (Brecon Governors)

Projections, Facts and Figures

- 4.25 The Brecon Governors raised a number of objections to specific evidence and assumptions in the consultation document underpinning the case for change, particularly in relation to: the difference between offer and take-up of Welsh medium subjects; the omission of an 'up-to-date assessment of the

progress the high school has been making'; outdated figures on BHS's financial situation; and the apparently misleading insinuation that the school fails to offer post-16 Welsh medium education (when it was agreed this provision, post 16, would be provided at Builth Wells as part of the South Powys Consortium):

Can I just point out that some of the statistics like when they say the number of Welsh medium subjects in year 10 and 11 in Brecon High School - that is not what's offered, that's the take-up because pupils may be choosing other things. It doesn't mean to say we are only offering two, that doesn't come through (Brecon Governors)

I want to talk about an omission...about an up-to-date assessment of the progress the high school has been making. The latest formal assessment for Gwernyfed is very up to date but the latest for ours is for 2012 (Brecon Governors)

You've been happy in this document to include the figures to show where we're currently at which... just continue to show that it is not sustainable. It would have been handy to show the figures that we're actually at (Brecon Governors)

I need to state that in this consultation document the intonation is that Brecon High School has failed in some way to offer any Welsh medium post-16. We haven't failed to do that. We are part of a South Powys consortium and it was agreed that this provision...would be provided at Builth Wells. (Brecon Governors)

Figure 18: Other Issues and Sub-Themes from the Governors Meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Reduced funding per pupil in new proposed school	<i>I question why the funding per pupil is going down by so much in the new school? (Brecon Governors)</i>
Finding additional funding to expand A-level provision	<i>There's been a commitment by the local authority to put EIG to provide additional A-level provision in South Powys and in North Powys so why can't there be a commitment to do that into the future? Yes, the money could shrink but there is an opportunity there to be funding additional A-level courses. (Brecon Governors)</i>
Clarity around arrangements for developing the learning campus	<i>Whose grounds will the college be built on? Is the Authority giving away ground to NPTC? (Brecon Governors)</i>
Proposals will not deliver the 'super school' that was promised	<i>I don't think we're getting a 'super' school in any sense. It feels like this proposal is a pared down version of the original proposal of about four years ago. It will obviously be a smaller site than the original proposal which has implications for facilities and for how the school is going to be run will grow and what you can put in it.... (Brecon Governors)</i>
Lack of faith in the democratic process	<i>Cabinet isn't all the Council. It would appear not to be democratic; only nine people in it? (Brecon Governors)</i>
Possible need for staff to travel between school sites	<i>It's the rurality of the situation you don't seem to understand...we are a fair distance from anywhere. You can have members of staff who will be spending three quarters of their time in vehicles... (Gwernyfed Governors)</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
Evidence of success at A-level on the Brecon campus	<i>The statistics we've had pertain to the whole of Neath Port Talbot and not to across the road...local parents are only interested in the results that come from across the road. (Brecon Governors)</i>
Tertiary system is an urban not rural solution	<i>It (tertiary college sixth form provision) probably works very well in an urban area but we're not living in an urban area, we're living in a rural area. (Brecon Governors)</i>
Investment in welsh language skills for primary staff contrary to centralising plans that limit local transitions into Welsh medium education	<i>I was talking to a teacher in one of the local primary schools who had been on a Welsh course... She was there with other teachers from the Brecon cluster group so they could go back into their primary schools to promote the Welsh language... So there's a lot of time and effort being put into these teachers being brought up to speed...But for that to actually work and carry on that's an opportunity for those schools to have small Welsh streams. You have those teachers with the expertise and the follow on is they would want those children to go onto secondary level and that's not happening. It's a golden opportunity for something to be done to encourage the growth of Welsh medium education in this area. It's all going to die a death at the end of primary school. (Brecon Governors)</i>

5. Staff Meetings

Main issues and themes from the Staff meetings

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 5.1 The staff meetings were held on Tuesday 19th April 2016 (Brecon) and Wednesday 20th April 2016 (Gwernyfed) at the respective high schools. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers. Most, if not all, staff members from each school attended the two sessions.
- 5.2 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the staff meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.

Main Themes Raised at Staff Meetings

Quality of Education

- 5.3 Participants at both meetings were unconvinced that reorganisation alone improves educational standards:

I'm yet to understand how school reorganisation will impact on standards. I've been involved with schools for a long time and it ain't buildings that change schools, it's the people that work within them. It's the work you do to develop teaching and learning and nothing in this document explains to me how new buildings and organisation of the two schools is going to have an impact on standards. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.4 Moreover, neither set of staff felt that their schools' current improvement trajectories are sufficiently recognised in the consultation document:

You rightly acknowledge in the consultation document about Gwernyfed having come out of Estyn monitoring, You make no mention of the progress this school has made and that has been acknowledged by Estyn in regard to its movement towards coming out of special measures... (Brecon Staff)

We know how to improve; we have the right support in place. 53% of schools in Wales are in Estyn monitoring, and we're not any longer. National literacy tests are good, first or second quarter, Key Stages 3 and 4 have been in first quarter. My question is, what is your problem with the standards at this school? (Gwernyfed Staff)

- 5.5 Furthermore, in their view, the consultation documentation unfairly suggests a connection between poor educational outcomes and the quality of the present teaching staff - and does not recognise the role PCC has allegedly played in falling educational standards across Powys as a whole, especially with respect to lack of support for schools:

In your consultation questionnaire it says the reasons for the proposals. Point 2 it says 'Shadow Governing Body would employ high quality staff' etc.... It suggests that doesn't currently exist (Gwernyfed Staff)

You started your presentation by stating that three out of four schools in Powys are in special measures and yet you've just told me that you want to appoint high quality teaching staff and that jobs will be ring-fenced. I don't understand the connection (Brecon Staff)

Since 2011, Powys has had the highest number of schools, including primary, in special measures and don't you think you have to take some culpability instead of passing the blame to schools... What are YOU going to do? (Brecon Staff)

The top table keeps on about support, support, support. I haven't seen it. PCC has not given any support to this school or the teachers... (Brecon Staff)

Transport and Travel

- 5.6 Participants were keen to see the possible financial, logistical and time-related impact of teacher travel between sites factored into the current proposals - as well as a recognition that such an increase in travel will have on staff stress levels (and thus sickness levels):

You're talking about an impact on staff, and then subsequently on standards. My husband teaches in Rhondda, where three schools were closed and turned into one...standards dropped, staff sickness and stress increased and that was just in one town. Staff were having to travel in their break; there was no detention... What you're proposing - one school split site - that's going to happen in just over one academic year. So I would imagine the split site will be for two, three, four, five years of working conditions where you're going to have to bus students or staff up and down. Who is going to cover break and lunch? Who is going to cover the cost of the bussing students or staff? If staff are giving up break and lunch, they're going to have to get back time. Where are meetings going to be held? Where are we going to meet parents? (Gwernyfed Staff)

Finance and Funding

- 5.7 Participants at Brecon argued that the school's current financial situation has been caused by systematic failures and historical mismanagement by PCC - and in some part by the uncertainty raised by the ongoing consultation process around BHS's future - and should not reflect badly on its current staff and leadership:

We all know that historically PCC went against its own guidelines for school budgets and allowed the school to become heavily in debt when they shouldn't have done and the school still carries and has to pay back the loan for things which certainly the pupils and certainly the staff are not responsible for...if you could acknowledge the fact that some of the problems in the information that is being presented as reasons for closing this school is a presentation of facts for which the County Council are themselves responsible? (Brecon Staff)

How confident are you that these budgets are right and do you acknowledge that the actions over the last few years have contributed to those problems? Do you acknowledge the fact that losing children as a result of the consultation process that started last year and then was stopped resulted caused students to leave this school and has caused significant financial hardship to this school? I'd like to know what Powys County Council have put in place to support Brecon High School in the loss

of the students in the Welsh Medium...I would like someone to make comment on the fact that we lost 30 students as a result of the consultation process. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.8 Furthermore, they questioned whether the Council is reflecting the current picture at Brecon by using outdated financial figures in its consultation document – and complained about a lack of support for a head teacher who is attempting to move the school in the right direction in a financial sense:

Budgets are fluid and things have changed since publishing (the consultation document). They seem to change very quickly and therefore presenting this information as a snapshot without that information also being published alongside doesn't seem very fair... (Brecon Staff)

I feel we've got a head teacher who is taking the reins of the school and moving the school forward... We've had challenging financial problems that have led to a lot of difficulties... It hasn't been easy...the funding isn't there so it's a spiral really. We have a very good head teacher who is trying to move us out of special measures but isn't getting the support from Powys. From a financial position his hands are tied. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.9 It was also said that the projected financial savings are not sufficient to compensate for the 'chaos' the proposals will cause if implemented:

This split site thing that will last in your model for a very short period of time, the financial savings are not worth the chaos you will get, even if we all stay and don't run to the hills. For a minimal saving in the grand scheme of things, is it worth it? (Gwernyfed Staff)

Buildings and Estates

- 5.10 Staff at both meetings suggested that Powys should look again at the feasibility of keeping both current school sites by considering alternative options (such as an all-through school for Brecon):

Instead of throwing the baby out with the bathwater, why don't we invest in what we've got? It's obvious that we need a new school but I was handing out the consultation documents to my pupils the other day and no way do they want to lose Brecon High School. There are opportunities to look at different options but it seems to me as if the decision has been made and that worries me... (Brecon Staff)

In terms of alternatives, has the option of 3-18 year schools been seriously considered on both sites? I worked in the English system ... and this has proven to be very successful and a sound financial option. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.11 There was also a great deal of scepticism around the reasons for the proposals: Gwernyfed staff in particular suggested that they are driven by the need to secure Welsh Government capital funding streams for a new building in Brecon and not by a need to develop better educational standards and outcomes for pupils:

Can you confirm that the reason you wish to close the high school is not because of the standard of education, but to secure funding from the Welsh Assembly Government for a new high school in Brecon? (Gwernyfed Staff)

Governance and Staffing of a New School

- 5.12 Gwernyfed staff principally underlined the challenge they believe a new Shadow Governing Body (when formed) will face in implementing a new school entity in an 'unachievable' timeframe, particularly with respect to developing timetables and negotiating contracts:

The whole timeline is just absolutely, completely unrealistic and what that gets people to believe is that it's totally driven by financial need. It's just completely unachievable...four months to sort out 100 contracts over the two schools? Really? (Gwernyfed Staff)

Here we have five maths teachers. The complexities of putting a second timetable together in the interim...we have seven or eight Welsh staff that aren't full-time equivalents. There are specialist staff on .6 .8 or .4. It's not ambitious; it's totally unachievable. (Gwernyfed Staff)

- 5.13 Furthermore, Gwernyfed were keen to understand the relationship between PCC, the Shadow Governing Body and Senior Management Team in implementing any possible changes - and stressed that the former should not seek to involve itself in the day-to-day running of the school:

What are the roles of the County Council and the Shadow Governing Body who then appoint the head teacher? It's not the position of the Council to say you will teach Key Stage 3 and 4 on both sites etc. It is up to the Shadow Governing Body and the head teacher to decide all that. (Gwernyfed Staff)

Pupil Impacts

- 5.14 Gwernyfed staff highlighted the psychological and social impacts of the recent history of proposed local school closures on young people and the wider community. Families have apparently moved from the area due to the uncertainty, which has also apparently been very 'damaging' to children's mental wellbeing:

Estyn said our transition was 'seamless'. We've worked with our primary schools to make sure pupils have come here and settle. This year, it's been much worse, they're scared. They've expressed concern, they're really worried. Some kind of psych problem. This goes back five years when you first proposed this... Families made decisions; they moved. They're going to Crickhowell. That's a reason why their numbers have gone up and we've gone down. The same is happening in Hay. The number of parents putting kids into English schools is up as well. This is not because of us. It's because of decisions made by yourselves! What about the psychological impacts on children in Years 5 and 6? The uncertainty of this entire process. It really is damaging to them, and you need to understand that if you make this decision, they have no idea what they're going to do. I speak to these children, they WANT to come here. You're damaging that. (Gwernyfed Staff)

Staff Impacts

- 5.15 Of most concern to staff was the impact of continuing job insecurity on their own and colleagues' mental, emotional and financial wellbeing - and the lack of support offered by PCC in relation to this:

Your announcement of a proposal for school closures has had a negative financial impact on me. What support have you put in place for what you will be offering me and other staff in the school? I applied for a loan...one of the questions asked was, 'are you aware of any changes in your financial situation, your earnings or your employment that may occur for the duration of this loan?' I answered honestly up to September 2016. Up to that date I have not been able to obtain financial loans...so what will you be offering me to put that right? This is affecting staff in this room; we can't get mortgages, we can't get loans. That has happened since the announcement back in 2015. What timeframe will you come back and tell me that I can now provide for my children... I need to be able to tell my family in six months' time I will know the answer... (Brecon Staff)

You're not considering us as people. We need to keep our mortgage/family going. If you give us a temporary contract for 12 months how can we do this? The banks won't understand... (Gwernyfed Staff)

This consultation is having mental, emotional and physical impacts on this staff and on our families. What have you put in place since making your statement to support us as your employees? We have never been made aware of (a counselling service)... Should it not have been your first consideration the effect this would have on staff and did you come and talk to us as staff or did you give it to the head teacher to inform us? Would it not have been better to have come and support and be honest and forthright with us? I don't think anyone was aware that there was support available to us. As your employees, you have let us down (Brecon Staff)

Looking through this document there is absolutely no impact assessment for Brecon High School staff beyond hoping for 'mitigation' of acknowledged 'demotivation'. Not very helpful. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.16 They also suggested that the retention of current staff will be a real challenge in the short-term unless there is some recognition of their positive contribution to the schools and some clarification around job security, redundancy and redeployment can be given:

People in this room work very, very hard and are professionals... We run a balanced budget. There's that feeling of 'what have we done wrong'? This sums up how we feel as an establishment, we don't want to lose this (Gwernyfed Staff)

You don't get it. You have nice comfy jobs, and we don't know what we're doing. Our jobs? Are we going back and forth to Brecon? What are we doing?! (Gwernyfed Staff)

If the proposal is accepted and the Shadow Governing Body etc. decides - what happens to us? Made redundant or...? (Gwernyfed Staff)

As I understand it the Shadow Governing Body can ring fence jobs, or it can decide not to. In which case it seems to me the implication would that if the Governing Body wanted to it could advertise all jobs nationally which would mean that all staff here would lose their jobs. In which case, what's the redundancy situation in terms of payments to staff? (Brecon Staff)

- 5.17 Furthermore, another important concern was that the loss of sixth form provision will result in a teacher 'exodus' because of their general enjoyment of teaching at this level and the loss of career development opportunities.

Sixth form disappears from here. You obviously want to keep the best teachers here. But if the sixth form goes, they'll be looking for jobs elsewhere... How can you keep the standards of teaching up if there's an exodus of highly skilled staff? (Gwernyfed Staff)

Teachers have subject skills and knowledge up to A-level, and they enjoy teaching up to A-level; it's part of their development and its why they teach...you're going to be preventing staff from being able to follow the careers that they want... A lot of teachers that do teach sixth form would feel that they would have to go elsewhere. It would have an impact on standards lower down, because obviously some A-level teachers can make great Key Stage 4 teachers... The most experienced, with the best subject knowledge will then be leaving to do a more fulfilling/challenging job. They wouldn't go to NPTC because the terms and conditions and the pay isn't the same (Gwernyfed Staff)

If the sixth form is transferred to [NPTC] I assume you'll get your lecturers; what's going to happen to all the expertise and experience from the schools in Brecon and Gwernyfed? They're just going to be swept away and that's a massive waste of resources (Gwernyfed Staff)

There's a statement here that there may be a positive impact on the further dismantling of Brecon's educational asset. It says, 'a new school would be able to focus solely on Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. I can't believe that anyone would have any conviction with that statement. To say that if you take away our sixth form, we can suddenly concentrate on everything else... (Brecon Staff)

Post-16 Education

- 5.18 Participants made a number of points around the continuity and quality of post-16 education in the area. They suggested that NPTC lacks the capacity and resources to provide at least comparable education provision to what is currently provided by the schools - and sought reassurances that pupils will never be expected to travel to Neath to complete their education (which has apparently happened in the past):

You've worked very hard in this document to convince us of that argument about NPTC. All of the statistics are here. It doesn't hold any sway. It's the easiest thing in the world to talk about general results in NPTC. If you work in this environment and live in the community you will know that there is absolutely no quality assurance for students studying across the road. So on a lot of levels there are a lot of objections here (Brecon Staff)

In the consultation it shows that [NPTC's] standards aren't as good as ours, so if it's about raising standards, that's not happening at all (Gwernyfed Staff)

It was our understanding that you were happy with the sixth form provision here and how well it works. The standards here are good. A-level results are very, very good...every child went to their first or second place uni. About 70% of the cohort have applied to Russell Group unis this year. The standards are excellent. What you're proposing is that there is no sixth form at Brecon or Gwernyfed and that it all goes to NPTC. In the consultation it shows that their standards aren't as good as ours, so if it's about raising standards, that's not happening at all. Students I know have had lessons there, particularly psychology, which I think is the only A-level they currently provide that we don't. We had a student that was the only student to pass with A to C grade. She wanted to go to university to study psych and we had to give her additional support; without us she would have failed. Another four students from Powys had to travel to Neath. We want assurance that the standards will be as good [and] we need to ensure that they won't be shipped down to Neath (Gwernyfed Staff)*

In the last four years, when the Council issues results and says results are comparable, even though [NPTC has] 22% free school meals and results are going up, it's still a bad deal for us because our results are trending upwards faster. Offering 25 subjects does not mean you will deliver 25 subjects. We could say we offer 25 and then decide not to provide the 13 lowest signed-up courses. That seems to be what you did. A student I know started a course with NPTC and it got dropped, and she had to go to night school! (Gwernyfed Staff)

- 5.19 Lack of accountability and quality assurance in relation to NPTC's performance was also a concern, and overall staff felt that removing the option of school-based sixth form in favour of the proposed tertiary model would lead to an unnecessarily uncertain future for pupils:

Because it won't be Powys County Council's responsibility for the standards of NPTC, what happens if we have issues? If they cancel a course, if results are poor? Who do they go to say 'the College is not providing for my child'? What happens when there isn't good A-level provision? (Gwernyfed Staff)

If my children go to NPCT, what responsibility does the County Council have for that child? Where do I go to if something goes wrong? (Gwernyfed Staff)

I pay my taxes here! If they pull out and say my son has to go to Neath, what then? I have an email saying there's no science labs over there. We're teaching one of them. You're saying that's okay, because I can complain to them? (Gwernyfed Staff)

- 5.20 There was also significant worry about continuity for pupils; that is, being taught at the critical A-level stage by teachers with whom they are familiar and who know 'what makes them tick':

In this school there would only be Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and therefore the continuation of education would stop and be transferred to another institution. We're looking at the impact on the pupils and the continuation of people who have spent almost five years within the school... (Brecon Staff)

My concern is that if we lose that continuity in this school. We know the students. We know what makes them tick. We know how to cajole them; get them to do the best they can in the school and they go on to another area within the school with teachers who perhaps they don't know, they're not going to achieve that continuity. (Brecon Staff)

Moreover, there was a sense that younger pupils would suffer as a result of a lack of sixth form, whose pupils act as role models and have a significant positive influence on others.

They will not be able to project positive role models to younger students, to celebrate their achievements. They will go from being the big fish to being little fish if they go to tertiary education and that will be a major loss to them. There has been no consideration of that at all in the document. (Brecon Staff)

- 5.21 Staff also noted the unfairness of removing post-16 parental and learner choice within the area, an unique situation in the context of Powys as a whole and one that may result in the loss of Powys pupils to educational establishments in, for example, Hereford and Merthyr Tydfil where more courses are offered and the quality of education is assured. This, in turn, would seriously jeopardise the sustainability of NPTC's Brecon-based provision:

I can't see the logic in the fact that this would be the only school in Powys where the sixth form is lost. You don't have a high school within Powys where these sixth formers [could go]. I don't think the impact on the pupils has been taken into account (Brecon Staff)

My son is in year 10. When the school closes he will have just finished his GCSEs. When the school reopens...where does he go for sixth form? As a parent I would be quite foolish to send him to an organisation that doesn't have a track record of delivering academic A-Levels on its site at present. So will there be other provision? Will Crickhowell suddenly double in size in their sixth form so he can go there? Or do I have to send him to Merthyr or Hereford? (Brecon Staff)

We did survey both our current Year 11 and year 10, and we have one student that would go to NPTC if Brecon and Gwernyfed shut. All the others would go to Hereford. In our current Year 10, all wanted to go to Brecon or Hereford. It's not that the students don't know what's on offer at NPTC. They will go to Merthyr, they will go to Hereford...and if they go there, they follow a completely

different system. They won't have access to the Welsh Baccalaureate, which we do fantastically here and is great for university and gives you the best life chances (Gwernyfed Staff)

We know that these students aren't going to go there; we've done a questionnaire. The students that would go to NPTC, it wouldn't be enough for them... What you're suggesting is not sustainable because they have to have sufficient numbers which they won't get from two sixth forms. If you want tertiary education, you need all the sixth forms in this area. Crickhowell's numbers are growing, good luck to them... In Brecon and Gwernyfed, our kids are going to Hereford and Merthyr where more courses are offered. (Gwernyfed Staff)

Welsh Medium Education

- 5.22 Participants desired a more honest appraisal of the likely pupil numbers and breadth of courses that will be offered at Builth Wells - as well as more information about primary school provision in the area - so that parents can make better informed choices around their children's future:

Many parents made the decision to move their children to Builth last year and I note in your consultation document that there is an assumption that all pupils in Welsh streams would transfer to Builth. I am concerned that I can't find any information about the primary providers in the Builth area. I am concerned because I don't see that parents can make informed decisions if you are not giving them all of the information. How can you make comparisons as parents if the information isn't published in the consultation document? (Brecon Staff)

Indeed, some argued that there is a lack of evidence that the proposal will create a critical mass at Builth Wells and encourage sufficient numbers to make it feasible, especially in the short-term:

You talk about the increase of numbers in Builth Wells High School as the result of this change and the impact this will have on Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 and the ability to increase the breadth of subjects offered. It's going to take you four years before you can have any kind of significant increase in numbers. Let's say Year 7, going into Year 8 next year, there are currently three pupils; I can't guarantee that they'll all want to go to Builth. So it could be only one or two that are going to increase the numbers at Builth Wells High School. That won't have an impact on being able to deliver a broader range of subjects. And I would question the same at KS5. It's going to take an awful long time before any kind of numbers increase and bear in mind you have a huge drop-off in the number of Welsh Medium students who choose their A-levels through the medium of English. I fail to see how it's going to impact on the breadth of subjects at Builth Wells... (Brecon Staff)

- 5.23 There was considerable anger among Brecon staff members that the school's Welsh stream has lost many pupils to Builth Wells as a result of the consultation process: parents apparently proactively removed their children for 'fear that the Welsh medium unit would close'. Furthermore, the provision of out of school transport to enable pupils from Sennybridge to attend Ystalyfera was noted; participants were unclear as to how this was allowed to happen in preference to encouraging people to send their children to Brecon and growing Welsh medium provision locally - particularly in the primary school sector:

I have yet to hear any acknowledgement from anybody...of the impact of your original consultation on the significant number of pupils who left this school, who believed that it was a fait accompli and we lost 30 pupils almost overnight. Nobody's acknowledged the impact of the Local Authority. The fact that those numbers are now lost and the fact is you quote in the document [that at] Brecon High School there are low numbers (Brecon Staff)

Many parents took their children from this school in fear that the Welsh medium unit would close. You make a big point about 30 pupils; at that point of time it wasn't 30 pupils. They moved before they thought they would be pushed. So I would like to know, have you got any more historical data to show the downward trend and how it's dramatically changed after your first idea for doing this? (Brecon Staff)

We talk about a critical mass of pupils for Welsh medium. The fact we have a Welsh medium primary school across the road and you've also got Sennybridge which is within commuting distance; how is it that we cannot foresee them transferring to Brecon High School and also how has it happened that the Council provides transport out of catchment? There are healthy numbers in both those schools that could have come here (Brecon Staff)

A year ago it was acknowledged that the County Council had not provided support to the school...Brecon High School is now stuffed in terms of trying to grow its Welsh Medium provision. Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge are providing apparently at best between 15 and 20 young people, not all who will come to Brecon High School to do Welsh medium. Now that kind of number is not significantly big enough in order to have a sustainable Welsh medium provision...if you are serious about Welsh provision, why are you not growing it in the primary provision within South Powys to enable there to be sustainable provision? (Brecon Staff)

- 5.24 In addition to the above, the lack of support offered by PCC to BHS's bid to obtain Welsh language status 2b was noted as another contributory factor to the decline of Welsh medium education at the school:

Where was the Council when the school wanted to go from status 2c to 2b? Why didn't Powys help us as a school to get 2b status? (Brecon Staff)

- 5.25 It was also said that PCC is not being as creative, proactive and supportive in terms of developing Welsh medium education as other counties across Wales:

Why aren't Powys County Council being creative about getting schools to keep the local areas alive? You want to move the school 16 miles away; you'll lose the kids and you'll lose the Welsh (Gwernyfed Staff)

I am from Ystradgynlais and am aware of the changes that were made there...and in regard to expanding Welsh provision in primary, you as a county made a decision to close two Welsh medium primaries in Ystradgynlais. You made one Welsh medium primary; it was a very successful and popular school. It's been put on the smallest site in Ystradgynlais with no room for expansion. That school is now over-capacity and there's nothing that can be done about it... In every other county in Wales, English comprehensive schools are closing and are creating Welsh medium... It seems that Powys County Council have no support for Welsh medium education in general. I cannot understand how every other county in Wales is successful in developing Welsh medium education and Powys is not. (Brecon Staff)

Consultation Process

- 5.26 Many staff members suggested a lack of detail in the consultation document, which was thought to contain too many vagaries and implicit assumptions:

In the consultation document there seems to be a lot of presumption. We'll try to make sure this happens/that happens. The schools will make the decisions. Not the Council... (Gwernyfed Staff)

Projections, Facts and Figures

5.27 Participants at both meetings suggested that finance not quality is the driver for the proposals. Additionally, they challenged a number of specific statements around the reasons for falling pupil numbers put forward in the case for change:

A lot of the questions have been around the human elements for staff, the pupils, parents and the wider community. Most of the answers are statistical or financial, which obviously is the major concern. It seems the whole thing is finance driven rather than the welfare; the overall human element (Brecon Staff)

We're not debating standards? So if there wasn't a financial query, we would be worried about placements? Would we be in this situation if it wasn't financial? (Gwernyfed Staff)

You've made an issue of it in terms of the presentation this evening; the falling numbers in Powys and Brecon High School and so on. So why is it that Powys County Council would allow another school to increase its numbers in each year group? Brecon High School has suffered from the fact that the pupil numbers have been allowed to increase at Crickhowell. Pupils have left this school to go to Crickhowell as soon as parents are aware there are additional places. You talk about us as a school wanting to retain numbers, and then you create an opportunity for pupils to move out of this area. How can that be right? (Brecon Staff)

It is not true what you put about primary schools; there are more children in primary schools than we can actually take in... (Gwernyfed Staff)

Figure 19: Other Issues and Sub-Themes from the Staff meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Loss of unique school identity	<i>Gwernyfed is the worst scenario; we're going to disappear... And I know it won't be called Brecon High School but it's a high school in Brecon. (Gwernyfed Staff)</i>
Quality of BHS buildings	<i>Have you actually walked around Brecon High? The roof's caving in. Are you expecting our students to go from here to there!? It's perfectly good here. (Gwernyfed Staff)</i>
Insufficient pre-engagement with staff	<i>Shouldn't we have been consulted when you came up with the various options in the first place? A consultation on all the different options...what would work best, what do you think about this? The range of options, not just this one? (Gwernyfed Staff)</i>
Impact of loss of BHS's Welsh medium stream	<i>There's no impact assessment on the loss to the school of the Welsh medium stream who have contributed out of all proportion to their numbers over the years. (Brecon Staff)</i>
Loss of Welsh unit will not improve outcomes for English medium Pupils	<i>I feel it's equally insulting that by losing the Welsh unit that we'll then be able to concentrate more on the English unit. Not impressed. (Brecon Staff)</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
Comparisons with North Powys merger	<i>We can compare John Beddoes/Newtown to here. It sounds the same, but up there you're talking about a merger. The chaos will be far greater; we're looking at the closure of two schools, The staffing changes won't be the same. You can't compare it. It's not going to be as smooth as that. (Brecon Staff)</i>
Use of emotive language in consultation document	<i>I would actually like to go to the pupil consultation document and some of the comments that are made in there...on page 2 you state 'we <u>fear</u> the standard of education delivered in our secondary schools may <u>worsen</u>'...don't you think you're scaremongering? You could have chosen your words far more carefully when dealing with young people. (Brecon Staff)</i>

6. Secondary School Workshops

Main issues and themes from the secondary school pupil workshops

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 6.1 ORS facilitated and reported discussion sessions with BHS and GHS pupils aged between 11 and 18 (key stages 3 to 5; year groups 7 to 13). All year groups were invited to nominate a number of pupils to attend. The point or purpose of these workshops was to allow PCC to engage with, and listen to, existing pupils - and to elicit their opinions, queries and concerns on the proposed changes. They also offered the pupils an opportunity to become more informed about the consultation process, the case for change and the proposals themselves.
- 6.2 The workshops were held and attended as follows:

Location	Date	Approx. number of attendees
Gwernyfed High School	Tuesday 12th April 2016	60
Brecon High School	Wednesday 27th April 2016	117

- 6.3 ORS worked in collaboration with PCC to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meeting, which covered the following topics:

Participants' knowledge of the consultation and proposals;

PCC's case for change;

PCC's proposals; and

Alternative options

The pupils were also encouraged to ask any questions and make any comments they wished throughout the discussions.

Reporting

- 6.4 This section of the report presents the main themes and key points arising from the Brecon and Gwernyfed sessions (those affecting Builth and Llandrindod have been reported separately). The opinions expressed were not always unanimous, but we have endeavoured to reflect the range of views expressed. Some important common themes emerged from discussions across both workshops; but issues relating to a particular school or key stage have been highlighted. Many quotations are used (in

italics), not because we wish to endorse any views, but in order to illustrate some of the more common and important themes and issues.

Main Themes Raised at the Secondary School Pupil Meetings

Awareness of Consultation and Proposals

- 6.5 Most, if not all, pupils had heard of the consultation and had some knowledge of the proposals to: close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new school in Brecon; and to deliver post-16 education there via the NPTC Group of Colleges.
- 6.6 However, a minority of pupils had misheard or made incorrect assumptions such as: ‘years 7, 8 and 9 would stay in this building and years 9, 10 and 11 would go to Gwernyfed’. (KS3, Brecon High School).
- 6.7 Some BHS pupils felt that communication around the consultation and the fact the changes are not certain could and should have been better:

My friend and I are going to different schools for A-Levels; I’m going the Crickhowell to do mine because of the miscommunication. I thought the decision had already been made to get rid of the sixth form. If I’d have known there might still be a sixth form here I would have stayed (KS5, Brecon High School)

The uncertainty about what’s happening is affecting loads of people already. The messages need to be communicated more clearly. (KS5, Brecon High School)

Views on the Case for Change

- 6.8 BHS pupils recognised their school building’s age and poor condition, as well as the relatively poor educational practices in evidence there. Some important examples of the latter were that teachers are frequently teaching subjects outside their areas of expertise and an over-use of supply teachers. Therefore, most understood and supported PCC’s reasons for considering changes to the way in which it delivers secondary school education in the area:

The school is falling apart because it’s a really old building. People do their exams in the gym and they can see outside and people can see in. It’s not very nice for people doing their GCSEs (KS3, Brecon High School)

There is a case for changing some things. In the hall some of the tiles are broken on the roof; there are other things like that which are quite bad (KS4, Brecon High School)

Our core subjects are being taught by people who aren’t qualified in that subject; our science teacher is our music teacher (KS3, Brecon High School)

We’ve had supply teachers every week who don’t get through as much during the lesson. I feel like we’re slowing down when we were quite ahead before (KS3, Brecon High School)

Half the children in my class in Sennybridge Primary went straight to Ystalyfera; they didn’t even consider Brecon and why that’s happening should be looked at (KS3, Brecon High School)

There was a small fraction in our years that didn’t come to Brecon because of the state of the building anyway - some went to Builth and one other to Ystalyfera. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.9 Indeed, only a minority of participants could not understand the case for change at BHS, particularly in terms of educational standards:

I've been here seven years and haven't had a problem with the school itself...in terms of education I can't fault it. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.10 Although GHS pupils agreed that change is needed at the Brecon site, they rejected PCC's case for their own school, suggesting that it's involvement in the proposals 'hinder the overall aims'. Specifically, they argued that low pupil numbers are not an issue because:

Smaller schools and class sizes are preferable to larger ones in terms of educational standards:

Why do you need 600 pupils in a school? Isn't it better to have small classes and one-to-one teaching? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

The current sizes of classes are good – a class of 28 is too big (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

The 'negatives' in the (consultation) document aren't really negative. For example, the small class sizes which isn't a bad thing (KS5, Brecon High School)

The school naturally has fewer pupils due to its rural location, not because it is in some way deficient:

It is a small school due to being in the countryside (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

It is a situation that has partly arisen as a result of this consultation, which has discouraged pupils from attending GHS:

We currently have so few numbers in the year groups because of what Powys have done with the threat of closing the school. Pupils in year 6 were hearing that Gwernyfed was going to close so they have chosen to go to other schools not under threat. (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

PCC's Proposals: A New School in Brecon

Support and Acceptance

- 6.11 Brecon pupils were supportive of a new secondary school and were hopeful that it would bring important educational improvements such as: subjects being set-based rather than mixed ability; a wider range of subject options; more permanent teachers; and better facilities:

I think a new school would be great because we will have more subject choices (KS3, Brecon High School)

If we join we might have a better education. You could have more qualified teachers...better Maths or English teachers in a bigger school (KS3, Brecon High School)

A friend of mine was choosing their GCSE options a while ago and wanted to do Music which wasn't an option here. They also changed Triple Science as a compulsory option so people couldn't choose what they wanted. Would this be rectified under the new system? (KS4, Brecon High School)

It would be good to have more modern options. With A-Levels you have to specialise so if you know what you do to do at A-Level when you're at GCSE age they should have something more specialised to offer you too so you have continuity. For example, for IT they could have a specialist programming aspect (KS4, Brecon High School)

Having a good new facility would entice people to come and raise pupil numbers. A better building would be attractive to people. (KS5, Brecon High School)

Concerns and Opposition

- 6.12 Despite the general positivity at Brecon, the pupils were also mindful of resistance within the Gwernyfed catchment area, which led them to question whether the two schools should or could be merged:

I have a friend in Gwernyfed and they don't want it to happen. In Brecon there's a mix as to whether we want it to or not but they are all against it in Gwernyfed. So if it does happen how will you persuade them that it's a good idea? (KS3, Brecon High School)

The majority of people from Gwernyfed don't want to move here... (KS4, Brecon High School)

Brecon definitely needs a new building but I'm not really sure a merger with Gwernyfed is a good idea (KS4, Brecon High School)

- 6.13 In particular, the increased travel for pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment area was recognised as an issue - as was the possibility that many pupils from that area would likely attend a school elsewhere rather than the proposed new one at Brecon:

Gwernyfed pupils worry about how they will get here. For us it's a couple of metres longer to walk but for them it's a lot further (KS3, Brecon High School)

I think we can all agree that we need a new building but not a new school combined with Gwernyfed. It wouldn't be so bad for us but some people from Gwernyfed would have to travel miles and miles (KS4, Brecon High School)

From their point of view, for pupils from the other side of the area like Hay etc. it's probably far enough to Gwernyfed let alone Brecon. So you see where they're coming from. The majority will find another school to go to nearer where they live (KS4, Brecon High School)

- 6.14 These issues and concerns were confirmed in the Gwernyfed workshops, where pupils were overwhelmingly opposed to PCC's proposals on the following grounds:

Brecon is too far to travel to and access, which has not been sufficiently considered due to 'the difference between what the government and pupils think are acceptable travel times'. Indeed, the remote location of and lack of public transport for many pupils was a key issue, which led several participants to question how money can be saved given the amount that would be required for transport provision:

There has always been a bus to Gwernyfed from pupils' villages but there is rarely any transport to Brecon (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

If people are travelling more how is this saving money? (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

Brecon is a long way to go (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

A large amount of pupils live up in the mountains - would the transport go there? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

The additional travel time to and from school would impact on pupils' ability to undertake extra-curricular activities (and on their parents who might have to travel further to collect them) – and would leave little time for homework and 'down time':

Can the bus routes be changed to suit after-school classes? (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

Would students have to pay for extra bus tickets to do this on public buses? (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

Most pupils do after school clubs, and their parents have to come and pick them up... (KS3, Brecon High School)

It would take me an hour to get home from Brecon which means I wouldn't get to rugby club on time (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

After school clubs can be accessed easily now because it's not far to travel, but if we do have to travel parents will end up waiting around. It doesn't just affect pupils but parents as well (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

The extra travel would impact on my life. I wouldn't have time for the young farmers club I'm involved with, my homework or helping my dad out on the farm. Extracurricular is really important, why should I have to give it up? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.15 In addition, pupils in both areas recognised that BHS is perceived as having a 'bad reputation' and there was concern that locating the new site there would either allow these issues to continue or fail to eradicate the stigma associated with the existing school:

I used to go to Brecon High School and there were issues with security (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

There are lots of people in Brecon who smoke, take drugs and misbehave (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

Some pupils went to Gwernyfed from Brecon because they were being bullied (KS4, Brecon High School)

Stigma would still be attached to Brecon; people wouldn't see it as a new school. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.16 Many reservations were expressed and reassurances sought about attending a merged school. These included:

Brecon and Gwernyfed pupils not 'getting on well', possibly resulting in conflicts

Brecon and Gwernyfed don't really get on (KS4, Brecon High School)

There is rivalry between Gwernyfed and Brecon (KS4, Brecon High School)

I don't mind them moving here but some of the kids from there have insulted us before because they think we're having a really bad education and are irresponsible... (KS4, Brecon High School)

Lots of people don't get on with Brecon pupils, there's lots of rivalry; can you guarantee that we will get on with each other? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

Pupil increases leading to misbehaviour and larger classes, which would place further strain on teachers and affect educational standards

Brecon has a rule they aren't supposed to go by the leisure centre and teachers have to rein it in. I have concerns this is going to happen on a bigger scale wasting teacher's time (KS5, Brecon High School)

If you have bigger classes teachers may not be able to give pupils enough attention (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

Whether the wellbeing centre at BHS would remain successful within a larger school

What support will you offer to pupils in a larger school? We have a wellbeing centre here which is very well used and is massively important. It has links with outside organisations and they do tremendous amounts for all pupils. They do group activities for people who aren't confident socialising and it's a space for people to go to, to get away from things every day. It's phenomenal to be able to see a familiar face that is trained. How will that be provided in a merged school? Some of the children who rely on that service would not want to come to school if it wasn't there (KS5, Brecon High School)

We are an inclusive school and the wellbeing centre is a big part of that as they will not give up on any pupils. Will you be able to provide this in a bigger school? (KS5, Brecon High School)

Whether the school uniform would change of and ,if so, whether parents would they be expected to pay for it

Will we have to pay for any changes to the school uniform even if the Council are the ones who want to change it? (KS3, Brecon High School)

Whether the termly inter-school sports tournament would be affected.

6.17 Additional worries around the proposal included:

Whether it would put teachers' job security into doubt - and specifically whether they there would be redundancies or the requirement to re-apply for posts

Would the teachers have to reapply for their jobs? Would any of them be made redundant? We would want the best teachers across the two schools (KS3, Brecon High School)

We were speaking to our RE teachers and she said all the teachers are really worried about losing their jobs (KS3, Brecon High School)

Uncertainty may result in some teachers choosing to leave, further impacting on the current quality of education

If staff want jobs elsewhere will we be able to get new staff in to finish off the year? (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

How going to a new school may affect and unsettle those in the middle of their GCSEs

If the new school is built and the schools merge, people doing their GCSEs may have new teachers. When this happens it does affect your grades (KS4, Brecon High School)

Whether PCC can afford to build a new school

Are you sure you will be able to build a new school financially? (KS4, Brecon High School)

How PCC can safeguard BHS pupils in the short-term given the poor condition of the school building

How will you make the building safe for us in the interim? (KS4, Brecon High School)

What alternative options are available to pupils who do not wish to attend the new school

If people don't want to come to the new school the nearest one for both areas is Crickhowell, which is already turning people away because they're overcrowded. (KS4, Brecon High School)

- 6.18 There was also some scepticism around the proposed timescales for the opening of the proposed new school based on previous experiences of implementation delays in improving the area's primary school:

Five years ago there was a proposal to close primary schools and build a new super school – they've closed some schools but not built the new one. I'm worried this will also happen to Gwernyfed (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

The new primary school should have opened in 2015, how do we know this isn't going to happen here? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.19 A final discussion point was around the short- and long-term future of the school buildings themselves: in the Brecon workshops reassurance was sought that the land would be put to good use, while there were concerns about how development on the Gwernyfed site may impact the local leisure centre at the sessions there:

There's no point having a big building like this wasting away here. It's important the Council does something with it (KS3, Brecon High School)

Say if the school gets built, what will happen to our school during the process? (KS4, Brecon High School)

Can you build on the proposed land? What will happen to the leisure centre? (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

General Queries

- 6.20 Some pupils wanted to know more about the details of the proposal, and asked questions around: whether the schools' uniform and logo would change; how the head teacher and senior leadership team would be chosen; and how long it would take to build the new school.

PCC's Proposals: Proposed Closure of GHS

- 6.21 As might be anticipated from the views reported above, Gwernyfed pupils were strongly opposed to the proposed closure of their school: they described it as a 'happy' and 'safe' community-focused school in attractive surroundings with a good reputation. Some typical comments were:

I don't see anything wrong with Gwernyfed and I don't see the need for closure. It also has beautiful surroundings (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

Gwernyfed is small and safe; you are happy to bring younger siblings here and there's no bullying (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

There is better pupil and staff engagement at Gwernyfed (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

Gwernyfed fits all the categories of the Wellbeing Act so by moving to Brecon this will be lost; it should be something to protect (KS5, Brecon High School)

Gwernyfed is in a good spot for a school; you stay in school all day whereas in Brecon pupils can walk to town (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

I went to Brecon High School and came to Gwernyfed to do A-Levels, and the sense of community is so much better here. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.22 Furthermore, participants reasoned that only BHS needs improving and that it is unfair to 'tar Gwernyfed with the same brush'. Indeed, pupils felt that merging their school with 'a bad one' would have a detrimental effect on its current high standards, contradicting PCC's case for change:

It's Brecon that needs to be changed; Gwernyfed should not be sacrificed for it (KS5, Brecon High School)

I feel like Gwernyfed is getting penalised (KS5, Brecon High School)

Bringing Gwernyfed down to Brecon isn't fair. Brecon is known for truancy because it is by the town, but in Gwernyfed there is no chance of this (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

To put a good school with a bad one could make our standards drop. The problems are linked with Brecon, not Gwernyfed (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

How much of a negative effect will this have on younger pupils? Gwernyfed is already of a good standard and if this goes ahead there will be a slip in standards. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.23 An important issue for many pupils was the impact the proposed closure of GHS would have on its affiliated local clubs. Indeed, there was concern that many of the area's young people would no longer be able to attend these clubs due to getting home later from school and that numbers would further dwindle with no local high school:

If the school closes and they have to go to Brecon it would impact on after school clubs due to transport issues with being picked up (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

I am part of the rugby club which has 115 members, most of who are from Gwernyfed. It has lots of funding and girls teams etc. but without a flow of 11 to 16 year olds I can't see there being a youth team in seven years. No one will move here if there is no school. (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.24 In addition, it was thought that local businesses and the area's sense of community would suffer hugely in the absence of GHS:

The plans could disrupt the sports centre, charity work and businesses. The sense of community would be lost; the setting of the school is nice and it's the hub of the community (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

The economy and business in the local community will be impacted; less pupils will stop off at places on their way home from school etc. (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

A £100,000 a year saving doesn't outweigh the loss economy on the community. (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.25 The pupils also argued that it would be 'very unlikely' that those in the Gwernyfed catchment area would attend the new school in Brecon, instead preferring to 'go over the border' to England - and they felt that the closure of GHS would discourage parents of young children from settling in the area, again exacerbating the issue of low pupil numbers:

By proposing this closure you're not doing anything to improve pupil numbers because the primary school pupils won't come here. (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

Alternative Suggestions

- 6.26 Pupils urged PCC to provide a new building for BHS only, and to spend any additional funding on improving Gwernyfed instead of closing it. Indeed, they asked 'why this was not the main option' under the proposals:

Why don't you just rebuild Brecon? (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

Fixing the school would mean less travel and sixth form. Plus we already have good grounds and facilities (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

If you are spending this money why don't you spend it on just changing Brecon where it is actually needed? (KS5, Brecon High School)

It's an option just to renovate Brecon; it seems the only reason Gwernyfed is proposed to close is to wipe the debt (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

You really don't need to join the two schools, as the new building will attract people here and raise pupil numbers. (KS4, Brecon High School)

- 6.27 A less popular alternative was to merge the two schools into one site, but to locate it at Gwernyfed instead:

Why can't Brecon come to Gwernyfed instead? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

You could build a primary school on the existing Gwernyfed site and combine it with the secondary school. (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.28 There was at least some opposition and concern across both catchment areas to the closure of the two schools, and one Gwernyfed pupil asked: 'why are the schools in South Powys proposed to close and none in North Powys?' Those who were opposed to the closures explained that they would prefer PCC to save money in other service areas and repair the two schools instead:

I've heard that joining the two schools together will save money, but money is wasted on things like digging up roads all the time. Refurbish this school and don't combine them and make Gwernyfed pupils travel so far (KS4, Brecon High School)

Why don't you repeat the structure used by John Beddoes Secondary School if this has worked well – there has been an increase in standards and guaranteed post-16 provision (KS4, Brecon High School)

Why can't the money be split between Gwernyfed and Brecon and used to upgrade the current buildings? (KS3, Gwernyfed High School)

Post-16 Education

- 6.29 BHS pupils were particularly opposed to the proposal for the area's post-16 education to be delivered by NPTC. They urged PCC to retain a sixth form at the proposed new school site for the following reasons:

The current sixth form is an integral part of the school; its pupils provide inspiration, encouragement and set a good example for younger year groups

With a sixth form there is someone to look up to. I would say keep the sixth form because it's encouraging for younger pupils (KS3, Brecon High School)

The sixth form for us are quite an inspiration to look up to and to say 'we want to be like that' (KS3, Brecon High School)

The sixth form means a lot to us. They do so much for the school and push people to do things, especially people who don't have the confidence. They say 'you can do it'. They have got to sixth form and they show that even if you do go to Brecon High School you can go to university (KS3, Brecon High School)

When we were in the younger years the sixth formers were people we looked up to; I always wanted to be a sixth former here and couldn't wait to be a prefect. Taking it away would be a negative thing I think (KS5, Brecon High School)

I like the fact we are role models for younger kids (KS5, Brecon High School)

Sixth forms offer more continuity in terms of pupil/teacher relationships and educational support

We want to be able to have teachers that we can trust at A-Level and have developed a relationship with since Year 7 (KS3, Brecon High School)

In the sixth form you are taught by teachers you are used to and know well; if you move to college you don't have that and it's unfair (KS4, Brecon High School)

If the new school will be built and it will be better than this one why can't you supply a sixth form? Both my sisters are in sixth form and they say it's really good because they can ask the teachers for help (KS4, Brecon High School)

I go to college as part of sixth form and there is nowhere near as much support as you get in the sixth form at school and you need at A-Level. In school you grow up with the teachers and you don't get that at college (KS5, Brecon High School)

The support we had from our GCSE German teacher shows it helps having a sixth form; we said we wanted to do it at A-Level and she taught us off-timetable to allow us to do that (KS5, Brecon High School)

It is advantageous to provide post-16 education locally because after-school support can be easily accessed as teachers more often than not live nearby

I do RE and the after-school support and revision provided has been so beneficial. The college teachers don't live around here and wouldn't be able to provide that (KS5, Brecon High School)

College teachers not being local may affect the quality of education and pastoral support

We can usually get a quick and helpful response from current A-Level teachers, but if teachers had to travel standards could drop. This would have an impact on the pastoral side during the day and the continuation of support will suffer (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

A range of important (and CV-friendly) responsibilities and opportunities are offered in a sixth form that colleges do not provide

Mentoring etc. is good on CVs, but if you go to college these unique aspects are taken away. Senior prefecting and school charity work has had a massive effect on university applications and jobs etc. (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

Friendship groups can be educated together

Instead of going to another school for A-Levels you can do it in the same school as your friends (KS3, Brecon High School)

The current South Powys Consortium is working well

Travel to other campuses works very well. I really enjoy travelling to other schools; it's a nice break and a chance to meet new people. It is seen as positive because teachers will work around you. I can also do work during the journey. (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.30 One of the most significant concerns among pupils in both catchment areas was the perceived poor standard of NPTC's provision. The Neath and Brecon campuses were both said to be lacking in: teaching quality; proper management (especially in relation to teachers leaving before the end of term and not being replaced); facilities; and capacity to accommodate more pupils. Participants thus expressed strong reservations as to whether NPTC can deliver what is promised; indeed, some felt they would prefer to attend colleges and schools elsewhere - such as in Merthyr or Hereford – with proven track-records and good quality assurance:

The college is a very poor standard at the moment, so would there be money put into it to raise standards? (KS3, Brecon High School)

It's the management of the college too. The Performing Arts class didn't have a teacher for months because they sacked one and didn't replace them, so before they went to Neath they didn't have a teacher which was a big source of worry (KS5, Brecon High School)

Nobody is going to go to NPTC from around Gwernyfed because of its reputation (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

The college is only just big enough for the current number of pupils, how would it be able to accommodate everyone? (KS4, Brecon High School)

Almost all of the sixth form will be going to Merthyr College which is a waste of time and money (KS3, Brecon High School)

There's no faith in Brecon or NPTC; pupils would go to Hereford instead. (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.31 Indeed, some pupils explained that uncertainty around the future of their school has led many to apply for or consider Hereford or Merthyr Colleges regardless of the consultation outcome. As such, they said that the number of post-16 education pupils at the NPTC campus in Brecon may not increase by as much as PCC suggests:

Hereford is a good college and has lots of choices and they all get the standard A-Levels. Lots of people from Gwernyfed are going to Hereford due to the quality and concerns about the closures (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

I will be leaving to do a vocational course in Merthyr. I was going to stay in Gwernyfed until the threat of school closure (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

99% of pupils are going to Hereford because of the proposal so there is no guarantee that centralising it will increase the numbers; it's a gamble (KS5, Brecon High School)

I'm concerned about going into sixth form and teachers leaving half way through the course because their jobs will be under threat. I'm considering going to Hereford College because of this. (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

- 6.32 Additional important concerns that arose throughout the discussions were that:

It is unfair to take away pupils' right to choose where they study, especially in the case of those who prefer to learn in a school environment

If sixth formers don't want to go to college and want to go to a school, the nearest is Crickhowell and a lot of people have been turned down there because it's full. So where would they go? (KS3, Brecon High School)

It's a culture thing; I would rather go to a sixth form in school than a college... (KS3, Brecon High School)

You could argue that you are taking away the right of the pupils in this area to go to a sixth form in a school. Everyone else in places like Crick and Builth have the choice (Brecon High School)

I'm in Year 10 and what I don't find fair is that we may not have the option to go through sixth form when other pupils in Powys have. (Brecon High School)

A lack of a sixth form will have a negative effect on the running of BHS due to the work older students do in terms of, say, organising activities and fundraising

If the sixth forms went what would happen to the houses and the house competitions? They help organise this (KS3, Brecon High School)

The sixth formers contribute to the high school quite a lot and they raise a lot of money... (KS4, Brecon High School)

Sixth form is a vital part of the school; they get involved in doing and running so many things. (KS5, Brecon High School)

Alternative Suggestions

^{6.33} All of the alternative suggestions were offered by Brecon pupils, and all involved the retention of post-16 education within the proposed new secondary school. Indeed, it was argued that merging the two schools would provide sufficient pupils numbers to maintain a sixth form there:

Why don't you have a sixth form in the new school and include the things the sixth formers might need? Have a sixth form academy within the school. They would then be able to go and see familiar people if they were stuck with anything and they wouldn't have to travel anywhere (KS4, Brecon High School)

If you are already building a new school, why not incorporate sixth form provision with all the facilities we need to do the subjects we want? (KS5, Brecon High School)

Surely if you bring the two schools together there will be enough numbers to sustain a sixth form there? (KS5, Brecon High School)

^{6.34} Another pupil suggested still using the college to provide education, but making arrangements for this to be delivered from the school building:

Since you're merging the two schools together the college is something that could be used too, but providing subjects within the school environment (KS4, Brecon High School)

Questions and Queries

^{6.35} Some pupils were not explicitly opposed to the post-16 proposal, but sought reassurance that: NPTC would offer a better range of subjects and facilities; the teaching would be of high quality; new facilities would definitely be developed at Brecon to prevent pupils having to travel to Neath; the college could cope with larger pupil numbers; and that subjects would be protected from discontinuation if pupil numbers were low:

If the college is going to be providing A-Levels will they be giving the facilities to enable us to do what we want? (KS4, Brecon High School)

Can you guarantee that we won't have to travel to Neath eventually? Performing Arts has been cancelled this year and the pupils doing that have to travel to Neath for their course (KS5, Brecon High School)

Can it realistically be done? We don't want pupils missing out on facilities that are already in Gwernyfed (KS5, Brecon High School)

It would obviously be better to have all subjects on one site rather than people having to travel, but it's about quality. Is the college provision going to be of the same quality as in a school where the teacher has been teaching the subject for years? (KS5, Brecon High School)

If all the people go this college can it withstand the numbers? (KS5, Brecon High School)

How much are you expanding the college? (KS4, Gwernyfed High School)

If a subject drops in pupil numbers can we stop them from getting rid of the course? (KS5, Gwernyfed High School)

Welsh Medium Education

Concern and Opposition

^{6.36} The proposal to provide Welsh medium education at Builth Wells High School and close the Welsh stream at Brecon was met with significant opposition from BHS pupils, who queried why said stream could not be included within the proposed new school. They said that the consultation and resulting uncertainty around the future of Welsh medium education in Brecon has already caused parents to start moving their children to Builth, further exacerbating the problematic issues of low pupil numbers within the Welsh stream at Brecon:

We used to have a huge class but a lot of parents scooted their pupils over to Builth since the announcement was made last year, so now we're really depleted. That's also what's happened with the Year 7 pupils we could have had here; the parents have wanted a fresh start for their children so they have sent them to Builth (KS3, Brecon High School)

The proposal came out last year and it looked like the decision had already been made; people thought 'we might as well send our kids to Builth because of that.' So Welsh has disintegrated here from that time. (KS5, Brecon High School)

^{6.37} The potentially negative impact of the proposal on Ysgol y Bannau's pupil numbers was a worry; it was suggested that parents (especially English-speaking parents) may be discouraged from sending their children to a Welsh medium primary school without any secondary provision locally:

If you close the Welsh-stream wouldn't it put people off going to Ysgol y Bannau, as they will have to travel up to Builth to go to a Welsh secondary school? (KS3, Brecon High School)

If you are sending people to Builth it's a waste of Ysgol y Bannau which is one of the best primary schools around (KS5, Brecon High School)

If the Welsh school was in Builth wouldn't it reduce numbers at Ysgol y Bannau across the road? (KS4, Brecon High School)

A lot of English speaking parents who have sent their kids to Ysgol y Bannau took a leap of faith. My parents don't speak Welsh but since it was local and it was there they thought it was a good idea for me to go to a Welsh school. In the future people like my parents wouldn't take that leap of faith

if there's no local Welsh stream in Brecon. There would be fewer numbers in Ysgol y Bannau and only Welsh speakers would send their children there. (KS3, Brecon High School)

- 6.38 Furthermore, Brecon pupils argued that the knock-on effect of fewer people learning Welsh would result in a decline in the Welsh language locally:

Moving the Welsh stream to Builth would have a massive effect on pupil numbers in Ysgol y Bannau, as parents are already starting to panic. This could have a massive impact on the 'Welshness' of Brecon (KS5, Brecon High School)

I know people who say 'if they shut the Welsh stream in Brecon I'm going into the English stream.' It's so important for our heritage. (KS5, Brecon High School)

- 6.39 Travel was another main concern insofar as Builth was considered too distant from Brecon. Using public transport to and from difficult to access areas was predicted to be particularly problematic, as was the lack of flexibility for pupils wishing to continue participating in after-school clubs or needing time off for, say, GP appointments:

One of my friends used to be in the Welsh stream here but now goes to Builth. It's much harder for her to get there in the morning because of the transport; wouldn't it be easier to have a Welsh stream here so she could walk to school? (KS3, Brecon High School)

Some people will just not go to Builth because they won't or can't travel that far (KS4, Brecon High School)

We wouldn't be able to get to Builth during the bad weather which would affect our education (KS5, Brecon High School)

I've been going to the doctors quite a lot this term and if I went to Builth I'd probably be off for the whole day rather than a few hours (KS3, Brecon High School)

If I went to Builth I wouldn't be able to go to the after-school clubs anymore because it would be too difficult for my parents to pick me up. (KS3, Brecon High School)

- 6.40 The fragmentation of friendship groups and the depletion of local extra-curricular clubs were also thought to be potential consequences of removing the Welsh stream from Brecon:

I'd rather keep it here as I've made lots of new friends and I might lose them if I went to Builth (KS3, Brecon High School)

Some of my friends have gone to Ystalyfera, and when they move you do lose that friendship. I do see it being harder (KS3, Brecon High School)

Some of the Welsh boys play football with the English stream boys, so it's breaking up friendship groups and communities as well (KS5, Brecon High School)

Because some of my good friends have gone to Builth I might want to follow them there, but then I'd lose the ability to go to after school clubs and choir (KS3, Brecon High School)

If the Welsh stream went to Builth things like the choir would lose numbers. (KS3, Brecon High School)

- 6.41 Despite the overwhelming negativity, a few pupils from Brecon acknowledged that removing the Welsh-stream from their high school would make good financial sense and allow more money to be spent on educational improvements:

It does cost a lot to keep the Welsh-stream in Brecon so they may need to think about moving to Builth (KS3, Brecon High School)

Remove the Welsh stream and build a new school that would be more advanced and save money. (KS4, Brecon High School)

Moreover, the views of one Welsh medium pupil who has moved from Brecon to Builth are worth nothing here. They say that: *I came here from Brecon because there weren't many lessons available in Welsh, there weren't many of us and it was the same teacher teaching lots of things. I've seen an improvement since I came here. (KS3, Builth Wells High School)*

7. Primary School Workshops

Main issues and themes from the primary school pupil workshops

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 7.1 ORS facilitated and reported on the findings of deliberative workshops with primary school children aged between six and 11 from each of the affected catchment areas (some of whom were members of their school councils). All feeder primary schools were invited to nominate a number of children to attend. The point or purpose of these workshops was to allow PCC to engage with, and listen to, children who will be beginning their secondary school education in the next one to five years – and to elicit their opinions, queries and concerns on the proposed changes. They also offered the children an opportunity to become more informed about the consultation process, the case for change and the proposals themselves.
- 7.2 The workshops were held and attended as follows:

Catchment Area	Location and Date	Schools Attended	Approx. number of attendees
Brecon	Ysgol y Bannau Wednesday 11 th May 2016	Ysgol y Bannau Ysgol Cradoc Llangorse Church In Wales School Llanfaes Primary School Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools Priory Church in Wales School Sennybridge Primary School	70+
Gwernyfed	Talgarth Primary School Thursday 12 th May 2016	Bronllys Community Primary School Clyro Church in Wales Primary School Hay-On-Wye County Primary School Ysgol Llyswen Talgarth Community Primary School	63

- 7.3 ORS worked in collaboration with PCC to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meetings, which covered the following topics and activities:
- Participants' knowledge of the consultation and proposals;
 - PCC's case for change; and
 - PCC's proposals.
- 7.4 An initial presentation of the case for change and the proposals was then followed by: comments and questions; a poster-making activity (whereby participants (in groups) created a poster to display and

express their thoughts and feelings about the proposed changes¹) and presentation of views; and a final question and answer session.

Reporting

^{7.5} This section of the report presents the main themes and key points arising from the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment workshops (those affecting Builth and Llandrindod have been reported separately). The opinions expressed were not always unanimous, but we have endeavoured to reflect the range of views expressed. Some important common themes emerged from discussions across both workshops; but issues relating to a particular catchment area or school have been highlighted. Many quotations are used (in italics), not because we wish to endorse any views, but in order to illustrate some of the more common and important themes and issues.

Main Themes Raised at the Primary School Pupil Meetings

Awareness of the Consultation and Proposals

^{7.6} Most, if not all, pupils had heard of the consultation and had received a questionnaire to complete. They also had some knowledge of the proposals to: close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new school in Brecon; and to deliver post-16 education there via the NPTC Group of Colleges. In addition, some pupils were aware that Brecon High School's financial situation is a cause for concern.

^{7.7} However, a few pupils in the Gwernyfed workshop were uncertain about the proposals for sixth form education in the area.

Views on the Case for Change

^{7.8} Initially, participating pupils were asked why they thought PCC is considering changing the way it delivers secondary school education in the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment areas. In response, pupils at both workshops identified the age and poor condition of the two schools – and particularly Brecon – as a motive behind establishing a new school:

Brecon High School is not in a good condition so they want to make a better school (Brecon catchment area)

Brecon's school is damaged (Gwernyfed catchment area)

Gwernyfed is an old school (Gwernyfed catchment area)

Some say that Brecon and Gwernyfed are in a state. (Brecon catchment area)

^{7.9} Pupils in the Brecon catchment workshop also acknowledged the high running costs of both schools and the need to save money. In addition, specific issues in relation to Gwernyfed High School (henceforth GHS) were mentioned, notably its falling pupil numbers and lack of subject availability at A-level:

At the moment the costs are too high (Brecon catchment area)

Gwernyfed does not have as many pupils (Brecon catchment area)

There are not enough sixth form subjects in Welsh in Gwernyfed. (Brecon catchment area)

¹ Please see Appendix 1 for photographs of the posters

- 7.10 Pupils at the Gwernyfed catchment session recognised PCC's aim to improve educational standards, facilities and mutual support:

To provide somewhere that offers a lot of different subjects to study are needed (Gwernyfed catchment area)

They want new facilities to help children learn (Gwernyfed catchment area)

To bring the schools together to better support one another. (Gwernyfed catchment area)

However, many of these pupils felt that there is currently little wrong with their local high school, and that any proposed changes are unjustified. Indeed, despite most having a generally good understanding of some of the reasoning behind PCC's proposals, there was much concern about and aversion to the specific changes being proposed in response. These concerns and views are explored in further detail overleaf.

PCC's Proposals: A New School in Brecon?

- 7.11 Pupils in the Gwernyfed catchment workshop were particularly concerned about the impact of attending a new secondary school in Brecon, concerns that were also shared by Brecon catchment pupils, though to a lesser extent. Specifically, the location of the new school raised the following issues around travel, transport and after/out-of-school activities.

The distance between Brecon and the Gwernyfed catchment area was deemed too great. Pupils were concerned about increases to journey times, particularly in terms of time spent on buses and the inconvenience involved in getting to and from school should the bus be missed

People who have to travel from Gwernyfed to Brecon will have to add on an extra 20 minutes to their journey (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Brecon)

Pupils who live further north and would have gone to Gwernyfed will have to travel all the way down to Brecon (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

It's a long way for me to travel (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

81 and a quarter days will be spent on the bus travelling from Clyro to Brecon High School over five years (Clyro Church in Wales Primary School, Gwernyfed)

What if we miss the bus at home time? We will be an hour away from home! (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

We will have to get up really early (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

We are worried about being told off by teachers for being late for school because of travelling (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

The thought of going on a bus with lots of people is scary. (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

The impact on pupils' social lives and their ability to undertake after-school activities was noted; those living further away from the proposed new school were especially concerned that time and transport limitations would prohibit their attendance at extra-curricular activities

I might lose my friends if we have to go further away (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

There won't be enough time to do after school clubs (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

Clubs in Brecon are too far to travel to (Clyro Church in Wales Primary School, Gwernyfed)

As well as general access issues, pupils from Llangorse Primary School were concerned about how travelling by bus will affect pupils with disabilities

Will there be wheelchair access? (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Brecon)

- 7.12 Given these concerns, it was suggested by some that PCC should consider establishing a new school in a location between the two current facilities:

Why don't you build a new school in between the two? (Priory Church in Wales School, Brecon)

Why not build a brand new school in between the two sites? (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

- 7.13 Some pupils in both catchment areas were concerned about the following aspects of attending a larger school:

An increase in bullying and the ability of the new school to deal with it effectively

More children will mean more bullying (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

We are concerned about bullying (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

How is it possible to manage bullying well in a larger school? We worry that it will be harder to detect (Priory Church in Wales School, Brecon)

Larger class sizes leading to distractions and insufficient teacher time (and thus not necessarily meaning a better education)

There will be too much noise in the classrooms because of the bigger classes (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

If they build a new school how big will the classes be? (Llanfaes Primary School, Brecon)

Developing relationships with new teachers

The new teachers might be scary (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Being split-up from existing friends and making new friendships

How will you get the children from different schools to become friends? (Priory Church in Wales School, Brecon)

The new school would be too big; we won't know where the classrooms are or our friends. (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

- 7.14 Furthermore, Ysgol Cradoc pupils explained that they '*come from a small primary school and we want to go to small secondary school.*'

- 7.15 Additionally, the pupils had a range of questions about the proposed new school, many of which concerned staff. For example, they asked: whether current teachers from Brecon and Gwernyfed would be employed there; whether they would need to reapply for their jobs; and how PCC plans to recruit to a new school bearing in mind travel times. They also enquired how long the facility would take to build.

- 7.16 There were also general worries in the GHS catchment workshop about the timing of having to move to a new school (if approved). Many workshop pupils would be studying for their GCSEs around this time, which they felt would be unsettling and disruptive:

All of the changes will happen at the most important time – our GCSEs (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

When things change we may be at GCSE level which may impact on our exams. (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Gwernyfed)

- 7.17 Despite the general concerns about and opposition to the proposals, some pupils in both workshops acknowledged some potential benefits to having one larger school. In particular they felt that the two existing schools: would be 'stronger' together; would offer opportunities to make new friends; and could be combined into a modern building with better facilities:

There will be better facilities in the new school (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

The good things from both schools can come together (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

We will have a newer school (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

It brings people from different schools together to better support one another (Gwernyfed)

There will be new computers and more lockers (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

There will be more children to meet and more friends (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

There will be somewhere new to explore. (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

PCC's Proposals: Closure of GHS

- 7.18 There was a great deal of support for GHS and thus strong opposition to its proposed closure. Pupils explained that Brecon High School (henceforth BHS) is considered '*to be the problem*' - in contrast to GHS, which was described as '*a good school*'. Furthermore there was concern that a merger of BHS and GHS would negatively impact on the latter's performance:

What is the purpose of closing Gwernyfed? It's a good school (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

Why are we merging when the issue is with Brecon? (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Gwernyfed)

The two schools are very different, why merge them? (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Why do we have to shut down a good school and join a bad one? (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Will Gwernyfed's school ranking go down by joining with Brecon? (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

- 7.19 Another important issue for some was the impact of the proposed closure on its associated clubs, especially the Rugby Club. Indeed, there is apparently a great deal of uncertainty around their future insofar as the area's children would likely choose to attend clubs around their new school rather than in their local area:

Gwernyfed Rugby Club might be impacted, I'm worried people will stop going there (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

It will be bad for the Rugby Club if Gwernyfed closes (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

If there's no Gwernyfed school how will it impact on clubs? (Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools, Brecon)

There are over 30 clubs run by Gwernyfed High School – what will happen to people’s jobs?
(Llangorse Church in Wales School, Brecon)

- 7.20 There was also worry about how communities and friendships would be affected by the proposal: that is, existing friendship groups may break up, especially as some pupils would be likely to attend schools other than Brecon depending on their location. Some participants also explained that their siblings currently attend Gwernyfed and that they wish ‘*to follow family footsteps.*’

If Gwernyfed is closed all the children will have to go to different schools and be split up (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

Not everyone will go to Brecon; they will go elsewhere such as Herefordshire if they live on the border (Clyro Church in Wales Primary School, Gwernyfed)

If Gwernyfed closed the community around the school would die too. If that happened then our school numbers would drop and Clyro would be forced to close too (Clyro Church in Wales Primary School, Gwernyfed)

My dad works in Gwernyfed sometimes and he says it’s a good school, and he wants me to go there. My mum, dad, stepmum and grandad all went there. (Gwernyfed catchment area)

- 7.21 Furthermore, Llangorse and Clyro pupils said that more houses are being built in the area (specifically ‘*over 400 in Talgarth*’) and that ‘*the number of pupils in Gwernyfed may go up.*’

- 7.22 Finally, pupils were keen to understand what would become of the GHS building if it were to close:

I’m worried about what will happen to the old building if it’s knocked down (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Alternative Suggestions

- 7.23 Pupils proposed some alternative suggestions that they felt would result in less disruption for GHS and the pupils within its catchment area. These included: retaining GHS in its current form and focussing on improving BHS without a merger; merging BHS with another school; merging GHS with Crickhowell High School; and reversing the proposal so that the single site school would be located in Gwernyfed rather than Brecon:

Gwernyfed is a good school – leave it as it is and build a new smaller school in Brecon (Ysgol Cradoc, Brecon)

Why not deal with the issues in Brecon and leave Gwernyfed alone? (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

Brecon doesn’t need a ‘super school’; it can just be a normal one without closing Gwernyfed (Ysgol Llyswen, Gwernyfed)

Why doesn’t Brecon join another school? (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Why don’t they knock Brecon High School down and make them join Gwernyfed? (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

Why can’t it be the other way around? (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

I think they should just close down Brecon because Gwernyfed is doing ok (Llanfaes Primary School, Brecon)

I’d rather join with Crickhowell because it’s a better school. (Bronllys Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

- 7.24 Pupils in both workshops questioned why the money earmarked for the proposed new school could not be spent on repairing and maintaining the two schools instead of building a new one. This, to many, was a preferable option:

Why does Brecon need a new high school? Why can't you just put new windows in and carry out the repairs? (Ysgol Cradoc, Brecon)

How is there no money for repairs but money to build a new school? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

Why are you wasting time having meetings and making changes and not improving what is already there? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

It will take £50 million to build the new school, which instead can be used to repair both schools (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Brecon)

If you have money to build a new school why can't you repair the current ones? (Hay-On-Wye County Primary School, Gwernyfed)

- 7.25 Finally, building two new schools on the respective sites was suggested – to be funded by the savings made from not having to transport pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment to Brecon:

Why don't you build two new schools at the two sites and use the money that would have been spent on transport to pay for them? (Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools, Brecon)

Post-16 education

- 7.26 The proposal for post-16 education to be delivered via the NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon was not met with a great deal of opposition, though pupils in the Brecon catchment workshop were more sceptical and questioned: why the new school would not have its own sixth form; why PCC cannot run the college; whether the college would offer a sufficient range of subjects; and why the Council feels NPTC would provide better post-16 education than the proposed new school.

If you are going to build a new school why is sixth form not going to be there? (Sennybridge Primary School, Brecon)

Will the sixth form be able to provide a good range of subjects such as agricultural and engineering choices? Can they deliver? (Llangorse Church in Wales School, Brecon)

Why do you think that going to sixth form in a college is better than going to a sixth form in a high school? (Priory Church in Wales School, Brecon)

- 7.27 There was also some concern about being unfamiliar with the college teachers:

I'm worried about going to a sixth form where I don't know the teachers. (Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools, Brecon)

- 7.28 However, some pupils recognised the benefits of having a better range of subjects available at A-Level:

There will be new subjects (Talgarth Community Primary School, Gwernyfed)

There will be plenty of subjects. (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

Welsh Medium Education

- 7.29 The plans to continue Welsh-medium education in Builth Wells High School but not at Brecon was also met with criticism, mainly from Ysgol y Bannau pupils. They were chiefly concerned about:

The lack of Welsh medium secondary education locally discouraging parents from sending their children to Ysgol y Bannau – leading to a decline in the Welsh language in the Brecon area

Children won't come to Ysgol y Bannau because there won't be a high school (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

Have you thought about the impact on Ysgol y Bannau? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

We are worried about losing the Welsh language if pupils transfer to English-medium education. (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

The distance between Brecon and Builth and the logistics of being so far from home if, for example, they became ill while at school

If you live in Brecon but have to go to school in Builth and you got ill, how would you get home? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

The cost to PCC of having to transport pupils from Brecon to Builth

It will cost more money to transport pupils to Builth Wells. (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

^{7.30} Pupils in the Brecon catchment area thus urged PCC to continue Welsh-medium education at their local high school:

Save our schools! If you are going to build a new school (in Brecon) why is Welsh education not going to be there? (Sennybridge Primary School, Brecon)

Why not build a big bilingual school in Brecon? (Sennybridge Primary School, Brecon)

Why can't you just make the Welsh-stream in Brecon better? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

Can't some of the teachers come from Builth to Brecon to help the teaching quality? (Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon)

8. Additional Learning Needs Focus Groups

Main issues and themes from the Additional Learning Needs Focus Groups

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 8.1 ORS to facilitated and reported on the findings of deliberative focus groups with children, staff and stakeholders to explore the ways in which the proposals could affect Additional Learning Needs (henceforth ALN) provision across the County. The point or purpose of these focus groups was to allow PCC to engage with, and listen to, pupils with ALN, as well as the staff and stakeholders involved in delivering support to these pupils. They were given the opportunity to ask questions about the proposals and to share their opinions and concerns about how the proposed changes may affect pupils with ALN across the County. The groups also provided the opportunity for the pupils, staff and stakeholders to become more informed about the consultation process, the case for change and the proposals.
- 8.2 A total of three focus groups were held in May 2016: one with pupils from Ysgol Penmaes (including three who also attend Brecon High School on a part-time basis) with ALN; and two with stakeholders. The latter included staff members, Governors and representatives of a range of organisations including: Powys CHC, Powys Carers and Powys County Council.
- 8.3 The workshops were held and attended as follows:

Location	Date	Participant Type	No. of attendees
Cartrefi Cymru	Friday 16th May 2016	Staff and Stakeholders	10
Ysgol Penmaes	Friday 20th May 2016		
Ysgol Penmaes	Friday 20th May 2016	ALN pupils	11

- 8.4 ORS worked in collaboration with PCC to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meeting, which covered the following topics and activities:

- Participants' knowledge of the consultation and proposals;
- PCC's case for change;
- PCC's proposals; and
- Alternative options

Pupils and stakeholders were encouraged to ask any questions they wished throughout the discussions.

Reporting

- 8.5 This section of the report presents the main themes and key points arising from the ALN focus groups. The opinions expressed were not always unanimous, but we have endeavoured to reflect the range of views expressed. Some important common themes emerged from discussions across all three groups and these are reported below; but issues relating to a particular catchment area or school have been highlighted. Many quotations have been used (in italics), not because we wish to endorse any views, but in order to illustrate some of the more common and important themes and issues.

Main Themes Raised at the ALN Focus Groups

Views on the Case for Change

Stakeholders

- 8.6 Many stakeholders recognised that ALN funding is a key issue and discussed current staff shortages:

Additional Learning Needs haven't got any staff. We have more children in exams who need a scribe than we have got staff for. (Stakeholder)

Without increases to this funding, there was doubt that the proposals would result in any improvements for ALN pupils, which begged the question of 'what more mainstream schools can do' without more money and resources:

We had ALF and there are a few classroom interventions...but a bigger school won't help; the same children will need the same support but the funding formula won't change. You can't have six children and one scribe, and the parents are fighting for as much as they can such as one-to-one to one support; but this change is not going to help them. (Stakeholder)

Pupils

- 8.7 Pupils were aware of the proposals and were of the view that PCC is considering them due to Brecon High School (henceforth BHS)'s poor financial situation and building condition. Indeed, some had first-hand experience of the latter and were in agreement that change is necessary not only to improve the environment for pupils, but also to save money:

Brecon hasn't got any money, they spent it all (Pupil)

They are shutting Brecon School because it is getting old (Pupil)

I remember when we went up there to a drama class and it was falling apart then (Pupil)

It needs to be refurbished; the walls are literally crumbling (Pupil)

They want to save money; they may actually have some money if they build a new school. (Pupil)

- 8.8 However, there was little, if any, agreement that Gwernyfed High School (henceforth GHS) requires improvement and replacement with a new school.

PCC's Proposals: A New School in Brecon

Travel, access and location

Stakeholders

8.9 The impact of travelling longer distances was discussed at length and stakeholders were keen to know whether any of their concerns had been considered by PCC when developing its proposals. Overall it was felt that additional travel would have a detrimental effect on the well-being of pupils with ALN in the following ways:

Routine and continuity is imperative for some ALN pupils, and time spent travelling as well as changes to current travel arrangements could lead to increased anxiety and stress

If there is provision in Brecon then there would be those who would have to travel and there has been some feedback on transport and anxiety. It is the whole change! (Stakeholder)

For a lot of children they find the journey anxious. For those with a sensory impairment it takes time to learn...that has to be a consideration (Stakeholder)

Change has a detrimental effect. Trying to cope with exams, trying to cope with the hour on the bus when public transport is rubbish... I am concerned that the tone of the business case has dismissed this and it will have to be addressed (Stakeholder)

Pupils will be exhausted as a result of travelling further and longer days

For younger ones it is a long day. They are absolutely knackered. It could be at that age they are not naturally equipped to deal with that... (Stakeholder)

There are those who already travel far; but you are going to add that travel time. They are going to be exhausted! (Stakeholder)

Public transport cannot be relied upon, which may result in poor attendance

Public transport is rubbish; what if they cannot get in, attendance could potentially come in (Stakeholder)

Pupils without sufficient support at home (such as young carers) would be affected by the logistics of their starting day earlier and pick-ups/drop-offs

If they have to get transport earlier I am worried about their nutrition; they are not getting the support at home. If children are turning up and they haven't had a good start... (Stakeholder)

There would be a group that would struggle with the transport and struggle to be picked up; like carers (Stakeholder)

It would be unacceptable for pupils with specific issues such as incontinence to be expected to travel further

There are children who have continence issues; if you increase their journey it will be untenable. This needs to be factored in. (Stakeholder)

8.10 The ease with which wheelchair users would be able to access public transport was discussed, as was the loss of independence for those who can currently get to and from a local high school themselves, but would not be able to do so if they were required to travel further.

- 8.11 In addition, the logistics of accessing the Autism unit while the school was being run over two sites was questioned, specifically whether staff would be expected to travel between Brecon and Gwernyfed:

A Year 8 pupil couldn't just access the Brecon unit...which site is going to have the ASD unit while there are two sites. Will staff be travelling between the two sites? There should be equality of access. If there is going to be pupil support there then it needs to be on both of the sites. (Stakeholder)

- 8.12 Stakeholders emphasised the importance of keeping ALN services within communities because of providers' local knowledge and better understanding of the needs of pupils and families:

It all comes back to knowledge about the local community; you need to know what is happening and Brecon and Gwernyfed are two different communities (Stakeholder)

We are talking about Powys, not an urban area; this is considered to be a strength in Powys and from the parents' perspective it is more about the school and the community setting. (Stakeholder)

- 8.13 It was also argued that attending a school further away could weaken pupils' links to their local communities, which could lead to: mental health problems such as anxiety, especially for those with spectrum disorders who rely on the structure and routine of being within their local areas; young people not being home in time to attend local after school-clubs; and some pupils requiring help and support from their local communities later on in life, but encountering difficulties in doing so if they have become disconnected.

- 8.14 Furthermore, it was reasoned that pupils are 'entitled to be in their communities' and that integrating with pupils within their local areas is an important part of their socialisation.

- 8.15 Despite the above however, one stakeholder was undecided about what is more important for and beneficial to pupils: attending a school in their local community or potentially being offered better opportunities in a larger one, albeit out-of-area:

Overall there is always going to be this dilemma with having a bigger campus, opportunities and economies of scale or keeping pupils in their own communities...you only think what you have got is best, because you don't know what anything else will be like. (Stakeholder)

Pupils

- 8.16 Interestingly, travel and access was not discussed as eagerly in the pupil focus group: it was certainly not considered to be a key issue. Indeed 10 of the 11 participants are currently travelling to Ysgol Penmaes/Brecon High School from other areas in Powys and most did not think this impacts on their quality of life or education:

It is a positive; I go in my taxi and I can listen to my music to pass the time. (Pupil)

- 8.17 However, there was some concern among a few that Brecon High School is too distant from some pupils in in the Gwernyfed catchment area, which may affect the numbers attending any new school there:

Keep Gwernyfed as it is; some children won't want to travel from Brecon (Pupil)

Even if you do build a bigger school, some might not come because it is too far away. (Pupil)

- 8.18 In addition, another pupil who currently travels from outside Brecon to their school explained that 'it can sometimes be quite tiring when you are on your way home'.

A Larger School?

Stakeholders

- 8.19 Some stakeholders were sceptical as to whether a larger school would benefit pupils with ALN: their main concern was that being around so many more pupils would increase anxiety and stress levels:

The numbers of pupils in Brecon High School are high now; if they double it that would affect their anxiety. There won't be the low arousal space. A new site could possibly have improvements but it is about the communication with parents about what will be there, and the number needs to be looked at (Stakeholder)

There are a number of youngsters who are not sitting in the main hall because of some sort of anxiety. (Stakeholder)

- 8.20 There was also worry around staff, particularly around ALN teacher to pupil ratios and that new staff may not be sufficiently qualified in or knowledgeable about ALN, resulting in some pupils 'slipping through the net':

What if the staff don't have the skills to help children with special needs? (Pupil)

Some people who have special needs just won't say and they will struggle through school, or maybe it won't be picked up by the teachers because they just think it's normal. (Pupil)

- 8.21 Another stakeholder reasoned, though, that being exposed to and getting to know other pupils, especially those with ALN, could be beneficial:

A larger environment could work for some pupils; seeing people who are similar to themselves could be good for them. They would like this, provided that they have the support. (Stakeholder)

Pupils

- 8.22 In contrast to most of the stakeholders, many pupils were positive about the thought of attending a larger school: they felt it would employ more teachers, offer a wider range of subjects and provide a larger support unit, thus enhancing the quality of their education:

There would be more options if it was a bigger school. If the Gwernyfed and Brecon teachers came together there would be more teachers and we'd have more help if we needed it. They would have more subjects and more exams...there would be more options (Pupil)

If they build a new school they could get a bigger unit (Pupil)

It would be good if they had a bigger unit; they could help people who are behind and need help with work. Eventually they could go back to the normal bit of school but have the option of using the unit if they want. (Pupil)

- 8.23 Pupils were also positive that combining Brecon and Gwernyfed would offer more socialisation opportunities through not only meeting new people, but also being able to see friends who currently attend different high schools more often:

It would make a nice change for the staff and pupils to meet new friends. Instead of coming all the way from Gwernyfed all the way up to Brecon to meet friends, they could see them in school; they would have a better social life and gives you the chance to see friends face-to-face. It widens your area (Pupil)

For those who go there it could be better because they would make more friends because there would be more people there. (Pupil)

This view was supported by someone who currently travels from an area outside Brecon to study there, and feels they have a wider group of friends as a result.

- 8.24 Conversely, there was some apprehension around having new teachers - and a few participants felt that they would receive better support from a smaller school where pupils and teachers can get to know each other well:

I think if the schools stay as they are and pupils know their teachers then they would have a better chance of support. If they go to a bigger school, students will lose out of having staff that they know (Pupil)

If they had a bigger school they could have different teachers, who might be like "who is this? I don't know him or her". I want the school to stay the same. (Pupil)

- 8.25 There was also some scepticism about how well pupils from Brecon and Gwernyfed would integrate because they 'don't really like each other'. This, along with a general increase in pupils, led to fears of more bullying within the proposed new school.

- 8.26 A few participants recognised that opinions on being part of a larger school will differ and thus recommended that the decision should be to some degree based on a pupil 'vote':

Some kids are looking forward to a bigger school, but others are not. Just ask the kids what they want; if most want to keep it the same, keep it the same, but if they want a new school then change it to that. There should be a vote so that pupils can have their say. (Pupil)

Alternative Suggestions

- 8.27 Although pupils accepted that BHS is in need of replacement, GHS was considered to be in good repair. As such, most felt it should remain 'as it is':

Now they have got a good budget in Gwernyfed, couldn't Brecon just sort themselves out? (Pupil)

They could just build a new school in Brecon? Why does Gwernyfed have to go? (Pupil)

- 8.28 Another suggestion was to repair rather than replace BHS:

They could keep Gwernyfed and repair Brecon; fix the important parts first. (Pupil)

Transition Management and Considerations Specific to ALN Pupils

Stakeholders

- 8.29 Stakeholders identified the importance of effective transitional management if the proposal is to go ahead; they emphasised that ALN pupils may find the changes particularly stressful, and asked how PCC plans to support them:

It is important that pupils from Gwernyfed are being managed well...how will they be supported in that move? (Stakeholder)

There are a lot of detachment issues, and that is just with 'normal' transition (Stakeholder)

Massive investment into time and resources is needed; it's not just about taking them for a trip around the school, it takes more than that. (Stakeholder)

- 8.30 There was particular concern around the current lack of funding and resources for vulnerable children, particularly in the area of mental health. This led some to question how pupils who may struggle with the changes would be sufficiently supported:

What services are available for pupils when things go wrong? Are there mental health services? There are no contingencies in place (Stakeholder)

There is a lack of support for those who have SEN from CAMHS. You either have to have an eating disorder or have tried to commit suicide; there is a lack of those who are just having a hard time. (Stakeholder)

- 8.31 Despite this perceived lack of support, suggestions as to how PCC could (and should) help pupils and their families with the transition were discussed, including:

Sufficient, ongoing communication;

Engagement with parents throughout the whole process;

Thorough assessments of pupils to ensure they receive the correct support;

Multi-agency working (for example between the school, social services and mental health services);

Providing as much continuity as possible; and

Beginning transitional support as early as possible.

Pupils

- 8.32 Pupils discussed the types of things they would find useful in navigating around and accessing facilities within a new school - such as maps, signposting, lifts and ramps:

Couldn't pupils have a map included with their planner to find their way around? (Pupil)

There needs to be access to lifts and stairs; Brecon High School has got a lift but it's broken (Pupil)

Having signs for people with wheelchairs so they know they're way around. They also need to have access so ramps and maybe a lift are needed. (Pupil)

- 8.33 While stakeholders discussed the importance of better joined-up working between schools and outside agencies, pupils explained that improving the links between Ysgol Penmaes and other high schools would be helpful in future:

If some of the pupils from Brecon High School want to do childcare courses they would have a better chance of working with the younger ones here (Pupil)

Quite a lot of high schools send their pupils here for work experience although we have to limit it. We have had some pupils who come to use our hydrotherapy pool if they have physical issues, and we've always had a good relationship with the high schools who send their pupils here. (Pupil)

Post-16 Education

Stakeholders

- 8.34 Most stakeholders recognised shortcomings with the current provision of post-16 education for ALN pupils, particularly in terms of access to a range of subjects:

Years ago there used to be catering in Brecon which has now gone, and courses such as painting which would be suitable for our pupils would only be available in Newton. (Stakeholder)

- 8.35 Therefore, participants predicted that college-based study would help improve ALN pupils' quality of education. Indeed, it was hoped that as well as providing better opportunities for pupils, encouraging and enabling more of them to attend college would free up space in schools such as Penmaes.
- 8.36 Despite this though, NPTC's apparently poor reputation and lack of suitable courses in the Brecon area led some to question whether it would be able to 'deliver' for ALN students:

Historically the provision of SEN in Neath College was good, but it hasn't yet spread to Brecon. However, if the provision would improve via the new college system, we could let more pupils go at the age of 16 rather than 19. Our special schools in the North and the South are full (Stakeholder)

It is about the NPT group being able to deliver what they are promising; potentially it could have a positive impact for our learners, and there would be some pupils who wouldn't be hanging on until they are 19 because there may be better opportunities (Stakeholder)

I think the college has a long way to go to build up confidence in schools to be able to say that 'we can offer this and we can offer that'. The secondary schools have also been saying that the college has been offering things that have then fizzled or withdrawn because there has not been enough take-up. Any changes will take time (Stakeholder)

It isn't just about the range of courses at the college, it is also about the levels that the qualifications offer. There is little availability for level one courses, and pupils might have to go straight to a level two, which will be too much of a jump for them. The provision all has to be integrated. (Stakeholder)

- 8.37 Other reservations included: whether college-based education only is the most appropriate option for such a large area; potentially less focus on the pupil wellbeing within the college compared to schools; and the implications of increasing numbers of pupils requiring transport for college, which is already too high:

Personally I am not convinced how suitable the college is to run across the wide area (Stakeholder)

The difference is that colleges are commercial whereas schools have an obligation and have focus on the pupils (Stakeholder)

Currently there are too many children who require a lot of transport for college. (Stakeholder)

- 8.38 The importance of transitional support for post-16 pupils, as well as partnership working between the college and adult services, was also discussed by stakeholders:

What will happen at sixth form? That will be the biggest gap in the provision (from transition support); will they be able to manage the transition? Any measures undertaken would have to include structure and communication (Stakeholder)

I would like to see the possibility of a transition class for post 16 education which would bridge the gap (Stakeholder)

Post-16 and 19 education should be linked to adult services provision; it is no good having them separately (Stakeholder)

There needs to be links between education and adult/social care services. (Stakeholder)

Pupils

- 8.39 Some pupils recognised the advantages of college-based education and were aware that Hereford College is a preferred option to BHS's sixth form for some students. Furthermore, participating pupils

who were planning to attend college explained that they were doing so because of the range of options and flexibility available to them:

You have options, so you can pick what options you want to do. I am doing ICT and Team Enterprise (Pupil)

On transition day in the afternoon we all sit in the hall and people tell us what options we can do for the following term. They ask us what our interests are and what we want to do. (Pupil)

^{8.40} However, most who were almost 16 years of age said they would prefer to continue their studies at Ysgol Penmaes because of the help offered to SEN students there, Makaton signs (a system of sign language for those who struggle to verbalise) for example.

9. Public Meetings

Main issues and themes from the public meetings

Overview of the Meeting Process

- 9.1 The public meetings were held on Tuesday 19th April 2016 (Brecon) and Wednesday 20th April 2016 (Gwernyfed) at the respective high schools. Each meeting received a standard presentation from PCC on the proposed changes, which was followed by a question and answer session between participants and a panel of PCC officers. According to figures provided by PCC, 1,013 members of the public attended the two sessions; 219 at Brecon and 794 at Gwernyfed.
- 9.2 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the public meeting process and the second is a concise review of the main issues raised by participants.

Main Themes Raised at the Public Meetings

Quality of Education

- 9.3 Participants at the meetings were unconvinced that reorganisation into a larger school alone will improve educational outcomes for pupils, and there was disquiet in both areas that PCC has not recognised the positive upward trajectory of both schools in its consultation materials:

The Council has an opportunity to find new ways of delivering education in a rural community which is challenging. The primary aim has to be to improve quality and there has been no evidence to suggest that these plans will do this... (Brecon Public)

This school is in special measures and you are saying those schools are failing. If you look at four Estyn monitoring forms for this school they say that this school has made a lot of progress and that isn't mentioned... (Brecon Public)

First of all I'm really pleased that someone finally congratulated Gwernyfed on their achievements; it's now as good as Crickhowell and Newtown...this school needs to continue. We can never, ever let this school go. (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.4 The perception that pastoral care is better within smaller 11-18 high schools was noted by a former pupil of GHS, who described how the dedication, understanding and support they received from familiar teachers was invaluable in helping them achieve their educational aims. They also discussed the importance of a sixth form in terms of personal development and fostering a sense of responsibility (PCC's post-16 proposals are discussed further later in this chapter):

...my desire is for the young people of Brecon to have the best educational provision and that to me is about the quality of that provision. My belief is that this is best done through an 11-18 school with cultural diversity (Gwernyfed Public)

I'm a former student in Gwernyfed: I just want to thank them for everything they've done, allowed me to achieve a first class degree. What I want to know is how you can implement the dedication they've shown me in such a large school? They take the time to understand and support you in every way, to be part of a sixth form where you can have responsibilities and show universities how

you've developed... I've grown through the school with (the teachers) knowing me. Their results are outstanding and there are far and few between where all students get their first choice uni. It shows their dedication and relationships with students... If you went to a new school, you only have two years' relationship, it is nothing compared to the seven years they had with me. How are you going to mirror that in such a big school and sixth form? (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.5 Once again, it was said that concerns around stability, options choices and educational quality within Powys may result in parents and learners choosing an education elsewhere:

I have serious concerns about the future of educational provision in Powys in terms of stability, options choice and quality... I very much want my children to have the best education in Powys but if I don't feel like they can get this I will look elsewhere. There is already evidence this is happening. (Brecon Public)

Finance and Funding

- 9.6 Participants were of the view that the proposals are simply about saving the most amount of money possible and not about improving pupil outcomes - and PCC was accused of wishing to close GHS to wipe out BHS's debts and moving too quickly to make changes in an attempt to secure Welsh Government capital funding for rebuilding the latter:

I believe these proposals are financially motivated rather than about the long-term future of the young people of Powys (Brecon Public)

It shouldn't be about cost. How much is it going to cost our children? (Brecon Public)

It's really upsetting to see a money-saving scheme rather than a teaching quality scheme. I don't see a problem with the quality of the teaching here (Brecon Public)

The purpose of the closure is of course to write-off the debt of Brecon... (Gwernyfed Public)

Welsh Government policies say you cannot merge a failing school with a successful school. Is this not just doing that through the back door to wipe Brecon's debts? (Gwernyfed Public)

In March last year you started this process and you were forced to stop it here by the court because you tried to steamroll it through without following your own code. You then tried to tell us you were pausing and reflecting, when really you're catching up before you miss the deadline for funding for Brecon High School from the Welsh Government... (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.7 The need to address Brecon's buildings issues were not disputed, but the vision of building a brand new learning campus without any certainty around long-term Welsh Government capital funding was - as was how the new debt burden will be managed in future:

We are proposing to close two schools without a guarantee at the moment that there is going to be money for a new one (Brecon Public)

One of [the] risks is the non-availability of Welsh Government capital funding to build the new school and one of the ways you are looking to address that potentially is 'the Council will look at the capacity to fund this from its capital budget programme'. I want to know, given pressures on Powys budgets and promises made in the past in the Gwernyfed cluster, that my children will not have to come to Brecon High School in its current state because 'at present it is classified as a condition 5D building'. Can you guarantee that the new build you are proposing that we deserve will be able to happen? (Brecon Public)

The £20m you're looking at spending, the interest on that alone will be in excess of 300,000. How the hell do you justify that? (Gwernyfed Public)

We're talking about a loan of £20 million pounds, that's going to have a colossal interest rate on it. And there's no mention of how much it would cost to make Gwernyfed successful in the future (Gwernyfed Public)

In favour of the proposals...saving of £300,000 a year, extended choice of A-levels and managing to get rid of unutilised places. What it doesn't seem to balance up is the capital cost of over £20million which gives us a repayment over 100 years. (Brecon Public)

- 9.8 One participant suggested the following phased approach to the use of capital funding:

The [BHS] building was classed as a D Fail in 2009 and at the rate you're going it will be a decade before the new building shows up. This is unacceptable. I propose a phased approach to this. Phase 1. You take £20 million of the £25 million allocated in the capital programme for a new school for between 600 and 800 to open in 2018...with a stage two that allows you to expand the Brecon campus. (Brecon Public)

This, they felt, would have the significant benefit of certainty, meaning the area's parents would be happy to send their children to the new school safe in the knowledge of a secure educational future for their children - and even more so were it to include a sixth form for continuing education:

You will then benefit from parents in Powys deciding to send their children here because there's a new building. If you keep delaying it people will lose their belief in you to care for their children and help them prosper. (Brecon Public)

Buildings and Estates

- 9.9 Discussions on buildings and estates focused primarily on the lack of surplus capacity at the proposed new school to grow and meet future pupil number projections.

Based on your figures, within two years the school will be at full capacity. How is that a 21st century school if it has no capacity to grow? There will be only eight spaces in a 1,100 capacity school. (Brecon Public)

- 9.10 Brecon participants also sought clarification on whether NPTC's facilities will have the capacity and resources to cater for an additional range of subjects and increased number of students at post 16 - and those at Gwernyfed asked for information about how existing community facilities provided by the school sites will be maintained for community use:

I want an assurance from NPTC that there will be no watering down of vocational qualifications on the college site if A-Levels are to be provided there. The site is only so big and can only accommodate so much (Brecon Public)

There are current room problems and lack of space. How will you make sure you have enough space for the extra students coming to (the college)? (Brecon Public)

The school organisation code states your proposal has to show how community facilities provided by the school will be maintained... Where in your proposal do you deal with how Gwernyfed sports facilities and clubs (around 40) will be maintained when you close and then sell the Gwernyfed site? (Gwernyfed Public)

Pupil Impacts

9.11 Participants highlighted a number of concerns around the impact of the proposed changes on pupils' wellbeing, particularly in relation to:

Additional travel distance and time and their consequences for: reduced sleep, homework and recreational time; academic attentiveness; and extra-curricular participation both within and outside young people's home communities

First of all the commute, studies have shown that students who travel long periods of time to a school have reduced sleep time, recreational time, academic attentiveness and extra-curricular participation (Brecon Public)

Children wake up and have breakfast earlier and so by the time they get to school they are so hungry that they can't concentrate. They arrive home later as well and have less time to complete homework and relaxation which in turn can affect their mental health (Brecon Public)

How many hours is it going to take for pupils here to get to Brecon, and how many study hours will that equate to...quite a lot, don't you think? (Gwernyfed Public)

How are Powys going to support my child to access extra-curricular activities after school if they have to travel to Builth for Welsh education? Will you provide extra transport for them to do this? (Brecon Public)

You're forcing our children to either stay in Brecon and stay after-school for activities and missing the bus home, or going further away and coming home where there are no activities (Gwernyfed Public)

The mechanics and implications of schools providing more daytime extra-curricular activities

Gwernyfed provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities. P43 states the new school would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular activities during the school day. Can you explain how you see this working in reality and not impacting on learning or time in the evenings? (Gwernyfed Public)

Reduced pastoral care within a larger school

I love teaching in a small school. I'm in charge of pastoral care and I feel this is better in a small school. The teachers and the year heads and the form teachers know their pupils well; the pupils know everybody. The school is supportive as a community; younger students look up to the older students and the older pupils support the younger pupils. If you increase the sizes of the schools we're going to get a situation where pupils will barely know anyone in their year group let alone anyone else in the school (Gwernyfed Public)

The loss of role models, support and mentoring for younger pupils if sixth forms are removed

The recent Seven Brides for Seven Brothers production is a perfect example of why a sixth form environment needs to remain. It was fantastic and led by inspirational sixth formers who helped all of the years below them. Please don't get rid of it (Brecon Public)

Sixth forms are important to schools in providing mentoring to younger pupils...something for the younger children to look up to. The Seven Brides for Seven Brothers production;

without the sixth form that production would not have been able to take place. They provided key characters, worked backstage, provided props etc. (Brecon Public)

I'm an older sibling that has been through Brecon High School and I have had the opportunity to do Reading for Fun where I help Year 7s each morning with their reading. I've had the enjoyment of seeing them improve their English and reading skills. Removing the sixth form means this will no longer happen (Brecon Public)

Fracturing friendship groups

[Children] worry about the future of their school and their future. Llanigon school...when it closed, every single parent sent their child to a different school which broke up friendships. If this proposal goes through...a lot of parents don't want to send their children to Brecon. The closest school to parents in Hay will be Hereford. There's Crickhowell... Interfering with peer groups, undermining the future of their education...how can that possibly be good for the children in this area? (Gwernyfed Public)

How can a proposal that fractures children's confidence and their peer groups possibly be good for them? (Gwernyfed Public)

Teacher Impacts

- ^{9.12} It was said that the recruitment and retention of teaching staff is already difficult because of job insecurity - and that the possible removal of the challenge of teaching at A-level will further exacerbate this:

I have real concerns about recruiting and retaining good teachers because they love the challenge of sixth form. I have real concerns that we will struggle to recruit teachers to this area in future with no sixth form...I want some reassurance that A-Level provision is not going to be diminished or diluted in this area and that my children have the opportunity to achieve the very best A-Levels by qualified teachers (Brecon Public)

I'm planning to come to sixth form here, and I know job security isn't secure; how do I know my teachers won't be leaving half way through a course and not getting a high level of standard? (Gwernyfed Public)

Community Impacts

- ^{9.13} Both sets of participants raised concerns about the future prosperity, wellbeing and cohesion of their communities should the proposals be approved.
- ^{9.14} Participants at Brecon focused mainly on the negative impacts of losing the sixth form and Welsh language stream at BHS, commenting that pupils attending schools outside their local area will find it difficult to attend extra-curricular activities, resulting in alienation and a general 'erosion of community cohesion':

How are we going to build up our grass roots sports provision here in Brecon? Children will have to choose between sport and Welsh... (Brecon Public)

A study said that farming our children off from our local community is an erosion of community cohesion. They will not feel welcome in their own communities with their friends here and them being farmed off... (Brecon Public)

- 9.15 At Gwernyfed, meeting attendees were strongly opposed to the proposed closure of their local school, which they felt would eventually also lead to the loss of its associated community clubs and groups (the latter being essential for well-being and cohesion):

We have nearly 200 children playing rugby, recognised as one of the most successful community clubs in Wales...with an extremely close relationship with governors and staff of Gwernyfed High School. Any change to the school has the potential to affect the viability of our club. We are continually using each other's facilities and there is a seamless relationship between pupils and the club... Children want to play with new friends in new schools, so if the school goes, we will wither and die. With no junior section, you will have no senior section. It builds long-term health, and lays the foundations for good mental health... If the school closes, the club will enter a period of decline... (Gwernyfed Public)

People are worried their group/club will wither and die when their young people transfer to Brecon... If you decide to proceed with these proposals, you're signing our death wish. We'll see the funeral for not only our school but our sports clubs etc. (Gwernyfed Public)

As president of an arts organisation we make a great deal of use of this building; and we have a very close relationship with this school in terms of curriculum. It's not just sports; it's going to be arts as well. This school has 35 community organisations and 33 have told us that they will close. That will affect all 12 communities in this area. (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.16 Another significant issue at Gwernyfed was that approval of the changes would be very much against the will of the people and would result in the further depletion of essential services. This, it was said, will result in families 'voting with their feet' and leaving the area - leading to further falling pupil numbers (and financial premiums) and broken, ageing communities. Some of the very many typical comments were:

If pupils are happy with Gwernyfed, parents are happy with Gwernyfed, the community is happy with Gwernyfed, what on earth makes you think we'll be happy to move our communities and children to another community while this one dies? (Gwernyfed Public)

You should realise people are not coming to Powys because there are no provisions for education, health and etc. People are not attracted here because of your lack of provision of services in the community. Falling numbers are the result of a poor service attracting few people to the area... (Gwernyfed Public)

We want to support Brecon; we want Brecon to do well. This school could help Brecon. Don't destroy it...the legacy will not be a shiny new building, but one shrouded in shame and disgrace. Each of our twelve communities will face a bleak future, with our most able pupils moving across the border. Some legacy (Gwernyfed Public)

Are Powys County Council willing to risk members of the community voting with their feet and leaving the county to obtain suitable education for their children; exacerbating the problem of reducing pupil numbers. They are future life-blood, our employees and our employers. We will not have the backbone we need in Powys to sustain it (Brecon Public)

They'll leave and take the money for the pupil premium with them. How can that be good for people around here and people in Powys? (Gwernyfed Public)

I don't want my daughter going to Hereford, but I don't want her going to Brecon either so she will be going to Hereford. Could we not have a through school in Brecon and keep Gwernyfed here to stop people going to Hereford? (Gwernyfed Public)

If you do that, young families will move away, all the houses will be occupied by old people like me... (Gwernyfed Public)

Gwernyfed students aren't going to come [to Brecon]...they will go over the border. It might work on paper but it won't work here because parents will vote with their feet. You have to deal with the reality and not what you want the reality to be (Brecon Public)

Closing this school will make councillors agents of destruction for this community and county. If you want people to not come here, and leave in droves, this is exactly the way to it. (Gwernyfed Public)

- ^{9.17} Overall, there was a definite sense that the financial savings that will be realised as a result of PCC's proposals in no way compensate for the 'destruction and loss' they would ultimately bring, especially within the Gwernyfed catchment area:

I can't believe that all this destruction and loss of what is inestimable value can really be for £300k. Even for many more times that, it's not right. (Gwernyfed Public)

Post-16 Education

- ^{9.18} Meeting participants were extremely concerned that the NPTC group does not currently have the capacity to deliver at least equal or better quality post-16 provision than is currently offered in South Powys in terms of teaching quality, subject and teacher availability and facilities such as science labs and common rooms. Some of the many comments made can be seen below:

Some research I've looked at suggests that children learn best at the A-Level post-16 stage either in a dedicated sixth form college setting (not a general FE college), second best is an in-school setting with a large sixth form, third best is a general FE college which is what Powys are proposing. I don't want that experience for my child (Brecon Public)

What guarantees have you received from NPTC that will assure us parents that the appropriate teaching standards, subject availability and facilities will be available from the outset from the Brecon campus and will remain in the long-term? (Brecon Public)

I want to know who will be teaching AS-Levels and A-Levels. Will it be qualified teachers with degrees and professional qualifications and expertise in these A-level subjects? Key Stage 5 standards in Powys are excellent already; why are we risking the future of our pupils by sending them to a college with no track record of achieving success at A-Level (Brecon Public)

I was looking at consultation doc that points out that the A to E are 99% at Neath which are higher than Wales and Powys. But it omits the fact that Gwernyfed is 18% higher A* to B than Neath (Gwernyfed Public)*

In the three years where we have had students accessing Psychology, we have only had one student passing A - C. We had to get them private tuition because they were teaching the wrong syllabus (Gwernyfed Public)*

At the moment the timeline gives the college seven months to go from 13 A-levels to a proposed 25. How on earth will they recruit the teachers they need and develop the space to do that? (Brecon Public)

I notice that some of the courses that are offered are science courses and I know you don't have labs at your Brecon campus so how will you deliver these? (Brecon Public)

What do they provide [at NPCT] for when they're not in lessons? Are there areas for them to go and be fruitfully occupied or are they turfed out into town? (Brecon Public)

Some of the info I've heard about provision by NPT says that there is no provision of labs, a common room and other things... (Gwernyfed Public)

I have an email from NPTC teachers saying that they do not have any working labs there, and we actually teach one biology student here at Gwernyfed; they couldn't get access at NPTC (Gwernyfed Public)

We're having students sent to us at Gwernyfed to study science because you don't have any labs. (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.19 Participants also noted the lack of assurance around sustainability and that all the advertised courses will continue to be delivered locally and not transferred to Neath or cancelled altogether once commenced due to student or teacher shortages - and about the lack of accountability in such an event:

Who's to say the college will continue to provide? They have pulled the course my daughter was supposed to be doing this year. I have had to go out of county (Brecon Public)

In the proposal you say that NPTC will offer a minimum of 25 A- and AS-levels. Can you guarantee that all of these subjects will be offered at the Brecon campus and they won't transfer to Neath? (Brecon Public)

They can offer them, but if they aren't taken up by enough students they can then withdraw at a moment's notice. They made it clear...that Powys County Council could do nothing to prevent that, so if your child started that course they could do nothing to stop you taking it away or they could move it all the way to Neath! Something they've already done this year; at the beginning of the academic year they offered Performing Arts and it's been withdrawn and moved to Neath. And another pupil can only access her lessons in night school (Gwernyfed Public)

If a pupil has problems with NPTC, we can do nothing. (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.20 All this is compounded by a sense that Brecon and Gwernyfed pupils are not being offered the same choice of post-16 provision (that is, a sixth form in addition to a tertiary college) as others are across the county:

I would like to record that I object to the proposal to turn Brecon High School into an 11-16 school...this proposal would mean that the children in the Brecon catchment area would be the only ones in Powys without an option for a sixth form in a school (Brecon Public)

It's quite clear that the choice of a sixth form should be offered to this community as it is being offered to all other Powys communities. It's not fair (Brecon Public)

We are all committed to having a sixth form in this area. Why is it happening here? Why isn't it happening across all of Powys at the same time because that's what's fair? (Brecon Public)

You might want to look at the North of the county where Llanfyllin High School notes how proud they are of their sixth form because of the outstanding contribution sixth form students make to their school. Why shouldn't students in Brecon have that opportunity to allow the younger students

to learn from the sixth form and see that development but also as sixth formers to be leaders and to take on that role? (Brecon Public)

- 9.21 In light of the above, it was strongly suggested that the current arrangement - close collaboration between sixth forms and the college - is maintained:

It is clear that the community wants a sixth form in close collaboration with the college for vocational courses. Some pupils want to have both and there should be strong collaboration between the two sectors because they both have something to offer. It should not be a takeover but a collaboration (Brecon Public)

The choice of A-levels from NPT can still be there, with two schools (Brecon Public)

You must listen to what people want here. They want a Welsh stream and they want a sixth form. I believe the role of the college is to do what the college does best and provide that vocational partnership. (Brecon Public)

Welsh Medium Education

- 9.22 There was grave concern that the transferal of the Welsh stream to Builth Wells High School would be to the detriment of Welsh culture in the Brecon area and also to a lesser degree in Gwernyfed:

Please don't underestimate the negative impact your proposals will have on English and Welsh education and the Welsh language more generally in our community (Brecon Public)

You mentioned that the Welsh Government will be funding the new school in Brecon. Does the Welsh Government know you're destroying the Welsh language in this area? Poll in Hay school; 75% of parents will be sending their parents to Herefordshire, even before high school age. Will they fund it, based on the loss of Welsh language in this area? (Gwernyfed Public)

You are teaching our children that their language and culture play second fiddle to another country. I don't want my son to think it's unimportant and that English is more important. Should you not be promoting Welsh? Feel proud of your language and culture not ashamed of it and farm them off to other places. It's not a choice it's our goddamn right to speak Welsh on a daily basis (Brecon Public)

You mentioned that centralising provision will grow the Welsh language community. How do you see that panning out seeing as you are shipping people away from Brecon for their Welsh medium education? It looks to me like you are trying to kill the Welsh language in the Brecon area (Brecon Public)

- 9.23 Moreover, participants in Brecon suggested that the proposals will make local parents think twice about choosing Welsh medium primary education for their children if there is no local high school Welsh medium provision available - with the overall effect that numbers of Welsh medium pupils will decline and ultimately affect the viability of both the Welsh medium stream at Builth Wells and of Ysgol y Bannau:

I understand what you are trying to achieve regarding Welsh and that is a larger cohort of pupils to be able to provide a broader range of subjects at GCSE level. But what this plan does is undermine the numbers of people going into that medium because parents will not choose Welsh medium education for their children if they know they have to be bused. It will just about suffice for the people who are already in the system but parents will not actively choose Welsh medium provision in the Brecon area if they know their children will have to travel... This is especially for parents who are English speaking and take a leap of faith to put their children into Welsh medium because they

see the value of it. But they won't do that if they can't have their children continually educated in this system (Brecon Public)

This will have an adverse effect on the numbers of children wanting to have Welsh language education in the Brecon area (Brecon Public)

Won't this mean closing Ysgol y Bannau in future? (Brecon Public)

- 9.24 One participant suggested that this will also mean fewer young people reaping the many benefits of bilingualism in future, as the following quotation demonstrates:

Research has demonstrated that bilinguals have a better memory, are better at multi-tasking, have better selective attention and have a better ability to learn languages and mathematics. They are also better socially and show greater empathy towards others. In the long-term bilinguals have a five-year delayed onset of dementia compared to monoglots. (Brecon Public)

- 9.25 Brecon participants also argued that the council's recent transport policy for Welsh medium education (that is, paying for pupils to be transported to Builth or even out-of-county to Ystalyfera) has damaged the prospect of strengthening provision at BHS and could be judged as pre-determination of the consultation outcomes:

Regarding the Welsh education, the decision to provide transport tied one hand behind our backs here in Brecon but with that other hand we will fight to keep it (Brecon Public)

With the Welsh provision, we didn't have a hope in terms of trying to sustain it (Brecon Public)

In terms of numbers, why does the County pay for Welsh-speaking pupils to go outside county to learn Welsh? You are using numbers to close this stream (Brecon Public)

It's disgusting that you have been spending money on sending children to Ystalyfera; it would have been much better spent bringing us up to 2b status than making children have to travel. The Welsh ethos in this area is much stronger than it is in the Builth area (Brecon Public)

Can you explain how paying for children to be transported to Builth prior to the start of consultation is not considered pre-determination? (Brecon Public)

- 9.26 It was also said that expecting pupils from Brecon's core Welsh-speaking area of Crai, Sennybridge and Trecastle to travel over 30 miles to Builth is unrealistic and will contribute further to the out-of-county pupil exodus given Ystalyfera is closer:

The core of the Welsh-speaking area of Breconshire is Crai, Sennybridge and Trecastle which is 11 miles at least to Brecon. If you expect those children to travel to Builth that is over 30 miles... Is 31 miles to Builth for Welsh education satisfactory; I think it's not. We are failing our young people... (Brecon Public)

- 9.27 A suggestion was thus made that PCC should: *look at not paying for children to go outside the county from Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge to bring the numbers up here in Brecon and keep the pupils in the county? I have friends who have sent their children to Ystalyfera to guarantee their education but looking at the numbers going to Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge, if you brought them to Brecon you would then have the same numbers as they have in Builth? (Brecon Public)*

- 9.28 Finally, there was also some scepticism that the anticipated critical mass of Welsh medium pupils will not materialise at Builth, meaning the promised wider range of subjects to be provided there will not either:

Let's assume the 'only 30' don't transfer from Brecon to Builth and you don't get your critical mass, how are you going to fund an improved and extended curriculum in Builth? (Brecon Public)

- ^{9.29} Overall, Brecon participants felt that the BHS Welsh stream has been intentionally downgraded in favour of Builth (as particularly highlighted by the aforementioned provision of free school transport for Welsh medium pupils to Builth and Ystalyfera) and that its loss is contrary to the will of local people, who recognise the essential contribution the Welsh stream pupils have made to both the school and the local community:

You will be fully aware that the transfer of children from Brecon to Builth over the past year has had a detrimental effect on the Welsh stream at Brecon, adding to the demise of the provision due to poor investment and management over previous years... (Brecon Public)

If parents wanted a Welsh education for their child it was pretty much Builth or nothing. The numbers were bound to increase at Builth because you didn't give anyone a choice (Brecon Public)

How does removing the Welsh stream from Brecon High School fit with the criteria success factor that it should be politically acceptable at a local level? Brecon Town Council have said they are voting against it so how does that fit? (Brecon Public)

We welcome a new school but we want it to be 11-18 and we want it to have Welsh medium provision ... We will continue to fight for our new school which we need but it has to be an all-through school with Welsh medium provision (Brecon Public)

Welsh medium education and the sixth form are important to Brecon High school and always have been. They make it what it is (Brecon Public)

The Welsh pupils played a major part in the Seven Brides for Seven Brothers production. They provide a lot of the creative heart of the school because they have a background in Eisteddfods. The school orchestra has been depleted, the choir has too since some of them left for Builth. You are taking away our culture (Brecon Public)

I've gone through the Welsh stream at Brecon and it's been a privilege and a pleasure to be here. The stream does a massive amount for the school and outside school... (Brecon Public)

Consultation Process

- ^{9.30} A number of people at the Gwernyfed meeting voiced distrust of the council based on its alleged mismanagement and poor implementation of the previous primary schools reorganisation consultation in their area:

Already been mentioned about the closure of primary schools in the Gwernyfed cluster and extent to which it undermines our faith in the Council to carry through promises (Gwernyfed Public)

Powys county council failed my children in primary schools; how can I be convinced that they won't be failed in secondary schools? (Gwernyfed Public)

How can we trust you? A lot of the animosity that you feel here is because many of us have already gone through the modernisation program of the primary schools. I remember sitting in a meeting similar to this and we were assured that none of the small primary schools would close down until the larger ones were redeveloped... Can I suggest you sort the primaries out before you think about the secondaries. After six years, porta cabins, not one brick has been laid in Hay. I can see a scenario where you close this excellent school, and do nothing in Brecon, just have a load of porta

cabins and in 10 years' time this school will be in ruins and a whole generation will be taught in porta cabins in Brecon receiving a substandard education... (Gwernyfed Public)

Considering your track record with the Gwernyfed primary school proposals which have yet to be delivered ten years on, how can you reassure us that you have the capacity and capability to deliver such widespread changes across the county? (Brecon Public)

- 9.31 Participants also sought reassurance that the balance of opinion will be considered and that the consultation process will be in line with the Welsh Government's legal requirements and compliant with wider relevant legislation - which was doubted by several attendees:

There is clearly a high level of opposition to the proposals, focusing mainly around the intentions around sixth form and Welsh medium learning (Brecon Public)

Does Powys County Council think the children of this county are important? Are you actually going to take any notice of young people's opinions? (Gwernyfed Public)

If you look at a new piece [of legislation] that's come in on the 1st April around the way in which wellbeing affects future generations. The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015. No one quoted it (Gwernyfed Public)

In the draft Community Impact Assessment Powys claims to apply the contents of the Schools Statutory Code which every Local Authority must comply with. We've found five failures to comply with [this]... That means you're acting unlawfully (Gwernyfed Public)

You also claim that you are complying with the UN charter of the rights of the child. Sorry to disappoint you, but we have found six failures in your documentation. That's just the Community Impact Assessment. The convention underpins every piece of legislation in the UK that relates to the child. Every public body must comply to every part of it... (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.32 A lack of confidence in the democratic process was also evident from the comments made at Gwernyfed, where people accused PCC of: not listening to public concerns; not wishing to have constructive discussions; and having already made up its mind to proceed with the proposals:

Please don't sit there and say this is a consultation exercise and you're just here to listen because we don't believe you. We assume that it's a done deal... (Gwernyfed Public)

I'm frustrated at consultation process. Anxiety and upset and stress has been caused by you, Powys County Council. You've taken a sweeping brush approach; and there's also a terminology called a cosmetic consultation (Gwernyfed Public)

Projections, Facts and Figures

- 9.33 Participants at the Gwernyfed meeting felt that not enough consideration has been given during the options appraisal to maintaining both sites in some form:

12 outstanding schools exceeding against the odds in Powys 2009. Students first, rich opportunities, outstanding teaching, outstanding well-distributed leadership and ambition. Not one mention of buildings. Gwernyfed High School demonstrates many of these already and is working hard to achieve more. They do that by balancing the books. Maybe a 12th option is needed; a costed plan to keep both schools and avoid closures. (Gwernyfed Public)

- 9.34 Furthermore, they said that local demographics (many families with school-age children for example) and population growth in light of local housing development should also have been factored in to the

pupil number assumptions in the case for change, specifically around the viability of maintaining the Gwernyfed site:

Over the next 10 to 15 years the population is expected to increase 10 to 15%. The fact you're predicting a decrease of 10 to 15% is crazy (Gwernyfed Public)

If you're looking at Powys as a whole or Wales as a whole it's different to what it is here. There's not many flats around here; what you'll find is a lot of people with school-age children. Certainly on your own figures there's a rise in places; we're back up to 2012 figures in five years. It seems a very short sighted approach. (Gwernyfed Public)

Figure 20: Other Issues and Sub-Themes from the Public meetings

Sub-Theme	Comments
Proposals are creating tensions between communities	<i>The tragedy of the proposals is that they have set community against community. It's disturbing that we have to have a conversation about which community is more Welsh – Brecon or Builth. Even parents have fallen out over these proposals. (Brecon Public)</i>
Impact of the proposals on businesses	<i>Without a local secondary school the area may not be attractive to younger people. There will be a reduction of young flexible part-time workers, so will you be supporting local businesses with business rate reductions? (Gwernyfed Public)</i>
Tertiary model may not transfer successfully to rural areas	<i>Welsh Government research (done by an independent professor) shows that whilst the tertiary model has done great things and lifted quality, that's mainly in urban areas. It also says that a one size fits all approach may not be the best option for rural Wales. (Brecon Public)</i>
Support at NPTC is lacking compared with BHS	<i>I've been to NPTC and have studied here at sixth form and I've had much more support. here. (Brecon Public)</i>
Student safety	<i>Do you think that security of the school has an impact on pupil numbers? When these proposals started in 2009 you've saying numbers have been decreasing since 2010... knock on effect? If you could secure the school, do you not think more people would come back to the area? (Gwernyfed Public)</i>
Additional levels of pupil stress	<i>Have you taken into consideration the stress its putting on students and teachers in the exam period? Personally I take a GCSE after school, additional maths. If I had to move to Brecon, my parents wouldn't be able to pick me up; around here I can get family or friends to pick me up. Would I just wait around? (Gwernyfed Public)</i>
Unachievable timetable for foundation of Shadow Governing Body	<i>6th September you're going to put it to the Cabinet then have a Shadow Governing Body in place by December... Given all the points raised, I think you're barking up the wrong tree. It's going to be an awful long time past December before you get that. (Gwernyfed Public)</i>
Teachers travelling between sites rather than students?	<i>Is there a possibility of teachers moving around rather than students? My understanding is that this is what the college does now. How come it hasn't been considered for the schools? (Brecon Public)</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
Concerns over the robustness of the post-16 options appraisal	<i>According to the consultation document the options appraisal framework for Builth and Llandrindod shows a 13 to 9 split in favour of a sixth form within schools - but for this area it's a 10/10 split... Why has the provision here gone towards NPTC and not a sixth form within the school if it's exactly split?</i> (Brecon Public)
Funding uplift for the same Welsh medium a-level courses at Builth Wells High school	<i>I've had friends who came from Builth to Brecon who said we offered the same number of subjects in the Welsh stream if not more. They get £100,000 more for the subjects which doesn't seem fair.</i> (Brecon Public) <i>[Builth] is getting much more money to deliver Welsh medium education and so we can't possibly deliver the same number of subjects...</i> (Brecon Public)
Condition of current Gwernyfed building	<i>In the consultation document for children you say one reason to close Gwernyfed is because some of it is old. Some of the best schools in the UK are in old buildings...</i> (Gwernyfed Public)

10. Written Submissions

Analysis of statutory stakeholder responses

Introduction

^{10.1} During the formal consultation process, 29 statutory written submissions were received concerning the proposals for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. The table below shows the breakdown of contributors by type.

Assembly Members/Members of Parliament	
Chris Davies MP (2 submissions received)	County Councillor Melanie Davies
County Councillor Matthew Dorrance	County Councillor William Powell
Other Political Groups	
Powys County Council Welsh Liberal Democrats Group	
School Governing Bodies	
Brecon High School Governing Body (2 submissions received)	Ysgol Y Bannau
Gwernyfed High School Governing Body	
Town/Community Councils	
Andrew Jones – Chairman of Gwernyfed Community Council (4 submissions received)	Llanigon Community Council
Brecon Town Council	Maescar Community Council
Erwood Community Council	Merthyr Cynog Community Council
Felinfach Community Council	Painscastle Community Council
Llangorse Community Council	Talgarth Town Council
Other Organisations	
Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales- Estyn	Association of School and College Leaders
Gwernyfed Campaign Group (2 submissions received)	Rhosgoch & Painscastle Toddler Group
Parents at Clyro Playgroup	

^{10.2} ORS has read all the written submissions and reported them in this chapter; none have been disregarded even if they are not expressed in a 'formal' way. It is a painstaking but necessary process to identify the main themes and issues raised by respondents.

^{10.3} All submissions have also been reviewed by Powys County Council; meaning that any submissions that present technical arguments that require more detailed consideration have been evaluated by appropriate members of the consultation team.

^{10.4} Submissions were initially classified on the basis of the type of individual or organisation submitting the response. They were then read in their entirety and the key themes and issues raised were collated, classified and reported using a standardised code frame.

- 10.5 Where multiple submissions present the same or very similar arguments, or refer to the same evidence or assumptions, they have been summarised collectively in the report of consultation findings without undue repetition. These summaries are presented in a thematic (tabular) format in order to identify the range of views and issues as well as common themes. This will ensure that Powys County Council is able to consider the important issues identified.
- 10.6 In accordance with Welsh Governments' School Organisation code, Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales- Estyn's formal response to this consultation is included in full in Appendix 1.
- 10.7 Finally, it is important to note that the following section is a report of the views expressed by submission contributors. In some cases, these views will not be supported by the available evidence - and while ORS has not sought to highlight or correct those that make incorrect statements or assumptions, this should be borne in mind when considering the submissions.

Main Themes Raised in Written Submissions from Statutory Stakeholders

Pupil Projections

- 10.8 The Gwernyfed Campaign Group questioned the validity of PCCs pupil number projections, quoting miscalculations within the consultation document:

946 [pupils] are shown as constant [in the consultation document] even though the plans involve the removal of the Welsh stream from Brecon and the transfer of the pupils to Builth Wells. Where does the number 946 come from? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

The table at the bottom of page 51 gives information about primary pupil numbers in Gwernyfed catchment. The totals given do not tally with the primary school figures given on page 69. The differences are not large but further undermine our faith in your calculations... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- 10.9 The Group – as well as Councillor Melanie Davies, Talgarth Town Council and Felinfach Community Council – also insisted that projected numbers are projected to rise in coming years:

In view of the fact - shown by your own data - that pupil numbers are expected to rise at Gwernyfed, please justify the reason given for closing the school... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Based on the pupil number forecasts for Gwernyfed...surplus places at the school will be 15% by 2019 - within what you say is the Welsh Government's agreed maximum for Powys - and by 2021 the surplus falls to just 8%. You will note that these pupil number forecasts do not take into account the extra 104 children expected from the housing developments you mention on page 52... Based on the above, do you agree that the arguments of 'falling pupil numbers' and 'surplus places' have no basis in fact and should therefore be removed from this proposal and from the Outline Business Case for the Beacons Learning Campus submitted to the Welsh Government? Please explain why you want to spend tens of millions of pounds building a new school to resolve a surplus places issue which - by your own admission – will not exist by the time building is complete (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Gwernyfed has the lowest surplus places at 20% and according to the data provided by the Council will achieve the required 15% by 2019; that's only three years away. The catchment is growing and only last week the National Park Planning Authority gave permission for over 80 houses in the Hay

area. This number was not factored in at the time of the proposal and will need to be considered along with other potential building developments (Cllr Melanie Davies)

Pupil numbers at Gwernyfed High School are already set to rise and by 2021 reach well over 500 (Felinfach Community Council)

There is a huge expansion of housing planned for the Bronllys area, so in a few short years there will in most likelihood be huge demand or even over subscription for school places. (Talgarth Town Council)

- 10.10 In any case, the Gwernyfed Community Council challenged the assumption that surplus places are harmful to schools' viability: they were considered perfectly acceptable providing school budgets are managed effectively:

Unfilled places are typically harmful due to the excess unproductive costs incurred. Unfilled places are thus only an issue where poor management and planning has failed to trim its teaching capacity to meet the needs of its pupil numbers. GHS has a balanced budget, has demonstrated diligent management of resources and has no underutilised teaching capacity. (Gwernyfed Community Council)

- 10.11 Furthermore, the Gwernyfed High School Governing Body suggested that uncertainty around the future of GHS has had a negative impact on admission numbers - but that the school has now re-established its intake and is in a stable position once more:

The uncertainty of the previous school reorganisation threat meant that parents moved their children to Herefordshire or Crickhowell and it has taken until now to re-establish our intake. (GHS Governing Body)

- 10.12 In terms of pupil numbers, it was said that the proposals themselves may, in fact, serve to further exacerbate the issue of falling pupil numbers given that many parents in the Gwernyfed catchment area will choose to send their children out of county, into England or to private school (Christ College) in preference to the proposed new school in Brecon:

Parents in Llangorse area also consider sending children to Christ College...Christ College both as a secondary school and a provider of Key stage 2 education has been omitted from the analysis and appears not to have been consulted on this matter... (Llangorse Community Council)

We have been told by up to 75% of parents in the Hay/Clyro area they will move to another high school if the proposal to close Gwernyfed receives cabinet approval... Why is the Council content to approve a proposal that will lose pupils, not only out of county but from the Welsh education system completely? How does this in any way address the issue of falling pupil numbers and surplus places? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

People will be looking to go over the English border for sixth form and other post-16 provision. This will also lead to Welsh pupils being relocated into the network of English primary and secondary primary schools feeding into that post-16 provision. In my opinion, we would then see a radical fall away in pupil numbers on the Powys side of the border and that would prove to be very, very damaging (Councillor William Powell)

It is not about how many students there are on each site, the critical consideration is how far apart the sites are and how long students would have to travel. Powys has not shrunk geographically in

the last five years. Crucially in this area, would our students opt to travel in to Brecon or head off to Hereford? (Talgarth Town Council)

Pupils are lost over the border, together with the funding they attract - and, crucially, the vitality that they would bring to our communities in the future is also lost. (Councillor William Powell)

- 10.13 Finally, Estyn want further clarity around the projected pupil numbers and capacity of the proposed new school:

The proposer refers appropriately to the current numbers of surplus places at both schools. Surplus places at Brecon High School currently stand at 36% and at Gwernyfed High School at 20%. However, the proposer does not provide a proposed capacity figure for the new school, or provide any information on projected pupil numbers at the new school. (Estyn)

Finance, Facts and Figures

- 10.14 Llangorse Community Council questioned why PCC *will not consider funding maintenance of GHS from its capital funds* - and asked whether the Council has set aside money for ongoing annual maintenance for the proposed new school to prevent it falling into disrepair.

- 10.15 Furthermore, the GHS Governing Body queried the £3.7 million 'backlog of repairs' figure quoted in the consultation document, asking whether it includes the cost of the recent renovation and re-fit of the Mansion House – as well as whether it is based on PCC's own service undertaking the work as opposed to potentially cheaper external contractors:

Does this figure include the renovation and re-fit of the Mansion House as recommended in the last Access Audit, 2009, and estimated at £196,500? If so, then it includes works no longer required to make the teaching spaces accessible. We now estimate this work to be nearer to £70,000 (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

Is this figure based upon the cost of the Powys CC FMS service providing the work? If so, we would suggest there are alternatives that could reduce the cost by between 25% - 50%...by procuring externally. (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

- 10.16 The Governing Body also goes on to say that it has: *many other ideas of further cost savings, all of which can divert funds into raising educational standards. We currently manage the cleaning for the five primary schools; have set up refuse and recycling contracts across the cluster and our mini buses support activities that would not have otherwise taken place due to cost.* (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

Transport and Travel

- 10.17 Respondents questioned the rationale of transporting pupils additional distances and the impacts this will cause for farming families (in terms of the time available for children to assist with the day-to-day running of farms) and to young people's attainment levels, access to educational and other opportunities, general well-being and connections to their communities:

On page 20 of the consultation document, one of the risks states 'additional travel time has a negative impact on pupil well-being and attainment', yet offers no suggestion as to how this negative impact will be addressed. Has the impact regarding travel times been seriously considered? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

When looking at Critical Success Factors on page 14 the document states 'to provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and...' ... What does access mean? How does increased travel time contribute to improved access? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

Some pupils from the current Gwernyfed catchment area will be on a bus for up to 2 hours per day. The health and well-being of these pupils will be damaged by placing time, travel and cost burdens on parents to support friendships and after school activities (Felinfach Community Council)

We do not wish for our children to be stuck on a bus for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon day in day out. We feel that this will have a negative impact on their ability to concentrate and will leave less time for their broad interests and after school activities. Many of our rural children live on farms and a natural part of their lives is to take care of their animals and helping with farm chores. If the children are on the bus for 2 hours minimum per day there will be no time for these lovely, family orientated activities... (Rhosgoch and Painscastle Toddler Group)

Agriculture is the backbone of this part of rural Powys ... pupils from farming backgrounds play a huge role in the day-to-day running of their family farms. Can the Council justify the increased travelling times for these pupils who are going to spend significantly more time on a school bus rather than helping on their farms? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

For the students, they would have significantly longer travel times and their associations with the local community would be strained and in many cases broken. (Councillor William Powell)

Indeed, Llangorse Community Council suggested that the prospect of additional travel time to Brecon may prompt Gwernyfed parents and pupils to consider furthering their education in Herefordshire, in contravention to several local and national policies designed to protect and meet the needs of rural Welsh communities:

Closing GHS will extend travel time resulting in additional stress to pupils. Not being able to face journeys in excess of an hour will mean no option for many but to go against their cultural needs and attend a Herefordshire school. This contravenes the PCC "One Powys Plan" and does not promote community cohesion and meet the needs of rural Welsh communities. It contravenes all the following policies: the Welsh Language Strategy 2012-2017 [and the] Welsh Government learner travel guidance 2014 (Llangorse Community Council)

How does PCC justify driving pupils out of county and country and encouraging the Powys "brain drain" and its knock on effect on local business and future of the rural economy, particularly in respect of its One Powys Plan and Welsh cultural policies? (Llangorse Community Council)

^{10.18} Moreover, Llangorse Community Council questioned whether pupils or staff would be required to move between sites (with the implicit suggestion that it should be the former):

Could PCC confirm that pupils will not be subjected to this procedure and it will be staff that move between schools rather than pupils? (Llangorse Community Council)

^{10.19} Felinfach Community Council and the Gwernyfed Campaign Group suggested that the proposals are premature and in need of review given that PCC's new travel policy is imminent:

When is the Powys Cabinet due to consider a new travel policy and when and how will the new policy be reflected in these proposals?' (Felinfach Community Council)

Why have you brought this proposal to consultation before publishing or implementing the New Schools Transport Policy, and what does Powys CC plan to do to remedy its failure to give members of the public the opportunity to respond to the transport elements of this consultation in the context of the new Schools Transport Policy? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- ^{10.20} Estyn would like to see a clearer risk management strategy from PCC relating to possible negative impacts that additional travel time would have on learners. They also want to see greater clarity on the exact provision planned for those learners having to travel more than one hour:

Similarly, the proposer acknowledges the issues associated with the additional travel times faced by pupils currently at Gwernyfed High School travelling to the proposed new school at Brecon, as well as for Welsh-medium learners currently at Brecon High School travelling to the proposed new school at Builth Wells. However, although the proposer acknowledges that these could have a negative impact on pupil wellbeing and attainment, the proposer is not able to offer any risk management measures beyond stating that travel time would not normally be more than an hour. It does not explain what provision it would make for those pupils for whom journey times would be longer than an hour. While the proposer acknowledges that the increased travel time is likely to restrict pupils' access to after-school activities at the new school, it does not discuss the risk that this might also impact negatively on their ability to access after-school activities in their home area. (Estyn)

Quality of Education

- ^{10.21} Estyn is unconvinced that the proposals will demonstrate an improvement in current standards and outcomes for pupils :

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards in relation to pupils' outcomes or the leadership and management of the new school. It does not consider sufficiently the risks involved in the proposal, particularly given the short timescales of its proposals. As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is unlikely to improve the present standard of education provision in the area. (Estyn)

Moreover, Estyn state that current standards at the schools are not adequately explained:

...The proposer makes appropriate reference to the outcomes of both schools' most recent Estyn inspections. It identifies correctly that Brecon High School remains in special measures and that Gwernyfed High School was removed from Estyn monitoring in February 2016. The proposer also refers briefly to the schools' categorisation within the National School Categorisation System. However, it provides no explanation of the context or detail for these judgements...Significantly, the proposer provides no analysis of the standards achieved by pupils at either school in terms of attainment at either key stage 3 or key stage 4.

- ^{10.22} Llangorse and Erwood Community Councils doubted the wisdom and indeed legality of combining two schools with varying educational standards and cultures into one larger school - particularly when the underlying rationale for the proposal is, in its view, to eradicate BHS's debts:

The proposal is clearly a merger of schools to deal with BHS debts. To suggest that this is not a merger is not acceptable. It is noted that a merger between a successful and a failing school is illegal. How does PCC explain that this is not a merger? (Llangorse Community Council)

This proposal is clearly an amalgamation/merger of two very different schools, both educationally and culturally. It is not the fault of GHS that education in Powys and particularly BHS, is in such a poor state. PCC have to take responsibility for that situation. Does PCC accept that it must take responsibility for this scenario and accept that it must not use its own poor performance and that of BHS as a factor to close a school that is functioning well? (Llangorse Community Council)

The current proposals are only to find a fundable solution to the problems at Brecon High School so that it gets a new school. (Erwood Community Council)

- 10.23 The area's Community Council was particularly concerned that a new school would not be subject to Estyn inspection for several years following the removal of BHS's special measures status, effectively ensuring a lack of standards monitoring at that school:

We are further concerned that the "rebranding" of the combined schools will effectively eradicate Brecon campus' Estyn rating, and defer further detailed inspection for at least three years. This is unlikely to be conducive to progress towards the standards sought by Estyn, although cosmetically useful for PCC. (Gwernyfed Community Council)

- 10.24 Furthermore, stakeholders were worried that an effective 'merger' cannot guarantee current educational and extra-curricular standards are maintained for GHS pupils let alone improved. It was also suggested that a larger school cannot provide proper pastoral care in the same way a smaller one can - and that the widely held view that schools with a minimum of 600 are preferable is no longer generally accepted:

How does PCC expect the resultant amalgamated school will comply with guidance in 1.3 of the WG schools organisation code in providing at least the equivalent standard of education for the pupils of GHS from day one? (Llangorse Community Council)

Can Powys CC guarantee that the quality of education in the merged school would be at least as good as the current high standards at Gwernyfed? (Felinfach Community Council)

GCC believe that these strategies would bring about very significant reductions to the level of academic outcomes for local pupils, with additional harm to health, well-being and social activities (Gwernyfed Community Council)

This is a breach of the Statutory Schools Organisation Code: 'there should normally be evidence that the alternative would deliver outcomes and offer provision at least equivalent to that which is currently available to those learners.' Can the local authority explain why it thinks a breach of statutory responsibility is acceptable? Can Powys County Council explain how the closure of Gwernyfed High School and Community Organisation meets [this statement]? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

A smaller school has clear benefits over a larger school in respect of quality of life and pastoral care, every child known by every teacher; this strengthens each pupil's personal development (Llanigon Town Council)

It is the strongly held opinion that breadth of academic choice is a relatively low priority, and greatly outweighed by the personal, social and welfare benefits of a small school... GCC notes the 2011 report A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Rural Secondary School Consolidation: A Report to Gwynedd County Council by James Foreman-Peck... [which] throws into doubt the orthodoxy favouring schools of a minimum of 600 pupils. GCC understands that the Welsh Government has adopted these findings and is no longer pursuing a 600 pupil threshold. (Gwernyfed Community Council)

- 10.25 Some responses suggested that PCC is removing a leadership team on an upward trajectory at Gwernyfed in favour of a new and untried formula - and is neglecting the fact that the school itself has improved significantly over the past few years in terms of educational standards and outcomes in developing its proposals:

The Governing Body at Gwernyfed has been acknowledged as being effective in its role by both Estyn and ERW (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

The school is developing a depth of skill and experience across the board that builds resilience into the future of the school. Estyn noted this development when they visited the school in February 2016... The good work of the Governing Body over the last five to six years has been swept aside ... How can the Council declare an ambition to establish an effective and resilient leadership team and then destroy one that already exists? (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

The consultation document states that the poor quality of education and learning outcomes in some schools is unacceptable. This cannot be applied to Gwernyfed High School. In its formal consultation meeting with the Governing Body, the Council formally acknowledged that the school is on an improvement journey. The significant improvement in standards and learning outcomes has been recognised not only by Powys County Council but also by ERW, ESTYN and the Welsh Government. In fact, the Fischer Family Trust Aspire demonstrates that Gwernyfed is now ranked 8th in terms of progress across the whole of Wales at Level 2+. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

Governance and Leadership

- 10.26 Stakeholders desired more clarity around the composition of the Shadow Governing Body and how PCC will ensure sufficiently strong leadership to enable the best possible start for the proposed new school - especially given that the current Gwernyfed Governors' vehement opposition to the Council's proposals means it is highly likely that most will leave their posts:

The structure of the temporary Governing Body will be critical in this proposal and whilst a promise has been made that this will be made up of equal numbers of Governors from the two schools this is not required in the legislation and more clarity is requested (Association of School and College Leaders)

The manner in which a new governing body will be selected for the proposed new school is unclear. Given that the current Governing Body of Gwernyfed are completely opposed to these proposals it would be unlikely that they will commit to a school they do not believe in. The talents that have contributed to the ongoing improvement journey at Gwernyfed will be lost to the new school. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- 10.27 The challenge of a single leadership team ensuring consistent quality across two very different sites was also raised as a concern, particularly if an acting Head of School is not employed in the two original schools to allow the head teacher to focus on their planning and implementation duties in relation to the new one:

Felinfach Community Council asks PCC to describe how it envisages a shared head teacher, governing body and leadership will operate effectively and efficiently on a dual-sited school and what the impact on either school will be when Gwernyfed's standards are already improving and Brecon is struggling financially and educationally? (Felinfach Community Council)

When the head teacher of the new school is appointed there is not sufficient provision in place to allow the planning and implementation of a new school unless there is an allowance for an acting Head of School to be put in place in their original school. (Association of School and College Leaders)

- ^{10.28} Estyn raise concerns around the risks associated in trying to establish a new leadership team and staffing structure in the proposed timeframe, and question whether this will result in tangible improvements to governance and leadership:

In a few cases, the proposer fails to identify significant aspects of the proposal as a risk. For example, it does not include as a risk the challenges associated with the proposed timescales for implementation. In particular, the proposer does not acknowledge the challenges for the successful establishment of the new school when the new leadership team and staffing structure will not be in place until May 2017...It identifies appropriately that the transition to the new school will provide substantial additional workload for the shadowing governing body and appointed leadership team, and how the council aims to support this process. However, the proposer is less clear about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management once the new school is established. (Estyn)

Buildings and Estates

- ^{10.29} The Gwernyfed Campaign Group was concerned that PCC will dispose of Gwernyfed's building and community assets well below their market value and sought more information about the valuation process. They also desired reassurance that the Council would, in the event of sale, put contingency plans in place to ensure that community facilities are maintained and accessible to local people in future:

Given that Powys County Council suggest the site should be sold seriously below market value can the Local Authority: explain why the valuation is so far below market value? How they arrived at this conclusion? The process of calculation used? Or is this just a figure plucked out of the air? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Can Powys County Council, given it intends to sell the site, make clear how those facilities could be retained for community use in the middle of another development and whether community activity charges would be maintained at an affordable level for the groups currently using the facilities? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Given that Powys County Council have a responsibility under the Statutory Schools Organisation Code to facilitate replacement community facilities where a school closes, can the local authority: explain how it plans to make it possible for community organisation's to continue in the area? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Furthermore, the Group wondered where PCC will find the £3+ million required to enable this - and suggested that it would be wiser to spend the money on ensuring GHS's disability compliance and retaining what they consider 'one of the best schools in Powys':

Where they are going to find the £3 million + to make this possible? Explain why that this course of action is better than spending £3.5 million to make Gwernyfed disability compliant thereby negating the need to spend on replacement buildings whilst retaining one of the best schools in Powys.... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- 10.30 Llangorse Community Council also raised concerns that the potential loss of recreational activities in Gwernyfed may be coupled with the loss of recreational green spaces on the site of the new-build Brecon school development:

It is noted that this area of land is outside of the BBNPA LDP development boundary and designated as recreational land. Whilst Brecon is supported in its bid for a new high school Llangorse Community Council does not support PCC being allowed to build on longstanding recreational land. Such land is essential for the health and wellbeing of the public. It is suggested that recent Welsh Government guidance supports the retention of recreational land (Llangorse Community Council)

If building on recreational land is to go ahead how does PCC mitigate this? Is alternative recreational land being offered nearby? (Llangorse Community Council)

- 10.31 There was widespread acceptance that BHS requires a new building, but its current Governing Body was concerned over *the lack of capacity at the proposed new school and the ability of the school to meet the future needs of the community. They are also concerned around the security of the funding available and the timeframe for building the new school and impacts on the current building in the interim.* (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

Pupil Impacts

- 10.32 Respondents complained that PCC's proposals represent the removal of choice for some parents and pupils within the current Gwernyfed catchment area:

For those living in the majority of Llangorse Community Council area it means pupils are likely to have no option but to attend a new school at Brecon for secondary education. Llangorse Community Council opposes the removal of any parental choice for secondary school education in this manner... (Llangorse Community Council)

- 10.33 It was said that the proposals create an unequal playing field in terms of pupil access to and participation in after-school activities - and that those from lower socio-economic backgrounds in the Gwernyfed area will be double disadvantaged in accessing to the full range of extra-curricular activities because of restricted transport:

It would be more difficult for GHS pupils to participate in after-school activities than their Brecon-based counterparts. The proposal is thus clearly less favourable to GHS pupils than those living in Brecon It is further remarked in the consultation document...that those pupils who would be reliant on school transport would be particularly disadvantaged in respect of access to after-school activities. It is therefore clear that this policy will differentially harm the educational experience and outcome of those families who rely on school transport; typically that will mean those families on the lowest incomes. This proposal must therefore fail any Equalities Impact Assessment due to particularly harming pupils from the lowest income families (Gwernyfed Community Council)

Children miss buses, have doctor's appointments, want to attend extra-curricular activities after school, etc. The alternative public transport system...is limited to a first thing in the morning to late afternoon/very early evening transport model running every two hours. This is a poor alternative travel system for the complex needs of families without their own transport (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

It is likely that our children who will be sat on a bus for at least 2 hours a day will suffer educationally and socially. They will be disadvantaged compared to children living in Brecon who

will be able to attend after-school activities and clubs whilst children travelling from our community will find it much more difficult to attend. Currently some children attend after school clubs at Gwernyfed HS and are collected by friends or parents. However picking up children from Brecon would involve travelling an additional 20 miles, 44 miles in total (Painscastle Community Council)

Llangorse Community Council area, like so many areas in this rural part of Wales, has no public transport and for those travelling longer distances to a school in Brecon there is an issue of inequality as pupils will not be able to access such extra-curricular activities. How does PCC justify treating pupils on an unequal basis? (Llangorse Community Council)

What the Cabinet is proposing will, as a detailed Equality Impact Assessment would show, have the greatest impact on students who come from more deprived background and learners with disabilities. I am not confident that Powys County Council has detailed how it would mitigate this impact and therefore, the proposal is not sound. (Councillor Matthew Dorrance)

- ^{10.34} Some stakeholders also commented that PCCs recent primary and secondary school reorganisations have affected some local pupils to the point where their basic rights are being violated:

How does PCC justify putting some pupils through this process on more than one occasion in their 3-18 years of education? (Llangorse Community College)

A generation of pupils will suffer a disrupted education (Erwood Community Council)

Where in the documentation is it evidenced that Article 24 [of the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child] has been complied with? The plans to close Gwernyfed risks diminishing quality of health as the accessibility to local community health services will no longer be easily accessible. What if anything does, Powys County Council intend to do to remedy this? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Teacher Impacts

- ^{10.35} Stakeholders questioned whether the proposed timetable for forming the new school entity is feasible given that negotiations around staff appointments and contracts may be complex and time-consuming:

The timescales proposed are unrealistic and the timing of the consultation and the process of appointing a Headteacher does not allow sufficient time for the subsequent appointment of staff within the timeframe which may disadvantage the school in appointing the most appropriate staff... (Association of School and College Leaders)

- ^{10.36} Furthermore, it was said that: uncertainty around job security could lead to the imminent loss of high quality staff; PCC's Human Resources department is currently too overstretched to cope with changes of this magnitude; and that the Council must clarify whether the whole range of potential staff and pupil travel costs has been taken into account:

The lack of clarity regarding security of contracts for staff is creating uncertainty and pressure on staff who may well be tempted to leave the schools and weaken the provision. ... Will there be additional resources provided to Human Resources, who are already overstretched, to manage such a programme? (Association of School and College Leaders)

[There is a need to] clarify whether the following have, or have not, been taken into account? Staff travel costs for: the leadership team travelling daily; weekly departmental teachers' and middle managers' meetings; teachers travelling to teach subjects across both schools; and non-teacher travelling - KS4 students wishing to access GCSE options only available on one school site will need

to be transported every Tuesday and Thursday at an estimated cost of £20,000. (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

Community Impacts

- ^{10.37} Stakeholders stressed the case for retaining GHS in part because of the disproportionately negative impact its loss would have on community cohesion, culture and wellbeing (as evidenced by experiences of school closures elsewhere in the catchment area – Rhosgoch in particular):

Gwernyfed represents the focal point for quite a dispersed rural community. It is fed by the two main towns of Hay and Talgarth and the many villages and farmsteads of a deeply rural hinterland, close to the Herefordshire border. The identity of our community and its many achievements are very well tied in with the school (Councillor William Powell)

GHS has very strong links with the local community and so the Governing Body asks: how can these be sustained and developed when our young people are attending school away from their local community as the preferred option suggests? (Gwernyfed HS Governing Body)

Painscastle Community Council says its community has recently been affected by the closure of Rhosgoch Primary School and that since this closure there has been a decline in social cohesion in the area: informal activity loosely based around the school has diminished and parents no longer meet and chat at the school gate. (Painscastle Community Council)

- ^{10.38} Indeed, it was argued that this negative impact will be so significant as to contravene the Statutory Schools Organisation Code that PCC is applying to this process:

Given that local authority claims to be applying the Statutory Schools Organisation Code, can Powys County Council explain where in the code it gives any credence whatsoever to the right of a local authority to take actions to close a school, as applied to Gwernyfed High School, where it is self-evident the action will destroy communities' quality of life, culture and cohesion? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- ^{10.39} A particular worry was the detrimental impact closing GHS would have on the area's sporting, arts and other community groups, many of which make significant use of the school buildings currently - and the lack of mention in the consultation document about specific mitigations against this impact:

The closure of Gwernyfed HS will also cause the removal of...sports and community facilities, which are heavily relied on by over 30 local sports, arts and community groups for their continued activities and survival. The adverse community impact of closure would be excessive (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

Felinfach Community Council says that the closure of Gwernyfed School will have a detrimental impact on sports clubs and community groups that are integral to the social and economic community and asks: 'how is Powys CC going to alleviate this impact?' (Felinfach Community Council)

There are a large number of sports and cultural activities held at Gwernyfed School one being the Rugby Club. This would all be lost as pupils would feel obliged to remain in the school in Brecon for these activities and this would have a knock on effect on the community of Gwernyfed (Erwood Town Council)

The Sports Centre at Gwernyfed School managed by the School is also made available to the public with both indoor and outdoor sports facilities which are enthusiastically utilised by many groups

which make a significant contribution to health and wellbeing in the district. There is a drama studio which holds a variety of arts activities so closure of the school could mean the loss of Glasbury Arts (Erwood Town Council)

Gwernyfed High School provides excellent sports facilities in the sports hall and on the sports pitches outside. It also provides a venue for formal and informal meetings and events in rooms of various sizes. There are no similar facilities near to our community and at a time when the public is being encouraged to be more active, closure of this facility would appear to be a retrograde measure. We do not believe that it will be feasible to retain these facilities if the school closed (Painscastle Community Council)

The Statutory Schools Organisation Code makes clear ...that the LA has a responsibility at the consultation stage to recognise that where school facilities close but are extensively used by the community an assessment of where alternatives can be found and if necessary enhancing other buildings etc. has to be carried out. None of this is explained. (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

^{10.40} The economic impact of the school's loss on local businesses and the housing market was also highlighted as a key concern, as the following typical quotations demonstrate:

The sale of properties in the area would be affected as most potential buyers with children would consider the availability of local schools when contemplating a move (Erwood Community Council)

Hay and Clyro are thriving communities and we worry that there will be a negative effect for all the young families in the area if the local secondary school closes. There will be less reason for people to move to this area because it will have poor secondary school provision. Would people still choose to move here with a long bus ride each way to secondary school? We need to help rural communities stay connected, not increasingly isolate them (Parents at Clyro Playgroup)

From the Llangorse area, parental journeys to GHS to collect children after out of school activities or extra study lessons result in parents stopping on route and spending money in businesses in Talgarth, Bronllys and Three Cocks etc.... Is it right that PCC encourage the transfer of such business/associated activity away from rural communities and smaller towns to one larger town centre? (Llangorse Community Council)

Closing Gwernyfed will have a detrimental effect on local businesses as people will naturally gravitate towards Brecon rather than Hay or Three Cocks. This will impact on all of us as we have a lovely range of independent shops in the area that need local people to use them, rather than those shops in Brecon (Parents at Clyro Playgroup)

"Many local people are employed by Gwernyfed High School, or in the supply chain that supports the high school – leading to a loss of employment which would affect the local economy"...Page 47 of the consultation document. Has Powys Council calculated the specific number of jobs that would be lost...? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

GCC believes that removal of education from the Gwernyfed site will cause significant hardship to local businesses and will cause economic harm in the long-term (Gwernyfed Community Council)

Businesses currently within close proximity have strong links within Gwernyfed HS, offering invaluable work experience and fundraising events. Businesses have confirmed their serious concerns that these links would be lost if the school closes, how will Powys County Council counteract and reconnect these broken links between our communities and local businesses? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

One business conducted a questionnaire and 40.5% of respondents stated that they made visits to the businesses as a result of visiting the school. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- 10.41 That families will 'vote with their feet' and leave the area - or indeed not be attracted there in the first place - because of the lack of secondary education provision was a worry, particularly in relation to changing demographics and ageing communities:

If the community is denied its successful local secondary school, our community is going to have very serious problems. This will doubtless be reflected in the local housing market and will also make it less attractive for younger people, looking to have families in the near future. This would have a profoundly detrimental impact upon the shape and character of the local community - and undermine its sustainability (Councillor William Powell)

Powys CC admits the closure would negatively affect the housing market and also make the area less attractive to newcomers – this will inevitably have a harmful effect on whole communities and the demographic balance in communities. Families will be less keen to move to the area, communities will be made up of an ageing population and businesses will be adversely affected and unable to attract quality staff (Felinfach Community Council)

Removing facilities for young people and local communities in general will lead to a decline in their resilience. We have real concerns that closing the school will lead to our community being populated by an ageing population as young people leave and few families with children move in because of the lack of facilities. (Painscastle Community Council)

- 10.42 Painscastle Community Council and the Gwernyfed Campaign Group both raised the prospect of a decline in Young Farmers Club membership as a result of GHS's proposed closure and the dispersal of its pupils to various schools:

Rhosgoch has a very strong Young Farmers Club and members have attended school together. It is anticipated that if GHS closes and children attend different schools, it will be much more difficult to sustain this club (Painscastle Community Council)

Has the Council considered that the proposed school closure would certainly see a decline in YFC membership and participation of pupils in Gwernyfed catchment areas as a result of families moving out of the area? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- 10.43 Finally in terms of impacts, it was said that GHS helps its primary feeder schools financially through joint procurement exercises and external contract management, but would evidently be unable to maintain this assistance were it to close:

Our Business Manager looks for best possible value in all procurement, and this year has been able to pass on significant savings to our cluster Primaries, for example, waste management, janitorial supplies, refuse collection and educational resources. Gwernyfed High School also manages the cleaning staff for the catchment primary schools. There are also plans to develop the possibilities for further procurement savings for the primaries in the future. Will the council acknowledge that the proposals will adversely impact upon the primary school and their opportunities to make financial savings? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- 10.44 Llangorse Community Council called for wider local consultation, including a much more detailed economic and community impact assessment in both school areas to assess the resilience and capacity of communities, local businesses and primary feeder schools to absorb the proposed changes:

Can PCC explain why they have not consulted directly with [affected] Community Groups...and why there is such little respect for these highly valued often voluntary organisations within our rural communities? Can PCC explain how it proposes to keep the community facilities open and accessible to all, as they are now? (Llangorse Community Council)

Can Brecon as a town absorb the impact of circa 400 extra school children aged 11 to 18 and associated implications? A full explanation and availability of facilities in Brecon with appropriate Community Impact Assessment would be useful. (Llangorse Community Council)

Estyn argue that PCC needs to demonstrate how it will mitigate against the risks identified in its own equalities and community impact assessments. For example, Estyn suggest that PCC should consult with parents electing other schools other than the proposed new school:

The proposer has considered the likely impact of the proposal on a range of groups, including pupils with Special Educational Needs, pupils from low-income families and Welsh-medium pupils. The proposer has undertaken draft equality impact assessments for pupils from both Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School. They identify clearly how pupils at both schools might be affected by the proposal but do not at this stage identify any measures to mitigate this. The proposer has also carried out a draft Community Impact Assessment which suitably acknowledges the significant issues faced by the communities within the Gwernyfed catchment area should the proposal be successful. However, it does not identify measures it would take to address these. (Estyn)

The proposer appropriately includes these disadvantages in its analysis of risks associated with the proposal, together with the measures it intends to employ to manage them. Overall, its identification of risks appears to be fair and balanced. However, in a few instances, the proposer does not discuss these or its risk management measures in sufficient detail. For example, although the proposer identifies the risk that some parents may arrange for their children to attend schools other than the new school, it does not identify sufficiently well how it will engage positively with parents to reduce this risk. (Estyn)

Post-16 Education

^{10.45} Many comments made by statutory stakeholders underline a sense of inequity that parents and pupils in south Powys will not have the same choice of post-16 delivery models as those in the rest the county. Some of the many typical comments were:

The removal of sixth forms would leave the students of the Brecon area without the same equity of choice around post-16 as offered to students in the rest of Powys (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

There is no equity across Powys in the recommendation. I do not understand the logic behind the recommendation, if the Cabinet are content to close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School, stripping the sixth forms and Welsh Language out of the educational offer in this part of south Powys and develop a new area school on the recreation grounds at Brecon for the reasons out lined, why are they not looking to do the same at Builth and Llandrindod? (Cllr Melanie Davies)

Why is the Council prepared to deliberately discriminate against post-16 learners in the Gwernyfed and Brecon catchment areas by withdrawing from them alone in the whole county the option of taking A-levels in a High School? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

If sixth form provision and Welsh had been provided (as a dual stream option) for both 'area schools', I would have been at least reassured that there was equity of education in the south of the County even if I had opposed the plans. (Cllr Melanie Davies)

^{10.46} Furthermore, there is a sense that entrusting local post-16 education to an untried and untested provider with limited accountability to PCC is a risk. Particular concerns were around: a perception of poor educational standards and outcomes at NPTC; reduced access to teachers and the support and pastoral care they can offer within a sixth form environment; the possibility that NPTC could withdraw provision from the Brecon campus at any time should student numbers render it unviable; and whether the promised breadth of A-level choice will materialise in reality. Some of the many typical comments can be seen below:

Can the Council explain the justification for replacing an A-level provision that produces 67.7% A to B with one that produces only 50.2% A* to B? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)*

Last year, 50.2% at NPTC got A - B grades, compared with 67.6% at Gwernyfed. What assurance can Powys CC give that the A-level standards achieved at Gwernyfed school will continue to be achieved let alone improved upon if delivered by NPTC? (Felinfach Community Council)*

[The proposal] provides no demonstrable prospect of an improvement in educational outcomes at either pre- or post-16 levels in the catchment areas covered by both current schools - in particular the planned transfer of all post-16 provision to the NPTC Group of Colleges by September 2017. In the absence of any indication of how that provision will be delivered in Brecon, is considered by the WLD Group to be a reckless proposal in current circumstances (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

Although the current consortium model has its limitations [it is] highly unlikely that the range of A-level provision promised by NPTC offers any guaranteed improvement in terms of choice or quality assurance. Furthermore, comparators with performance at Neath and Port Talbot campuses does not ensure that they will be replicated at Brecon (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

Council [was advised at a previous meeting] that the results at the Brecon campus of NPTC Group of Colleges were poor. Given that you are aware of this information and that you advised full Council of this, I do not see how Powys County Council can enable NPTC Group of Colleges to be responsible for the sole delivery of post-16 education in Brecon... (Councillor Matthew Dorrance)

At the public meeting held on 20th April...NPTC stated that their intention was to operate Brecon campus with the same team as is currently employed at Neath. It is thus clear that teaching staff would be parachuted in for brief periods of the college week. Students would have very restricted access to their tutors, and nothing close to the "open door" policy applied at GHS would be remotely possible (Gwernyfed Community Council)

Has Cabinet considered the possibility that, should NPTC's Brecon Campus prove unviable, NPTC may threaten to withdraw unless the other south Powys sixth forms are closed also? What stance will Cabinet take on this? What do you plan to do to prevent this scenario evolving? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

What assurance can Powys CC give parents and young people that the full range of A level subjects will be offered at the new campus and continue to be delivered from the site into the future? (Felinfach Community Council)

What is the guarantee that NPTC will be able to offer the full range of A Level subjects and do so to a high standard? (Chris Davies MP)

As the College is not linked or accountable to the Council, what is there to prevent it from cancelling or reducing courses, or pulling out of the area completely at any time? Can the Council and NPTC Group guarantee that they will increase A-level provision from 14 subjects to 25 by 2017, especially in light of the evidence that suggests they will not achieve the predicted number of pupils? And what is the nature of the “commitment” from NPTC? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- 10.47 Indeed, in relation to the latter point, several respondents were of the view that PCC’s estimates of potential student numbers at NPTC are highly optimistic given many students are likely to look outside Powys (and even Wales) for their post-16 education - and even if accurate could not sustain the proposed 25 A-level courses:

The estimated 150 students who would attend the Brecon Campus would not be able to sustain the provision of 25 A-Level courses (Erwood Community Council)

Please explain how NPTC arrives at a figure of ‘up to 201’ students attending the new college (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Even at their most optimistic, NPTC is only predicting about 150 students, yet NPTC have promised to offer 25 different A-level courses leading to an average class size of five. (The Welsh Government states that the minimum viable class size at A Level is eight.) The average size of sixth form Colleges in the UK is over 1,700 pupils. GCC greatly doubts that Brecon campus with 150 students would be sustainably viable. (Gwernyfed Community Council)

- 10.48 Some suggested that incentivising NPTC to move into the Brecon campus (without evidence of sufficient pupil numbers to make the breadth of courses being proposed viable) reflects a wider strategic ambition toward a Powys-wide tertiary system at post-16 level:

The college’s willingness to contemplate the expenditure of some £25 million on expanding their footprint in Brecon suggests that they have not lost sight of their ambition to take over sixth form provision of all six South Powys Schools. (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- 10.49 The balance of opinion among statutory stakeholders was that the current South Powys Consortium model of post-16 education provides better quality for pupils, even if it offers less subject choice. They thus strongly desired maintaining the status quo; that is, both BHS and GHS continuing to deliver academic A-levels, with support from NPTC in the delivery of vocational options:

We have made the South Powys Consortium post-16 offer work. Our students like it. We have offered to run transport at a reduced cost than currently stated. Standards have been maintained. This is an alternative option which has not been fully explored, suggesting that the consortium approach to delivering A-levels has been dismissed without the Cabinet understanding the value of this approach. Our position is that Gwernyfed and Brecon should both continue to deliver A-levels with NPTC focusing on the delivery of vocational options. This is a model that is delivered successfully in other parts of Wales. This model will ensure that our students continue to access the high quality post-16 academic education to which they are entitled (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

The governors of Brecon High school firmly believe that NPTC has a valuable role to play in delivering an excellent vocational package that can collaborate with a school based sixth form to develop and offer greater choice (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

The Governing Body of Brecon High School is firmly committed to ... the retention of school-based Sixth Form provision (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

The school must include a sixth form (Merthyr Cynog Community Council)

Last month the Welsh Government published a report...called Improving the Performance and Efficiency of sixth forms in Wales. In rural areas, it notes, the tertiary approach would be “extremely hard to operationalise”. (Gwernyfed Community Council)

- ^{10.50} Gwernyfed High School Governing Body questioned how NPTC plans to finance improvements to its Brecon Campus - and if via a loan, how it will manage the high interest repayments (while also maintaining and investing in its buildings), especially in the event of less student revenue than expected:

You say on P21 of the Consultation Document that ‘[NPTC] is also planning to invest in new facilities which will enhance the post-16 learning environment,’ but you do not provide any explanation of how NPTC plans to finance this investment... If NPTC plan to borrow, and assuming they are able to borrow at a similar rate (4%) to the prudential borrowing open to Local Authorities, then annual interest payments alone will be in the region of £500,000 on the £12.5m loan they require. We know...that the college is banking on revenue of £500,000 from the supposed 201 students. Explain how NPTC plan to repay their loan, as well as maintain and invest in their Brecon Campus building stock, given that their annual revenue from the Brecon college will only cover their interest payments. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- ^{10.51} Finally, Estyn state that there is insufficient evidence around how the reorganisation of post 16 education into a single site at Brecon will improve quality and outcomes for learners:

The proposer refers to the standards achieved by both schools in relation to A levels, and compares these appropriately with results for Powys, Wales and for the NPTC group of colleges. Although the proposer argues that it does not anticipate that there would be a negative impact on outcomes for post-16 pupils, it does not outline sufficiently how the transfer of post-16 provision from both schools would have a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils at this stage. Overall, the proposer does not demonstrate how the reorganisation would have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils at any key stage. (Estyn)

Estyn state that inequity in choice for Welsh medium learners at post 16 will not be addressed in the short-term at least:

With regard to post-16 provision, the proposer’s view that an increase in the numbers of English-medium post-16 pupils on a single site would enable the provision of a broader range of subjects and qualifications seems reasonable. Similarly, the proposer asserts that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils on the Builth Wells site of the new school in mid-Powys would lead in time to an increase in the number of available subjects at the school post-16. However, there remain questions about equality of opportunities for post-16 pupils choosing to study through the medium of Welsh in terms of the range of courses available to them. (Estyn)

Welsh Medium Education

- ^{10.52} Stakeholders argued that removing the Welsh stream from BHS without a significantly improved alternative Welsh medium offer elsewhere will lead to reduced number of parents choosing to educate their children through the medium of Welsh. This, it was felt, will inevitably impact on the cultural and linguistic fabric of south Powys:

GCC believes that the closure of GHS would provoke the loss of many young people across the border to Herefordshire for their education. This would lead to a loss of local cultural identity, and in particular a reduction in Welsh culture and Welsh language skills (Gwernyfed Community Council)

For many Builth Wells High School is a long distance to travel and a barrier to the development of the Welsh language in South Powys (Llangorse Community Council)

It is difficult to comprehend that Powys County Council are content to create an environment where parents will choose to remove their children from their Welsh cultural heritage to ensure the high quality of education they know their children deserve in the rural setting they choose. Could this movement of pupils results in surplus places in the new build Primary Schools? How will the Welsh Language Commissioner feel about pupils leaving the Welsh education system? How will this help community cohesion? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

^{10.53} It was also said that a likely reduction in Welsh medium primary pupil intakes at Ysgol Y Bannau and Sennybridge (which in itself was considered highly regrettable) may starve Builth Wells High School of the critical mass of pupils it needs to expand its dual stream provision and ensure it is sustainable:

Brecon has a thriving Welsh medium primary school and I am concerned that its future will be damaged if you proceed with the proposal. Sennybridge CP School will also be damaged if Brecon lacks Welsh medium secondary provision [Councillor Matthew Dorrance]

Moving Welsh medium provision from Brecon entirely represents a risk to the number of children who will chose their education in Ysgol Y Bannau and, as a result, reduces the critical mass available at KS3 and KS4... This then has a direct negative influence on siblings as they move to English medium schools in readiness for transitioning to English medium high schools (4 children have left Ysgol y Bannau for September 2016) (Ysgol Y Bannau)

The success of the proposal to broaden the Welsh medium offer is reliant on sufficient critical mass and assumes that there will be sufficient numbers transferring across to Builth Wells to make this viable. Less than half of those parents currently choosing Welsh medium provision will chose to send their children to Builth to continue their education in Welsh. This is less than expected and is a blow to PCC plans for a critical mass to enhanced and expanded Welsh medium offer. (Ysgol Y Bannau)

^{10.54} Furthermore, a dual stream by its very nature was considered somewhat uncertain in terms of sustainability - and a possible reason for some parents' decision to send their children to a more 'secure' Welsh medium educational environment at Ystalyfera:

It is evident that many parents have chosen to send their children to the Welsh medium school at Ystylafera, and while this is not an easy decision for them, it does offer stability and certainty for their children for the five years that they could not guarantee in the dual stream at BHS. The uncertainty that exists within a dual stream system is unfair on the pupils. (Ysgol Y Bannau)

Indeed, Ysgol y Bannau commented on parents' willingness to allow their children to travel long distances to secure a quality Welsh medium education, and suggested that the establishment of a Welsh medium secondary school for south and mid Powys would be welcomed and well-supported:

The fact that many choose to send them out of county for Welsh provision demonstrates that many are willing to travel if the provision is secure and of sufficient quality. Similarly, Ysgol Y Bannau attracts pupils from a large catchment area and we are sure that parents would support in the same way should a Welsh medium secondary school be available (wherever it may be). (Ysgol Y Bannau)

- 10.55 Ysgol y Bannau also requested ‘a fair analysis’ of the results of Brecon and Builth Wells High Schools’ Welsh streams to enable parents and primary schools to make comparisons between the two schools and judge the reasonableness of the proposal to centralise provision at the latter:

Ysgol y Bannau has established strong links with BHS over a number of years and, even though the provision hasn't been consistent the quality, as shown by the GCSE results in the Welsh stream, outperforms the equivalent school averages... PCC need to produce a fair analysis so that parents and us as a school can compare the current provision since this is at the root of decisions around merging the Welsh medium provision at Builth Wells. (Ysgol Y Bannau)

- 10.56 Overall, stakeholders would prefer to see Welsh medium provision supported in the Brecon area at least until a fully bilingual 2a/2b school can be established to serve mid and south Powys - especially given that the only Welsh medium primary school in Powys is situated across the road from BHS:

The Governing Body of Brecon High School is firmly committed to...the continuation of Welsh-Medium education within the Brecon community (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

The WLD Group opposes the current proposal to remove Welsh-medium provision from Brecon High School, as this flies in the face of logical education policy, given that the only Welsh-medium primary school in south Powys is situated opposite the entrance to Brecon High School. (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

- 10.57 Estyn suggest that PCC’s assumption that a greater critical mass of Welsh medium pupils will lead to a broader curriculum and greater differentiation of pupils is reasonable, but would like greater detail on how this will improve on current standards:

In terms of Welsh-medium provision at key stage 3 and key stage 4, the proposer suggests that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new dual-stream school in Mid-Powys would enable the school to set pupils according to ability for some subjects. The proposer argues that this could have a positive impact in terms of outcomes for Welsh-medium pupils. However, it does not provide evidence for its view that setting improves standards. (Estyn)

Estyn also highlight that PCC has not given sufficient consideration to alternative provision should the proposal for a new dual stream school in Builth Wells not be approved:

In terms of Welsh-medium provision, the proposer does not consider the risk that its proposal for a new dual-stream school in mid- Powys might not be approved. (Estyn)

Alternative Options

- 10.58 In addition to the retention of the status quo (excepting the need to build a new school at Brecon), several stakeholders urged PCC to give further consideration to alternative options, including a through-school at Brecon:

Brecon Town Council recognises the urgent need for the development of modern, fit-for-purpose secondary educational facilities in Brecon, and calls on PCC to do all it can to access the opportunities available under the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme. However, the Council also firmly believes that a new school should offer a full range of post-16 opportunities to make it an attractive choice for students and professionals; and that it should offer full Welsh medium provision to nurture and enhance the Welsh language and culture in the community (Brecon Town Council)

The Governing Body recognises the challenges faced in providing secondary education in Powys, particularly in terms of financial impediments in relation to the requirement for a 'critical mass' of pupils. It supports proposals to reach such a critical mass to secure the school's future. However, the Governing Body does not feel that transformation of education provision should be limited to secondary education only. It believes that this must include provision for ages 4-18 - as well as post-16 (academic and vocational) and Welsh Medium education... Through the creation of a bilingual 4-18 through school, the Governing Body would promote the uptake of Welsh while also providing parental choice, generating the necessary critical mass to offer sustainable bilingual teaching... (Governing Body of Brecon High School)

A rebuild of a 3 to 16 years (through) school at Brecon...could centralise resources within the whole town and be part financed by the sale of primary school sites. This would allow Brecon pupils to have their own new school with no requirement to involve Gwernyfed pupils to 'make up numbers' in order to seek financial support from Welsh Government... (Llangorse Community Council)

We understand that GHS and BHS support a proposal to build an all through school at Brecon and include pupils from Mount Street primary school...thus allowing GHS to remain as it is now. This would appear to be a transformational project that would meet all the 21st century schools criteria and assist with budgetary matters in Brecon... (Llangorse Community Council)

The Governing Body urges PCC to re-visit option 7. They believe that a through school (3-18) for Brecon would achieve many of the Council's aims: it would provide the desperately needed new building; create a critical mass of learners; wipe out Brecon High School's deficit; and potentially secure the match funding being sought from Welsh Government. The Governing Body fully supports Brecon High School's wish for this to be accepted as the preferred option. For Gwernyfed, this would: retain a high performing secondary school that is ready and willing to work with the Council to explore closer working relationships with its primary cluster; safeguard the health and wellbeing of young people; and secure the future of the rural communities that depend so much on GSH's existence. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

^{10.59} Furthermore, the Welsh Liberal Democrats proposed the following alternative proposal:

Both Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools should be retained as 11-18 schools for the foreseeable future;

PCC should work on proposals to either: create a new 3-18 school in Brecon; or build a new 3-11 school on the same or an adjacent site as a new 11-18 school in Brecon;

Consideration and consultation should begin in to the closure of Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools, with provision to transfer as per above;

Work to create a seamless, fully-integrated post-16 learning system in the Brecon, Gwernyfed and Crickhowell High Schools catchment areas should commence immediately (or as soon as practically possible) so that in future all post-16 learning in this part of Powys is planned and funded in a fully-collaborative system involving the three schools, the NPTC Group of Colleges and the main Work-Based Learning providers operating in the area; and

Work should begin in preparation for the disposal of the Mount Street Infant and Junior School sites, to produce a capital receipt to assist in the funding of the project.

Consultation Process

- 10.60 Many of the comments made underline a sense of mistrust and a lack of confidence in PCCs decision-making and implementation processes, in some cases based on its alleged mismanagement of the previous primary schools reorganisation consultation in the Gwernyfed catchment area:

TTC has much deeper concerns about the decision-making process itself: it has no confidence in the decision-making abilities of the current PCC Cabinet, which does not appear to have the necessary expertise or levels of competence required to make such a fundamental decision about secondary education (Talgarth Town Council)

The Group says it feels let down by unfulfilled promises made about the closure of Rhosgoch and thus questions how it is expected to believe new promises being made about secondary education in the area (Rhosgoch and Painscastle Toddler Group)

The Playgroup comments on PCC's very slow proposed changes to Clyro School under the Primary Schools Modernisation Programme and thus doubts that it is capable of successfully carrying out such extreme changes to the secondary school system (Parents at Clyro Playgroup)

Erwood Community Council says that the lack confidence in PCC's leadership as it has failed to progress the primary schools modernisation programme. (Erwood Community Council)

- 10.61 A number of concerns were raised either around inaccurate or missing/incomplete information in PCC's documentation in relation to, for example, budgets, predicted spend and the financial cost of the proposed project - as the examples below demonstrate:

Why is the Gwernyfed budget share given as £1.929m on page 60 and £1.694m on page 36? What is the true funding per pupil figure for Gwernyfed? (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

We refer you...the Outline Business Case for the Beacons Campus Project. This table details when you plan to spend money on building the proposed school. It shows 'New Build Capital Cost' expenditure as: Year 0: £50,000; Year 1: £41,000; Year 2: £295,000; Year 3: £11,333,000. Therefore, by Year 3 (2019-20) - the year the new £20m school opens - you have only spent £11,719,000 (a quarter of the £45m Beacons Campus budget). You still have over £8m to spend on the new school. Please explain how you plan to open a £20m new school having spent only £11,719,000 on its construction. (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

- 10.62 Furthermore, stakeholders raised concerns around the transparency and technical precision of the options appraisal processes, citing inconsistencies and mistakes that erode their faith in the accuracy of the consultation document:

In our opinion, the appraisal exercise...is flawed and has been slanted in favour of the preferred option. 'Ticks' and 'double ticks' are arbitrary, subjective and do not appear to be directly linked to factual data. The significance of the 'Xs' in some columns has not been explained. Some aspects of the matrix on page 101 are utterly bizarre - the first line, for example: 'to significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners...' Somehow, for this objective, every option gets a tick. Even doing nothing gets a tick (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

It comes as no surprise that Option 4 is classed as non-achievable, since it is apparently to "establish a new English-medium Secondary School in Gwernyfed" but the school would operate "from a single site in Brecon". This sort of sloppiness makes it impossible to take the matrix seriously... Please explain why negative impacts (such as 'avoids negative social and economic impact on communities

within the Gwernyfed catchment') have been omitted from the appraisal exercise.... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

The decision you took to provide transport to Builth Wells before the consultation on Welsh medium education in Brecon concluded has in my view predetermined the outcome of this process (Councillor Matthew Dorrance)

The campaign team members, obtained, via a Freedom of Information request, a copy of the County Council's outline business case for the new campus in Brecon... By withholding the document the Local Authority has acted unlawfully and has severely compromised its own Consultation process because of a major pre- determination action. This should be a reason for abandoning the whole process... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

What is not explained is how an option meeting the criteria can receive two ticks or why, if it meets the criteria, it only gets one tick. For instance the first criteria is 'to significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range'. Each option gets one tick including the status quo... The Framework is shown to be deeply flawed, the marking pointless and the short-list thereby arrived at of no value whatsoever... What weighting matrix has been used in deciding which of the two options arrived at by the discredited Options Appraisal Framework was preferred? Why has the 'clear disadvantage of no secondary education in the Gwernyfed area, with additional travel for pupils' and the 'requirement for significant capital investment to build a new school' been discounted in favour of an option that is described as 'challenging operationally' but 'not insurmountable' (when the operational challenge is predicated upon the limited view of a through school that involves all 13 primary schools as feeder schools), even when it is described as having 'added benefits of improving transition between primary and secondary phases and provides a greater level of savings to the Council'? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

- ^{10.63} Other concerns were around: the lack of consultation with affected pupils and parents in 'other' schools such as Crickhowell; and the lack of consultation generally at a formative stage:

It is noted that some pupils attending Crickhowell High School also attend GHS or BHS for some "A" level provision. It would, however, appear that parents of pupils at Crickhowell High School and its catchment area primary schools have not been duly consulted about this current proposal. Can PCC explain why that sector of the public has not been duly consulted? (Llangorse Community Council)

Given that Powys County Council claims to be applying the Statutory Schools Organisation Code can the Local Authority explain where in its documentation it can demonstrate how it is implementing Principle 3.1 in that document as applied to Gwernyfed High School? Gwernyfed is in the final stages of consultation and neither the school, parents, children, or community organisations were consulted at the proposals formative stage (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

The schools and community were not consulted before the publication of any proposals. This has resulted in mistrust and deep opposition. (Association of School and College Leaders)

- ^{10.64} Finally, a couple of stakeholders suggested that the outcome of the consultation is predetermined: the first on the basis that PCC has already agreed to provide free school transport to pupils wishing to enter the Welsh stream at Builth Wells; and the second on the grounds that it withheld its outline business case for a new Brecon Campus, despite lodging it with Welsh Government prior to the start of the consultation process:

The decision you took to provide transport to Builth Wells before the consultation on Welsh medium education in Brecon concluded has in my view predetermined the outcome of this process. (Councillor Matthew Dorrance)

The campaign team members, obtained, via a Freedom of Information request, a copy of the County Council's outline business case for the new campus in Brecon... By withholding the document the Local Authority has acted unlawfully and has severely compromised its own Consultation process because of a major pre- determination action. This should be a reason for abandoning the whole process... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

Balance of Opinion

^{10.65} As the following quotations demonstrate, there was overwhelming opposition to the proposals across stakeholders who responded via a written submission:

Gwernyfed Community Council is entirely opposed to the proposal to close GHS and remove 11-16 education to a larger high school in Brecon and the removal of 6th Form education to NPTC Group (Gwernyfed Community Council)

Erwood Community Council objects to the proposed closure of Gwernyfed High School (Erwood Community Council)

Felinfach Community Council is concerned about PCC's proposal to close Gwernyfed High School (Felinfach Community Council)

[The proposal] is strongly opposed at all political levels within the area - by the local MP, the local constituency AM, all the local members of Powys County Council, all local community councils and every local voluntary sporting, cultural and community group; and opposition to the proposals is virtually universal among individual local residents (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

The proposal severely damages the reputation of Powys County Council among the general public, as it includes the complete closure of the only one of the four mid Powys high schools not currently in Special Measures, to be operating within budget to at least satisfactory standards (as judged by Estyn) and in buildings some of which are barely 10 years old; and is also blessed with excellent outdoor sporting and recreational facilities (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

[The proposal] carries huge elements of educational, financial and general project risk, which far outweigh any potential educational or financial gains (Welsh Liberal Democrats)

Maescar Community Council expresses deep concerns at proposals that could bring to an end Welsh-medium and sixth form education provision at Brecon High School. The Council urges PCC to put in place measures that will ensure that this provision is maintained within Brecon for the long-term (Maescar Community Council)

Llanigon Community Council strongly objects to PCC's proposal to close Gwernyfed High School and replace it with a new 11-16 school in Brecon (Llanigon Community Council)

Llangorse Community Council has obtained feedback from residents that there is strong opposition to the proposals. This is mainly linked to the removal of post 16 education at GHS and the closure of GHS. Whilst the Community Council understands that there are some educational merits to the proposal and the difficulties faced by PCC with funding cuts, the many negative factors within the overall proposal far outweigh any positives (Llangorse Community Council)

The Governors of Gwernyfed High School do not accept that the closure of the school and the removal of secondary education from the Gwernyfed catchment area is an appropriate response to the pressures the Council faces. (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)

Indeed, the general sense was that, for all the reasons outlined above, the negative impacts of the proposed changes far outweigh any proposed benefits, which are in no way appropriate answers to PCC's current challenges – financial or otherwise. Furthermore, it was said that the proposals represent unworkable urban solutions to rural issues, and that parents in rural areas must retain the ability to send their children to a school that reflects their values and lifestyles:

Merging schools to create larger establishments is a city solution that only works when the schools are within walking distance of each other - not in a rural situation where students must be transported over tens of miles (Talgarth Town Council)

The closure and consequences flies in the face of the contents of the Donaldson Report which stresses the need for creative education as well as cohesion between education and communities, the Maguire paper stressing the need for wider models of education in rural areas which are not dependent on larger buildings, the Peck study which found that smaller secondary schools are not costlier or less effective in rural areas because in part of greater community involvement... (Gwernyfed Campaign Group)

The rural nature and geography of Powys requires a model to the provision of public services which is different to provision in an urban area. The sparse distribution of the population outside the larger towns, hilly landscape with narrow twisty roads means that centralising services in larger towns disproportionately impacts on the rural population (Painscastle Community Council)

Gwernyfed is a happy successful school which has strong roots in the local rural community...rural children have a different set of core beliefs that are reinforced and supported by each other. We, as parents, should have the choice to send our children to a secondary school which is sympathetic to our rural way of life. (Rhosgoch and Painscastle Toddler Group)

Figure 21: Other Issues and Sub-Themes from Stakeholder submissions

Sub-Theme	Comments
Big lottery funding	<i>Due to the purchase of land being involved with the Big Lottery investment, it is understood that the Big Lottery have an interest in the site for 80 years not 20 years as specified in the consultation document. (Llangorse Community Council)</i>
Environmental impacts	<i>The number of pupils who currently walk or cycle to school...would drop to zero. (Gwernyfed Community Council)</i>
Health and Safety risk	<i>There will be the same number of classes with the same number of students and the same number of IT devices ... does the Council agree there can be no savings on the cost of technicians and that any cuts to technicians would create an increased Health and Safety risk? (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)</i>
Transport and capital costs placing stress on PCC budgets	<i>Increases to the cost of transport for children who are transferring schools would put further pressures on Powys County Council's budget, along with the massive capital investment of building two new schools.(Chris Davies MP)</i>
Not reflecting curriculum	<i>It is our view that the Council's preferred option...demonstrates that no thought</i>

Sub-Theme	Comments
policy changes in Wales	<i>whatsoever has been given to the substantial curriculum changes now being developed across Wales... This proposal focusses on the established curriculum and fails to reference Successful Futures and Qualified for Life... (Gwernyfed High School Governing Body)</i>
Gwernyfed repairs backlog – PCC to blame	<i>The Council has identified a back log of repairs needed at the school, as a County Councillor I find this a highly embarrassing reason for closure. If this is true, it is the failing of successive Cabinets of Powys County Council and not of the School and Governing Body. However the school is not run down, it is a fantastic setting for learning, I believe we should be investing in this truly unique environment. (Cllr Melanie Davies)</i>
Further consultation is required if additional changes are made in future	<i>Should this proposal as it stands be approved by the PCC Cabinet...and subsequently there becomes a lack of funding or policy change to progress matters, then it would appear that running one school on two sites will enable PCC to close either school site and transfer pupils to the remaining site at any time without a new school being built and without any further consultation. This situation is totally unacceptable. (Llangorse Community Council)</i>
Pre-determination of planning applications	<i>It is surprising that this consultation is about the closure of two schools when planning permission for a new school on the proposed site has not been sought/granted. It would appear to pre-determine any future planning application. In this regard, can PCC justify its position regarding the timing of the consultation to close two schools? (Llangorse Community Council)</i>
Challenges of transferring first year 12 cohort to NPTC not outlined	<i>The proposer does not consider the challenges associated with the transfer of the first cohort of Y12 pupils from the existing school to the NPTC group of colleges in Brecon by September 2017. (Estyn)</i>

11. Written Submissions

Analysis of public responses

Introduction

- 11.1 During the formal consultation process 409 written submissions were received from individual residents (405) and local businesses/non-statutory organisations (4) concerning PCC's proposals for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. It should be noted that the majority of submissions were from people living and/or working within the Gwernyfed catchment area, which explains the volume bias towards views from this area in this chapter.
- 11.2 ORS has read all the written submissions and reported them in this chapter, with some detailed summaries also provided; none have been disregarded even if they are not expressed in a 'formal' way. It is a painstaking but necessary process to identify the main themes and issues raised by respondents.
- 11.3 All submissions have also been reviewed by Powys County Council; meaning that any submissions that present technical arguments that require more detailed consideration have been evaluated by appropriate members of the consultation team.
- 11.4 Submissions were initially classified on the basis of the type of individual or organisation submitting the response. They were then read in their entirety and the key themes and issues raised were collated, classified and reported using a standardised code frame.
- 11.5 Where multiple submissions present the same or very similar arguments, or refer to the same evidence or assumptions, they have been summarised collectively in the report of consultation findings without undue repetition. These summaries are presented in a thematic (tabular) format in order to identify the range of views and issues as well as common themes. This will ensure that Powys County Council is able to consider the important issues identified.
- 11.6 Finally, it is important to note that the following section is a report of the views expressed by submission contributors. In some cases, these views will not be supported by the available evidence - and while ORS has not sought to highlight or correct those that make incorrect statements or assumptions, this should be borne in mind when considering the submissions.

Main Themes Raised in Written Submissions from the Public and Non-Statutory Organisations

General Opposition

- 11.7 It is important to note at the outset that the submissions were overwhelming opposed to the proposals. Furthermore, the local campaign group within the Gwernyfed catchment area has been active in mobilising public interest in the consultation, which is reflected in the overwhelming number of responses against the closure of the school.

Comments (77)

The sheer numbers at the consultation meeting at Gwernyfed should tell you what the people think. This is not just a small but vocal action group. This is the people en-masse – the ones you represent.

The way the Council is handling change across South and Mid Powys is damaging our young people's education, their wellbeing, the retention of students, our communities and our faith in local democracy. Our community is united against the proposed plans and will 'persevere' to protect the heart of our community.

It is very difficult to put into words just how strongly I and a huge number of other people feel, as this proposal would be to the detriment of pupils both present and future and to the community as a whole.

How can it be in any way helpful to young people today to give them a message that there is no point in striving to do well, provide an excellent service and keep within a budget as this will not be rewarded but likely to be completely ignored if it does not suit somebody else's agenda? This is the message that young people will take from the closure of Gwernyfed.

The Case for Change

- 11.8 The projections, facts and figures underpinning PCC's case for change were challenged in many of the written responses. For example, while the consultation document cites falling pupil numbers and surplus school places, it was argued that uncertainty around the future of BHS and GHS has been partly responsible for these trends. Conversely, it was said that positive investment in the two schools would attract families to the area - thus increasing pupil numbers once more.
- 11.9 Despite one submitter agreeing that a critical mass of 600 pupils is necessary for the schools' future success, many challenged the assumption that this number is needed to make a school viable and felt that no evidence had been provided to show that that 'bigger' is 'better'. On the contrary, it was reasoned that Gwernyfed is a good school and that its size simply reflects its rural location.
- 11.10 It was also suggested that future housing developments in the local area will increase student numbers and address the surplus places issue. Furthermore, some responses highlighted PCC's own projections, which show that a single new school could be oversubscribed within a very short time and suggested that the Council should consider the longer-term picture by supporting secondary schools at both Brecon *and* Gwernyfed.
- 11.11 On the other hand, others asked how PCC can possibly predict where Gwernyfed parents will send their children given that other high schools may be closer or easier to access than Brecon. As such, they felt that the number of pupils projected to attend the new school could have been overestimated.
- 11.12 Finally in terms of the case for change, some respondents felt that the Council is being disingenuous in its framing of the consultation. They claimed that the primary purpose of the proposals is to eradicate BHS's debt and access capital funding - effectively sacrificing one school for another new one. Many doubted the legality of this.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Student numbers and surplus places	<p><u>Constant uncertainty to blame for falling student numbers</u></p> <p><i>One of the biggest concerns cited as being responsible for PCC's proposal to close and merge the schools is falling pupil numbers. However, is this not a self-fulfilling prophecy? If you create uncertainty over the availability of secondary education, are you not going to, at the very least,</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
(119)	<p><i>make people with children not move to the area or to consider to move away if already resident here? Furthermore, on reviewing your consultation document, this admits that pupil numbers are increasing.</i></p> <p><i>Pupils, parents and staff have faced uncertainty and turmoil about the future of Welsh provision at Brecon with many parents and pupils having had to make extremely difficult and contentious decisions about the future of their education based on rumours and scaremongering. As a result, increasing numbers have opted to leave [Brecon] high school.</i></p> <p><u>Projected pupil numbers for the proposed new school could be overestimated</u></p> <p><i>Reduces overall surplus places - how much research has PCC conducted to determine actually how many pupils from Gwernyfed will transfer to Brecon and not other schools? Surely some current Gwernyfed pupils would then be nearer other secondary schools, potentially outside the county...</i></p> <p><i>Forecast is for 1092 pupils in merged school by 2021 but this is projected from figures that include Welsh stream and sixth form. This should be 200 fewer using the 2016 figures, meaning the new school would be struggling to achieve 900 pupils. ... PCC want to build a new school in Brecon for a capacity that Brecon can easily accommodate.</i></p> <p><u>Projected pupil numbers for the proposed new school could be underestimated</u></p> <p><i>Forecasted figures show that by 2020 there will be a combined total of 1092 spaces, therefore, the school will already be at capacity not allowing for any future new homes. How does the council propose to accommodate additional children over the 1100 that they have allowed for?</i></p>
Legality of the proposals (43)	<p><i>Is the proposal to close Gwernyfed legal? You are closing a yellow category school, out of ESTYN monitoring, to merge it with Brecon, a failing school in red banding and in special measures. The fact that you close both schools and open one new school is just trying to find a way round the legalities of shutting a school that is performing well.</i></p> <p><i>If approved NPTC would offer 25 AS/A Levels but you do not confirm if they will be offering chemistry as they do not currently have a viable chemistry lab. Surely under the Welsh Assembly Education policy which states you are not allowed to close a school if it disadvantages the pupils and their welfare, you are now illegally disadvantaging them?</i></p>
Writing off BHS's debts (35)	<p><i>It is blindingly obvious this whole reorganisation is to write off the debts that Brecon High has racked up in the past. This was caused by someone else's mistakes and mismanagement. Why should our children be punished for this?</i></p> <p><i>PCC seem to have strong conviction in closing Gwernyfed to write off a suggested £1.2m worth of debt accrued by Brecon High School. He is supported by a very dedicated teaching staff and group of Governors, who could not wish for a more passionate, educated and talented chair of Governors in Reverend Ian Charlesworth. Gwernyfed High School is, as a result, experiencing a renaissance in the results the pupils attain. Yet, Powys Council seem hell bent on overlooking this in favour of supporting their proposal through statistics. If ever there is a clear example of considering statistics over real life, this is it.</i></p>
GHS being sacrificed to save BHS (31)	<p><i>It does appear that Gwernyfed is being sacrificed in a reorganisation with political reasons that have nothing to do with the standard of education provision for local children.</i></p> <p><i>Why does a fantastic high achievement school need to be used as a sacrificial lamb through bad management of another school. This surely is teaching our children that even though you do well and achieve your targets the bad wins in the end! I think you will agree that this isn't a valuable</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<i>life lesson...How do I tell my worried, upset and angry children that a bunch of short sighted people in the Council want to close their fantastic school to wipe the slate clean for a failing school?</i>
Population, housing and new homes (19)	<p><i>National Parks housing data has revealed that 137 houses could be built opposite Brecon High school by 2020. The total build proposed for Brecon by 2020 could be as many as 273 houses. 152 houses are also possible in Talgarth as well as 80 houses possible in Hay. All of these are in the catchment area for the proposed new school. The new school will be at capacity as soon as it opens in 2019/20; surely provision needs to be made for additional spaces/housing in the area and this must be taken into consideration when looking at the option to remove the sixth form from Brecon High School.</i></p> <p><i>Figures quoted in the consultation document for future pupil numbers are very misleading. It appears that consideration has not been given to the house building projects that have already started or are in the planning process.</i></p>
Size of proposed new school (18)	<p><i>I am very concerned about the vision to close a brilliant school, and spend £750,000,000 of Welsh Assembly funding on a new school in Brecon. And this is proposed without any evidence that large schools improve the education of attendees over good quality smaller schools.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation also claims the merger will create a 'critical mass' of pupils and reduce unfilled places. There are many examples of highly successful schools that do not fit this model. Fairfield across the border in England only has 450 pupils. If Welsh government policy requires such a minimum, we would argue their policy is not fit for purpose in rural areas and would ask PCC to take this up with the new minister for education, the assembly member for Brecon and & Radnor Kirsty Williams.</i></p>
Ethical Issues (10)	<i>You say you have a duty to take into account the impact of your decisions on people with protected characteristics but please answer for me, what about a pupil's Human Rights to have a full educational life as in being able to attend extracurricular activities?</i>

^{11.13} A small minority (3) of responses expressed support for the proposals: they recognised that the status quo is no longer sustainable and felt that the changes could offer pupils more opportunities access to facilities. One typical comment was:

Parents and the communities should focus their attention on not opposing change, but on how best to radically improve the schools and education services that their children deserve. The status quo is not an option, it is not economically feasible and is the wrong choice educationally. We should all instead be demanding a much better education service which is economically viable now and in the future and which seeks the best possible education to secure our children's future. In today's and tomorrow's world small secondary schools, housed in old buildings with out of date equipment and culture which lacks ambition, some saddled with debt should have no place in our thinking. if we were starting from scratch we wouldn't start from where we are and the opportunities presented by this re-organisation and capital injection should be wholeheartedly seized upon, nurtured, supported. The council should be supported in making this work and held to account for if it fails.

Quality of Education

^{11.14} Respondents were sceptical that merging GHS and BHS would improve educational quality at the former, particularly for pupils affected by uncertainty or transition to the new school at important exam

stages. Moreover, it was argued that PCC has failed to provide any evidence to suggest the proposals would be of benefit, and that its aim for the new school to be 'as good' as the current ones in terms of standards is unacceptable. In fact, it was felt that merging a 'failing school' with Gwernyfed would cause standards to slip there which, parents said, would encourage them to send their children out of county or into neighbouring English schools rather than to Brecon.

- 11.15 Being part of a larger school was thought to be disadvantageous to pupils in terms of increased bullying and absenteeism, both of which could affect performance. In addition, the loss of close relationships between pupils and teachers as well as having to get used to new teaching styles within larger classes could, it was said, have a negative impact.
- 11.16 Furthermore, there were concerns that the current close ties between GHS and local businesses that provide important work experience would be jeopardised, further affecting pupils' development.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Pupils moving out of county/ Wales (27)	<p><i>If these proposals are implemented I would send my kids to Fairfield. I have noted that, conveniently for Powys CC, Fairfield is listed as "currently oversubscribed", which leaves me in the invidious position of having NO CHOICE about my children's education. This makes me feel desperate and furious with the high handed and smug attitude of the council. I do not wish to move out of the area but nothing is off the table now - my kids are my priority.</i></p> <p><i>Brecon High School has had an undesirable reputation for many years. We would not send our children there once the Gwernyfed campus closes. Our nearest school would then be in England. We already travel out of Wales into England for A&E, hospital appointments, and a dentist and request your help to protect borderland children from losing their Welsh identity completely.</i></p>
Impact on student-teacher relationships (20)	<p><i>I think that by closing our school it will take a negative impact on students as they would have to get used to new teachers and the new teachers would have a different teaching method and that would take time to get used to as the pupils would have possibly learnt a topic in a different way.</i></p> <p><i>It would be hard to make new relationships with teachers at Brecon because it's a bigger school than Gwernyfed and teachers would be confused about which pupils are which.</i></p> <p><i>As year 11 pupils, we raised concerns about whether we would lose A-level teachers in Gwernyfed High School sixth form halfway through our courses due to closure and lack of job security for staff... How can you justify allowing this to happen and for pupils to be placed in this situation?</i></p>
Lack of evidence that quality will improve (9)	<p><i>The proposal by Powys CC does not provide any evidence that closing Gwernyfed High School will improve the standards of its young people. Where and when we will see such evidence?</i></p> <p><i>How can Powys CC guarantee that the quality of education under the new system would be at least as good as the current high standards at Gwernyfed? Merging a failing school with Gwernyfed will lower standards not improve them!</i></p>
Impact on educational outcomes (9)	<p><i>My first concern is how the educational standards may be damaged in the transfer between Gwernyfed and the new "super-school". At Gwernyfed, when you are in year 7, it takes time to settle into the new educational environment, to get used to the teachers and establish friendship groups. By the end of year 7, the pupils' environment is familiar and learning is a lot easier than it was when everything was new to them. To have everyone move schools again would be set the majority of students back in their education because they have to go</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>through the transition period again, which would probably last for about the first year. The plan for the school is to raise educational standards and surely this wouldn't be happening if the entire school is set back due to the transition.</i></p> <p><i>In my GCSEs I hope to get mostly A's and some A*'s. However, to achieve this I would need to make sure I focus and am not messed about by becoming a new school. In September 2017, you wish to combine both schools to form a new one on the current sites. Now, I would currently be doing my GCSE's at this time, and if anything, it would affect my performance.</i></p>
Impact on work experience (3)	<p><i>We [Hay Veterinary Group] currently have good links with the school providing work experience for pupils. This is an excellent link to the young people in our community which we fear would be diminished if the children are all based in Brecon or other schools in Herefordshire. The children who attend our practice during work experience placements from Gwernyfed High School are almost without fail articulate, confident, polite, mature young people. They are well prepared for their placements and well-supported.</i></p>

11.17 There was particularly strong support for GHS and a lack of understanding as to why PCC is proposing to close it. Indeed, the current subject range, quality of teaching and strong leadership at the school were praised and thought to reflect the: positive relationships between staff and pupils; excellent academic results (especially compared to other schools); positive progress made since the last Estyn report; and satisfactory staff recruitment and retention record. The current small size of Gwernyfed was also considered to be an asset in continuing high standards in that it allows teachers to dedicate more time to students. In addition, parents described the invaluable support the school has provided to pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

11.18 Moreover, despite one respondent describing the management team at Brecon High School as 'failing', a few responses commended the staff there for their hard work in trying to improve the school and recognised that there have been improvements since its placement in special measures.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Educational attainment at GHS (127)	<p><i>With a number of the high schools in Brecon and Radnorshire in Special Measures, the fact that the Authority is looking to get rid of one of its best performing schools beggars belief</i></p> <p><i>Gwernyfed is a successful school that produces great results, indeed it is one of the most improved schools in Powys. 96% of GCSE students achieved 5 A*-C grades in 2014 (32% more than the national average that year), and all A level students went to their first choice university, including some of the top Universities in the UK. 1/5 of all A* Maths GCSEs in Powys are achieved by Gwernyfed High School.</i></p> <p><i>Gwernyfed has been producing excellent results and the students are passionate about staying there. They are also keen to ensure that their siblings have the opportunity to go there too. Doesn't that say something about the quality of the school?</i></p> <p><i>Last year, the Year 11s achieved the second best results the school has ever seen, so I don't see the reason why anyone would want to shut us down when our standards at the moment are so high.</i></p>

<p>Quality of teaching and leadership at GHS (69)</p>	<p><i>Gwernyfed has an outstanding record of staff recruitment and retention who all teach to an exceptionally high, professional standard. The staff are also willing to go the extra mile, whether it's extra revision sessions at lunchtime or after school to ensure that their pupils feel calm and stress-free for their upcoming examinations. The work the staff put in with the primary to secondary transition allows you to feel safe and secure and not disrupt the actual learning that is taking place.</i></p> <p><i>These Key Stage 4 statistics are fantastic and it's all down to the brilliant relationship between pupils and their teachers, both putting the work in to achieve their full potential and go on to do greater things.</i></p> <p><i>The foundations to build 'Strong communities in the green heart of Wales' are in place at Gwernyfed. Our head teacher, John Williams is excellent. He is naturally gifted to be a head teacher and has the respect and trust of his pupils and the local community.</i></p>
<p>Ongoing improvements at GHS (36)</p>	<p><i>Gwernyfed is one of few in the County to have consistently managed a balanced budget and have an excellent track record of staff recruitment and retention. Indeed I myself feel privileged to have worked in such a unique workplace for nearly 12 years. There are many more exceptional aspects of this school, we are constantly evolving and improving, as evidenced by our recent Estyn monitoring visit and the fact that we are banded a 'yellow' school.</i></p> <p><i>Gwernyfed has shown that it has been going from strength to strength when looking at its student grades and I can't quite understand why you feel it's the best action to take to break something that is doing so well.</i></p> <p><i>A new building may provide a catalyst for [improved educational outcomes], but it is not a prerequisite. There is a plan to develop and improve Gwernyfed and it seems to be working. If the school felt supported by the Council rather than under siege by it, it is possible that the results could be even better.</i></p>
<p>GHS quality owing to size (27)</p>	<p><i>Personally I never experienced any type of bullying or saw anyone else being bullied whilst being a student here. I think that was due to it being a smaller high school rather than a large one. I also think that due to it being a smaller school the grades tend to be better and due to my current knowledge I have heard that it boasts some of the best grades in Powys.</i></p> <p><i>My daughter has a smaller class this term to the last few terms and she has come on leaps and bounds, she has gone from extra help in class to nearly top. She couldn't cope with a bigger school and larger classes.</i></p>
<p>Standards at GHS to other schools (14)</p>	<p><i>Apart from Crickhowell High our school is the only one not in special measures locally. I cannot believe that PCC expect us to accept merging with a school in special measures which is also in debt and believe that we could benefit from this in any way.</i></p> <p><i>We do agree that Brecon High needs a new school but this should NOT be at the loss of Gwernyfed. Every child in Powys deserves to be offered high standards of education and it is our understanding looking at the schools in our area that Gwernyfed is offering the best at the moment. ... As Gwernyfed is the only high school in the area not in special measures, they are delivering the education in South Powys.</i></p>
<p>GHS as an inclusive school (13)</p>	<p><i>Gwernyfed has an inclusive ethos; supporting all students and enabling them to reach their full potential, developing them to articulate their own opinions and express their views.</i></p> <p><i>Our Daughter...has a condition called Fragile x syndrome. She has attended Gwernyfed High School since year 7 and as parents we feel that Gwernyfed High School has met her needs far better within a supportive community environment. The School has also helped her to gain invaluable work experience at a range of industries, which has led to her obtaining two part</i></p>

	<p><i>time jobs. Gwernyfed High School has provided [daughter] with amazing support in conjunction with the educational Psychologist. Although she has continued to struggle with English, the High School has been relentless in their assistance and provided her with extra lessons and tuition. The head teacher has also shown his commitment to ensure getting [name] through any difficult stages.</i></p> <p><i>A few years ago you very kindly took an interest in a matter concerning my son and the struggles he was experiencing in school due to dyslexia. I was so grateful and encouraged by your genuine interest and in sharing your own experiences of dyslexia that we were able to help [name] address many of the problems which were causing so much anxiety at that time. I have regular meetings with the learning support team which is always productive. He is never made to feel uncomfortable about any issues connected to his reading or writing and because of this boost to his confidence has thrown himself in to all sorts of out of school activities including Cadets, YFC and Gwernyfed Rugby Club. With regards to the possible closure of Gwernyfed, I feel it is all too easy to focus on statistics and budgets, which of course have a place in the decisions that are to be made. However, the opportunities Gwernyfed High School has given my son to grow and shine and be celebrated are due to the skill and dedication of its staff and the maturity and kindness of its pupils.</i></p>
Quality of staff at BHS (7)	<p><i>I have been consistently impressed by the dedication and commitment of the staff who have time and again gone the extra mile to assist my children in achieving their potential, despite teaching in a building that is no longer fit for purpose.</i></p> <p><i>The head, staff and governors are fully committed to ensuring that the school moves successfully out of special measures and as the latest Estyn monitoring report suggests is making successful progress in this respect.</i></p>
Choice of subjects at Gwernyfed (3)	<p><i>The school may be relatively small but it still offers a good choice of subjects, this year they have introduced Agriculture as a GCSE option. This school knows its child and responds to their needs.</i></p>

Buildings and Estates

- 11.19 Respondents sought more clarity around the possible options for the disposal of the GHS buildings and grounds if the school is to close. Some expressed concern around site falling into disrepair, while others doubted that PCC would be able to retain the co-located community leisure facilities for community use.
- 11.20 Respondents were largely in favour of a new school for Brecon but there were worries around planning and the short timeframe which led some to question whether any development would happen in the near future. There was a clear sense that PCC is culpable for the decline in the quality of BHS's school buildings and that capital funds should be invested into improving or replacing them using a phased approach.
- 11.21 Moreover, it was stressed that improvements to or a new school for Brecon should not be dependent on the closure of Gwernyfed - though many suspected that the conditions of accessing Welsh Government capital funding will require a new build.

Sub-theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
Alternative proposal to refurbish (16)	<p><i>This proposal is financially unsound. The interest on the borrowed amount will be far in excess of the money required to keep Gwernyfed High School open. The saving is a mere £300,000 per year! The capital investment required to maintain both schools will be far less than £20 million. Keeping the schools open and sustaining the thriving economy that surrounds Gwernyfed High School would cost far less.</i></p> <p><i>It is stated in the consultation document that the amount needed to refurbish both school, namely around £20 million, is the amount you are proposing to borrow from the 21st Century Schools Programme. Would this not be better used to refurbish both schools allowing education to continue on both sites as preferred by the community, pupils and staff, rather than subjecting Gwernyfed and Brecon pupils to education in a “super school”?</i></p> <p><i>Why is a new school building needed? If the estimated backlog maintenance cost for Brecon High School is £15,581,541 then surely the proposed 20 million to build a brand new school is more than enough to refurbish the existing Brecon High School building and bring it up to the required standard. The school is currently large enough to be refurbished in sections, why not close off sections of the school and refurbish bit by bit.</i></p> <p><i>Jeremy Patterson noted that ‘it would be possible to spend capital money on the maintenance backlog at Gwernyfed but there would need to be a proper business case’ (Gwernyfed 2:02). I believe the Governors are willing to present this if they have not done so already.</i></p>
The future of GHS (14)	<p><i>Page 17 - sale of existing school sites. Who does the council consider to be potential buyers of the school sites? In particular, Gwernyfed as a listed building and with, I believe, listed views, may prove difficult to sell.</i></p> <p><i>(Reference to: mid Wales Mental hospital) There are signs of demolition throughout the site and many of the original slates (believed to be worth in excess of £1 million) have been stripped from the roofs. The hospital serves as a physical representation of the Council’s manifest incompetency. Gwernyfed High School would suffer an identical fate in the event of its closure.</i></p> <p><i>Mention was made of selling the Gwernyfed site while ‘trying to retain the sports facilities’. I find it difficult to believe you would be able to find a buyer who would be happy to allow community use of those sports facilities. I would also like to know whether the potential repayment of the £345,403 Lottery grant was actually included in the tables of figures provided in the consultation document.</i></p>
New buildings at Brecon urgently needed (8)	<p><i>The building Brecon High School pupils are expected to learn in a building which has not changed (bar the odd exception) since I left in 1992 – they should be learning in a safe and visually stimulating environment, which is certainly not happening at the moment. If the proposal to have a ‘super school’ does not go ahead I trust that Powys are still going to honour our pupils with a new build which is well overdue and certainly deserved?</i></p> <p><i>The pupils, teachers, parents, governors and the community of Brecon and its surrounding areas have no objection to the need to replace the outdated, ill-fitting and frankly unsuitable building that is Brecon High School. However, your methods of doing so are questionable. This is the second proposal for building a new school building, the first involved the leisure centre and this latest, the college. Neither have been acceptable to the community, what other proposals do you have?</i></p>

Sub-theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
Fund new build school at Brecon but maintain GHS (5)	<p><i>There is no objection to Brecon having a new school, but, in times of economic crisis, why spend what will no doubt be in excess of £50 million when a new school for the Brecon area could be built for much less? The amount of money saved by a merger is debatable, since the cost of transport would be huge, not to mention the congestion which already occurs outside Brecon High School every day of the week.</i></p> <p><i>Why not simply use the £22 million to rebuild Brecon High School and leave the successful and well-loved Gwernyfed out of the equation?</i></p> <p><i>Explain why a much cheaper alternative than the current proposals, of using the £20M for the New School Building, plus retaining Gwernyfed High School, plus revamping the existing Coleg Powys buildings in Brecon, is not considered a viable option. Put the £24M currently ring-fenced for the private NPTC Group to much better use by making essential repairs to existing high school infrastructure; for providing leverage for community and local business investment in schools maintenance; for partnership projects with clubs, societies and businesses to support extra-curricular activities.</i></p>
Timetable for new site (5)	<p><i>The timetable of events scheduled for the new Brecon campus is very tight. The Brecon Beacons National Park has to approve any building application and can delay building projects for many months until they are happy with the planning application.</i></p> <p><i>The site will have to be demolished and cleared, before you even think about undergoing the construction work. I'm not talking months, this is a matter of years. This will have major effects on the unlucky pupils that are doing their GCSE's.</i></p> <p><i>Will the dual site proposal not become two schools, left in limbo, for many years to come?</i></p>
PCC's culpability for the condition of buildings (4)	<p><i>One of the reasons given for the proposal is the current backlog of maintenance issues at both the Gwernyfed and the Brecon sites. It is the ongoing responsibility of PCC to manage these costs, to anticipate them and make provision for them. The current backlog is therefore a clear indicator of incompetence at PCC. Why does PCC highlight its own incompetence and use it as a justification for their own proposals?</i></p> <p><i>The fabric of Brecon High School is said to be so poor that the school needs rebuilding. Who is responsible for monitoring the condition of Powys schools? Answer, please. Who ignored the fact, or, even worse, was unaware that the school was in such a state until it was too late? Is there no rolling programme of repairs to the public buildings in this county?</i></p> <p><i>How dare a council, too incompetent to keep on top of these basic requirements, turn around and use them as an excuse to close a beloved community high school? It beggars belief.</i></p>
Location of the new site (4)	<p><i>Also have they secured land/site for this building? My understanding is that the site currently identified has deeds attached to it and it has been given to Brecon for recreational use only. If this is true and they have to look at another plot how easy will that be and where will it be and how long will it delay the build?</i></p> <p><i>I am also concerned that a new campus in Brecon, if modelled on the old style gives the children far too a great a freedom to slope off into the town. The great advantage of Gwernyfyd is that it is an enclosed community, which creates a sense of security and belonging for the pupils. The children are conspicuous outside of the school premises, so that their safety and discipline is more effectively ensured.</i></p>
Phased Approach (1)	<p><i>I propose that Powys go ahead immediately with a new building in Brecon, and that the new school be open in 2017/18 AT THE LATEST. From a Freedom of Information Act request I have</i></p>

Sub-theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>made it appears that Powys CC has enough money to build a 1000+ student school without dependency on the 21st Century schools programme. I object to the statement in the proposal that the sale of the existing Brecon High School site goes into the Councils General Accounts, not into the school itself or to funding the school. The new build should be a phased project, with the immediate phase 1 delivering a new school for the existing students at Brecon (1000+ spaces), with phase 2 to be developed pending a decision on closure of Gwernyfed and Phase 3 the building of a 6th form centre to include ALL pupils in the current Brecon/Gwernyfed/Crickhowell catchment. These should all be submitted as one planning application with separate build dates.</i></p>

Funding and Finance

- 11.22 The balance of views suggested that the savings being proposed do not compensate for the cost to communities (especially in the Gwernyfed catchment area) if the proposals are approved - and some questioned whether or not these savings would, in fact, be swallowed by unforeseen costs or interest on capital loans.
- 11.23 For Gwernyfed catchment residents, the fact their school runs a balanced budget and that a large repayment to the Big Lottery Fund would be required in the event of closure made the proposed saving difficult to accept.
- 11.24 It was argued that the closure of BHS and the writing off of its debt supports the widely-held view that the proposals are driven by financial considerations rather than making improvements to the quality of education and pupil wellbeing. Furthermore, there was concern that once the school's financial situation has been rectified, further changes will stall.

Sub-Theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
GHS operating within budget (56)	<p><i>Gwernyfed is managing to deliver excellent quality education to their pupils, whilst operating within a balanced budget. Brecon will have accrued a budget deficit of around £1.4 million. Can you explain to me how has this been allowed to happen?</i></p> <p><i>Our School has fought hard to remain within budget and we must not close at Brecon's expense. We appreciate that Brecon needs a new school and we will support this.</i></p> <p><i>You stated in the B&R that the "current structure is no longer fit for purpose, the fall in pupil numbers, and the resulting pressure on resources mean the status quo is not an option". Surely if Gwernyfed are managing to balance their finances with the number of pupils they have, the argument does not apply to this school.</i></p>
Proposals are financially driven (32)	<p><i>Policy is being dictated by how to get out of budget problems rather than the wellbeing of the community and its children.</i></p> <p><i>Out of 14 points made in the disadvantage box relating to the status quo half of them (7) were financial. Isn't the proposal meant to be about education standards?</i></p> <p><i>Gwernyfed appears to be being put through this process solely to enable Powys County Council to access 21st Century schools funding from the Welsh Government to build a new school in Brecon. I'm not stating that Brecon don't deserve a new school, but Powys should</i></p>

Sub-Theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>find the necessary funds elsewhere rather than closing Gwernyfed.</i></p> <p><i>I can see a situation developing in which the two schools are merged in September 2017, Brecon High School debt being written off and nothing else happening for years to come, whilst my children suffer the consequences of indecision, failure to deliver and being 'educated' in limbo.</i></p>
Big Lottery Fund (14)	<p><i>Also I am angered that the Big Lottery Fund had not been in contacted before the proposals were drawn up. To my knowledge it was awarded in 2005, not 2004 as the council stated in the document and there was a clause stating the local authority cannot change the status of the school without an approval letter from the Lottery because it has an interest in the building for at least 80 years, to which the Council could not close the school until 2085!</i></p> <p><i>The all-weather sports pitches at Gwernyfed were purchased using £371,000 lottery fund and they retain an interest in the property for 80 years, if that is the case and Powys County Council proceed to close Gwernyfed, will they have to pay back the £371,000?</i></p>
Savings not worth the cost to communities (10)	<p><i>As I understand this proposal, as stated in the consultation document, the total monetary savings will be in the region of £350,000. Is it really a forward thinking and "transformational" for Powys County Council to propose to uproot communities, force children to sit on transport for hours per week, move pupils and staff to a school that none of them want to attend, all to save £350,000?</i></p> <p><i>The finances of the proposed scheme are also extremely troubling. Powys County Council argue that the proposed scheme would save £300,000 per year. However, the modernisation would require funding totalling around £20 million, the interest on which would almost certainly eliminate any such saving.</i></p> <p><i>The WG School Organisation Code also states that in relation to proposals where substantial upfront capital investment is required (for example to support a substantial remodelling, refurbishment or a new build project), the costs and savings of the proposals should be calculated over the lifespan of the relevant building, and compared against the costs and savings associated with the maintenance of the status quo.</i></p>
Lack of clarity around long-term costs (3)	<p><i>Under the heading 'overall affordability', p154 of the Outline Business Case states that "The proposed cost of the project is £46,997m (including optimism bias) over the 60 years of the expected lifespan of the campus. It is anticipated that the optimism bias will be fully mitigated (or under a 2% ceiling) by FBC stage". It is extraordinarily difficult to make any sense of this figure. Firstly, it is necessary to assume that the sum should be £46,997k and not £46,997m, and that it refers to the capital costs, in which case the '60 year lifespan' becomes irrelevant as capital costs are fully incurred by the end of Year 5. If the bias is included, there seems to be no reason why the Project Risks should not be included. At the best this is simply sloppy, at the worst, there is something else going on...</i></p> <p><i>It is noted on p154 that "The Local Authority will look to finance their element of cost through prudential borrowing" but it is nowhere stated what the cost of that borrowing will be. This cost will be an annual drain on the council's resources until (and if) the borrowing is repaid. It cannot be ignored in assessing overall affordability.</i></p> <p><i>Is there a contingency plan? For example if the project exceeds the budget or the construction company goes bankrupt halfway through the build? Please also confirm how much the council will need to borrow to fund this proposal or what cuts to other local services will be</i></p>

Sub-Theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
	<i>made to fund it?</i>

Governance and Leadership

- 11.25 Historical issues around the leadership and management of BHS were noted as a cause for concern. Indeed, addressing any leadership and governance deficiencies - including support from PCC - was considered more important than new bricks and mortar.
- 11.26 Establishing the right leadership team was considered critical to the success of a school, but respondents were concerned that PCC has offered little reassurance as to how they would ensure the right people are appointed.

Sub-Theme (number of comments)	Comments
Improve leadership not just buildings (6)	<p><i>The culture within a school and consequently pupil outcomes is hugely dependent on the schools leadership team. This is something that Gwernyfed has clearly got right at the moment and something that I suspect is less successful at Brecon High School. Can PCC guarantee that they can create a leadership team that is as dynamic, and as effective as the current Gwernyfed team, under their new proposals, and if so, how?</i></p> <p><i>My over-riding concern...is that the proposals do not address the core issues surrounding Brecon High School as a failing school. The best buildings in the world will not counter the impact of poor leadership and poor management not only at school but at County levels. I am convinced that the basis of your proposal is financially driven and not pupil focused. Unless steps are taken to put right what is fundamentally wrong with the school, which has been so for many years, we will find ourselves five or more years down the road with a bigger debt and more pupils being failed by a third rate education. A good school needs dynamic, inspirational leadership and excellent management. Put those in place and the buildings can be built when you've actually identified a need, a place and the money to build them...</i></p> <p><i>A merger would conveniently write off the large debts accumulated by Brecon High School. What assurance do we have that the culture of mal-administration that has got Brecon into these difficulties does not get carried over to the new school on the same site?</i></p>

Transport and Travel

- 11.27 Many written responses expressed concern - and indeed anger - around the negative impact additional travel would have on pupils, which some argued directly contradicts the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 11.28 It was said that many pupils in the Gwernyfed catchment area already spend long periods of time travelling to and from school, and that any increase would be unacceptable. Indeed, there was concern that longer days and time spent travelling between the two sites would severely impact on their quality of life by: restricting their social lives; impacting on their ability to attend after-school clubs; and causing tiredness. The lack of reliable public transport and access issues for pupils in more isolated, rural areas was also predicted to result in increased non-attendance at school.

- 11.29 The burden of potentially having to transport their children to and from a school much further away so they can attend after-school clubs was noted by pupils' parents and family members, many of whom said they have neither the time nor financial means to do so. There were also concerns that farming families would be impacted by the proposals, as their children would not be home from school in time to assist in the running of the farms and develop their future farming careers.
- 11.30 Furthermore, the cost of providing more pupil transport was thought to represent 'removing one problem, and creating another'. It was suggested that the money would instead be better spent improving the quality of education in the existing schools. In addition, it was alleged that new School Transport Policy has not been considered by PCC in formulating its proposals which, to some, renders the consultation invalid.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Impact of travel on participation in extra-curricular activities for children, parents and family life (119)	<p><i>I fail to see how the organisation of a fleet of buses at different times could be laid on to accommodate all the attendances of school clubs, societies, sporting and creative activities. Buses would have to travel to villages, communities and farms over a huge rural area. Not feasible. Imagine the times some of these children would spend on these buses, The only people who would benefit would be the owners of the bus companies and one dreads to imagine what the costs would be.</i></p> <p><i>I would also like to know how the extra travelling would affect my life outside of school as I attend Gwernyfed RFC on a Thursday and a Sunday. On a Thursday I may not be able to go if I had to travel half an hour more and then do my homework and eat some tea I may not be able to get there in time.</i></p> <p><i>As grandparents we help out after school when both parents are working, If this proposal goes through we will be required to make a 40 minute round trip to pick up from after school activities. Negative effects: elderly drivers, petrol expenses etc. But most negative the loss of independence to the children having to rely on others to get home.</i></p> <p><i>Can the council also justify the added pressure this will have on parents who will inevitably have to spend more time, which they can ill afford and money, which they may not have, collecting children from extra-curricular activities from a school that Gwernyfed pupils don't need?</i></p>
Increased travel time (116)	<p><i>Pupils risk up to 3 hours a day travelling, unless they choose to move across the border to a nearer school which many have said they would.</i></p> <p><i>The bus journey from Hay to Gwernyfed is already up to 45 minutes, so why are you suggesting that my time learning is better spent travelling?</i></p> <p><i>I live on a farm in the isolated rural community of Gwenddwr and travelling to school takes two hours every day. Should the decision be made that I have to attend Brecon High school, I will face a journey of at least another 30 minutes.</i></p>
Impact of travel on pupils (62)	<p><i>For my own children, the closure of Gwernyfed would result in them having to travel nearly two hours per day on a school bus. This would not only result in tiredness but would also reduce the time available for them to complete home-work and revise for exams.</i></p> <p><i>I also wonder how the county plans to transport these children to and from Builth when the weather is inclement. It is a well-known fact that bus companies regularly cease to operate when the roads are dangerous for safety of all those involved. This can only have an adverse effect on attendance and a detrimental knock on effect for standards as these children</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>become more persistently absent during harder winters.</i></p> <p><i>Powys County Council have commented that pupils from Gwernyfed and Brecon schools will travel between the two sites. This fills me with dread. The time spent travelling to and from the sites will either reduce my learning time or increase my school day.</i></p>
Cost of extra travel (33)	<p><i>And if county are willing to pay for transport to out of county schools (as has been the practice to date), are they also willing to pay for transport for parental choice of English medium provision such as King Henry VIII? Surely this money would be better spent improving the existing provision at a local level to secure high standards of teaching and learning.</i></p> <p><i>I understand it would cost £225,000 in new transport fees. Is this worth the difficulties it would create?</i></p>
Impacts on farming families (10)	<p><i>Children will be home much later from school and farmers relying on them to help with the chores will no longer have this assistance. Some of these children may well be looking to a career in the farming industry but if they don't have the experience then they may consider other options and our farming industry will suffer greatly.</i></p> <p><i>They (PCC) will take away opportunities to learn family trades such as on the farm. Not all children want to go to University!!</i></p>
Transport Policy (8)	<p><i>The document contains no information on how the increased travel figures were obtained. Are they based on the 'Old' Transport Policy or the new one that cabinet is refusing to reveal until after the consultation is over?</i></p> <p><i>New School Transport Policy is to be considered 'in due course'. How can the consultation be valid when the information on the extent and limitations of that policy is not being made available? The Welsh Government's Schools Governance and Organisation Branch states, that 'local authorities in Wales are required by law to provide home to school transport for pupils to their nearest suitable school, if it is beyond the statutory walking distance, even if it is located in an English local authority's area'. It has been rumoured that the Powys 'New Schools Policy' will define a 'suitable school' as one offering the Welsh Bacc. If so, the policy would be a clear attempt to subvert the legal requirement stated by the Welsh Government, and the failure by Cabinet to include this information in the Consultation Document would be a clear attempt by Cabinet to subvert the consultation process.</i></p>

Other Pupil Impacts

- 11.31 Comments were made on the effect continued uncertainty around the future of their local primary and secondary schools is having on pupils' wellbeing. Not knowing where they will study for their GCSEs and potentially having to move between school sites was described as stressful for pupils, while other worries included: losing friendship groups; not being able to make new friends because of the 'rivalry' between the two schools; and a larger school resulting in fewer available places for sports competitions and other events.
- 11.32 Moreover, parents from the Gwernyfed area were of the view that their children's health would be put at risk through: spending more time on public transport as opposed to walking to and from school; having longer days with less sleep; not having access to the school nurse who is local to their area; and potentially being exposed to negative influences in the Brecon area (such as drug use).

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Fragmented friendship groups (57)	<p><i>Sustaining friends can be particularly hard for rural children who can be bused long distances to their secondary schools then returned to their local villages unable to meet up with friends out of school due to a lack of adequate transport. Even where families have access to their own cars, especially in rural areas, the running costs can be prohibitive and responding to children's social needs may be low on the list of essential trips to be afforded (Ridge, 2002, 2007, 2009).</i></p> <p><i>A wider catchment will cause problems, such as groups of friends having to meet up in local towns, currently our children visit each other's houses, but with friendships formed over such long distances we would no longer be able to do this, and the result will be groups of children in towns on evenings and weekends, I don't want this for my children, and I'm certain Councils won't.</i></p>
Uncertainty (33)	<p><i>As I am a year 8 pupil I am starting to think about my GCSEs. Having the stress of the school proposed to close and not knowing where I will take my GCSEs is very daunting. Will I take my GCSEs in a familiar environment with the teachers I know? Will I be moving schools half way between the important studying, disrupting my learning? Will I have to get used to different ways of teaching? Overlapping the things I have already learnt? I don't know, nobody knows. This is the pressure all of the year 7, 8 and 9 pupils are under, and it just isn't good enough.</i></p>
Other health/ well- being impacts (29)	<p><i>Being transported to school means children will have far less exercise than they do now, unable to walk to and from school and hours spent on the bus, especially for the person first on who will also be the last off at the end of the day. Having lived in my village for two years now I have the pleasure every school day to see happy, fit and healthy school children walking the two miles back home after their lessons have finished for the day. Totally against the government's obesity initiative.</i></p> <p><i>A major concern of attending a Brecon based school is the difference in cultural life, particularly within school hours. It appears that there are issues with the use of recreational drugs in such town schools and I strongly feel this is something which should not be imposed on pupils from a different cultural background in the interests of pupil health and wellbeing.</i></p> <p><i>If Gwernyfed school were to close the children would no longer be under the care of the local school nurse that we have regular contact with. A school nurse working in Brecon would not have the time or opportunity to travel out of her area to a regular meeting with our primary care team and so the sharing of regular information in a timely manner would not happen. We should not lightly throw away a system that can bring vital information to help protect our local children.</i></p>
Emotional impacts (26)	<p><i>Another, big concern for me is the impact the proposal will have on my personal life. If the plans go ahead I will be forced to move to Hereford; as much as I love adventure, this would be very stressful for me and could have drastic impacts on my education. Moving would mean adjusting to a new environment in or near a large town which would be a big change as I come from a small village where everyone knows everyone.</i></p> <p><i>Do you realise what you are doing and the worries and pressures that you are enforcing on pupils that are attending the school? Think of all the children that are in Primary schools, especially year six pupils who are anxious about transferring as it is. The pressure YOU are putting on pupils, parents and families is not acceptable.</i></p>
Inter-school tensions (18)	<p><i>There has been an ongoing rivalry between Brecon High school and Gwernyfed High school for many years and merging the two schools may not be an ideal plan for then it could promote</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>conflict.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, you are putting two rivals in the same school. That will have massive effects on behaviour, pupil's attitude in lessons and you would be destroying a healthy rivalry. There will be many fights which will bring down the standards of the school which is not the objective of this proposal. The pupils simply don't want to be in the same class as their rivals.</i></p>
Impact of large school (7)	<p><i>With such a big school, there will be less opportunities to take part in representing the school at events such as sports competitions with other schools because only a limited number of pupils can take part and there would be more pupils to choose from. I think that I could miss out on such opportunities and this would not be fair and equal.</i></p>

Staff Impacts

- 11.33 Without the challenge of teaching at A-level and with the added pressure of job insecurity affecting morale, it was feared that Powys will struggle to attract and retain the best teachers - leading to a drop in overall teaching standards.
- 11.34 There were also responses around teachers potentially being required to travel between the two sites: people asked whether this would detract from time spent in the classroom - and whether they would be reimbursed for additional travel costs.
- 11.35 PCC was criticised for its lack of support for staff, and it was suggested that the Council should try to help staff overcome the issues within their schools rather than continually threaten closure. There were also questions around whether PCC has capacity to develop and process new staff contracts, as well as time to recruit new members of staff before the proposed opening in September 2017.

Sub-theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
Retention/ recruitment (22)	<p><i>Teachers with an interest in their subject are keen to stretch their skills and develop their knowledge in teaching sixth formers. These are the teachers we want to inspire our children across the range of subjects through the school. Without the prospect of teaching A-levels and with the equipment and resources A-level provision brings, will have a negative impact throughout the school. Have you considered the potential loss of inspirational and talented teachers we currently have? Workers in Powys are currently on average the lowest paid in Wales, have you considered the additional impact this decision will make on the difficulty of attracting bright, talented and motivated teachers for our children in Brecon?</i></p> <p><i>What is your plan to hold on to good teachers, who with so much uncertainty will surely be looking to secure alternative positions at other schools? What incentives are you offering them whilst their workload and class sizes increase, job security decreases, uncertainty and lack of job satisfaction increases? Lack of commitment and support from the local authority may result in lack of commitment and support from teachers to children.</i></p>
Travelling between sites (14)	<p><i>Teaching staff will have to work together over two sites. Will this take away valuable teaching time from the pupils?</i></p>

Sub-theme (numbers of comments)	Comments
Job Insecurity (10)	<p><i>Surely Powys County Council has thought about the staff and that they are struggling to find new jobs in different places as many schools don't have enough room for more staff. Clearly the staff work hard in school and after school in different clubs and it seems to us that you have not thought about them whatsoever.</i></p> <p><i>The health and wellbeing of members of staff and pupils of both schools should be paramount. Does the council understand that if the schools remain as a dual site, then future numbers of pupils and experienced, well trained staff may decline at Gwernyfed due to the uncertainty of this situation and is this yet another way to close Gwernyfed, "by the back door"?</i></p>
Staff Morale (7)	<p><i>Powys CC betrays a tired and uncaring attitude towards teaching and support staff and School Governors and fails to acknowledge the extreme demotivation caused by the loss of two in-school sixth forms under the current proposals.</i></p> <p><i>As a parent I am dismayed by your lack of support for the current staff and students of any high school in Powys and in particular Brecon. Yes, Brecon may be facing challenges at present, however, I find your responses deplorable. From my observations, whenever there is a problem in a school in Powys, your response is to threaten to close the school and pile on more pressure. As a council you have enormous impact on the staff, pupils and governors of a school and yet distance yourselves from the consequences. There is an obvious impact on the motivation and self-esteem of the teaching staff and I question your role of this impact on the mental health and well-being of these staff. What are your strategies for addressing the stresses and negative impact of these current proposals on our children and their staff?</i></p>
Staff Contracts (5)	<p><i>Are you confident that the Human Resources department is sufficiently staffed to deal with this matter efficiently, as the timeframe is very tight?</i></p> <p><i>Do you think that you have sufficient time in your timetable to appoint a new Head, re-structure, negotiate new contracts and slot in's plus redundancies all before September 2017 - all of which need to comply with employment law and your employment policies?</i></p> <p><i>Will there be pay protection for ALL staff who lose a higher paid post?</i></p>

Community Impacts

- 11.36 A range of community impacts were identified by respondents from the Gwernyfed area, whose submissions reflect the important role the high school plays within the local community. There was deep concern that, should it close, the impact on the local area would be deep and far-reaching.
- 11.37 Specific worries were that: educated, talented young people will leave the area, leaving an older population and a low-skilled local community; pupils and their parents will use facilities in the Brecon area, putting the Gwernyfed catchment area's economy at risk; an area without a local high school is discouraging to families; and that local facilities such as the leisure centre, sport clubs and cultural groups will face an uncertain future. Consequently, it was predicted that the proposed closure of GHS would effectively divide the community.
- 11.38 In addition, the range of facilities that would be made available at Brecon Leisure Centre while the new school is being built was questioned: reassurance was sought that there would be sufficient capacity for adequate provision in the interim period.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
The future of community facilities (234)	<p><i>What plans does the Council have to help community groups, sports clubs and cultural groups continue in light of the fact that they may lose many pupil members and volunteers as a result of these changes. How will the contingency put forward by PCC address the impact that moving children to a Brecon based school will have on Talgarth, Glasbury, Hay etc. will have on clubs and societies.</i></p> <p><i>I have been told that there is an obligation to continue to provide community activities on the Gwernyfed site as a result of National Lottery funding provided on that basis, for years if not decades to come. The idea that the facilities would continue to be available and adequately maintained if Gwernyfed closes is highly implausible.</i></p> <p><i>If facilities at Gwernyfed are lost, where will they be replaced? How much will this cost the council? Why have these costs not been included in the final figures/costings? If the facilities at Gwernyfed are maintained how will this affect the capital receipt of the sale of the Mansion House at Gwernyfed? How much will the value of the site be devalued?</i></p>
Demographic change (ageing population) (96)	<p><i>A community devoid of a school is a dead community, no young families will want to come here, you are like the pied piper spiriting youth away, no youth to support local business, to breathe new life into a community of old folks.</i></p> <p><i>In the absence of a viable secondary school, the towns of Talgarth and Hay on Wye, which have become exceedingly popular locations for people to both visit and settle, would die as young families would no longer find the area a suitable place in which to bring up their children. In sum, the impact on this tightly knit community would be devastating.</i></p> <p><i>Rhosgoch where I live has lost its primary school and we already feel the pervasive loss to the community and lack of young families moving to the area.</i></p>
Impact on businesses – closure/ unemployment (53)	<p><i>Rural businesses will be affected by a loss of trade. How can these negative effects to the local economy & job losses be overlooked and ignored?</i></p> <p><i>The closure to Gwernyfed would also have a devastating effect on our family's school transport business. We have enjoyed a near 50-year working relationship with Gwernyfed high school and about 17 years ago decided to relocate our depot to Three Cocks in order to better serve in particular the Gwernyfed school bus contracts. Because of this close proximity we take great pride in being able to respond to any transport request almost immediately, and also offer the Council good value for money. The closure of this school would almost certainly mean unemployment for most our 18 plus staff and seriously affect our local suppliers many of whom are small businesses...</i></p> <p><i>The garden centre in Three Cocks which continues to win Garden Centre of the Year award would be adversely affected as the parents and grandparents who conveniently call in there when collecting children from afterschool activities will no longer make this stop. This will mean less local people will be employed at the garden centre and will have a negative and financial impact on the local community.</i></p>
Role of GHS in community life (47)	<p><i>Gwernyfed plays a central role in the life of the community. Extensive use is made of the sports centre, which is now managed by Gwernyfed High School itself, and now fully booked up with local community activities and sessions. As well as this, the playing fields are constantly being played on by pupils in the school as they play club rugby at Gwernyfed Rugby Club, the drama studio hosts music workshops and the minibuses take both pupils and</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>ex pupils outside of school to many fixtures for their local sports clubs. There are strong links with a wide range of community and sports groups, as well as with the Hay Festival, a renowned literature festival. The school has a positive working relationship with the primary schools and exceptional transition arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>The 'Impact Assessment' carried out was presented in such a way that did not clearly present the full extent of the negative impact on the local communities, not least pupils, parents and staff at the schools involved.</i></p>
Impact on the local economy (41)	<p><i>An educational void, as is being proposed, will lead to an exodus of working age families, taking their talents with them. Businesses, struggling to find either the workforce they need or the customer base, either fail or choose to relocate to pastures greener. A low-skill local economy prevails, and unemployment soars. Social problems follow, and local amenities and public services become unsustainable...</i></p> <p><i>The focus for their social life will be on the towns which will draw them away from the countryside and their country pursuits. We need to try and keep our children in the countryside otherwise farming will continue to become a job for old men.</i></p> <p><i>If our children go to school in Brecon, we will shop in Brecon, get our fuel in Brecon and generally spend more time in Brecon due to the nature of picking up and dropping off children at different times. The economic impact of this must also be a concern.</i></p> <p><i>I have undertaken research into the 'brain drain' of some of our most talented young people out of Wales. This research demonstrated clearly that once we lose our students to study or work in England, they are unlikely to return.</i></p>
Housing/ housing market (29)	<p><i>I am currently selling my property in Glasbury. It's been on the market for some time as I am selling a business connected with it. Every time, without fail, that I show somebody around the house, they ask where the nearest school is.</i></p> <p><i>We are told that there are less numbers in our schools but there is a commitment to more housing in Talgarth, Bronllys and even Felindre! These houses will remain empty if there are no schools to draw people in. What a total waste of money!</i></p>
Impacts on local primary schools (26)	<p><i>Hay Primary and other primaries in the Gwernyfed cluster currently enjoy a number of benefits from their proximity to the school: the use of mini-busses; access to sports facilities; access to additional learning resources; ease of integration when pupils leave the primary school etc. These things are of great value to the primary schools. How will they be replaced under PCC's proposals?</i></p> <p><i>If we assume Gwernyfed closes and also assume that you fulfil the commitment to build new primaries in the catchment, I foresee that you will in very short time face a greater surplus of places in the newly built primaries caused by the emigration of families to areas served by a secondary school i.e. Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, etc. Can you confirm that this scenario has been considered and planned for?</i></p>
Community health and wellbeing (17)	<p><i>Gwernyfed offers facilities to numerous sports clubs for adults and children alike. With obesity growing and fitness becoming an ever increasing problem taking away important facilities like these will only add to it. We do not live in city or town where these facilities that are easily accessible so take them away and you will have a population that will put greater pressure on our creaking health service.</i></p> <p><i>I use the community sports centre, due to a life-long condition, where exercise using weights,</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<i>is an essential part of keeping well. If the community facility were to be closed, it would be impossible for me to get to Brecon to attend the leisure centre there.</i>
Impact on businesses - labour force (11)	<p><i>Businesses would be put under further pressure by the withdrawal of students who make up a significant proportion of their labour force.</i></p> <p><i>They don't want to have to move their families out of the area as local employment prospects dry up and the county shifts towards a low-skill/low-pay economy.</i></p> <p><i>Professionals such as doctors, teachers, business people, investors, would be far less likely to settle here without the community corner stone that is Gwernyfed and the thriving, dynamic and re-generating community it supports.</i></p>
Community cohesion (6)	<p><i>The ongoing uncertainty over the proposed school re-organisation is divisive, splitting communities who should be working together to find an affordable, acceptable solution to the challenges of providing financially viable, high quality education, near to home for all our children. Neither school wishes to see the other close; both accept that there is much to be gained from collaboration; both, I am sure would be prepared to accept a compromise rather than closure.</i></p> <p><i>Powys CC talks about being at the heart of rural communities, but this proposal will have the effect of tearing communities apart and pitting families against each other as they vie for places at over-subscribed, preferred schools in England rather than send their children on a long journey to an unproven school in Brecon.</i></p>

Equalities

- 11.39 Respondents generally argued that PCC's proposals would accentuate existing rural deprivation and do nothing to help create equal educational opportunities.
- 11.40 While both high schools potentially losing their sixth forms (when others within Powys are not) was considered unfair, the proposals were mainly criticised for only benefiting Brecon pupils, while 'punishing' those within the Gwernyfed area. In particular, it was said that children from poorer families would not be able to participate in after-school activities if having to rely on school transport - and that, more generally, the ex-Gwernyfed pupils would be disadvantaged educationally by the demands of additional travel to the proposed new school in Brecon.
- 11.41 The potential effect of the proposed changes on vulnerable students was also noted, with respondents asking what measures will be put in place to support them.
- 11.42 Finally, the way in which the risks identified as a result of PCC's Equalities Impact Assessment will be considered was questioned.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Only Brecon pupils benefit (21)	<p><i>How is it that the report constantly states the advantages relating only to the Brecon pupils and disadvantages (and advantages for that matter) to Gwernyfed pupils are disregarded? The report concentrates on Brecon pupils at the expense of Gwernyfed pupils.</i></p> <p><i>The needs of Brecon and Gwernyfed are different. Gwernyfed is a rural school in a rural</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>community. It is certainly not fair for the communities surrounding Gwernyfed to lose their school, whilst Brecon gets a brand new one. As elected members you are mandated to manage and enhance the sustainable quality of life and environment for local citizens and communities and do so in a fair and equitable manner for all with due regard for the outcomes of your actions. Tell me, where is the enhancement of the quality of life for future generations of children in the Gwernyfed area? How is this sustainable, equitable or fair?</i></p>
Unfairness re only BHS and GHS losing their sixth forms (17)	<p><i>Why should the pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed be disadvantaged as the only pupils in Powys without access to a 6th form provision in the secondary school of their choice? Potentially the school where they achieved GCSEs, developed productive relationships with their teachers and where they could further develop their educational aspirations.</i></p> <p><i>How is it fair/ equitable that if this plan is enacted, Brecon and Gwernyfed high schools will be the only two Powys high schools who will lose their capacity to offer 6th form education.</i></p>
Disproportionate impact on poorer families (9)	<p><i>This will result in discrimination as only the more well-off families will be able to take these (after-school activities) up. The less well-off families will be dependent on their children catching the one bus back from school in the evening as not only will they not be able to afford to drive back and forth but will not be able to take the hours out of work to do so.</i></p> <p><i>One of the advantages of the preferred plan would be to “develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners”, whilst the ‘disadvantages’ list in the same section admits that “students living in the current Gwernyfed catchment may find it more difficult to access after school activities due to living further away”. These two statements are clearly contradictory - It seems that Powys is intent on granting a somewhat less inclusive educational experience to vulnerable students living in the Gwernyfed catchment than those living in the current Brecon catchment. Poor families will be subject to the most basic denial of equality of opportunity – that based on incomes.</i></p>
Impact on education (9)	<p><i>When applying to University additional activities are key, this will mean our children in the Gwernyfed catchment will be disadvantaged in their applications and they may well have to lower their sights on their first choice university.</i></p> <p><i>The impact of long journeys for pupils travelling from the current Gwernyfed catchment area will affect not only those pupils, but all pupils in the school – mainly because the capacity to learn after an early start and a long journey will be diminished but also because a large number of children will be excluded from the opportunity to join in with extra-curricular activities. This will create an inequality of opportunity for pupils in the same school – a two tier education system.</i></p>
Equality impact assessment (4)	<p><i>Vulnerable learners may suffer: on page 110 one of the weaknesses listed of the post-16 proposal is: ‘does not provide a clear learning pathway within a school environment.’ This directly relates to vulnerable students and should be acknowledged and addressed in the Equality Impact Assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Where is the cross referencing between the Equality Impact Assessment and the Risk Assessment? The Equality Impact Assessment identifies many, many RISKS.</i></p>

Urban Solutions for a Rural Area

- 11.43 PCC's proposals were generally criticised for being more suited to densely populated urban areas and failing to consider issues specific to the rurality of Powys - such as difficult transport networks and naturally smaller schools.
- 11.44 In the same vein, it was considered unfair to merge two schools that are so different both geographically and culturally - and so PCC was urged to revisit models in use in other rural areas in Wales and beyond.

Comments (6)

The proposal...may look the most suitable option on paper and may be an option for an urban environment but in a rural setting and in the real world it is a poor option.

There are significant contrasts between them. Brecon High School is a town school, where pupils are brought up in an urbanised area, and the nature of this is very different to Gwernyfed High School, a very rural school incorporating many local communities with children brought up differently to those in Brecon.

Small can be good. Big does not necessarily mean better, and a model that can work in densely populated urban areas is NOT the answer in a sparsely populated rural environment.

Post-16 Education

- 11.45 Some respondents complimented the quality of post-16 education at the two current schools and could not understand how the loss of their sixth forms could be of any benefit to pupils. Others rejected PCC's claim that the current range of A-Level subjects is insufficient; on the contrary, it was argued that some pupils do not want or need greater choice, while others would prefer to settle for a more limited range of subjects delivered in smaller, good quality sixth forms than risk their educational future with an apparently untested provider in the form of NPTC.
- 11.46 There were, however, a few comments around the poor choice of A-level subjects, inadequate facilities ('outdated' science labs for example) and poor teacher retention within the current high schools.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Existing quality of sixth forms (12)	<p><i>Nothing that I have heard or read from anyone has convinced me that there is a valid argument for [removal of the Sixth Form]. The Sixth Form needs to remain for countless reasons. You only had to hear the words spoken by several very brave pupils at the public meeting to see how important it is.</i></p> <p><i>Gwernyfed offers a broad range of the core academic A-levels (in association with other schools) that many pupils who attend sixth form are likely to want to take (quality is always better than quantity). In the past there have been few negative issues with the A-levels offered at Gwernyfed so what advantage is being gained by shutting it and who would benefit from the proposed closure?</i></p>
Quality of education more important than subject range (4)	<p><i>With regard to A levels I believe it is essential for students to have continuity with their teachers through to A levels. I also do not see the need to have a multitude of subjects to choose from when entry into universities is on the point system. Surely it would be better to offer a smaller core of subjects which guarantees enough pupils in each subject to enable the subject to be taught for the two years.</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>Gwernyfed is a community school where every pupil is known by every teacher, and the core subjects are taught to a very high standard. Given the choice between a more distant school offering greater subject choice and the current slightly restricted curriculum, we would favour the later every time. Greater subject choice does not outweigh the negatives of the merger.</i></p> <p><i>I want to stay in Gwernyfed and do not think PCC should prioritise choice (number of subjects offered) over quality of teaching and overall educational experience. I hope to study science "A" levels and note that I cannot find Chemistry (a basic academic "A" level) on the vast list of courses on offer by NPTC.</i></p>
Agreement that changes need to be made (3)	<p><i>Gwernyfed has a very poor choice of subjects to study at sixth form as evidenced by the relatively small numbers of children who stay there for sixth form.</i></p> <p><i>As it is now, I don't think the sixth form works very well. The youngsters don't have a pleasant environment to work in, or somewhere to relax, if they have free lessons. Science labs are outdated. I have looked at a sixth form college in Merthyr for my youngest. I feel that she has been disadvantaged in year 11. She has had two changes of teacher in the three sciences, a change of teacher in English and Welsh in the past 8 months, that can't be good in the final GCSE year.</i></p>

- 11.47 Many responses highlighted serious concerns about NPTC's educational standards and capacity to deliver the broad range of courses promised at the Brecon campus. The College's apparently poor reputation and lack of local accountability were also criticised; in relation to the latter, people commented on their own and others' experiences of courses being cancelled due to low numbers. Furthermore, current facilities (such as the science laboratories) at the College in Brecon were considered poorer than those at GHS in particular.
- 11.48 A further reservation was whether sufficient good quality staff could be recruited to teach for only 'a couple of hours a week'. Also, there was worry that they would not be as available and supportive as sixth form teachers who have built up a relationship with their pupils over a number of years.
- 11.49 Respondents typically did not wish to see post-16 education provided by an out-of-area organisation, leaving PCC with reduced control and influence; in fact, some accused the Council of abandoning their responsibilities in this respect. It was also alleged that PCC is using capital funding as an incentive to commit NPTC to Brecon, leading to accusations that the consultation outcome is predetermined.
- 11.50 There was also some distrust of NPTC's intentions and fear that its main focus is profit over educational quality. Respondents also questioned what would happen if the College decides it is not financially viable to continue its Brecon-based provision in future.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
NPTC - facilities (50)	<p><i>At the meeting, one of the representatives from the College was asked about A-Level provision at the College in Brecon, and in the course of his answer, mentioned that the College had a laboratory. ONE laboratory! Compared with separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics laboratories at Gwernyfed, how does moving A-Level Science studies to a single laboratory in Brecon "significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners", to quote your aspirational words in the Consultation Document? And even if all A-Level Science lessons can</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>be timetabled in this one laboratory, will the apparatus available for students compare with the excellent facilities currently available in Gwernyfed? If it were removed from the school, GCSE students would have to be taught by watching a screen or by textbook rather than by direct, live demonstrations round the front bench, which I believe is unforgiveable in an experimental subject.</i></p>
<p>NPTC - quality of education (46)</p>	<p><i>The consensus in our area is a total lack of confidence in the quality of provision this group will offer our older learners. Their results are evidence of this- 50.2% achieved A*-B grades, compared to Gwernyfed who had 67.6% equivalent.</i></p> <p><i>I also note that within NPTC's brochure, they directly compare their Gifted and Talented A level results with general national figures, which seems to imply a better relative pass rate than is actually achieved.</i></p> <p><i>If this proposal goes ahead where will my son get quality A level teaching? It won't be at NPTC. The results they boast have nothing to do with the Brecon campus. There is no confidence in the college locally and you will drive people away.</i></p> <p><i>I do not have confidence that this proposal can work in this rural area and provide me with the quality of education that my High School can. I really want to attend Gwernyfed but am sick of worrying about it and am seriously considering Hereford sixth form College.</i></p>
<p>NPTC - choice of subjects (44)</p>	<p><i>How can you guarantee that pupils will receive the full range and quality of courses at A-level in NPTC college rather than in a high school sixth form?</i></p> <p><i>In the document (it might be a typing error) the new school will offer no chemistry, meaning anyone wanting to pursue a medical career cannot do so ... more people will result in turning elsewhere for their education.</i></p> <p><i>Does NPTC have a legally binding agreement to provide the required 25 A Level subjects from one location, in Brecon? What is the duration of any such agreement?</i></p> <p><i>Some of my son's friends enrolled on courses and due to the low numbers are now being transported to Neath to access the course, which is more additional excessive travelling.</i></p> <p><i>I myself taught for the NPTC group (on the BTEC performing arts course, during the time that Coleg Powys was making the transition to NPTC group). I left this job after 8 months as the organisation was so poor; I would go so far as to say, shambolic. That particular course petered out due to lack of organisation and eventually ended, meaning students had to relocate to the Neath campus. This scenario could happen again with any of the courses (including A levels) that NPTC group offers. What a disaster that would be for Brecon's A-level students.</i></p>
<p>NPTC - quality of teaching staff (10)</p>	<p><i>We are not convinced NPTC will be able to recruit enough well qualified staff to a rural school.</i></p> <p><i>Where would staff be found to teach for what may well be only a few hours per week, spread out over several days?</i></p> <p><i>As a parent I will want my child educated at a school based sixth form by teachers who know her, who have inspired her, who know what she has already learnt, not random tutors who drop-in for a couple of lessons a week and can't be found at break-time for a quick question, or leading extra curricula activities, trips overseas, clubs etc.</i></p>

<p>Finances for proposed new build (10)</p>	<p><i>I understand that it has been proposed that £24 million is “given” to NPTC to improve their facilities in Brecon. Is this not foolhardy, considering the fact that following surveys in Gwernyfed, the vast majority of Year 11 and Year 10 pupils stated that they will go to Herefordshire for their education rather than to NPTC in Brecon and PCC will not have any say as to how this is spent?</i></p> <p><i>The proposal states that the Beacons Campus Project “may also include new facilities for NPTC Group of Colleges”. Is it the intention to publicly fund the facilities offered by a private company (NPTC) which operates for commercial gain, in order to make this proposal commercially viable for that company?</i></p> <p><i>What facilities might NPTC, a private company operated for profit, expect to be gifted by Powys in order to deliver the promised post-16 curriculum? What legally-binding guarantee does Powys Council have to protect this investment of public money into a private company, and over what period of time does NPTC Group guarantee to deliver these services in return for the investment in the facilities it will use to underwrite its business?</i></p>
<p>NPTC - motives, accountability and track record (5)</p>	<p><i>The proposals being made by Neath Port Talbot are thus not credible. It seems entirely possible that they are using the current proposals as a ‘Trojan Horse’ to further their ambition, clearly stated in a letter to the Welsh Government, to take over all post-16 provision in South Powys.</i></p> <p><i>They (the local population) don’t want to see the all-important post-16 education (the launch-pad to children’s future careers) handed over to an organisation from outside the area, which has no local accountability and who will withdraw or scale down the local provision as soon as it starts to look financially challenging to them.</i></p> <p><i>Why does the LEA insist on spending £24m on improving the college campus so that an out of county provider can take control with no input from Powys?</i></p> <p><i>We feel PCC’s proposal to hand over post 16 education to NPTC is a complete abdication of its responsibilities. Powys county council would relinquish any influence over its post 16 education - what happens in the future if standards drop or NPTC decide the Brecon campus is peripheral or loss making and leave?</i></p>

- 11.51 In addition to the above, it was claimed that the lack of local school-based sixth forms would encourage some parents to send their children to out-of-county colleges and schools, including those over the border in England. This, it was claimed, would not only impact on post-16 pupil numbers in Powys, but also on students’ right to be educated in their own country. There was also concern around additional transport costs, which it was feared families and pupils would be responsible for.
- 11.52 Additionally, those who had been affected by the closure of John Beddoes sixth form explained that the loss of those at BHS and GHS would lessen the provision and choice of school-based post-16 education in Powys even further. The negative impact of the changes at John Beddoes on pupils was also noted; for example, an inability to attend after-school clubs in their own areas due to excess travelling times.
- 11.53 Respondents also championed the benefits of having sixth form pupils within schools: they were described as role models for younger pupils and were thought to offer a great deal in terms of tutoring and mentoring. Furthermore, the continuity of education offered by school-based sixth forms was considered essential in terms of improving pupil performance and encouraging those who wish to further their education.

11.54 Alternative suggestions from written submitters included: merging Brecon and Gwernyfed sixth forms; and teachers travelling to different sites or carrying out 'Skype tutorials' to reduce travel and disruption for pupils, while still providing a range of subjects.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Parents/pupils moving out of county/Wales for post-16 education (63)	<p><i>Even more students will move to Hereford Sixth Form College if Gwernyfed closes which will exacerbate the problem of less money into Powys - there will be even less money to spend on those students wishing to continue their sixth form education in Brecon. Surely this is contradictory to what the council wish to achieve?</i></p> <p><i>I will have to put them on a bus to Herford Sixth Form college in ENGLAND, paid for by myself which I can't really afford. There will be no room for everyone at Crickhowell sixth form. Why should we send our children to school in England to secure a decent education? It is shameful. Why should Brecon be the only area without a school sixth form? Why are you ruining the future of Brecon's children?</i></p> <p><i>Have you considered the number of parents and pupils who want their child educated in a high school sixth form and will therefore move their child to Crickhowell, Abergavenny or Christ College for example and the impact this will have on the 'predicted' pupils numbers for NPTC college courses?</i></p>
Benefits of school-based sixth forms (16)	<p><i>How are you going to compensate those pupils in the lower years who would benefit from the mentoring and tutoring provided by sixth formers in school, for example in maths, reading, drama and sports? How are you going to compensate for the lack of opportunity for those sixth formers who would mentor and tutor younger pupils? The benefit to their self-esteem, consolidation of their own learning and the opportunity to add such opportunities to their university applications and CVs? Pupils in Year 11 currently deliver Peer Mentor Training to those pupils in Year 9 - how is this going to be facilitated with no Year 11 pupils in school?</i></p> <p><i>Brecon High School and its pupils would be impoverished if it lost its sixth form. If its older pupils had to travel a long distance to enjoy schooling to a level needed if they wished to go to university or college those pupils would be liable to be dissuaded from pursuing their education further or, if not dissuaded, will be handicapped by long daily journeys.</i></p> <p><i>The advantage offered by a teaching environment where teachers with long-established insight into pupils' character and educational characteristics will be thrown away.</i></p>
Alternative suggestions (7)	<p><i>If the most popular A level subjects were taught at the school in a regular sixth form, the more "exotic" subjects could be taught as tutorials, with maybe the teacher travelling rather than the pupils (to reduce the carbon footprint), or via skype, or distance learning.</i></p> <p><i>Why must the sixth forms at both Brecon and Gwernyfed be removed? If the council aspires to having sixth forms that have over 150 pupils and Brecon currently has 83 pupils with Gwernyfed having 79 pupils making a combined total of 162, why can't the two sixth forms be combined and delivered from a single site at Brecon High School, the larger of the two sites?</i></p> <p><i>I also feel that the sixth form could be organised better with teachers moving sites rather than students. Busing and taxiing students from one school to another is an enormous cost for the tax payer. Whereas teachers working on different sites is cheaper, easier, quicker and much less hassle. It will mean that the schools will need to work together to create sixth form timetables, but that is not very hard to do.</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<i>In light of the projected increase in pupil numbers from the current low, investment in two separate schools acting in concert to provide a wide range of A Levels may be a better way forward retaining as it would, a through-school provision in each site (and the advantages of continuity and pastoral care that this brings) as well as retaining at least some choice for pupils and parents.</i>
Transport cost for pupils/families (2)	<i>PCC has no obligation to transport people to NPTC whilst the new school is being built as it is not run under Powys, it is a Neath Port Talbot operation, and this means that the transport implication costs will be personal to families and would amount to a significant amount of money per week.</i>
Limited equivalent options to GHS in Powys (2)	<i>My daughter's 'catchment' school (John Beddoes in Newtown) lost its sixth form two years ago and was downgraded to a mere 'campus' of Newtown High, an impossible journey away. Now Powys cabinet is planning to close Gwernyfed High School, the only secondary school in Powys with a Sixth Form that is remotely geographically possible for us.</i>
Impact on sports activity/clubs (example John Beddoes) (1)	<i>I have seen the effect of closing John Beddoes sixth form in Presteigne by PCC and I know what a negative impact it has had on sports in Powys and in neighbouring Herefordshire. My son plays golf and once players are 16+ they cannot enter the Powys Schools Teams because they no longer go to school in Powys. The boys who previously played Junior League matches and took an active role in YFC are no longer able to as they board at Hartpury in Gloucestershire - with their parents having to be placed in this ridiculous situation when their children are only 16, having extra financial burdens as well as additional travel inconveniences owing to PCC taking away their local 6th Form.</i>

Welsh Medium Education

- 11.55 Equity of choice and access to Welsh-medium education was regarded as a right - and moreover essential to ensure the continued vibrancy of the language in Brecon and its surrounding areas.
- 11.56 As such, PCC was accused of being discriminatory in discouraging Welsh language use among young people in the area; the expectation was that many pupils, especially from South Powys, would attend or transfer to their local English medium school instead of travelling long distances on public transport to Builth Wells High School. It was thus suggested that the projected number of pupils entering the Welsh stream at Builth has been overestimated.
- 11.57 The removal of the Welsh stream from BHS was thought to make little sense when Ysgol y Bannau - a category 1 Welsh language primary school - is located in such close proximity. Indeed, many concerns were expressed around the negative impact of the proposal on pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau - as well as on facilities and community life in the area.
- 11.58 Some responses criticised PCC for its recent policy decisions and a lack of support and funding for BHS - all of which have apparently undermined the Welsh stream there. Several respondents also said that the case for change document is somewhat disingenuous and misleading insofar as constant uncertainty around the future of the school's Welsh stream has, in fact, been a significant contributing factor to its declining pupil numbers and educational quality.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Choosing English over Welsh Medium Education/ would refuse to travel to Builth (43)	<p><i>I know many parents who already state that they will not put their children into Welsh if this goes forward, which I completely agree with... but Brecon and the surrounding areas will be losing our Welsh language and you are backing parents into a corner to make that choice. It's not fair and bad for Brecon as a town not to mention our children's futures!</i></p> <p><i>If this plan goes through, there is no chance of my daughter continuing to receive a Welsh education after she leaves primary school. This will be a matter of deep regret for us. Reluctantly, she will receive the rest of her education in England.</i></p> <p><i>The effect is not just on grades but by going to schools out of Wales they will not be taught Welsh which will create a large area in the east of Radnorshire where the language will be lost. This would not be a temporary loss but a loss forever.</i></p>
Impact on Welsh primary school provision (20)	<p><i>If this provision is removed the number of pupils starting at Ysgol y Bannau will decline, some are already questioning their decisions even before the consultation has been completed. With two thirds of the children coming from English speaking families they will not consider putting them into Welsh education if they then have to travel to Builth to continue with their Welsh education, they will choose English medium from the beginning. Some parents are already planning to remove their children from the school next term.</i></p> <p><i>I have already spoken with at least four different families in the last two months who have opted out of sending their children to Ysgol y Bannau in the next academic year for the simple reason that they have been led to believe that there will be no continuation of first language Welsh at the nearest Comprehensive school.</i></p> <p><i>You might not have any plans to close the Ysgol y Bannau but your proposal is already having a detrimental impact: pupils being removed prematurely from Welsh medium education altogether. The school is likely to close in the future.</i></p>
Risks to the Welsh language in the local area (19)	<p><i>The removal of teaching in Welsh sends a negative cultural message for the community, particularly when considering the recent changes to the Welsh Language Act. How are you going to address this and develop a population of Welsh speakers within the community of Brecon? The Welsh language grows and develops not only through the teaching of subjects in Welsh, but by the interaction of those in the 'Welsh' stream with those in the 'English' stream. How are you going to address this deficit by the loss of the Welsh Stream in Brecon High?</i></p> <p><i>Without your investment, the Welsh speaking community in south Powys will be deprived of its younger people as they will inevitably draw towards the [Builth Wells High School] community. You are doing nothing to encourage future generations to link with their local community in an aging population.</i></p> <p><i>The amount of Welsh spoken in this area is going to reduce dramatically. This contradicts the Welsh Government's plans to increase the use of Welsh language. Our grandchildren are being denied the opportunity to learn Welsh in their community and it seems unfair and discriminatory that at long last there are plans to invest in a new school at Brecon but our grandchildren will not benefit from these new facilities.</i></p>
Travel for Welsh medium provision – impacts (16)	<p><i>If the decision is taken to proceed with the decision to move the Welsh stream out of Brecon and ask Welsh speaking children to travel 50 plus miles a day to Builth High School there will be a high price paid by the students singled out because they speak the language of their country. Having to ask them to leave the clubs they are members of, asking them to travel 52</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>miles a day, asking them to say goodbye to their friends, asking them to have less time at home in the evenings, asking them to get up an hour and a half earlier, asking them to have less free time after school work, does not in my opinion make it better for our students.</i></p> <p><i>Those pupils wishing to learn through the medium of Welsh are currently travelling to Builth. However there are also question marks over the future of Builth so how far are you prepared for your Welsh students to travel in order to learn in the language of their culture?</i></p> <p><i>I am a pupil from Ysgol y Bannau in year five. I am writing to you to say I really want to keep the Welsh stream in Brecon High School. I do not want to go on a bus to Builth every day because I do not know anyone from that area and will not feel comfortable or confident there.</i></p>
Lack of local Welsh medium provision in Brecon is discriminatory (14)	<p><i>I believe the Welsh assembly government must relook at their decision to consider funding a new school in Brecon that does not include welsh medium education, thereby discriminating against welsh speakers. For those with the ability to ‘pop’ their children the 52 mile trip you may class this as an inconvenience but for those who can't you must accept you are going to be discriminating against them by taking away their welsh medium education.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, if a new school is built in Brecon but Welsh medium education is relocated to Builth, one might conclude that the pupils electing to access the Welsh medium education are in fact disadvantaged – indeed, discriminated against by removing their access to a newly built school.</i></p> <p><i>A term used in the Brecon High School Consultation event was “Equality Education”. How is moving Welsh speaking children out of their community so they can move forward with their Welsh language promoting and providing “Equality Education”? It is in fact marginalising them and pushing them away from their local community, which I feel is also a serious case of discrimination towards the Welsh Language.</i></p> <p><i>Families who would like to choose Welsh medium education from low income families will have to choose between Welsh and quality of life [due to travel times/cost] ... Low income families with special needs will be unable to carry on through the medium of Welsh which would be an advantage in the job market.</i></p>
Facts and figures supporting the proposal are misleading (7)	<p><i>The reason that the numbers of children not choosing to attend the Welsh Medium stream in Brecon High School is a self-fulfilling prophecy created by scare mongering.</i></p> <p><i>These statistics are the result of council’s own failings. Over more than a decade the council has failed to effectively communicate its vision for Welsh medium secondary education in South Powys and has cast doubt on the viability of continued Welsh medium secondary education provision in Brecon. Unsurprisingly, parents have not had the confidence to commit their children to an uncertain educational future. Dozens of children are now educated at Ysgol Gyfun Ystylyfera and elsewhere (requiring in some cases around trip of more than 40 mile each day). How ironic it is that the result of Council's failure to set a compelling vision is now being used, via the consequential statistics, to justify removal of provision in Brecon. It’s shameful.</i></p> <p><i>Until the free transport to Builth, numbers in Brecon were on the increase and BWHS on the decrease. By projecting these figures forward, you will have more Brecon families in BWHS than Builth families. Consultation has not been run fairly...PCC has deliberately misled families into thinking the decision to close Brecon High School Welsh-medium provision has been made. This has led to falsifying numbers in the consultation document.</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Transitioning from primary to secondary (6)	<p><i>The school (Brecon) has a positive working relationship with the primary schools and exceptional transition arrangements. As a pupil at the school myself, the work the staff put in with the primary to secondary transition allows you to feel safe and secure and not disrupt the actual learning that is taking place.</i></p> <p><i>I for one fail to see the sense in this proposal for a number of reasons, not least given that there is a Category 1 Welsh language primary school fewer than 100 meters away from Brecon High School. Where is the nearest Category 1 school to Builth High School?</i></p> <p><i>Ysgol Y Bannau currently has a very successful Welsh-medium after school club called, 'Y Gorlan' and employs Welsh speaking children from the sixth form of Brecon High School providing opportunities to use Welsh in the community and earn some pocket money. Y Gorlan would struggle to find Welsh speaking people to work these odd hours 3.30 - 5.30 and therefore would either end up being English only or closing.</i></p>
Lack of critical mass- undermines the case for consolidation (5)	<p><i>Figures for Builth's Welsh-Medium Year 8 and 9 have not risen much or even at all. This does not engender confidence in "improved provision" and argues against a critical mass ... fewer people will enter in the first place, more will go out of county after KS2 ... those who have gone to Builth have simply transferred from one local Welsh stream in Brecon to another Welsh stream twenty miles away.</i></p> <p><i>The core Welsh-speaking population in South Powys is within the Brecon High School catchment not the Builth Wells catchment. Parents are unlikely to choose for their children to travel the extra distances to and from Builth Wells. So the critical mass will not happen, with a net result of reduced Welsh-medium provision overall.</i></p> <p><i>Powys should have a Welsh Secondary school, but Powys does not have the numbers to do this and by trying to force children to a central point will simply not work. Powys needs to look at ways to increase numbers in Welsh medium within Primary schools to create the numbers that can filter into the Brecon Welsh stream.</i></p> <p><i>I do not believe that the numbers used in the consultation regarding the numbers of pupils transferring to Builth from Brecon are in any way correct. All of the many parents I have spoken to in the Brecon Welsh stream none are thinking of transferring to Builth. We ourselves have not been asked where we would send our children if Brecon were to no longer be able to educate children in Welsh. How were these numbers arrived at? Who plucked these numbers out from the data? Are they just a guess?</i></p>
Impact on community life and facilities (4)	<p><i>The impact of these able and talented students on the cultural life of Ysgol y Bannau and Brecon High School and the community is enormous; orchestral events, school productions, debating competitions, carol concerts are all events that are woven into the creative fabric of the school day and after school rehearsals and are then transposed out into the local community... There have always been Welsh language items in these events and the school and community will be all the more diminished because of it. For the officers of county to suggest as they did in the consultation meeting that these students will be compensated by Welsh medium clubs and societies is both an insult to the teachers of Sport, Music and Drama within the school and a complete fallacy.</i></p> <p><i>There is already a Welsh medium primary school and even Welsh medium nursery provision in Brecon, taking away the opportunity for these children to continue their education in their home town does not seem like a consistent and well thought out policy. Are the council planning on shutting down these facilities as well?</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Consultation Document is skewed toward Builth Wells option (2)	<p><i>As soon as I start reading the draft language impact assessment we can see the information within it is skewed towards the council's preferred outcome. Looking at 'Welsh language activities provided by the schools' this is completely wrong and as it is referred to at other points in the document it is important to be correct.</i></p> <p><i>Brecon high has many activities carried out in welsh, it has its annual eisteddfod taking place on the 15th April with categories in welsh, second language welsh and English that will involve the whole school celebrating the welsh culture in and around Brecon. The carol service held at Christmas in the cathedral in Brecon was a memorable occasion with both welsh readings and songs by welsh speaking students that was very well attended and enjoyed by the community. Students from the welsh stream are regular contributors to 'papur bro, y Fan a'r lle' the Brecon and Radnor welsh supplement. Regular Welsh for adults courses are held on the campus numerous times a week. Some children even attend a local welsh group in our village of Talybont helping people who are learning the language. None of these are mentioned in the document. Why? ... As soon as I start reading the draft language impact assessment we can see the information within it is skewed towards the council's preferred outcome...</i></p>
Decision to support Welsh medium in Brecon has failed to materialise (1)	<p><i>In 2014 a report done by the council identified that the largest number of respondents who would prefer a designated welsh medium school were those in the Brecon catchment area. In 2014 the council also insisted they would bring Brecon up to 2B status. At some point the council has reneged on this commitment to Brecon High school welsh stream. Why has this been the case as it is a fundamental reason that the decision has been made to favour Builth over Brecon for the Welsh streams location.</i></p>
Lack of financial support for Brecon (1)	<p><i>The consultation report refers to support that was given to Brecon High School from 2011 in respect of increasing Welsh medium provision. There has only been the additional financial element given as part of the funding agreement in the fair funding formula. The Authority promised to work towards Brecon High achieving 2B status, however, under the fair funding formula and because of the number of pupils being less than Builth it was inevitable that Brecon High could not provide the same provision. There was no attempt whatsoever by the Authority to rectify this issue by giving Brecon High the necessary funding to do so like Ysgol Bro Ddyfi used to receive additional funding because it was a small school in order for them to deliver the curriculum. Likewise the same should have happened in Brecon High School but despite numerous attempts the Authority chose to ignore the requests. Was this a deliberate act by the Authority to make the provision at Brecon High School even less viable</i></p>

11.59 The balance of views called for the preservation of the Welsh stream at Brecon and there were suggestions to: increase pupils numbers by ensuring local primary school pupils (including Sennybridge) attend BHS; invest the money saved on pupils travelling to Builth into the recruitment of good quality Welsh medium teachers; and allow teachers to travel between the two sites to enable both to remain open. Others said they would accept a lesser range of subjects if at least some Welsh medium education could be retained at Brecon.

11.60 There was also general support for strengthening Welsh-medium provision across Powys as a whole: while some proposed Welsh-medium staff pooling across primary and secondary schools, others called for PCC to commit to establishing a fully Welsh-medium secondary school to serve South and Mid Powys.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Support for the existing Welsh stream at Brecon (4)	<p><i>You could also boost the numbers in the Welsh stream at Brecon High School by stopping sending pupils across the border to Ystalyfera. Paying for children to be schooled out of county just seems ludicrous to me. I was also extremely shocked to hear that Sennybridge Primary School has been designated as a feeder school for Ystalyfera. Crazy! If you look at the pupil numbers in the nursery class at Sennybridge Welsh Stream and the number in the nursery class at Ysgol Y Bannau (and made parents aware that you wouldn't be paying for them to be schooled out of county or bussed to Builth) you would see that there are enough children between these two schools to have two classes in the Welsh stream at Brecon High school.</i></p> <p><i>I would imagine the money paid out on buses would pay the salaries of quite a few Welsh medium teachers who could be used to boost the Welsh stream at Brecon High School rather than making the pupils travel. Or, as an alternative, why don't you get the teachers to travel between Brecon and Builth High Schools? Give the teachers a travel allowance, keep the Welsh streams open in both schools and save yourselves some money?</i></p>
Offer some local Welsh-medium provision (4)	<p><i>Many parents at Brecon High School and Ysgol y Bannau would accept a reduced number of subjects through Welsh at Brecon High School if it allowed their children to remain locally.</i></p> <p><i>Support Welsh speakers in their own communities rather than shipping them away. We would rather see some Welsh education available in Brecon than see one that may offer more choice in Builth.</i></p> <p><i>Provide free transport to Brecon as well as Builth; give local families the choice; stimulate both schools to work hard at improving its offer and PCC can demonstrate its positive commitment to Welsh-medium education.</i></p>
Support for establishing a dedicated Welsh medium school (3)	<p><i>Establishing Welsh medium Secondary Schools across the county therefore should be a key element of the council's strategic forward planning and an indispensable foundation stone in terms of the wider development of Welsh medium education in Powys. There can be no justification for any further delay, which would deprive another generation of Powys' pupils of the basic opportunities available to the majority of their peers in the rest of Wales.</i></p> <p><i>I am also a former pupil of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydfelen – the first Welsh language school in South Wales established in 1962 with 80 pupils on the school roll in that inaugural year. With the support of the local authority, parents, teachers and the local community, the school grew to over a thousand pupils within a decade. It sparked a renaissance in Welsh language education and remains through its alumni a testament to what can be achieved with passion and imagination. It also offers an example that a successful school offering excellent Welsh language provision could easily provide a critical mass of new learners to provide the numbers so desired by the authority. It would require a broader base of Welsh language primary schools in the area to feed the secondary school. This in turn would be in keeping with the Welsh government's education strategy regarding Welsh language.</i></p>
Use of Technology to link Welsh Streams (3)	<p><i>Using modern technology such as video conferencing, etc. would enable the continuation of a Secondary Welsh stream in both Brecon and Builth Wells High Schools, reduce student travel and embed a vibrant Welsh educational culture in all areas of South Powys. What research / modelling has been conducted by PCC Educational Officers into how new learning / teaching technologies could enable a Welsh A level stream to be retained in all South Powys High Schools?</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>Investment in technology may be able to facilitate a small core group of Welsh medium teachers to teach lessons to pupils across multiple sites, using video-conferencing facilities, online seminar software and so forth - a more attractive and viable option than shipping pupils who want a Welsh medium education to and from Builth Wells every day.</i></p> <p><i>I would much rather see a system of enhanced collaboration between existing institutions, involving imaginative use of modern technology to facilitate and enhance learning, the sharing of teaching and learning resources between existing schools, and so forth.</i></p>
Share Welsh teachers across sites (1)	<p><i>It was stated in the Builth Wells consultation evening that teams of teachers will travel between the two sites (being Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod-Wells High school) which would allow them to deliver lesson to both sites. Why can't a Welsh speaking team of teachers travel between Builth Wells High School and Brecon High School? Not only will it drastically cut travel costs, it would also ensure the security, safety and welfare of our children by keeping them off the roads and prevent anxiety and stress of pupils and their families.</i></p>

Environmental Impacts

^{11.61} Some respondents accused PCC of contradicting environmental policy insofar as its proposed changes would result in a greater carbon footprint. Furthermore, others questioned the relative weighting given to environmental concerns in PCC's options appraisal and whether it might be more prudent to improve the existing schools instead of a new build.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Increased travel = greater carbon footprint (28)	<p><i>How can this be environmentally sound, as Powys itself is a 'Healthy Schools' county. This appears to be an oxymoron and a classic example of not 'practising what you preach'. This also contradicts your plans as a county to encourage recycling and our fortnightly rubbish collections to become three weekly collections in order to reduce the carbon footprint that Powys as a whole is producing.</i></p> <p><i>There will be a significant impact on the environment with the additional transport costs and the associated increase of the carbon footprint. Please can the council justify why they are making a decision that goes directly against national government environmental policy?</i></p>
New build or reuse? (3)	<p><i>Continuous growth and development use resources that contribute to greenhouse gases, please consider other values, i.e. improving existing old-established good quality establishments.</i></p> <p><i>The BREEAM mission statement claims to: "Develop resilience and mitigate against climate change". Whatever happened to 'reduce, re-use, re-cycle' in order to achieve these goals?</i></p> <p><i>Powys CC should complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the proposals in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.</i></p>

Alternative Proposals

- 11.62 Several respondents called on PCC to consider a through-school model for Brecon (and a couple suggested the same for GHS) - while another suggested a similar model to John Beddoes and Newton for Gwernyfed, whereby GHS would become part of a campus school.
- 11.63 Greater partnerships and shared resources (for example through federation or combining sixth forms) were also proposed: these, it was hoped, would mitigate against the critical mass issues cited in the case for change.
- 11.64 Several people would like to see PCC adopt better and more creative uses of information technology across sites within a federation or consortium model in order to allow pupils to access a better range of subjects without having to travel long distances.

Sub-Theme	Comments
Through-school or federation model (33)	<p><i>Would combining aspects of primary and secondary school provision be more transformational? This would encourage a 'learning continuum' for pupils and keep facilities local, in line with the Donaldson Report. Were better ways of working considered, such as federation schools with shared governance, resources, facilities, staff and services, thus keeping schools in specific localities?</i></p> <p><i>Create a through school combining Mount Street Infants/Juniors and Brecon High. This will enable the debt to be wiped. Why is this the right proposal? There are serious concerns over the sustainability of Mount street Infants and Juniors. In particular the Juniors. The council could sell this land for residential development as it is surrounded by residential houses currently. This would bring similar proceeds to selling Gwernyfed. This would give through school pupil numbers of around 800+. This alongside the 120 new homes being built directly opposite Brecon High School has the potential of numbers closer to 900 pupils. Gwernyfed would be able to regain its former pupil numbers by the removal of this constant threat hanging over it. The community surrounding Gwernyfed could continue to prosper and grow.</i></p> <p><i>An All-through 4 to 18 model in Brecon and Gwernyfed, and retaining Welsh-medium provision in Brecon.</i></p> <p><i>Think outside the box! Include the sixth form at Crickhowell in the development of proposals for a dedicated sixth form at the site of one of the schools (probably Brecon) and the removal of sixth form provision at Crickhowell and Gwernyfed with the NPTCG to provide a complimentary vocational education (which is the bit they might be good at). This would create more 11-16 spaces at Gwernyfed and Crickhowell and allow the benefits of a critical mass of 6th students.</i></p>
Better use of technology (4)	<p><i>What research/modelling has been conducted by PCC Educational Officers into how new learning/teaching technologies could enable a reduction in student travel, enable interschool collaboration around subjects taught and increase numbers of A levels offered, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>Why has PCC not considered an option with enhanced use of ICT, leaving schools to remain open, more subjects to be offered, greater efficiency of staff, and increased choice for pupils?</i></p> <p><i>We can understand that taxiing (sixth form) students between campuses is not sustainable, but with modern technology of video conferencing, webinars etc. there must be scope for some innovative link ups with other education authorities.</i></p>

Primary school on Gwernyfed site (2)	<i>Why are we not considering building a primary school on the Gwernyfed site? This would give us the opportunity to increase the numbers at the school by increasing the age-range catered for. Locally, Christ College Brecon has done exactly that in order to improve their income streams to stay viable. Surely we could do something similar in the public sector, to make Gwernyfed a more financially secure unit by boosting numbers? We have a huge site for further buildings and it is a safe and secure site for younger pupils. There seems to be so much practical sense in this option. It keeps the community cohesion by increasing the numbers of students on this site making it more financially viable and offering a continuity of education on one site.</i>
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Consultation Process

- 11.65 There was an evident sense of distrust in the way PCC has developed its case for change. Many felt that the consultation process is at best cosmetic, whereas others alleged a pre-determined outcome and cited both bias (against GHS) and errors in the consultation document.
- 11.66 Some respondents were keen to see the decision-making process involving not only the PCC Cabinet, but all elected members. There was also criticism of: PCC's performance at the consultation meetings; the objectivity of the consultation questionnaire; and the inaccessibility of the online version of the consultation document.
- 11.67 More generally, respondents demonstrated a loss of confidence in PCC and sought reassurance that their views and the strength of opposition to the proposals would be heeded. Their responses also underlined the need for early dialogue with affected communities in developing options for schools reorganisation, especially in light of the recent primary schools process.

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
Decision has already been made (91)	<p><i>Since the proposal to close the school was first sprung in 2009, the Council has attempted to 'ram' through its agenda in ignorance of the vocal and compelling views of local people. It has purposefully timetabled key and burdensome meetings during the exam period in an attempt to dissuade staff, pupils and parents from expressing their views. At a recent Cabinet meeting, the Council changed the agenda fifteen minutes before hand to include discussion of the proposed closure and had not provided its scrutiny committee with the documents necessary for it to evaluate the merits of the proposal.</i></p> <p><i>I believe that the outcome of the reorganisation of schools is already predetermined by the council, from the beginning it has been implied that this must succeed and that the whole process has got behind on its schedule, from the way the consultation paper is skewed in favour of the proposal just goes to reinforce this...I feel not enough thought and consideration will be given to this decision (to close Welsh provision at Brecon) and it will be waved through as a small part of a 'bigger' decision (to close Gwernyfed High School).</i></p> <p><i>Powys also made a number of comments during the consultation meeting held on 20th April 2016 which strongly suggests that they had pre-determined the outcome, which is outrageous. This was brought to our attention when talking about the legal challenge last summer. Powys said they had 'fallen behind' and needed to 'catch up' showing they have no intention at all of changing their decision and are not going to listen to people's views and take them on board constructively, again showing their inadequacy.</i></p>

Sub-theme (number of comments)	Comments
	<p><i>The proposal for secondary schools, and in particular the closure of Gwernyfed is weak, ill-considered and lazy. It uses many statistics and facts that are simply wrong. It manipulates other statistics until they suit the argument. It falsifies existing research information by cherry-picking extracts from it and using them out of context, so that they appear to support the proposal but in fact no longer say what they were intended to. It fails to recognise the key factors which should inform the decision, glossing over or disregarding those which may reflect unfavourably on the proposal. The council officers responsible have come up with one, lazy idea and cannot or will not consider any other, and so they keep drumming on with a plan which simply does not stand up to intelligent scrutiny.</i></p>
Recent primary school re-configuration (82)	<p><i>The Council is not renowned for delivering on their promises. Before 2015, they closed many small primary schools in the area with the promise that we'd have a nice, new school in Hay and it would be finished by September 2015. Now it is April 2016, and not a single brick had been laid since then. This leads me, and many other people, to have no reason to believe that we are going to have the high school built either. We have been given no evidence that the Council isn't just going to close Gwernyfed and Brecon and then put the whole plan to the side and start on a new project. That is what happened to the primary schools and the Council shouldn't be starting to close anything else before they've built the new primary school in Hay.</i></p> <p><i>There have been plans for the rebuilding of 5 primary schools within the Gwernyfed catchment area and as yet, nearly 8 years later, not a brick has been laid.</i></p> <p><i>Powys have already caused problems with primary school closures in the catchment area of Gwernyfed High School, and the promised new primary schools which still, after years, - have not been started - have they even bought the land? This does not bode well for this proposal.</i></p>
Lack of trust/lost confidence in PCC (36)	<p><i>I would like to take my children out of the Powys education system. It is not fit for purpose. There is a high-handed culture of presenting plans to the people and communities of Powys with very little interest in engagement and dialogue. This causes huge amounts of stress to communities directly affected and, presumably, makes the process of carrying out any plans extremely difficult, if not impossible...</i></p> <p><i>I have absolutely zero confidence in Powys county council...In 2009, Powys proposed to close Gwernyfed, but they backed down as their process was flawed and done so illegally. Then again in the summer of 2015 the proposal to close the school was challenged successfully once more as Powys county council failed to comply with their own and Welsh Government published policies for developing school transition proposals. They then brought back to the table the same proposals with no real evidence of them having considered alternative options in any depth whatsoever. Surely this alone proves that the people behind this plan are totally inadequate...Also in this meeting they failed to address specific questions asked and concerns raised about the decision to close Gwernyfed.</i></p>

<p>Cabinet composition (24)</p>	<p><i>The Powys County Council Cabinet's members are nearly all from Montgomeryshire and this area has only one representative. In Montgomeryshire, they aren't closing any schools at all because they know that they'd get voted out. In this part of Powys we can't vote them out or do anything about it so they close our schools...It means that they can do whatever they want to us and we are powerless to stop them.</i></p> <p><i>I was appalled at the recent consultation meeting at Gwernyfed to discover that most of the members proposing these changes were not from this area of Powys...I notice that NO schools in their areas are planning to close.</i></p> <p><i>Why are the local councillors not allowed to vote on what is a monumental decision for this area. I believe the executive council of nine members, who hold all the power were chosen by the council leader Barry Thomas, none of who come from this area. This is totally undemocratic. Can you please tell me if this is a legal use of the council's power?</i></p>
<p>PCC performance at consultation meetings (20)</p>	<p><i>I attended the Public Meeting on Wednesday 20th April 2016 and was very disturbed at the lack of information given by the Councillors and what answers were given were not satisfactory. Clearly the community have lost faith in the Council and do not feel that our education is safe in their hands.</i></p> <p><i>I attended the consultation meeting in April at Gwernyfed ... Now I finally know what the phrase "pulling the wool over one's eyes" means! Thank goodness for the many members of the public who DID take the time to get their facts right and spoke so eloquently and passionately for saving Gwernyfed school. Unlike those members of the council in attendance who clearly did NOT have the means to back up their reasoning for closure, evident in the stammering and spluttering and indeed the number of NON responses!</i></p> <p><i>Powys County are unable to answer specific questions and concerns raised about the decision to close. If Powys are to go ahead with this proposals, who's to say they haven't covered all the legal work and thought of every outcome and possibility.</i></p>
<p>The Council will ignore views but instead need to listen (17)</p>	<p><i>The current proposal definitely illustrates that the learners' opinions and concerns have not even been slightly considered and therefore has left everyone feeling completely opposed and disgusted to the proposal.</i></p> <p><i>I know the Gwernyfed Governors have tried (as have many others) to make constructive suggestions to PCC cabinet for alternative proposals. This has continuously fallen on deaf ears. I urge PCC to develop a strategy that builds on the success of Gwernyfed High School to drive up the standards in both schools without the continual threat of closure hanging over them. Gwernyfed must be retained as a stand-alone school or as part of a federation arrangement which crucially also includes "A" level provision.</i></p> <p><i>Due to the level of campaigning it is evident that local interests are not being taken into account neither are they being engaged. If they had developed a dialogue with the community, they would know just how vital Gwernyfed is. The reorganisation is in no way balanced or meeting the need of the community.</i></p> <p><i>Listen to the voices of the children, if not the adults! Remember that our future is in their hands and if they don't get the very best schooling we can provide then the outlook for Powys is very bleak indeed.</i></p>

Questionnaire (8)	<p><i>On page 2 of the questionnaire, I am asked to comment on whether I believe the council is right to make changes and that there is a case for change in Powys education. Is this not potentially misleading - as responses may indicate that a change is needed but not the one suggested in the proposal? I am concerned as to how the cabinet will present this data.</i></p> <p><i>While the questionnaire states the case for change, it does not provide any reasons why the proposal should NOT be considered. Is this not potentially creating a bias in responses and is a consultation document allowed to be one-sided?</i></p> <p><i>I was disappointed that the documents published by Powys County Council (PCC) for consultee responses were poorly designed. Some of the questions were leading and it was not possible to provide full and open answers. For example you may strongly agree that Brecon needs a new High School building but strongly disagree that Gwernyfed should close or merge with Brecon.</i></p>
Public consultation meetings (7)	<p><i>I applied for a ticket for the public consultation meeting in Gwernyfed but was told that it had 'sold out'. I was added to a 'reserve list' but heard no more. I feel that if people were refused entry that another meeting needs to be added. It cannot be regarded as a public consultation if some are excluded from the process.</i></p> <p><i>The ORS representative who chaired the meeting at Llandrindod told us in that meeting that his aim was ""to ensure that you all get ample opportunity to ask questions"". Was that laudable aim achieved at Gwernyfed? You know very well that many of those who wanted to speak at Gwernyfed were unable to speak because the meeting ended before everyone had a chance to do so. Is it acceptable to allocate the same insufficient amount of time for questions at a meeting at the failing school in Builth Wells, which is to be improved and expanded under the cabinet's plans, as for the meeting at the successful school at Gwernyfed, which faces closure? If the answers to those two questions is no, as it has to be, is not the entire consultation process a sham?</i></p> <p><i>The council has a legal requirement to hold consultation meetings but this particular meeting amounted to nothing more than a superficial attempt to tick a box. Concern with time, no answers to any questions asked and the controlling over who was able to speak does not demonstrate the Council's legal following of the School closure procedure.</i></p>
Access to consultation document (1)	<p><i>I can't find a link to a pdf printable paper version online, only to the electronic one. To have the consultation resources only easily available online discriminates against the very young and the very old and anyone without computer skills or access to a computer.</i></p>
Reporting (1)	<p><i>Will Powys County Council produce a review of the consultation process, showing responses of all the groups included in the list of consultees? And if not, why not?</i></p>

12. Petitions

Overview of Petitions

- 12.1 Two petitions were organised against the proposal and this chapter reviews those of which ORS and Powys County Council is aware. We apologise if there have been other petitions of which we have no knowledge. Petitions reviewed below are all of those known by ORS and Powys County Council.
- 12.2 The total number of signatures across all petitions is 4,162. It has not been possible to determine how many signatures on online petitions were gathered during the consultation period. Figures for online petitions are correct as of 11th August 2016.

Summary of Petitions

Overturn decision to close Gwernyfed High School

- 12.3 A paper and an online version of a petition entitled 'Overturn decision to close Gwernyfed High School' exist against the proposal. 1,817 signatures were gathered on paper, while 1,787 signatures plus several hundred comments were gathered online.
- 12.4 The online version of this petition found at Change.org includes the following preamble:

We do not want to see Brecon High School close. We want to see it reach a stage when its educational standards and financial management reflect those at Gwernyfed and where its students and staff have a decent building in which to work together. This must not be achieved by sacrificing the quality of education received by students at Gwernyfed High School. It has taken many years to achieve those high standards and any new school will take time and hard work to provide the education, in its broadest sense, to which all our young people are entitled.

Save our Schools

- 12.5 An online petition entitled 'Save our Schools' exists with 558 signatures.
- 12.6 The petition is found at kirstywilliams.org.uk and includes the following preamble:
- We the undersigned support Kirsty Williams AM petition calling for the Independent led Powys County Council to keep our local Schools open.*
- 12.7 It is important to note that the petition is not specifically targeted towards this proposal, but instead makes mention of perceived impacts of *both* consultations involving Brecon, Gwernyfed, Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools.

13. Social Media

Main issues and themes from social media

- 13.1 This chapter is in two parts: the first provides an overview of the social media pages found and the method by which they were analysed; and the second offers a review of the arguments, discussions and themes arising from online discussions.

Introduction

- 13.2 Five social media pages were found to contain updates, comments or tweets referring to PCC's proposal and/or its perceived impacts. A summary of these pages can be found in Figure 1 below.

Name of page/group	Link	Likes/ followers
Powys County Council	facebook.com/powyscc/	3,395
Save Powys Schools	facebook.com/Save-Powys-Schools-1552306661705453/	2,091
Save Gwernyfed High School	facebook.com/SaveGwernyfedHighSchool/	1,161
Brecon High School	facebook.com/BreconHighSchool/	293
Save Gwernyfed High School	twitter.com/SaveGwernyfedHS	186

- 13.3 Each of the pages has been collated and analysed via a code frame which was designed to capture each unique argument or theme discussed. To ensure consistency between social media users and all other respondents, only content posted during the consultation period has been considered.
- 13.4 It is also worth noting that in addition to the above, a private Facebook group named 'Save Gwernyfed Sixth Form' exists. This group has 382 members and intends 'to aid with the coordination of preventative action to save Gwernyfed Sixth Form'. This group is open to Gwernyfed Sixth Form Alumni only, and as such cannot be analysed by ORS.

Main Themes Raised on Social Media

Quality of Education

- 13.5 Social media users frequently commented on the quality and 'well-rounded' education provided at GHS, as well as the excellent pastoral care offered there:

I see no logical reason to close a successful school in one of the largest catchment areas, producing good results year on year. Closing Gwernyfed would be a total travesty (Save Powys Schools)

It provides a well-rounded education resulting in happy, confident, successful young adults. Bigger is not necessarily better (Save Gwernyfed High School)

The best educational standards for miles around (Save Gwernyfed High School)

[Gwernyfed] *does what a school should do and does it well* (Save Gwernyfed High School)

It is well documented that Gwernyfed is a successful school academically and deserves to remain open. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Buildings and Estates

- 13.6 Social media users commented on the poor condition of the school buildings at Brecon, and argued that the town needs a brand new school regardless of the outcome of the consultation – and in addition to the retention of GHS:

Brecon needs a new school. Gwernyfed needs to stay where it is (Brecon High School)

Brecon need a new school no matter what the consultation comes with. At the moment there is a 'do nothing' option in the proposal (Brecon High School)

Hopefully they take this opportunity to rethink plans to close Gwernyfed High School and take forward the logical proposal to build a new school in Brecon without closing Gwernyfed! #SaveGwernyfed (Save Gwernyfed High School)

- 13.7 In contrast, the GHS school buildings, facilities and surroundings were viewed very positively: people considered it a 'travesty' that they should be lost, although some suspected plans to convert the site into a 'super primary school' for the area:

How many children outside of private education get to go to school in a building like this? I remember a grand staircase, wooden panelling, ghost stories, beautiful grounds and slogging my way up that road in cross country lessons! It's an absolute travesty (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Gwernyfed is a great school in a spectacular setting. It has some new facilities as well as the splendid Manor House (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Some of the best schools in Britain are in old buildings (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Keeping the sports facilities was the hint that this site will be recycled and no new primaries will be built, meaning this site will be the new Gwernyfed cluster super primary school (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Jeremy Patterson eluded to exactly what [I've] thought for [years]. @GwernyfedHS will become the super school for cluster primaries. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

- 13.8 Social media users also discussed the proposed new school in the context of: its size and capacity; and future-proofing to cater for new housing developments and population growth:

New school and college set to be less than half the size of current buildings. [The] school will have just eight spare places when it opens... (Brecon High School)

Powys unable to address concerns over capacity at new school which will only have a projected 8 spare places when it opens (Brecon High School)

1092 pupils due combined school by 2020/2021, capacity 1100 - just 8 spare places (Brecon High School)

National Parks housing data reveals 137 houses could be built opposite High School by 2020. Total build for Brecon by 2020 could be 273. 152 houses also possible in Talgarth, as well as 80 in Hay. All in catchment area of proposed new school ... 1100 places in [the proposed] school. Pupil numbers

across both schools 1092 by 2021. Current capacity across both schools 1680, including sixth form (Brecon High School)

We must future proof, class sizes in juniors are increasing (Brecon High School)

No planning for the future. (Brecon High School)

Finances and Funding

- ^{13.9} Some social media users questioned the motives behind PCC's proposals, suggesting that they are primarily financial insofar as Brecon High School's debts will be eradicated if a new school is established. In this context, GHS was thus seen as something of a 'sacrificial lamb':

This means for Brecon that their debt will be wiped out (Save Powys Schools)

[The] finance person stated [in the Gwernyfed public meeting] that by going ahead the £1.4m debt Brecon have built up would be written off – how can they say it's not financial? (Save Gwernyfed High School)

We're paying for the mismanagement of Brecon High School by Powys (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Powys sums do not add up. The only thing they care about is the £1.5million deficit they have mismanaged. They are wrecking the education of pupils in Brecon and Gwernyfed to cover it up. (Brecon High School)

Pupil Impacts

- ^{13.10} Concerns were expressed around transportation, particularly in relation to: the implications of longer journeys to and from school for GHS pupils in terms of tiredness, time for homework and revision, the ability to undertake extra-curricular activities and the potential for bullying on school buses; additional expense for families and PCC; and the potential environmental impacts of increased travel. Some typical comments can be seen below:

My kids already travel for 2 hours a day to go to Gwernyfed and if they close they'll have another 20-30 mins more to get to Brecon. We only live 7 miles from Builth but aren't in the catchment so have to pay for transport if we don't want them going to Brecon (Save Powys Schools)

Opening a new school in Brecon would mean long travelling times for some pupils (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Children shouldn't have to spend hours on buses when a great education is available locally. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

How can anyone say that travelling is better? When are these poor kids going to be able to do homework and revision? Tired children do not do well. Powys County Council are really not thinking at all (Save Gwernyfed High School)

It'll have a negative impact on families' interaction with attending school events and quality time for the children and young adults (Save Gwernyfed High School)

PCC's proposal will give us the choice of either ridiculous travel times meaning our kids spend hours on a bus instead of time which could be spent being active in sports clubs, [Young Farmers Club], out on the farm etc. OR the extra burden of travel expense to a new school as well as the more

important emotional upheaval of uprooting the children from their friends and community. Some choice (Save Powys Schools)

Vodden Report - Bullying on School bus is an interesting read. Adding safeguarding element into my letter to Powys to help @SaveGwernyfedHS (Save Gwernyfed High School)

The long term bus costs and environmental impact is bonkers. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

- 13.11 For these reasons, many social media users suggested that GHS parents may choose not to send their children to a new high school in Brecon, instead preferring other Powys schools, out-of-county schools or schools in England. Either of the latter two options, it was said, would result in a detrimental loss of revenue for PCC:

Parents won't have to send their children to Brecon. Crickhowell, Builth, Lady Hawkins and Fairfield are alternative choices (Save Powys Schools)

I think that a lot of parents will send their children over the border to be educated so that revenue will be lost to Powys forever (Save Powys Schools)

I consider it completely unfair and detrimental to their health and education that they waste 2 hours of each day [travelling]. So do I send them across the border to Kington? Drive them myself? Giving up my job to do so? Move? (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Fears of primary and secondary school pupil exodus to England if proposal goes ahead. (Brecon High School)

Staff Impacts

- 13.12 Comments were made on staff uncertainty and redundancies (and the cost the latter would entail) at both Brecon and Gwernyfed:

Have they even budgeted for all the redundancy pay outs they will need to make when these new schools open on one site? (Save Powys Schools)

Powys will have struck a deal to ensure that it is NPTC staff teaching A-levels there whilst its own dedicated and talented A-level teachers could well be unemployed! (Brecon High School)

Furthermore, there was concern about the ability of the proposed new school to attract quality teaching staff without a sixth form:

Parents [have] expressed concern at Brecon's ability to recruit teachers without a sixth form. (Brecon High School)

Community Impacts

- 13.13 Many social media users described Gwernyfed High School (henceforth GHS) as an essential part of the community, and suggested that its removal would be to the detriment of the local area and its residents. Some of the many typical comments were:

Gwernyfed supporters are not just fighting for a school. They are fighting to keep their communities (Save Powys Schools)

Gwernyfed is the best asset our community and our children have; taking it away will make us all poorer (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Closing the school would perpetuate the idea that we need to go further afield to live, work, educate and engage in community. It needs to remain open to retain and instil a sense of community (Save Gwernyfed High School)

To close Gwernyfed would be the termination of a large community. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Post-16 Education

- ^{13.14} Social media users frequently discussed the potential quality and sustainability of the education proposed to be provided by the Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges (henceforth NPTC) in Brecon:

Still no reassurances about the quality of sixth form provision (Brecon High School)

In studies sixth formers do their worst at FE colleges like the one proposed for Brecon (Brecon High School)

Brecon Head Girl - 'No support at NPTC' ... Just 5 vocational courses planned by NPTC. (Brecon High School)

Hereford Sixth Form College has just won best sixth form in UK. Surveys show if local school sixth forms close over 90% will go to Hereford not NPTC. It will not be financially viable for them to maintain A levels there. In a year or two at most Powys kids will have no sixth form provision as NPTC move the A levels back to Newport. (Brecon High School)

- ^{13.15} NPTC's ability to provide the requisite number of staff to deliver a full range of A-levels was also called into question - as was the ability of its teachers to develop relationships with pupils in the same way those at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools have been able to do:

NPTC seem incapable of providing assurances that they can find the staff to deliver the number of A levels they are promising, despite the fact that these teachers are ready and willing in post to teach A levels at the high school[s]. Not to mention the fact that those teachers will have spent 5 years nurturing and caring for their year groups/ forms / sets and will know best how to motivate and prepare them for the A levels that they choose (Brecon High School)

Why on earth can't...money be directed back at the schools where highly qualified and experienced teachers are ready, willing and enthusiastic to teach a plethora of A level subjects?! Am I missing a trick here? (Brecon High School)

Parents may want the same teachers for A levels - who know the pupils. (Brecon High School)

- ^{13.16} Other concerns were around governance, accountability and finances. With specific regard to the latter, several participants questioned the proposed £24 million spend on a new building to house the NPTC sixth form provision:

NPTC 'governance and accountability' questioned (Brecon High School)

Powys will have no influence on sixth form if NPTC take over (Brecon High School)

Could I ask where exactly is PCC getting 24 million pounds to build a new Sixth Form for Neath Port Talbot? Am I missing something here? (Brecon High School)

In relation to a new build for NPTC the £24 million spend is not disclosed in the report. Instead it just says the proposal 'may also include new facilities for NPTC Group of Colleges' (Brecon High School)

But why more money going into the college than to provide for the 11-16s? The NPTC campus already exists - how will it take £24m to bring it up to scratch?! (Brecon High School)

Last night's governors meeting with Powys revealed there will be a new build for NPTC but as yet no timetable for it or costing from Powys (Brecon High School)

I'm confused; Powys County Council are spending £24m to fund provision for NPTC to run A level provision in Brecon? For Powys youngsters to attend but for NPTC to staff and educate? Why?! What role will county therefore have in the running of the campus in which it has invested so generously? (Brecon High School)

- 13.17 One respondent, however, expressed support for the proposal to outsource post-16 education – on the condition that provision is good quality, well-resourced and comprehensive:

Does it really matter who operates the A level provision at this location, as long as the learners have access to good quality, well resourced, relevant choice of A levels? I don't think a school's survival strategy should be based on providing A levels. It should be about getting as many 11 - 16 year olds the best GCSE results it can, so that the learner can make a well informed choice to follow an academic or vocational post 16 career path. If NPTC can provide both of these and the school drive up GCSE attainment then is that not a really good outcome for our learners in Southern Powys? (Brecon High School)

Welsh Medium Education

- 13.18 Brecon's social media users were especially concerned about PCC's proposed changes to Welsh medium education, particularly in relation to travel distances, arrangements and costs:

If the Welsh stream goes to Builth, [pupils] may have to travel further (Brecon High School)

Powys propose to send Welsh Medium pupils to Builth ... Extra travel costs of £225,000 (Brecon High School)

Parent on proposed move of Welsh Medium to Builth and distance for children to travel for after school sports clubs. "Pupils will have to choose between sports and Welsh." (Brecon High School)

- 13.19 The possible impact of the proposals on Ysgol y Bannau was also noted:

[The] Chair of Governors at Ysgol Y Bannau ... said the closure of Brecon's Welsh stream could lead to the closure of Ysgol y Bannau (Brecon High School)

Alternative Suggestions

- 13.20 Some social media users had ideas or proposals of their own, for example: reintroducing an agricultural college for long-term sustainability; the development of a new three to 18 'through school'; and retaining a dedicated sixth form within the proposed new building and renting a portion of it to NPTC for vocational provision:

They should bring back [the] agricultural college for best long term use (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Last consultation a through school for 3 to 18 year olds was on the table (Brecon High School)

Why not retain the dedicated 6th form within that building and rent a bit to NPTC? (Brecon High School)

The Consultation Process

13.21 Many social media users commented on the consultation process, describing it as something of a 'done deal'. Some typical comments were:

I think it's no matter what people and communities think. They will do what they want... (Brecon High School)

Consultation is not a chance to do a tick box exercise so they can do what they like to our schools and our communities (Save Powys Schools)

It sounds like a decision has already been made?! (Save Powys Schools)

It seems to me that they just aren't listening. (Save Powys Schools)

13.22 The fact that the ultimate decision as to whether the proposals are approved or rejected will be taken by the PCC Cabinet (as opposed to the whole Council) was also referenced several times: several social media considered this to be undemocratic:

Decisions regarding our schools [will] be made by just nine individuals (most of who have nothing to do with Brecon anyway!) (Brecon High School)

I don't see how cabinet can be challenged in policy at all now ... they'll do what they intend to anyway (Save Powys Schools)

So this is what passes for local democracy. PCC pays our money to yet another consultancy firm ... then a small cabinet of people will make the final decision with no recourse to the whole council. And if we object to the decision it will go back to the same cabinet for another decision. (Save Powys Schools)

13.23 In terms of the public meetings, the Brecon event was considered a success by social media users:

An excellent meeting tonight, thank you to parents, students and other supportive stakeholders. Surely they have to listen to everyone who spoke so eloquently in favour of retaining Welsh medium and our sixth form. (Brecon High School)

However, some users were unhappy with the conduct of the Gwernyfed consultation event held on 20th April 2016, particularly with respect to the answers (or perceived lack thereof) provided to questions from the floor:

Startling to see the PCC officers speechless at so many of the questions (Save Gwernyfed High School)

They certainly didn't have any answers! (Save Gwernyfed High School)

No answers but I think they listened (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Hard to see how anyone could have any faith in those councillors after the [Gwernyfed High School Consultation Event]. They were like rabbits caught in headlights (Save Gwernyfed High School)

[ORS] had definitely been briefed not to let the councillors speak or answer if at all possible... (Save Gwernyfed High School)

13.24 Indeed, a general lack of faith and confidence in PCC was evident in some of the comments made on social media:

So many people in Powys...have so little faith in what PCC are up to on so many levels ... a vote of no confidence in them should be levied... (Save Gwernyfed High School)

I have no faith in Powys doing the right thing for the children or the communities involved. (Save Gwernyfed High School)

Other Comments

13.25 Other less commonly raised sub-themes and comments made on social media are listed in the table below:

Figure 22: Other comments from Social Media

Sub-Theme	Comments
Other alternative solutions	<i>I can see the economic argument for merging schools but to me it would make more sense to centre these on the old counties - Newtown to cover Montgomery, Llandrindod to cover Radnor and Brecon to cover Breconshire. This would ensure no student having to travel ridiculously long journeys. (Save Powys Schools)</i>
Longer-term plans?	<i>Is it feasible to request a 3 or 5 year plan from the county? Similar to the SDPs expected from schools? Maybe then county could shed some light on the thinking (or lack thereof) behind these projections, at least if they share their 5 year vision it might make more sense?! I mean, surely such a document must exist as these are huge changes with massive implications for literally thousands of people from various communities. I don't think that's unreasonable? (Brecon High School)</i>
Effect of proposals on pupils with Special Educational Needs	<i>If there is a special need they may not do well in the sixth form. Or a bigger school. (Brecon High School)</i> <i>Page 44 of the consultation document reports ... Learners with statement of special needs/additional learning needs may be affected emotionally due to the transition to a much larger school. (Brecon High School)</i>
Learning support	<i>Will there still be learning support? (Brecon High School)</i>
Impact of longer journeys on young carers	<i>What about a young carer who would be significantly affected. There are several pupils who care for their parents for whom this will have really serious implications. (Save Powys Schools)</i>
School ethos at Brecon High School	<i>Recently I had the pleasure and privilege of travelling...to attend a performance of 'Seven Brides for Seven Sisters' by Brecon High School students. It was so enjoyable, slick, energetic and very professional and the dedication of the performers was evident. I am told the students gave up their lunch breaks, weekends and other free time to rehearse for months, as well as doing their school work, prep and studying for exams. This shows loyalty and allegiance to their school, which in my humble opinion seems excellent. Why would the Powys County Council...want to change this wonderful school ethos?... By all means provide new buildings and equipment, but please allow the school to retain its own identity...(Brecon High School)</i>

Proposals are dividing communities	<i>[The proposal] is creating a rivalry between communities. (Brecon High School)</i>
Proposals are affecting the area's culture	<i>They are taking away our culture. (Brecon High School)</i>
No new leisure centre as part of proposals	<i>In 2013 it was all set to cost £75 million, just last summer £55 million. The £75m included [a] new leisure centre. (Brecon High School)</i>
Cost of consultation	<i>The company conducting the consultation is being paid £50,000. This is on top of the £105,000 PwC are said to have been paid to do the first consultation. (Brecon High School)</i>

Appendix 1

Formal Submission by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales

Estyn response to the proposal by Powys County Council to close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School and open a new English-medium 11- 16 school from September 2017

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

This is a consultation proposal from Powys County Council. The proposal is to:

- Close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School and establish a new English-medium 11-16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from September 2017;
- Transfer post-16 provision currently provided by both schools to the NPTC group of colleges in Brecon from September 2017;
- Transfer Welsh-medium education currently delivered at Brecon to the Builth Wells site of the proposed new secondary school in mid-Powys from September 2017; and
- Close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon, once new school accommodation has been built in Brecon in 2019/2020.

Summary/ Conclusion

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal to close both schools and establish a new English-medium 11-16 school, initially operating across the existing two sites at Brecon and Gwernyfed. It sets out clearly the proposals relating to the transfer of post-16 education to the NPTC group of colleges, and the transfer of Welsh-medium education to the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in mid-Powys.

Overall, many aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration. However, the proposal does not sufficiently consider standards currently achieved at both schools or demonstrate how the changes will lead to improved standards in relation to pupils' outcomes or the leadership and management of the new school. It does not consider sufficiently the risks involved in the proposal, particularly given the short timescales of its proposals.

As a result, it is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is unlikely to improve the present standard of education provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. The proposer appears to base its case for change primarily on the need to address the decline in pupil numbers at both schools, particularly when set in the context of the projected pupil numbers to 2021. It considers appropriately the impact of low pupil numbers on provision and access to the full curriculum at both schools, and sets out its view that increased pupil numbers would help address this. The proposer identifies appropriately the need to raise standards at both schools and to improve the condition of school buildings at both schools. The proposer also identifies how the proposal would produce annual revenue savings, as well as potential capital receipts from the sale of the existing school sites.

The proposer sets out clearly the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal when compared with the current situation. The proposer sees the main benefits of the proposal accruing from the increased numbers of pupils in the new schools allowing greater pupil choice and access to the curriculum, and cost-effectiveness. The proposer acknowledges the disadvantages of the proposal in terms of loss of community links and increased travel times for pupils affected.

However, overall, it considers that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the disadvantages it has identified.

The proposer appropriately includes these disadvantages in its analysis of risks associated with the proposal, together with the measures it intends to employ to manage them. Overall, its identification of risks appears to be fair and balanced. However, in a few instances, the proposer does not discuss these or its risk management measures in sufficient detail. For example, although the proposer identifies the risk that some parents may arrange for their children to attend schools other than the new school, it does not identify sufficiently well how it will engage positively with parents to reduce this risk.

Similarly, the proposer acknowledges the issues associated with the additional travel times faced by pupils currently at Gwernyfed High School travelling to the proposed new school at Brecon, as well as for Welsh-medium learners currently at Brecon High School travelling to the proposed new school at Builth Wells. However, although the proposer acknowledges that these could have a negative impact on pupil wellbeing and attainment, the proposer is not able to offer any risk management measures beyond stating that travel time would not normally be more than an hour. It does not explain what provision it would make for those pupils for whom journey times would be longer than an hour. While the proposer acknowledges that the increased travel time is likely to restrict pupils' access to after-school activities at the new school, it does not discuss the risk that this might also impact negatively on their ability to access after-school activities in their home area.

In a few cases, the proposer fails to identify significant aspects of the proposal as a risk. For example, it does not include as a risk the challenges associated with the proposed timescales for implementation. In

particular, the proposer does not acknowledge the challenges for the successful establishment of the new school when the new leadership team and staffing structure will not be in place until May 2017. The proposer does not consider the challenges associated with the transfer of the first cohort of Y12 pupils from the existing school to the NPTC group of colleges in Brecon by September 2017. In terms of Welsh-medium provision, the proposer does not consider the risk that its proposal for a new dual-stream school in mid- Powys might not be approved. Most significantly, however, it does not consider the possibility that the proposed new school will fail to improve standards, or identify any measures to address this.

The proposer has considered in some detail the impact of the changes on learners' travel arrangements. It correctly identifies that there will be no additional travel for pupils aged 11-16 who live in the Brecon catchment area and who wish to access English-medium provision at the new school. In addition, it considers that the proposed increase to post-16 courses on the Brecon site will reduce the requirements for inter-school transport for post-16 pupils.

The proposer acknowledges the increase in travel arrangements for pupils aged 11- 16 who live in the Brecon catchment and who wish to attend Welsh-medium provision and for those pupils currently at Gwernyfed if they were to transfer to the proposed new school building in Brecon. The proposer's analysis of the impact of the proposal on travel arrangements for this latter group of pupils demonstrates an increase in travel time that would normally add no more than 20 minutes to the journey, leading to a total journey time of normally no more than an hour. The proposer states that it views the proposed travel arrangements as suitable and in line with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. However, as identified above, the proposer does not explain how it would make provision for those pupils for whom journey times would be longer than an hour.

The proposer refers appropriately to the current numbers of surplus places at both schools. Surplus places at Brecon High School currently stand at 36% and at Gwernyfed High School at 20%. However, the proposer does not provide a proposed capacity figure for the new school, or provide any information on projected pupil numbers at the new school.

The proposer considers in suitable detail the impact of the proposal on Welsh- medium provision within mid- and south Powys. The proposer has carried out a separate Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which clearly assesses the impact of the proposal on provision for pupils at both schools and within this area of the local authority. Given the declining and very low numbers of pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium education at Brecon High School, the proposer's view that the proposal provides benefits for the provision of Welsh-medium education and progression appears reasonable.

Educational aspects of the proposal

Overall, the proposer has not sufficiently considered the impact of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management. The proposer makes appropriate reference to the outcomes of both schools' most recent Estyn inspections. It identifies correctly that Brecon High School remains in special measures and that Gwernyfed High School was removed from Estyn monitoring in February 2016. The proposer also refers briefly to the schools' categorisation within the National School Categorisation System. However, it provides no explanation of the context or detail for these judgements. The proposer acknowledges that there might be a negative impact on the wellbeing of pupils due to the transition to the new school building in Brecon and the additional travel time.

Significantly, the proposer provides no analysis of the standards achieved by pupils at either school in terms of attainment at either key stage 3 or key stage 4.

In terms of Welsh-medium provision at key stage 3 and key stage 4, the proposer suggests that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new dual-stream school in Mid-Powys would enable the school to set pupils according to ability for some subjects. The proposer argues that this could have a positive impact in terms of outcomes for Welsh-medium pupils. However, it does not provide evidence for its view that setting improves standards.

The proposer refers to the standards achieved by both schools in relation to A levels, and compares these appropriately with results for Powys, Wales and for the NPTC group of colleges. Although the proposer argues that it does not anticipate that there would be a negative impact on outcomes for post-16 pupils, it does not outline sufficiently how the transfer of post-16 provision from both schools would have a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils at this stage. Overall, the proposer does not demonstrate how the reorganisation would have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils at any key stage.

In terms of provision, the proposer argues reasonably that the increased pupil numbers within the new school, and of Welsh-medium pupils at the Builth Wells site of the proposed dual-stream school, will allow greater choice and access to the curriculum, particularly at key stage 3 and key stage 4. Similarly, the proposer's view that the proposal for post-16 education could lead to increased access for post-16 pupils to both academic and vocational subjects seems sound. The proposer asserts that a new school building would improve the learning environment and facilities for pupils in line with the principles of the Welsh Government's 21st Century schools programme. However, overall, the proposer does not consider any of these aspects in detail. In particular, the proposer does not demonstrate how the proposed reorganisation would lead to improved standards of teaching, or how these potential benefits would link to improved outcomes for pupils.

The proposer appropriately identifies the potential for the more efficient deployment of resources that would accrue from the proposal. It makes suitable reference to the significant budget deficit forecast by Brecon High School for the next three years, as well as to the backlog of maintenance costs for both sites. It identifies appropriately that the transition to the new school will provide substantial additional workload for the shadowing governing body and appointed leadership team, and how the council aims to support this process. However, the proposer is less clear about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management once the new school is established.

The proposer refers appropriately to the potential positive impact of the proposal on the delivery of the full curriculum at each key stage, at least in the medium and longer term. It identifies the likely positive effect of increased pupil numbers in the single site school on the ability to provide a broader curriculum with increased choice at key stage 3 and key stage 4. With regard to the new school in mid-Powys, the proposer acknowledges that the sudden increase in Welsh-medium pupils in individual year groups may cause initial difficulties for the new school, as it may require them to introduce a second Welsh-medium class in some year groups.

However, it considers reasonably that as larger numbers of pupils move through the school, this will improve the school's ability to offer a more comprehensive curriculum to Welsh-medium pupils, particularly at key stage 4 and post-16.

With regard to post-16 provision, the proposer's view that an increase in the numbers of English-medium post-16 pupils on a single site would enable the provision of a broader range of subjects and

qualifications seems reasonable. Similarly, the proposer asserts that the increased number of Welsh-medium pupils on the Builth Wells site of the new school in mid-Powys would lead in time to an increase in the number of available subjects at the school post-16. However, there remain questions about equality of opportunities for post-16 pupils choosing to study through the medium of Welsh in terms of the range of courses available to them.

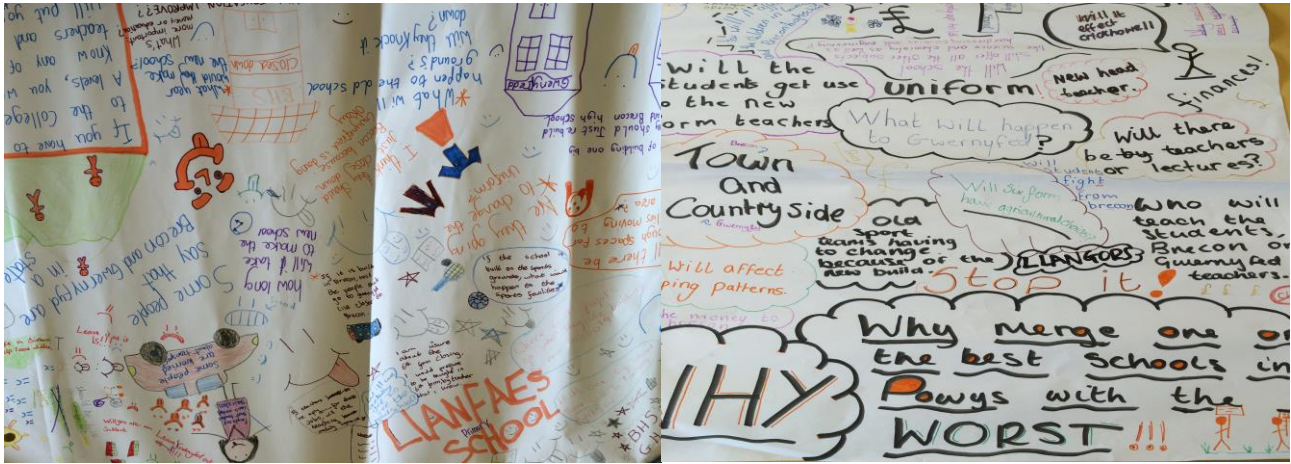
The proposer has considered the likely impact of the proposal on a range of groups, including pupils with Special Educational Needs, pupils from low-income families and Welsh-medium pupils. The proposer has undertaken draft equality impact assessments for pupils from both Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School. They identify clearly how pupils at both schools might be affected by the proposal but do not at this stage identify any measures to mitigate this. The proposer has also carried out a draft Community Impact Assessment which suitably acknowledges the significant issues faced by the communities within the Gwernyfed catchment area should the proposal be successful. However, it does not identify measures it would take to address these.

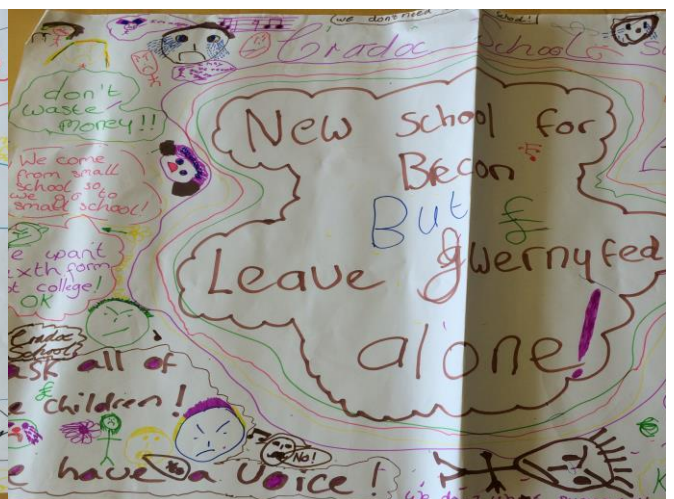
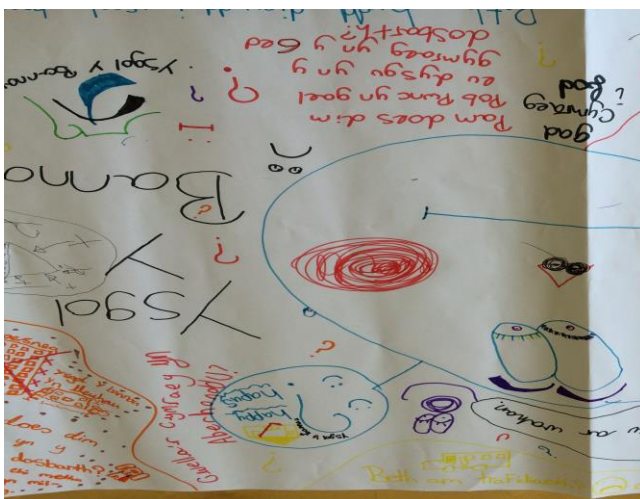
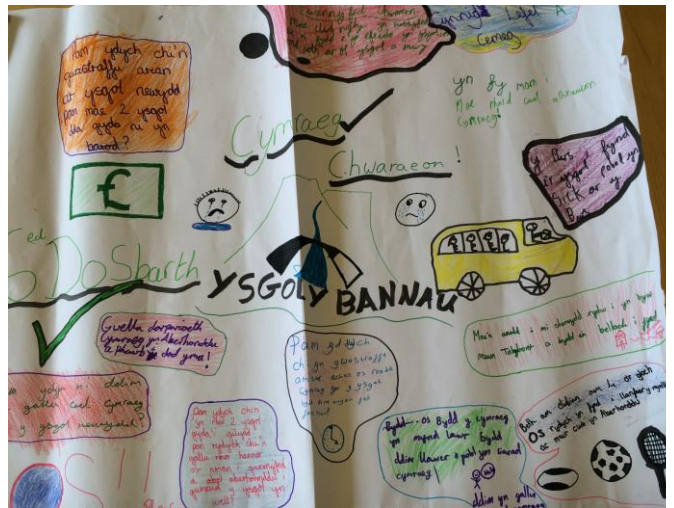
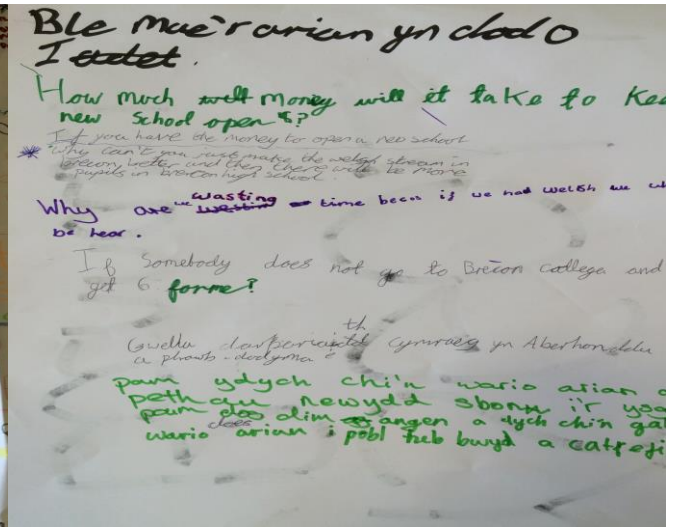
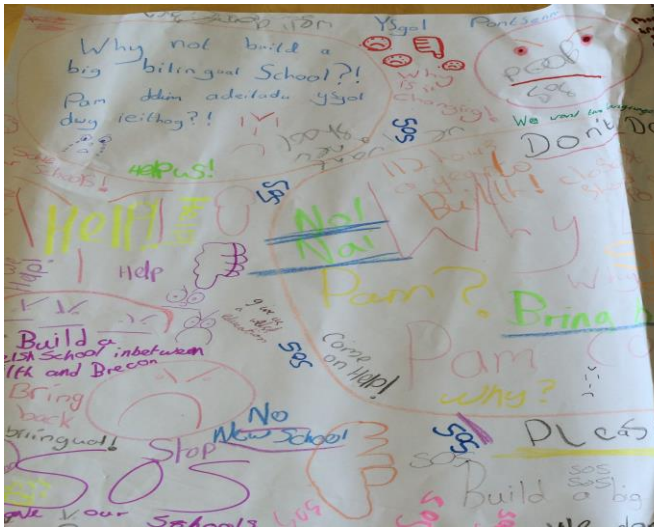
The proposer identifies arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the new school in its discussion of implications for admissions as well as arrangements for transport provision. However, overall, there is insufficient reference in the proposal on how any disruption to learners would be minimised should the proposal be successful.

Appendix 2

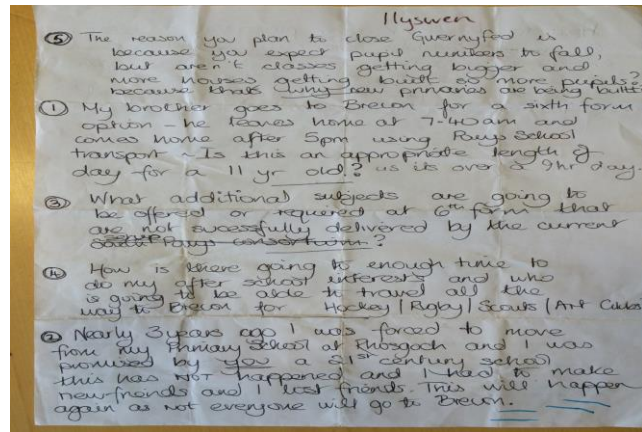
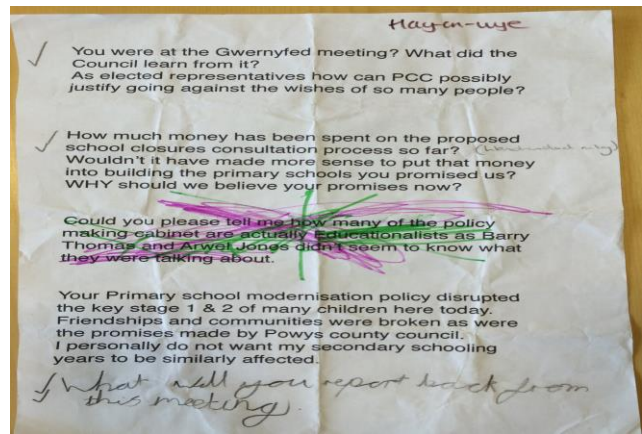
Posters by pupils involved in the primary school workshops

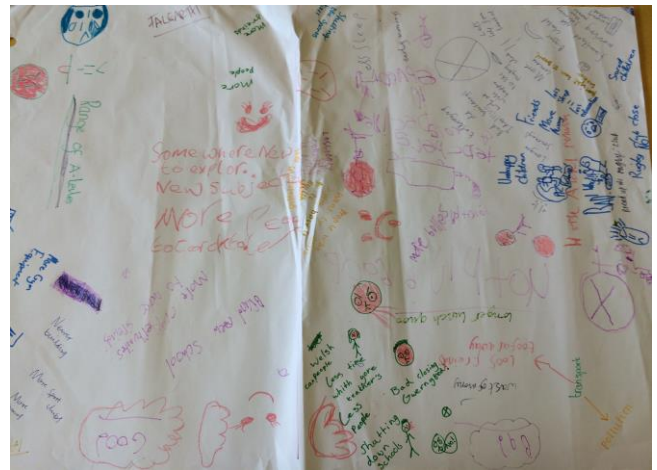
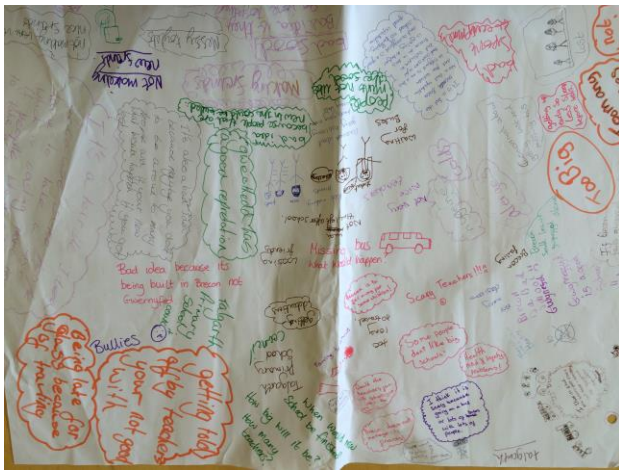
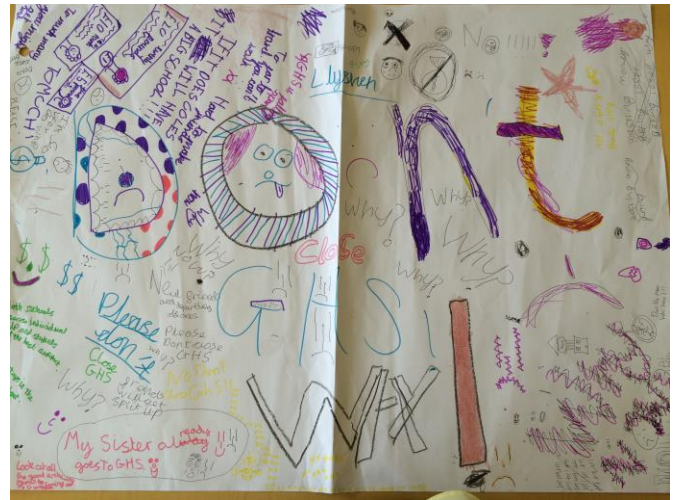
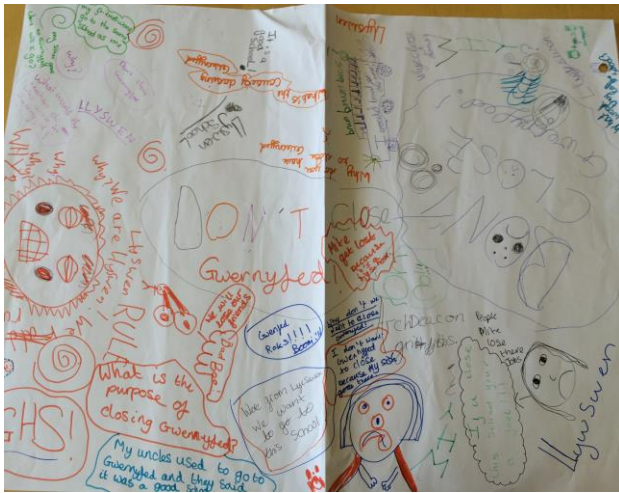
Brecon High School Catchment Schools Workshop





Gwernyfed High School Catchment Schools Workshop





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Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School

Consultation Report - Responses

August 2016

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1 Quality		
1.1 General		
1.1.1	Where is the cited evidence that the Proposal will make a difference to learning outcomes?	<i>The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. Through a larger critical mass of learners there will be greater opportunities to share good practice both within and across departments. Leadership structures will be more resilient to changes in staffing.</i>
1.1.2	How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL expect the resultant amalgamated school will comply with guidance in 1.3 of the WG schools organisation code in providing at least the equivalent standard of education for the pupils of Gwernyfed High School from day one?	<i>The Proposal of providing educational provision across the current sites from September 2017 will ensure that there is minimal disruption to the experiences of the learners. The equivalent standard of education for the pupils of Gwernyfed High School can be delivered immediately upon establishing the new school. The time between September 2017 and movement to a new building will be used by the leadership team with the support of the Local Authority to ensure that policies and procedures are embedded including curriculum timetabling and staffing</i>
1.2 Quality of Staff – Gwernyfed and good relationship with pupils		
1.2.1	The shadow governing body of the New School would be expected to appoint high- quality teaching and staff who would be able to provide excellent learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance;'. How does this not suggest that Gwernyfed high school doesn't provide this and what evidence does the council have to support this statement?	<i>The statement contained within the Consultation Document does not infer that current staff are not quality. It asserts that any appointments would be of high quality staff. The Authority acknowledges the ongoing improvement at Gwernyfed High School in response to being judged as 'adequate' for performance and 'adequate' for prospects for improvement by Estyn, and congratulates the school for coming out of the Estyn monitoring category in February of this year.</i>
1.2.2	The Proposal for the interim dual-site school solution expects a shadow governing body to "appoint high-quality teaching etc." What evidence is there that the current teaching and support staff are not high-quality?	

<p>1.2.3</p>	<p>Provide evidence that the current teaching and support staff at both Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools are not “high-quality” or “able to provide excellent learning experiences, teaching, care, support and guidance.”</p>	
<p>1.3 Choice of Subject KS3, KS4 and Post 16</p>		
<p>1.3.1</p>	<p>Explain what is meant by “to maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3...” What benchmark is being compared here?</p>	<p><i>The consultation document states, ‘The Council believes that a school with a minimum of 600 pupils in KS3 and KS4 would have average year groups of 120 pupils, which would help maximise the curriculum benefits and lead to improved outcomes.’ As a pupil population grows so does a school’s capacity to: deliver a wider range of viable subject options at key stage 4; increase the number of teaching staff; and thereby improve the range of subject specialism.</i></p>
<p>1.3.2</p>	<p>Explain what is, and whether there is, a sound evidence basis for the Council’s “belief” that a rural high school needs to be at least 600 pupils strong at KS3 and KS4.</p>	<p><i>The figure of 600 pupils was agreed by officers of the Authority, in discussions with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), following their Study into the Viability of Secondary Schools. The Authority currently funds KS3 and KS4 classes that deliver core curriculum subjects on a teacher-pupil ratio of 1- 23, apart from subjects which have a health and safety aspect where it is expected that no class has more than 20 pupils. E.g. science – (these classes make up approximately 20% of the curriculum).</i></p> <p><i>In future, it is expected that the maximum teacher-pupil ratio will not exceed 1 – 30/31 for core curriculum subjects.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority’s School Reorganisation Policy 2015 states the following in relation to size of schools:</i></p> <p><i>‘For secondary phase provision, the Council aspires to have schools with at least 600 pupils in Years 7 to 11. This would allow average year group sizes of a minimum of 120 children.</i></p>

	<p><i>The Authority’s optimum model for post-16 education is for centres to be able to provide 25 subjects, with a minimum class size of 12 or above. This will enable the Authority and schools to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 whilst minimising the need for inter-school travel.</i></p> <p><i>However, it must be recognised that in some situations, geographic or linguistic issues make the aspirational targets for size of schools difficult to achieve, and consideration will be given to the specific circumstances of each school under consideration.’</i></p>
<p>1.3.3 Please explain how “an average of 120 students per KS3 & KS4 would help maximise curriculum benefits and lead to improved outcomes”.</p>	<p><i>As a pupil population grows so does a school’s capacity to: deliver a wider range of viable subject options at key stage 4; increase the number of teaching staff; and thereby improve the range of subject specialism. In this context, ‘outcomes’ refers to the choice available to pupils at key stage 4 with wider choice regarded as a positive outcome.</i></p>
<p>1.4 Size of School</p>	
<p>1.4.1 You state that the new school is the council’s aspiration for a size of school. Where is the data and statistical analysis which shows that this will educationally benefit children?</p>	<p><i>The county council commissioned a study by Price Waterhouse Cooper to report on the potential financial viability of each of the secondary and of the overall provision of secondary education across the county. The report concluded that ‘all the schools appear to be reaching a point where their options are extremely limited and there is a tangible risk that schools will become finance, rather than curriculum led’, and that ‘in light of the forecasted, deteriorating financial position of the whole county provision, even a concerted, joint effort of cost management may not be enough to avoid the requirement to examine structural changes to the education provision across the county’.</i></p> <p><i>As a pupil population grows so does a school’s capacity to: deliver a wider range of viable subject options at key stage 4; increase the number of teaching staff; and thereby improve the range of subject specialism.</i></p>

1.5 Special Measures/Estyn		
1.5.1	If the four schools become two neither will be subject to special measures for the next two years. Is this motivation for Powys County Council to proceed with this Proposal and a convenient, short term solution to what appears to be a historic and deep rooted problem? There appears an obvious loophole in the process which you have exploited to your advantage.	<i>The Proposal is not about the current situation of removing a school from special measures due to a reorganisation process. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure for the future that can deliver high-quality education. Should the Proposal be implemented, Welsh Government and Estyn will expect the school to be continually monitored.</i>
1.5.2	What systems will you implement which, for these two years, education standards will be monitored and reviewed adequately and any shortfalls and inadequacies addressed promptly?	<i>All schools in Powys are monitored through the Regional School Improvement Strategy through a team of Challenge Advisers deployed through the regional consortium for South West and Mid Wales, namely ERW. This consists of a core visit during the Autumn Term annually at which a school is categorised for standards and also the capacity to improve and placed on a matrix. This matrix determines the support required by a school. The support required is then brokered through the designated Challenge Adviser to ensure appropriate improvements are made.</i>
1.5.3	What form will your support take during the transitional period - when staff will be working across two sites - to convince us that the Proposals will benefit our children's education?	<i>Officers from the Authority through the Regional School Improvement strategy will with the leadership team of the school provide a bespoke menu of support to ensure there is a smooth transition. The deployment of staff will be the responsibility of the leadership team</i>
1.5.4	Where are the latest Estyn inspection figures? pg. 29 quotes an annual review in 2014. What was the Estyn feedback on Curriculum and Quality in 2014?	<i>Estyn did not carry out a full inspection of Brecon High School In 2014. It carried out a monitoring visit following the core inspection of 2012. During the monitoring visit Estyn evaluated progress against the recommendations of the core inspection and therefore did not make judgement relating specifically to the quality indicators of the Common Inspection Framework. In 2014 of the 8 recommendations 6 were judged to be partly addressed and two fully addressed.</i>

1.6 Educational Attainment – Gwernyfed		
1.6.1	Gwernyfed High School has been producing excellent results and the students are passionate about staying there. They are also keen to ensure that their siblings have the opportunity to go there too. Doesn't that say something about the quality of the school?	<i>There are a range of factors that are taken into account when considering the performance of a school. This needs to reflect not only performance within the Local Authority but also against similar schools across Wales. From the comment made it is evident that students are pleased with their outcomes and this is reflected in their siblings also wanting to attend the school</i>
1.6.2	Why change something that works for something that is a large question mark?!	<i>The Proposal will ensure that the educational infrastructure is sustainable for the future through a critical mass of learners ensuring appropriate curriculum choice. With reducing pupil numbers across the secondary sector and reduction in grant funding for post 16 education it is increasingly difficult to ensure choice and related quality when compared to schools of a similar context across Wales</i>
1.6.3	Can you explain how the current school of Gwernyfed does not meet the requirements of the learning and skills measures in a single location? Why can't a broad range in curriculum be provided at the current Gwernyfed site?	<p><i>The requirement of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure is that every post-16 earner should have access to 30 level 3 courses, 5 of which must be vocational subjects across the 3 domains.</i></p> <p><i>Every 14 – 16 learner should have access to 23 subjects.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority receives a grant from Welsh Government for post-16 provision which is allocated on a formula basis, which has been agreed by all Powys secondary headteachers. The formula is, based on pupil numbers, along with uplifts for sparsity, deprivation and Welsh-medium. . Given that Gwernyfed High School had 89 pupils in the sixth form in 2015/16, the school received funding for 11.5 subjects.</i></p>
1.6.4	How can the learning environment be improved when Gwernyfed High School is located in a safe rural environment and the new school would be built in a busy town, where pupils are already known to leave the current school site in school time and stroll around the town centre?	<i>Safeguarding is a key principle in the design of any new school. The learning environment in the new school would be Condition A, rather than the current Condition C of Gwernyfed High School.</i>

1.7 Size of Year Groups		
1.7.1	What evidence does the council have that year groups of 120 pupils will lead to improved outcomes? What does the council mean by improved outcomes?	See 1.3.1 and 1.3.2
1.8 Standards at Gwernyfed – Relevant to Consultation Process		
1.8.1	If one of the general issues (pg. 8) is that Gwernyfed High School was under Estyn monitoring but is NO longer, then surely this must have no impact as a general issue? If it is not under monitoring then it is not a concern. As this is now historical, surely it does not need to be discussed and is prejudicing the consultation process?	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, Gwernyfed High School was removed from Estyn monitoring in 2016. However, the school will continue to be monitored and this is part of the Regional School Improvement Strategy. All schools in Powys are monitored by a team of Challenge Advisers deployed through the regional consortium for South West and Mid Wales, namely ERW. This consists of a core visit during the Autumn Term annually at which a school is categorised for standards and also the capacity to improve and placed on a matrix. This matrix determines the support required by a school. The support required is then brokered through the designated Challenge Adviser to ensure appropriate improvements are made.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Report that will be considered by Cabinet will reflect the fact that Gwernyfed High School has been removed from the requirement of Estyn monitoring due to progress having been made in addressing the recommendations of the core inspection of Autumn 2013.</i></p>
1.8.2	How can we trust an education department who have recently been in Estyn special measures to provide Gwernyfed High School pupils with an equal standard of education and school life or better, to what they already have?	<i>The education department of Powys County Council has not at any time been in the Estyn category of special measures. Estyn inspections of Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People (LAESCYP) are wide ranging and not limited to the Education Department. LAESCYP in Powys was placed in the category of requiring “Significant Improvement” in October 2012 following an Estyn Monitoring visit. Subsequently due to the progress and improvements made it was removed from the category in June 2014.</i>

1.9 The Consultation Document		
1.9.1	Reasons for the Proposal, bullet point 1: ' <i>an opportunity to improve the learning outcomes.</i> ' Please cite the educational research that backs up this assertion.	<i>Evidence that a move to new or refurbished buildings is provided by Estyn through a thematic report published in 2007. It states that "In nearly all schools with new or refurbished buildings that we surveyed, pupils' attainment and achievement have improved".</i>
1.9.2	Pg. 18 Advantages of the Proposal: ' <i>Opportunities to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment.</i> ' Please cite the evidence base for this.	<i>As stated above. In addition the Estyn report states "Most schools offer pupils more choices than in their previous buildings because they have more space and better facilities. It also states "improvements in the quality of buildings have a very beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and morale of staff which has a positive impact on school performance"</i>
1.9.3	Pg. 18 ' <i>Opportunities to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities.</i> ' Please cite the evidence base for this. Where is the evidence that the Proposal will improve teaching? Please cite research.	<i>In 16 secondary schools sampled, there was a range of improvement of between 5 and 10 percentage points in the core sublet indicator(5 A*-C) at key stage 4 with the average improvement being 3.9 percentage points</i>
1.9.4	How does the closure of Gwernyfed High School provide my son with the highest quality of education possible? It can't! It will disrupt his education massively, just as Powys County Councils shambolic primary school policies have already done	
1.9.5	The Proposal by Powys County Council does not provide any evidence that closing Gwernyfed High School will improve the standards of its young people. Where and when we will see such evidence?	
1.9.6	Where is your research-based evidence that demonstrates the 'new school' will achieve	

	educational standards equivalent to Gwernyfed High School in five years?	
1.9.7	The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires that "Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others." Explain how the current Proposals achieve this for all learners in each of the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments.	<i>The Proposal as outlined in the Consultation Report is based on a number of factors. Through a larger critical mass of learners there will be greater opportunities to share good practice both within and across departments. As a pupil population increases so does the school's capacity to deliver a wider range of subjects at Key stage 4. There would be less reliance on the use of non-specialist teachers at key stage 3 and greater opportunities for the sharing of good practice both within and across departments.</i>
1.9.8	Could you please provide evidence of having searched for literature / research which charts the impact upon pupils' educational outcomes of being subject to more than one experience of school closure?	<i>The Authority is not aware of any research published on this issue. However the pastoral programmes at the new school would mitigate any risk to well-being and achievement</i>
1.9.9	Can Powys County Council guarantee that the quality of education under the new system would be at least as good as the current high standards at Gwernyfed? Where is the empirical evidence that the quality of education under the new system would be at least as good as the current high standards at Gwernyfed?	<i>It is the role of the Local Authority through its school improvement service delivered through the regional School Improvement service, namely ERW to continually monitor the performance of all schools in Powys and to provide challenge and broker support as and when necessary. It is the role of the Local Authority to ensure that all Powys learners have an entitlement to a good quality of provision. Through the merger of the two schools good practice in both schools can be shared amongst all departments to ensure improvement</i>
1.9.10	How can Powys County Council guarantee that the quality of education under the new system would be at least as good as the current high standards at Gwernyfed? Merging a failing school with Gwernyfed will lower standards not improve them!	

1.9.11	With the proposed closure of the schools and introduction of the 'one school, two sites' idea scheduled for August 2017, just before I begin one of the most important years of my life, how can you guarantee that it will not affect my exam results or cause added pressure to me during this period of time?	<i>The Authority recognises that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils. However, all pupils will be supported in the transition to a new school. One of the reasons for the interim Proposal of one school over two sites is to ensure that learners commencing any new courses would be supported in this through a familiar learning environment.</i>
1.9.12	How has the Council taken into account the effect on educational performance at both schools due to the threat of the Proposals since 2009? Again, if it hasn't how can they be held up as a rationale for closure?	<i>With reference to the informal consultation on a variety of options for reorganisation secondary schools, which took place in 2011, not 2009, Cabinet listened to the views of local people and proposed a number of alternative models which maintained the current infrastructure of schools.</i>
1.9.13	If the consultation does not follow the anticipated timescales, you MUST give all appropriate support and resources to BRECON HIGH SCHOOL to ensure the current cohort of children are not neglected for the sake of you long term vision. What assurances can you provide that will instil us with some confidence?	<i>All schools in Powys are monitored through the Regional School Improvement Strategy through a team of Challenge Advisers deployed through the regional consortium for South West and Mid Wales, namely ERW. This consists of a core visit during the Autumn Term annually at which a school is categorised for standards and also the capacity to improve and placed on a matrix. This matrix determines the support required by a school. The support required is then brokered through the designated Challenge Adviser to ensure appropriate improvements are made.</i>
1.9.14	If your Proposals don't proceed according to plan, what assurances can you give us parents that our children's health and safety will not be compromised as a result of your insufficient governance in this area?	<i>In any school, it is the responsibility of the school leadership team and staff to ensure that children are safeguarded and protected from harm. The schools Health and Safety policy will underpin this. Advice is available from the Local Authority</i>
1.9.15	Explain how "to significantly improve the learning outcomes..." is defined.	<i>A range of performance indicators are used to define performance. Currently the schools are not meeting the modelled expectations for schools with the same context relating to free school meal benchmarking quartiles. This is one definition.</i>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
2. Post 16 Education		
2.1 Post 16 model		
2.1.1	Please answer for me what evidence you have that holding academic and vocational at one site is of benefit to either of those categories?	<p><i>The authorities view is that if learners can access both academic and vocational courses all on one site then this widens the curriculum choices and reduces travel requirements for learners who would like to study a mix of both academic and vocational courses.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal aims to provide a high-quality tertiary model of post-16 education, with a number of benefits. Tertiary Colleges provide the solution to the dilemma facing many young people today as they ponder their future - Tertiary colleges are a single establishment meeting educational and skills needs for all young people, their communities, and local employers.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary colleges were originally defined as educational establishments which combined the functions of a further education college and a sixth form college, offering further education through a full range of courses, both vocational and academic, primarily to the 16-19 age group. In a pure tertiary model, schools within a given area do not operate sixth forms, but instead young people progress to a single local institution that provides both their 16-19 education and adult learning for the wider community.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary Colleges offer, within one institution, readily accessible pathways of progression from foundation level to level 3 qualifications and beyond, across a wide range of subjects and skills sectors. They promote personalised programmes for young people and adults alike, enabling individuals to combine academic and vocational studies. The breadth of offer and the opportunity for individuals to fulfil their potential by moving from lower to higher levels of programmes are key characteristics of Tertiary Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to their considerable portfolio of 16-19 provision, Tertiary Colleges are important providers of adult education and training. They play a major role</i></p>

	<p><i>in developing employer responsive provision, working closely with local enterprise, business and industry, to meet their demands and local, regional and sometimes national skills needs; they successfully deliver Apprenticeships and traineeships and have been key in supporting individuals and businesses</i></p> <p><i>Evidence from the Promise and Performance Report 2007, a Report of the Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales in the context of the Learning Country: Vision in to Action, concluded that ‘pupils who have a wider choice of schools at their place of residence perform no better than those with a more limited choice’ and ‘on balance, choice and competition does not seem to be generally effective in raising standards in the school context’. The report expressed concern over the either/or mentality of academic or vocational pathways suggesting that “To embed more personalised learning we need to offer each learner a choice of a wide range of subjects, pathways and modes of learning to suit as many interests, capabilities, learning styles and career opportunities as possible. Choice should apply equally to all learners, whether they are academically or practically orientated. It should include a range of learning styles and contexts from the didactic to experiential, from classroom based to work-based – but all learners must have a wider range of vocational learning opportunities.”</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a private college. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission.</i></p>
<p>2.1.2 Explain what “sustainable infrastructure” and “... the sustainability of post-16 education” mean.</p>	<p><i>The Proposal is intended to create a post-16 model that is financial and educationally viable in the face of the financial and legislative pressures that Powys currently faces:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• There are small sixth forms at both schools with a narrow choice of subjects, which are both below the Council’s aspiration for size of sixth form. The Council wants sixth forms to be able to provide at least 25 AS/A level</i>

subjects from one location, which means that the Council aspires to having sixth forms that have over a 150 pupils;

- *Learners currently have to travel between school/college sites during the school day to have a wider choice of subjects – this is an additional cost to the Council;*
- *The Welsh Government gives Powys County Council an annual grant for post-16 provision. This grant has been reducing every year since 2013, and is forecast to reduce even further. This means that the number of subjects that the schools can offer has also reduced, and may reduce further;*
- *Even within Powys, there is a limited Post-16 choice of subjects, meaning that some pupils travel to sixth forms or colleges in other counties or in England to study – this means that there is even less money coming in to Powys to spend on post-16 subjects.*

No. of funded year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
12 classes			
Brecon High School	14	12	12
Gwernyfed High School	12	10.5	10.5

2.1.3 Explain why Powys County Council is content to rely on a crude Appraisal Methodology that ignores insight and evidence, is highly subjective, vulnerable to misdirection and that betrays institutional fatigue by the decision makers.

The Option Appraisal Methodology is aligned with the HM Treasury Five Case Model approach.

2.1.4 All thirteen FE tertiary colleges in Wales are based in much larger urban settings. Explain why Powys County Council believes that this is the best solution for Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments.

The size of the Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School post-16 student population means that establishing both an effective Sixth Form Centre and a school sixth form to provide this choice is not viable. This prioritisation of one kind of choice will be to the detriment of a choice of courses, pathways and options for a great number of students.

2.2 Statistics		
2.2.1	I questioned you on the detail of what Powys believes a viable sixth form to be. You and your officials have made reference to a roll of 150 learners although no one has been able to confirm what this figure is based on or where it is advised. ... I can only reach the conclusion that there is no basis for this figure.	<p><i>The Authority's optimum model for post-16 education is for centres to be able to provide 25 subjects, with a minimum class size of 12 and above.</i></p> <p><i>Each learner, over a two year period, studies an average of 3.5 subjects (4 AS in Year 12, 3 A Levels in Year 13).</i></p> <p><i>On an average class size of 12, the size of a sixth form (Years 12 & 13) would be 180</i></p> <p><i>On an average class size of 15, the size of a sixth form (Years 12 & 13) would be 220.</i></p> <p><u>$180 \times 3.5 = 630/50 = 12.6$</u></p> <p><u>$220 \times 3.5 = 770/50 = 15.4$</u></p> <p><i>However, in order to reflect Powys' extreme rurality and sparsity, officers agreed that the threshold should be 150 pupils.</i></p>
2.2.2	The Final Business Case explains that a minimum sixth form size, of 180 pupils, is based on providing 25 subjects with a minimum class size of 12. Explain the arithmetic behind this	See 2.2.1.
2.2.3	Explain clearly what the A level attendance and results are currently per subject for the Brecon site of the NPTC Group of Colleges.	<i>Results will not be available until mid-August.</i>
2.2.4	Explain how Powys County Council has identified the demand, from parents, teachers and pupils, for a tertiary model of education rather than an in-school sixth form.	<i>The Authority has not previously identified demand, but will do so through this consultation process.</i>
2.2.5	On what basis has the council decided that a sixth form of 150 pupils contributes to the wellbeing and education of the pupils in that sixth form?	<i>The wellbeing and educational attainment of all pupils is the responsibility of the school, whatever its size. Some pupils prefer to be in smaller sixth forms, others prefer larger settings.</i>

2.2.6	Please explain how NPTC arrives at a figure of 'up to 201' students attending the new college.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges bases this on existing numbers attending 6th forms in Brecon HIGH SCHOOL and Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL plus a number who currently travel out of county to obtain a wider subject choice.</i>
2.3 Travel – Current Position		
2.3.1	Page 6 states 'limited post 16 education meaning that some pupils need to travel outside of Powys...' What evidence does Powys County Council have to suggest that this would improve if there was no secondary education on the Gwernyfed High School site?	<i>It is the intention of the Proposal that a post-16 centre is established in Brecon High School, with brand new facilities, and a wider range of option choices, thereby allowing learners to have real choice as opposed to being restricted to the current Post-16 Partnership timetable. The Authority expects that this will be attractive to learners in the future, reducing the numbers of learners who are currently travelling out of county.</i>
2.3.2	How will this be diminished by the current Proposal to only have 11-16 to education within Brecon/Gwernyfed?	<i>See 2.3.1</i>
2.3.3	The Governing Body also asks: <i>why has pupil retention not been included as a risk of increased travel time?</i> This, they feel will be of particular significance to students accessing A- and AS-level provision.	<i>Comment noted – this will be included as a new risk.</i>
2.4 Fall in Funding for Sixth Form Education		
2.4.1	The documents states that the council has received a cut in its annual grant for post-16 education (pg. 8). What steps has the council taken to seek additional funding from alternative sources as opposed to just creating a cut in spending? What solutions have been researched to find additional funding?	<i>The Authority has worked with Powys Secondary Headteachers to develop a model of funding that ensures equity for all schools – this funding model is different to the way Welsh Government distributes its post-16 funding. The Authority also uses a proportion of the Educational Investment Grant to fund specific courses and transport for learners. Discussions take place with the Welsh Government Post-16 Planning Team on a bi-annual basis, and they are fully aware of the issues faced by Powys.</i>

2.5 Existing Quality of Sixth Form – Gwernyfed	
2.5.1	<p>Gwernyfed’ s 6th form results are far superior to those from NPTC at present so the question has to be asked why change something that’s working for a model that is clearly worse, so far POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL have failed to articulate why Gwernyfed’ s 6th form is not good enough.</p>
2.5.2	<p>Gwernyfed offers a broad range of the core academic A- levels (in association with other schools) that many pupils who attend sixth form are likely to want to take (quality is always better than quantity). In the past there have been few negative issues with the A-levels offered at Gwernyfed so what advantage is being gained by shutting it and who would benefit from the proposed closure?</p>
2.5.3	<p>Explain why it wouldn’t be advantageous to retain an in-school sixth form in Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, and a separate complementary vocational FE college.</p>

The issue with Gwernyfed’s sixth form is its size and ability to provide real choice for learners, without the need to travel to other sites. . In 2009, the Welsh Government introduced the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure, focusing on provision for 14– 19 year olds. The Measure requires schools to provide a basic minimum of choice for its learners. At post-16, the Measure places a duty on local authorities, schools and further education providers to provide a local curriculum for students aged 16 to 18 which contains a minimum of 30 courses of study at Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and National Qualification Framework (NQF) level 3.

The Consultation Document clearly notes the standards of A levels at Gwernyfed High School over the last three years.

NPTC Group of Colleges delivers A levels to students progressing from 9 secondary schools. Therefore, their results should be compared with the all Powys figure, not against any one individual school. This is a particularly unreliable measure when one factors in the comparative levels of social deprivation of students from many of the Neath Port Talbot schools. Neath Port Talbot secondary schools have a typical free school meal entitlement of around 19-20% although several are around 40%. Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL is identified from the same data source as having less than 5% of students entitled to free school meals.

The Proposal is intended to create a post-16 model that is financial and educationally viable in the face of the financial and legislative pressures that Powys currently faces:

- There are small sixth forms at both schools with a narrow choice of subjects, which are both below the Council’s aspiration for size of sixth form. The Council wants sixth forms to be able to provide at least 25 AS/A level subjects from one location, which means that the Council aspires to having sixth forms that have over a 150 pupils;*

- *Learners currently have to travel between school/college sites during the school day to have a wider choice of subjects – this is an additional cost to the Council;*
- *The Welsh Government gives Powys County Council an annual grant for post-16 provision. This grant has been reducing every year since 2013, and is forecast to reduce even further. This means that the number of subjects that the schools can offer has also reduced, and may reduce further;*
- *Even within Powys, there is a limited Post-16 choice of subjects, meaning that some pupils travel to sixth forms or colleges in other counties or in England to study – this means that there is even less money coming in to Powys to spend on post-16 subjects.*

No. of funded year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
12 classes			
Brecon High School	14	12	12
Gwernyfed High School	12	10.5	10.5

2.6 Existing Quality of Sixth Form Brecon

2.6.1 Powys County Council must go on record to demonstrate that it has not predetermined its own preference for NPTC Group of Colleges to take over post-16 education by deliberately allowing Brecon High School to continue to founder financially, contributing to the recent Special Measures.

The Authority did not allow Brecon High School to continue to founder financially. Brecon High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £107k. Current projections submitted by the Governing Body show projected deficits for the next few years. These figures do not take into account the action the school will take to reduce the projected deficit. The Authority works with all schools to offer the appropriate support and challenge to ensure they meet the requirements of the Scheme. Cabinet will review the position upon receipt of the Governing Body’s proposed recovery plan.

2.7 Why Tertiary College Model here alone?	
2.7.1	<p>Explain why, when this isn't the model elsewhere it is advantageous for pupils to blend academic and vocational strands of education in Brecon. Explain why only the pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed, and nowhere else in Powys, will be provided with no other choice by the LEA but to attend a private tertiary FE college, with no prior record in Brecon, to complete their A level studies within the county.</p>
	<p><i>The reason why a tertiary model has been proposed here is because there is because NPTC Group of Colleges already deliver both vocational and academic subjects in Brecon – this provides an opportunity to develop a sustainable post-16 centre with the additional benefits of a tertiary model as outlined previously.</i></p>
2.8 The Proposal	
2.8.1	<p>Success Factor 3: <i>'To provide post-16 provision that <u>improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirement of the Learning and Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day.</u></i>' What does ACCESS to mean? How will this success factor be achieved with pupils moving out of country to Hereford for their A' Level provision? pg. 33. Why is Hartbury College not included in the list? How does increased travel times contribute to improved access? How a reduction in does proposed A Levels e.g. Chemistry improve access?</p>
	<p><i>Improved access means that learners will have access to at least 30 subjects from one location, rather than having to travel between sites, as currently happens. It is the intention of the Proposal that a post-16 centre is established in Brecon, with brand new facilities, and a wider range of option choices, thereby allowing learners to have real choice as opposed to being restricted to the current Post-16 Partnership timetable. The Authority expects that this will be attractive to learners in the future, reducing the numbers of learners who are currently travelling out of county.</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges proposes to increase the range of A levels on offer, not reduce it. Chemistry was missing from the original provisional list; this was as an oversight which was pointed out during consultation. Chemistry has been added to the provisional list as will other subjects where there is demand.</i></p>
2.8.2	<p>Please explain why within the pros for the Status Quo, the list is full of Learning Environment positives, yet one of the key suggestions why the New School option is being put forward is an improvement in learning.</p>
	<p><i>The advantages for the Status Quo on page 11 of the Consultation Document include a variety of advantages including the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides access to separate Secondary Schools within two communities • No additional transport costs • More acceptable to local stakeholders

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No instability due to reorganisation</i> • <i>Schools can build on their current plans towards improving standards</i> • <i>No negative impact on local communities due to removal of secondary provision</i> • <i>Schools able to build on current good practices within both schools</i> • <i>Opportunities to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment;</i> • <i>Opportunities to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities;</i> • <i>Opportunities to develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners.</i> • <i>Opportunities to collaborate between both schools</i> • <i>Some Welsh-medium provision available locally</i>
2.8.3	Can you please give me further information on what is Strategic Fit?	<i>Strategic Fit means ‘Does the option fit with local / national strategies?’</i>
2.8.4	Will NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges deliver courses that are relevant to the area concerned?	<i>Yes. NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges plans its curriculum offer to meet national, regional and local needs. The curriculum offer on each of its campuses is different and reflects the needs of the learners, communities and employers within the catchment area it serves.</i>
2.8.5	What A level subjects will be available and realistically taught in this college? Are there skilled teachers for Maths?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has identified an initial offer for September 2017 which includes 25 A level subjects from the following list: Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, 3D Design, Economics, English Lang, English Lit, Fine Art, French, Geography, Graphics, History, Law, Maths, Maths (Further), Music, PE, Photography, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish, Theatre Studies and Welsh (2nd Lang). This is a provisional offer and can be fine-tuned to meet demand for subjects not currently on this list. NPTC Group of Colleges deliver 46 A levels on the Neath campus, any of these subjects could form part of the offer in Brecon if required.</i>

		<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has skilled teachers for Maths. Teachers are all appropriately qualified and registered with the Education Workforce Council (formerly the General Teaching Council Wales) in the same way that school teachers are.</i>
2.8.6	How can you guarantee that pupils will receive the full range and quality of courses at A-level in <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> rather than in a high school 6th form?	<i>The current school 6th forms are too small to deliver a full range of subjects. NPTC Group of Colleges has demonstrated its ability to deliver a full range of high quality A level courses on it's Neath campus and is confident of replicating this in Brecon with the larger student numbers forecast in the schools reorganisation programme.</i>
2.8.7	Explain how the <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> will increase provision from 13 A levels offered in September 2016 to 25 by 2017.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges delivers 46 A level subjects in Neath and has access to teachers with a proven track record of delivering these subjects. The room requirements for 25 subjects have been modelled through the College's timetabling software to ensure that this increase can be accommodated. Any additional costs for specialist equipment will be incorporated into the budget of the 6th form academy in the same way as vocational areas are able to update their equipment. These costs are likely to be significantly less than within the vocational areas. NPTC Group of Colleges is confident that an increase from 13 to 25 A levels by September 2017 can be achieved without too much difficulty.</i>
2.8.8	Demonstrate the likelihood that the <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> will offer any A levels at all in future.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has a track record of delivering A levels in Neath Port Talbot for the past 35 years. Its senior management and Board of Governors have made a commitment to deliver A levels in Brecon through the College's strategic planning process. The College is planning a considerable investment in time and money and its intention to deliver A levels as part of its long term operations should be clear to all.</i>
2.8.9	Can the Council and <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> guarantee that they will increase A level provision in 2015 from the current 14 subjects to 25 in 2017?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges can guarantee to offer increase it's A level offer from 14 to 25 subjects in 2017.</i>
2.8.10	The College offered 14 AS choices in the last academic year. How many of these choices ran for the full A Level?	<i>All students starting on an AS choice were given the opportunity to continue at A2, i.e. to complete the full A level.</i>

2.8.11	Why is there no offer of Chemistry?	<i>The omission of Chemistry from the original list of A level subjects was an oversight. The subject list is provisional and if alternative subjects are required these can be added. Chemistry will form part of the A level offer for 2017.</i>
2.8.12	When will the list of A' Levels that are definitely to be provided be available to current Year 10 students?	<i>Early in the Autumn term, once the Cabinet has indicated its decision on future provision of 6th form in Brecon and Gwernyfed. This is in line with current information provided by schools.</i>
2.8.13	What assurance can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL give that the full range of A-level subjects will be offered at the new campus and continue to be delivered from the site in future?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges will be responsible for providing post-16 education at the New School in Brecon, and will ensure that its provision meets the requirements of learners.</i>
2.8.14	Can the Council and NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges guarantee that they will increase A-level provision from 14 subjects to 25 by 2017, especially in light of the evidence that suggests they will not achieve the predicted number of pupils? And <i>what is the nature of the "commitment" from NPTC?</i>	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has guaranteed it will offer 25 A level subjects in 2017 and hasn't seen any independent evidence to suggest that pupil predictions will be incorrect. Obviously, if there is zero demand for a subject, it will not run. However, NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges expects to run with some small groups initially and is able to do so because these are compensated by large group sizes on the Neath campus.</i>
2.9 Location/Travel to Neath/England		
2.9.1	If there are insufficient pupils to make courses in Brecon viable, can you confirm that pupils will not be forced to travel to Neath to study, leaving their communities and friendship groups, which they would not have to do if provision was still available in local schools?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges does not intend to deliver A levels for Brecon and Gwernyfed based students on the Neath Campus. These students will study their full programme on the Brecon campus.</i>
2.9.2	It is proposed that NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges would provide at least 25 AS/A subjects -what happens if one of those subjects	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges does not expect Brecon and Gwernyfed based students to travel to Neath to study. Some small group sizes are likely and their</i>

<p>has a very low uptake and NPTC decide it isn't financially viable, would that subject still be offered or would the students be expected to travel to Neath?</p>	<p><i>lack of financial viability will be subsidised by large group sizes in Neath, not by transporting students to Neath.</i></p>
<p>2.10 Transport/Travel Issues</p>	
<p>2.10.1 On the point of Post 16 education - we are led to understand that costs for bussing children to Brecon have been included in the original scope but what about additional costs if this group do end up at Hereford or Neath?</p>	<p><i>It is the local Authorities policy not to fund out of county college/6th form so there would be no extra costs incurred should learners chose to access Neath or Hereford provision.</i></p>
<p>2.10.2 If the sixth form closes to go to <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> in Brecon and if they require 39B Bus, what will happen to the general public who uses the 8:00 and the 16:00 bus to go to work, as there well may be less seating? (Due to current NPTC Group of Colleges students as well as possible sixth form)</p>	<p><i>The local Authority will review all transport links and implement the most appropriate links to accommodate an increase of learners travelling to Brecon which will not affect the general public's ability to use public transport.</i></p>
<p>2.11 NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</p>	
<p>2.11.1 What is the minimum number of students a sixth form college in private hands will operate and for how long?</p>	<p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a private college. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission.</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges 6th form academy students are funded from the same post 16 Education budget that the schools receive via Powys County Council. Its curriculum delivery plans have to be agreed with the Welsh Government and its quality is inspected by HMI (Estyn) using the same criteria as 6th forms in schools.</i></p>

<p>2.11.2 What additional support is there outside the curriculum?</p>	<p><i>All students have a personal tutor allocated to look after their academic and pastoral needs. Students have access to specialist advice and guidance staff and can access support with issues ranging from personal problems, health related problems, financial guidance and counselling. Academic support staff provide one to one and group support with literacy, numeracy and potential obstacles to learning such as dyslexia. The college employs learning coaches and specialists qualified to access dyslexia and other potential barriers to effective learning.</i></p>
<p>2.11.3 Are the intentions of <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> purely educational or financial? (Also how are the Powys area of NPTC Group of Colleges of colleges being treated? As I have also learned, the Newtown Campus is run like a ghost ship and that the Llandrindod Wells campus only now covers two subject areas as FE subjects, which I find very worrying).</p>	<p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges primary purpose is to provide a high quality education to post 16 learners. It is a not for profit organisation, so the financial imperative is to operate within budgets and any surpluses produced are utilised to maintain facilities and equipment at a satisfactory level.</i></p> <p><i>Powys campuses are fully integrated into NPTC Group of Colleges and senior managers operate across all campuses. Academic schools or faculties operate across all campuses with single budgets, policies and procedures. There is a designated campus management team responsible for the day to day running of Newtown, Llandrindod and Brecon and a similar team based in Neath and Afan.</i></p> <p><i>The campuses are well run and the curriculum offer has increased in Powys since the formation of the Group. This includes expansion of the subjects in Newtown to include plumbing and level 3 engineering, amongst others, seldom found in a 'Ghost Ship'.</i></p> <p><i>The Llandrindod Wells campus has always run a very limited curriculum when compared to Newtown and Brecon. Due to its size and location, Coleg Powys (several years prior to merger) decided to focus investment into vocational facilities and equipment on its main campuses in Newtown and Brecon.</i></p>
<p>2.11.4 What is the provision for free periods or IT with <i>NPTC Group of Colleges</i>?</p>	<p><i>During free periods students can access learning resources including a large number of computers and other learning materials in order to pursue independent study. They are also able to access cafeteria and coffee shop areas for relaxation and social interaction.</i></p>

2.12 Why Has Powys County Council Chosen NPTC Group of Colleges?	
2.12.1	<p>Why NPTC Group of Colleges when Merthyr college is much nearer and appears to be of equal quality.</p> <p><i>The reason why POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL is working with NPTC Group of Colleges is because they are the main deliverer of post-16 FE provision in Powys, with campuses in Brecon and Newtown, following the merger with Coleg Powys in 2013.</i></p>
2.12.2	<p>If Powys County Council are so concerned about the quality of education for our children, what is the rationale for handing over the control of post 16 provision to NPTC?</p> <p><i>The Proposal aims to provide a high-quality tertiary model of post-16 education, with a number of benefits. Tertiary Colleges provide the solution to the dilemma facing many young people today as they ponder their future - Tertiary colleges are a single establishment meeting educational and skills needs for all young people, their communities, and local employers.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary colleges were originally defined as educational establishments which combined the functions of a further education college and a sixth form college, offering further education through a full range of courses, both vocational and academic, primarily to the 16-19 age group. In a pure tertiary model, schools within a given area do not operate sixth forms, but instead young people progress to a single local institution that provides both their 16-19 education and adult learning for the wider community.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary Colleges offer, within one institution, readily accessible pathways of progression from foundation level to level 3 qualifications and beyond, across a wide range of subjects and skills sectors. They promote personalised programmes for young people and adults alike, enabling individuals to combine academic and vocational studies. The breadth of offer and the opportunity for individuals to fulfil their potential by moving from lower to higher levels of programmes are key characteristics of Tertiary Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to their considerable portfolio of 16-19 provision, Tertiary Colleges are important providers of adult education and training. They play a major role in developing employer responsive provision, working closely with local enterprise, business and industry, to meet their demands and local, regional</i></p>

		<i>and sometimes national skills needs; they successfully deliver Apprenticeships and traineeships and have been key in supporting individuals and businesses</i>
2.12.3	The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires that "Relevant bodies should also consider the ability of the school... to deliver the full curriculum... This consideration should include the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this. "Explain how handing over post-16 education to the <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> Group achieves this.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has no results available yet for the Brecon campus because the A level provision is too new. However, the results for Neath should be seen as a reliable predictor of those achievable in Brecon. Courses are being delivered by the same staff in Brecon and under the same 6th Form Academy management team as in Neath. Teaching methods and materials will be identical. NPTC Group of Colleges is confident that the results achieved in Neath can be replicated on the Brecon campus.</i>
2.13	NPTC – Sustainability	
2.13.1	What commitment is in place for this 6th form after it is handed over to Neath Port Talbot and the pupil numbers don't match the costs? Are they under any obligation to keep the campus open in Brecon or will the offer only be there whilst it suits?	<i>If the Proposal is implemented, the Authority, as stated in the Consultation Document, will not receive any funding from Welsh Government to deliver post-16 provision in Brecon – this will be the sole responsibility of NPTC Group of Colleges, funded and monitored by Welsh Government directly. NPTC Group of Colleges will be fully accountable, as it is currently, to Estyn for the quality of its provision. The Authority has proposed a tertiary model in Brecon for a number of reasons, and believes that there are significant benefits to this model, as outlined previously.</i>
2.13.2	What is the contingency plan if <i>NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges</i> withdraws their service?	
2.13.3	What is there to prevent the College from pulling out at any time, reducing provision or cancelling courses?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has a track record of delivering A levels in Neath Port Talbot for the past 35 years. Its senior management and Board of Governors have made a commitment to deliver A levels in Brecon through the College's strategic planning process. The College is planning a considerable investment in time and money and its intention to deliver A levels as part of its long term operations should be clear to all.</i>
2.13.4	Has cabinet considered the possibility that, should NPTC's Brecon Campus prove unviable, NPTC may threaten to withdraw unless the other south Powys sixth forms are closed also? What	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges does not intend to deliver A levels to Brecon and Gwernyfed based learners in Neath. Their full A level programmes will be delivered in Brecon.</i>

stance will cabinet take on this? What do you plan to do to prevent this scenario evolving?

2.13.5 What assurances and guarantees are POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL seeking from *NPTC Group of Colleges* since they could pull out at any time?

2.13.6 Can you also comment on the fact that as Powys County Council will not have any say as to how NPTC run their courses and that should they decide that it is not financially viable, they could close their facility and there would be no provision for post 16 education in the Brecon and Gwernyfed area?

2.13.7 We feel POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's Proposal to hand over post 16 education to NPTC is a complete abdication of its responsibilities. Powys county council would relinquish any influence over its post 16 education - what happens in the future if standards drop or NPTC decide the Brecon campus is peripheral or loss making and leave?

2.13.8 Please answer me - what happens if NPTC withdraw the courses that they can offer? The Proposal hasn't been approved and NPTC cannot categorically state exactly what they can offer at this point. Please answer for me - will you then ship pupils to their site at Neath?

- 2.13.9** Why is Powys County Council prepared to absolve responsibility for our youngsters' higher education.
- 2.13.10** If NPTC can no longer support a course at Brecon Campus and directs its students to Neath to complete their education will Powys County Council still run a bus down to south wales? I think not. I live in a ward with NO PUBLIC TRANSPORT, the young people of my area could seriously find themselves without access to post-16 education and the Council, having given away its responsibility for providing post-16 education in this area, will tell me it's not their responsibility while continuing to educate the rest of the population through sixth forms. How is this rural progressive equality and how can a rural County even contemplate endorsing it?
- 2.13.11** You have adopted and are proposing different models of education provision (both Welsh and post 16) across Powys and pupils in south Powys have been sold short. Can you explain why the difference in proposed approaches? Why are you opting out of your responsibilities for managing post 16 education?
- 2.13.12** What guarantees have you received from NPTC which will assure us parents that the appropriate levels of teaching standards, subject availability and facilities will be available at the outset from the Brecon campus and will remain in the long term? Please provide evidence.

2.14 NPTC – Detachment from Powys County Council	
2.14.1 Why does the LEA insist on spending £24m on improving the college campus so that an out of county provider can take control with no input from Powys?	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Welsh Government has approved a Strategic Outline Case for investment in the New School Building in Brecon – the total estimated cost for this is £20m. A further £24m would be required to be provided by NPTC to rebuild the college’s facilities.</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not an out-of-county provider. Following the merger with Coleg Powys in 2013, the College has been delivering post-16 courses to learners throughout Powys.</i></p> <p><i>The LEA will not be paying to improve the College campus; NPTC Group of Colleges will be responsible for meeting this cost. NPTC Group of Colleges will be eligible to apply for capital funding from Welsh Government to meet up to 50% of their investment.</i></p>
2.14.2 When evidence suggests that a school managed 6th form achieves better education standards than a tertiary model?	<i>There is no evidence to suggest that a school managed 6th form achieves better education standards than a tertiary model.</i>
2.14.3 Explain how Powys County Council would guarantee continuous improvements in post-16 education in a privately run FE college that is outside its control.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a private college. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission.</i>
2.14.4 How will Powys County Council hold the College accountable for the quality of provision for Powys 6th formers?	<i>Estyn holds the College accountable for the quality of its provision.</i>

2.15 NPTC Standards		
2.15.1	If this Proposal goes ahead where my son will get quality A level teaching? It won't be at NPTC. The results they boast have nothing to do with the Brecon campus. There is no confidence in the college locally and you will drive people away.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges has no results available yet for the Brecon campus because the A level provision is too new. However, the results for Neath should be seen as a reliable predictor of those achievable in Brecon. Courses are being delivered by the same staff in Brecon and under the same 6th Form Academy management team as in Neath. Teaching methods and materials will be identical. NPTC Group of Colleges is confident that the results achieved in Neath can be replicated on the Brecon campus.</i>
2.15.2	What assurance can Powys County Council give that the A level standards achieved at Gwernyfed school will be achieved let alone improved upon if delivered by NPTC?	
2.15.3	How will Powys guarantee that educational standards at A' Level will be at least as good as at GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL?	
2.15.4	What assurance can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL give that the A-level standards achieved at Gwernyfed school will continue to be achieved let alone improved upon if delivered by NPTC?	
2.15.5	The data in the report indicates that GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL pupils achieve a high standard of "A" level results. Transferring the education provider for "A" levels to NPTC would appear to go against the school organisation code paragraph 1.3 where it cannot guarantee the standard of education will be the equivalent or better that the current system. If you are not in control of a system you cannot guarantee its outcome and POWYS COUNTY	

<p>2.15.6</p>	<p>COUNCIL must take ownership of their education responsibilities to Powys pupils. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify proposing this course of action against WG policy?</p> <p>POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL talk about the Proposal as something to combat falling pupil numbers. How will this work if existing pupils simply move to a different school?</p>	
<p>2.16 NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges Vs. Gwernyfed High School Results</p>		
<p>2.16.1</p>	<p>How comfortable are the Council - officers and councillors with signing up to a partnership with a College where the fact that the A' Level results for NPTC Group of Colleges A*-B and A*-C are less than GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL provision?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has proposed a tertiary model for consultation, and explains in the Consultation Document, why it believes the Proposal is beneficial.</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges delivers A levels to students progressing from 9 secondary schools. Therefore, their results should be compared with the all Powys figure, not against any one individual school. This is a particularly unreliable measure when one factors in the comparative levels of social deprivation of students from many of the Neath Port Talbot schools. Neath Port Talbot secondary schools have a typical free school meal entitlement of around 19-20% although several are around 40%. Gwernyfed High School is identified from the same data source as having less than 5% of students entitled to free school meals.</i></p>
<p>2.16.2</p>	<p>Gwernyfed' s A level results are getting better every year currently 67.6% of pupils get an A*-C grade. The NPTC results may be "above the Welsh average" at 50.2% A*- C grade but this is 17.6% lower than Gwernyfed' s current performance. Worryingly, it's been falling year on year in stark contrast to Gwernyfed. 'How are these statistics meant to convince me that the council has my children's best academic interests as their priority?</p>	
<p>2.16.3</p>	<p>Can the Council explain the justification for replacing an A-level provision that produces 67.7% A* to B with one that produces only</p>	<p><i>The information was not withheld from the Consultation Document. Page 28 refers to the Estyn Inspection of 2012, with a single reference to the outcome of the outcome of the Adult Community Education inspection of 2007. Page 29 of</i></p>

<p>50.2% A* to B? It is said that the evidence on quality provided in the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Consultation Report dates back to 2007 and that a 2014 Estyn Inspection describes a less positive picture. The Governing Body asks: why was this more recent information withheld from the consultation document?</p>	<p><i>the Document refers to Estyn’s Annual Review of Performance that took place in 2014, post-merger with Coleg Powys.</i></p>
<p>2.17 NPTC Quality of Education</p>	
<p>2.17.1 I have yet to see evidence of the college’s success rate in individual subjects and the reassurance conveyed by the college principal during said evening was less than reassuring.</p>	<p><i>All subjects within the provisional offer from NPTC Group of Colleges for Brecon have 100% pass rate at A*-E, except for Maths which was 94.4% last year.</i></p>
<p>2.17.2 The current standards and results of NPTC in Neath are difficult to transfer to Brecon and the surrounding area with its particular challenges. Have you considered your response if standards and results in the 6th form provision as proposed are inadequate?</p>	<p><i>Courses are being delivered by the same staff in Brecon and under the same 6th Form Academy management team as in Neath. Teaching methods and materials will be identical. NPTC Group of Colleges is confident that the results achieved in Neath can be replicated on the Brecon campus. NPTC Group of Colleges would be responsible for ensuring standards and results of all post-16 provision, and would be fully accountable to Estyn.</i></p>
<p>2.17.3 Explain how ‘first class teaching and learning provision’ will be guaranteed by the NPTC Group of Colleges that has no achievement record whatsoever for A levels in Brecon, no rapport with the local community, inadequate facilities for A level education, and a Director and staff that will not be based in Brecon five days a week.</p>	<p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges has no results available yet for the Brecon campus because the A level provision is too new. However, the results for Neath should be seen as a reliable predictor of those achievable in Brecon. Courses are being delivered by the same staff in Brecon and under the same 6th Form Academy management team as in Neath. Teaching methods and materials will be identical. NPTC Group of Colleges is confident that the results achieved in Neath can be replicated on the Brecon campus.</i></p> <p><i>Facilities in Brecon for the delivery of A levels from September 2017 will be at least the equal of those in the schools.</i></p>

		<i>NPTC Group of Colleges teaching staff and managers are used to operating across multiple campuses rather than being based in one location for the whole week. They are extremely effective at setting up communication lines with students on all campuses. A dedicated management and support team is available on each campus to deal with day to day and urgent issues. NPTC Group of Colleges staff travel, so that their learners don't have to.</i>
2.18	NPTC Facilities	
2.18.1	From what I've heard ... they have no science labs. Is this true? And where would I go to use science labs?	<i>This is not true. NPTC Group of Colleges has a fully equipped science lab on its Brecon campus. This will be utilised to deliver A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics at various stages of the week.</i>
2.18.2	Are there appropriate student facilities on this site for science?	<i>Yes. NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges has a fully equipped science lab on its Brecon campus. This will be utilised to deliver A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics at various stages of the week.</i>
2.18.3	Is there an area for students to study in free periods or will they be hanging around Brecon with nowhere to go?	<i>Yes, the Learning Resource Centre on NPTC's Brecon campus is well equipped for independent study with text books for all courses and computers for on-line research and assignment work. The campus also has a cafeteria/coffee shop area which is fully Wi-Fi enabled if students prefer to work in this area.</i>
2.18.4	How does moving A-Level Science studies to a single laboratory in Brecon "significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners"? And even if all A-Level Science lessons can be timetabled in this one laboratory, will the apparatus available for students compare with the excellent facilities currently available in Gwernyfed?	<i>Timetabling has been modelled and NPTC Group of Colleges are confident that the current facilities can support the delivery of Biology, Chemistry and Physics A levels. Existing equipment is good, but NPTC Group of Colleges are committed to investing in purchasing further equipment if required to meet changing syllabuses and student demand. Labs in Neath are equipped to a very high standard and teachers in Brecon will be given the same level of equipment.</i>
2.18.5	What facilities will NPTC incorporate into the campus to support A Level students?	<i>Facilities on the Brecon campus are good and will support the needs of all students, including those studying A levels. Teachers review syllabuses annually and upgrades to equipment and facilities are made as a matter of course.</i>

2.19 Parents/Pupils moving out of County/Wales	
2.19.1 Why should we send our children to school in England to secure a decent education? It is shameful. Why should Brecon be the only area without a school sixth form? Why are you ruining the future of Brecon's children?	<p><i>The local Authority believes that NPTC Group of Colleges will provide a good standard of education to the Brecon learners and the Proposal states that NPTC Group of Colleges will provide both the traditional 6th form education and the vocational education all on one site. The Proposal is not taking away 6th form education, it is proposing a tertiary model whereby a further education provider will provide Post 16 education to the Brecon learners.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary Colleges provide the solution to the dilemma facing many young people today as they ponder their future - Tertiary colleges are a single establishment meeting educational and skills needs for all young people, their communities, and local employers.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary colleges were originally defined as educational establishments which combined the functions of a further education college and a sixth form college, offering further education through a full range of courses, both vocational and academic, primarily to the 16-19 age group. In a pure tertiary model, schools within a given area do not operate sixth forms, but instead young people progress to a single local institution that provides both their 16-19 education and adult learning for the wider community.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary Colleges offer, within one institution, readily accessible pathways of progression from foundation level to level 3 qualifications and beyond, across a wide range of subjects and skills sectors. They promote personalised programmes for young people and adults alike, enabling individuals to combine academic and vocational studies. The breadth of offer and the opportunity for individuals to fulfil their potential by moving from lower to higher levels of programmes are key characteristics of Tertiary Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to their considerable portfolio of 16-19 provision, Tertiary Colleges are important providers of adult education and training. They play a major role</i></p>

		<i>in developing employer responsive provision, working closely with local enterprise, business and industry, to meet their demands and local, regional and sometimes national skills needs; they successfully deliver Apprenticeships and traineeships and have been key in supporting individuals and businesses.</i>
2.19.2	Have you considered the number of parents and pupils who want their child educated in a high school 6th form and will therefore move their child to Crickhowell, Abergavenny or Christ College for example and the impact this will have on the 'predicted' pupils' numbers for NPTC college courses?	<i>During this consultation, many consultees have stated their preference for a sixth form education rather than a FE tertiary education.</i>
2.19.3	I understand that it has been proposed that £24 million is "given" to NPTC to improve their facilities in Brecon. Is this not foolhardy, considering the fact that following surveys in Gwernyfed, the vast majority of Year 11 and Year 10 pupils stated that they will go to Herefordshire for their education rather than to NPTC in Brecon and POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL will not have any say as to how this is spent?	<i>It is not proposed that £24m is 'given' to NPTC Group of Colleges. The College will have to find the funding for its element of the build. Powys County Council will not be paying to improve the College campus; NPTC Group of Colleges will be responsible for meeting this cost. NPTC Group of Colleges will be eligible to apply for capital funding from Welsh Government to meet up to 50% of their investment. NPTC Group of Colleges believes that the surveys in Gwernyfed were not carried out independently and as such the accuracy of the results is unreliable.</i>
2.19.4	How likely is it that students who leave Powys to do their A Level qualifications will return to Wales for University and/or employment?	<i>All learners have freedom of choice to follow their own career pathways wherever they wish to do so.</i>
2.19.5	<i>'It is anticipated that the number of learners choosing to follow AS/A level provision at any of the affected schools....rather than at the proposed new Post-16 facility in Brecon would be small, and the impact on outcomes, provision</i>	<i>This statement is based on the assumption that provision of a wide range of high-quality AS/A levels in new, purpose-built facilities in Brecon would be attractive for post-16 learners. The benefits of a tertiary model have been outlined previously.</i>

	<p><i>and leadership and management would be minimal.....'Where is the research - please cite?</i></p>
<p>2.19.6 How will Powys County Council deal with more students going across the border to Hereford College for their post-16 provision? This number will increase, as there is increasing uncertainty for those pupils in current year 10 and below.</p>	<p><i>During this consultation, many stakeholders have voiced their opinion that pupils would travel to Hereford College for post-16 provision. The Authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposals create a period of uncertainty for pupils, and that this could lead to more learners travelling to other post-16 providers in the short term. However, in the longer term, the Authority believes that provision of a wide range of high-quality AS/A levels in new, purpose-built facilities in Brecon would be attractive for post-16 learners.</i></p>
<p>2.19.7 How will NPTC compete with Hereford Sixth Form Centre? Research shows that current Yr. 10 and 11 students will travel to Hereford in preference to Brecon or Neath.</p>	
<p>2.19.8 There is no guarantee that standards will improve at NPTC and POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL will have no jurisdiction over the education given to Powys pupils at the site. Taking away student choice of sites for “A” levels is likely to drive students out of county and country for “A” level education. POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL want to make the transfer of “A” levels to NPTC to ensure students stay in Powys and protect post 16 funding for POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL. However it is likely the opposite effect will happen reducing POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL post 16 funding even further. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify driving pupils out of County and Country and encouraging the Powys “brain drain” and its knock on effect on local business and future of the rural economy, particularly in respect of its One Powys Plan and Welsh cultural policies?</p>	

2.19.9	Does the Council accept that there will be a significant number of pupils who would find it easier to commute to a school in England rather than Brecon?	
2.19.10	Has any attempt been made to assess the number of pupils that will move to education in England if Gwernyfed closes, and the effect on the Welsh Language this will inevitably have?	
2.20 Finances of the New Site		
2.20.1	Powys County Council is prepared to invest in new facilities (for this <u>private</u> FE college) to the tune of £24M. This is highly irresponsible. Is the amount to be invested by the College itself in addition to the Powys County Council allocation? The College’s investment plans should have been included with this consultation?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a <u>private</u> college. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission. POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL will not be paying to improve the College campus; NPTC Group of Colleges will be responsible for meeting this cost. NPTC Group of Colleges will be eligible to apply for capital funding from Welsh Government to meet up to 50% of their investment.</i>
2.20.2	The Proposal states that the Beacons Campus Project “may also include new facilities for NPTC Group of Colleges of Colleges”. Is it the intention to publicly fund the facilities offered by a private company (NPTC) which operates for commercial gain, in order to make this Proposal commercially viable for that company? Does NPTC have a legally binding agreement to provide the required 25 A Level subjects from one location, in Brecon? What is the duration of any such agreement?	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a private company. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission. NPTC Group of Colleges are currently funded for around 80% of their annual income from public funding via the Welsh Government. <i>The Authority does not have a legally binding agreement with NPTC Group of Colleges to provide the required amount of A levels from one location.</i></i>

2.20.3	<p>What facilities might NPTC, a private company operated for profit? Expect to be gifted by Powys in order to deliver the promised post-16 curriculum? What legally-binding guarantee does Powys Council have to protect this investment of public money into a private company, and over what period of time does NPTC Group of Colleges guarantee to deliver these services in return for the investment in the facilities it will use to underwrite its business?</p>	<p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges is not a private company. It is a Further Education (FE) College and is classified by the National Office for Statistics as NPISH (Not for Profit Institution Serving Households). All FE Colleges in Wales are classified in this way and they are largely treated in the same way as any charity, but they are regulated by Welsh Government, not the Charities Commission.</i></p> <p><i>The College will not be gifted any facilities by Powys County Council. The College is required to fund its element of the capital funding needed for the Beacons Campus.</i></p>
2.21 Loss of Quality Teaching Staff		
2.21.1	<p>What guarantees can you give that experienced A level teaching staff will not leave these schools to find employment in an establishment that continues to provide post 16 education, therefore removing these specialist teachers and potentially forcing a second rate education on the pupils remaining ?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has recognised this as risk in the Consultation Document, with appropriate mitigation. However, the Authority cannot guarantee that experienced A level teaching staff will not leave, if this Proposal is implemented.</i></p> <p><i>The impact on learners from the possible loss of specialist teachers should not be significant. NPTC Group of Colleges will be providing a good standard of education utilising current Post 16 staff and specialist staff of their own.</i></p>
2.21.2	<p>Can you confirm that the education of the present and future pupils will not be compromised by the quality of teachers who will be left or employed in the future?</p>	<p><i>The Authority expects that the quality of education is not compromised by this Proposal. There are a number of 11 – 16 schools in Wales and beyond. There is evidence that good quality teachers choose to teach in these schools, as well as 11 – 18 schools: Evidence can found in Estyn Inspection Reports, and in the National Categorisation of Schools. In 2015/16, both 11 – 16 and 11- 18 schools appear in all four support categories, indicating that no specific model is better than the other.</i></p> <p><i>NPTC Group of Colleges are happy to confirm that teachers delivering post 16 education including A levels will be of the highest calibre.</i></p>

2.22 Limited equivalent options to Gwernyfed	
<p>2.22.1 The First Minister has a responsibility to provide equivalent 6th Form Education – I would like to know where this is in Wales? Where do POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL propose the equivalent facility is?</p>	<p><i>The Authority is of the view that NPTC Group of Colleges will be able to provide high-quality A level provision that is equivalent in terms of standards to that of Gwernyfed High School, and broader in terms of range of provision, without the need to travel between schools/providers during the school day.</i></p> <p><i>Part II of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (LSA 2000) makes specific provision for further education in Wales and sets out the Welsh Ministers’ powers and duties in relation to further education. Persons over compulsory school age in Wales are not obliged to participate in education or training but the Welsh Ministers are obliged to make provision for this education and training and to encourage people to participate in it.</i></p> <p><i>The Welsh Ministers (with the assistance of local authorities and the governing institutions of schools and further education institutions) are responsible for devising local curriculums for the further education of 16 to 18 year olds. Different curriculums may be devised for different local areas but the courses that make up those curriculums must fall into the categories listed in section 33A of LSA 2000.</i></p> <p><i>Post-16 education may be provided in school sixth-forms, in which case it will fall into the category of secondary (school) education rather than further education. Further education in Wales is, however, usually provided in further education institutions which are either further education corporations or existing educational institutions that have been designated by the Welsh Ministers to become part of the further education sector. The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 sets out provisions relating to the establishment, dissolution, powers and responsibilities of further education institutions.</i></p>

2.23 Benefits of having Sixth Form in School	
2.23.1	<p>How are you going to compensate those pupils in the lower years who would benefit from the mentoring and tutoring provided by 6th formers in school, for example in maths, reading, drama and sports? How are you going to compensate for the lack of opportunity for those 6th formers who would mentor and tutor younger pupils? The benefit to their self-esteem, consolidation of their own learning and the opportunity to add such opportunities to their university applications and CVs? Have you considered the impact of the loss of 6th formers in school on Sex and Relationship education, especially through the Apause Peer Mentor Training? Pupils in Year 11 currently deliver Peer Mentor Training to those pupils in Year 9 - how is this going to be facilitated with no Year 11 pupils in school?</p>
	<p><i>There are many schools in Wales and wider that provide education for 11 – 16 year olds. In these schools, the older pupils in Years 10 and 11 take on wider leadership and mentoring roles with younger pupils. This helps the self-esteem and learning of these pupils, rather than waiting until the sixth form to have these opportunities.</i></p>
2.24 Suggestions	
2.24.1	<p>Why must the sixth forms at both Brecon and Gwernyfed be removed? If the council aspires to having sixth forms that have over 150 pupils and Brecon currently has 83 pupils with Gwernyfed having 79 pupils making a combined total of 162, why can't the two sixth forms be combined and delivered from a single site at Brecon High School, the larger of the two sites?</p>
	<p><i>The Authority has consulted on a Proposal for a 'tertiary' further education college in Brecon, as it felt that this would provide more opportunities for the young people of the area. Tertiary Colleges provide the solution to the dilemma facing many young people today as they ponder their future - Tertiary colleges are a single establishment meeting educational and skills needs for all young people, their communities, and local employers.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary colleges were originally defined as educational establishments which combined the functions of a further education college and a sixth form college, offering further education through a full range of courses, both vocational and academic, primarily to the 16-19 age group. In a pure tertiary model, schools within a given area do not operate sixth forms, but instead young people progress to a single local institution that provides both their 16-19 education</i></p>

	<p><i>and adult learning for the wider community.</i></p> <p><i>Tertiary Colleges offer, within one institution, readily accessible pathways of progression from foundation level to level 3 qualifications and beyond, across a wide range of subjects and skills sectors. They promote personalised programmes for young people and adults alike, enabling individuals to combine academic and vocational studies. The breadth of offer and the opportunity for individuals to fulfil their potential by moving from lower to higher levels of programmes are key characteristics of Tertiary Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to their considerable portfolio of 16-19 provision, Tertiary Colleges are important providers of adult education and training. They play a major role in developing employer responsive provision, working closely with local enterprise, business and industry, to meet their demands and local, regional and sometimes national skills needs; they successfully deliver Apprenticeships and traineeships and have been key in supporting individuals and businesses.</i></p>
<p>2.24.2 Why cannot Gwernyfed High School work with one of the large agricultural colleges and establish another arm to the Educational High Value that is presently being delivered and enjoyed at Gwernyfed High School. There is plenty of parking and ample ground to extend facilities.</p>	<p><i>Gwernyfed High School will be delivering a collaborative agricultural course with Coleg Sir Gar from September 2016.</i></p>
<p>2.25 Other Questions</p>	
<p>2.25.1 What would actually happen to us while the new buildings were being built?</p>	<p><i>There are no plans to demolish the current school buildings until the new school in Brecon is built.</i></p>
<p>2.25.2 Explain why Powys County Council isn't planning for future demand by designing both Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools accordingly.</p>	<p><i>The Authority wishes to deliver a sustainable, high quality secondary education system, within the context of falling pupil numbers.</i></p>

2.26 Parents choosing to travel out of County		
2.26.1	Parents in Llangors area also consider sending children to Christ College. It is noted that on page 62 & 67 - details of other affected schools - Christ College both as a secondary school and a provider of Key stage 2 education has been omitted from the analysis and appears not to have been consulted on this matter. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain this scenario?	<i>It is reasonable to assume that the WG's School Organisation Code relates to local Authority maintained schools only. However, it was the Authority's view that the number of pupils likely to choose to attend Christ College would not be significant, due to the fact that it is a fee-paying school and that the Proposal would have a new school with new facilities and available places for all pupils in the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments.</i>
2.26.2	Why is the council content to approve a Proposal that will lose pupils, not only out of County but from the Welsh education system completely? How does this in any way address the issue of falling pupil numbers and surplus places?	<i>During this consultation, many respondents have voiced their opinion that pupils will choose to attend schools in England. The Authority acknowledges that, if this happens, this will potentially lead to a reduction in pupil numbers and increase surplus places.</i>
2.26.3	Could this movement of pupils result in surplus places in the new build primary schools? How will the Welsh Language Commissioner feel about pupils leaving the Welsh education system? How will this help rural community cohesion?	<i>During this consultation, many respondents have voiced their opinion that pupils will choose to attend schools in England. The Authority acknowledges that, if this happens, pupils will not have access to the Welsh Curriculum or community cohesion.</i>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
3	Travel	
	3.1 Times, distances to and from School	
3.1.1	And South Powys is renowned for its inclement weather conditions; how will attendance and standards be affected when pupils cannot access education because the journey is insurmountable?	<i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority has already identified that additional travel may pose a risk to pupils' well-being and attainment. The Council's intention is for the New School to provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</i>
3.1.2	The bus journey from Hay to Gwernyfed is already up to 45 minutes, so why are you suggesting that my time learning is better spent travelling?	<i>However, the Council recognises that there would be additional travel requirements once the New School Building is opened in Brecon, especially for those pupils living in Clyro and Hay-on-Wye Primary School catchment areas</i>
3.1.3	You can claim it is perfectly reasonable to expect pupils to travel 16 miles to school and back. Please answer for me how would that not be derogatory to the learners?	<i>An assessment of the home postcodes of pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School has been carried out, and it is expected that the maximum travel time for pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School to travel to the New School in Brecon would be not normally more than an hour</i>
3.1.4	Pupils within the current Gwernyfed catchment will spend up to 2 hours per day travelling to and from a school in Brecon. This is simply unacceptable. It is widely recognised that childhood obesity is one of the major health problems faced in the UK, with massive society wide implications going forward. Has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL undertaken a Health and wellbeing assessment of this travel time on the effected pupils? Does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL consider that 10	<i>The Council already transports pupils with special educational needs from the Gwernyfed catchment area to Ysgol Penmaes, Brecon; the ASD Unit at Brecon High School and other primary specialist provision. The Council's view is that the current transport arrangements for these pupils are suitable because the journey does not take an unreasonable amount of time. As such, the proposed travel arrangements for secondary pupils to the New School Building in Brecon are deemed suitable.</i> <i>The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 does not specify a time limit for journeys. However, local authorities are required to assess the individual needs of learners when considering if a journey time is reasonable. This would be done on an individual basis, if the Proposal is approved.</i> <i>However, the old Learner Travel Operational Guidance April 2009 stated that Welsh Ministers considered that normal journey times should be no more than 60 minutes</i>

<p>hours per week of dead time is an acceptable imposition on anyone?</p>	<p><i>for secondary school aged pupils. This is reflected in the Council's proposed new School Transport Policy</i></p> <p><i>The provision of post-16 education on a single site would remove any requirement for additional inter-school/college travel during the school day</i></p>
<p>3.2 Road Safety</p>	
<p>3.2.1 Have you considered the effect this will have on their safety?</p>	<p><i>The Authority views that all adopted roads are deemed safe for home-to-school transport. The additional mileage required for the pupils to travel to Brecon is along the A40 which is considered by the Highways Authority as a safe route.</i></p>
<p>3.3 Cost of Travel</p>	
<p>3.3.1 Children will have to travel too far to access school. Surely this will be very expensive in our austerity and climate change agenda?</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that there will be an additional cost and environmental impact of transporting learners. However, the Proposal aims to address a number of issues that are affecting secondary schools, with the intention that the New School will provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</i></p>
<p>3.3.2 And if county are willing to pay for transport to out of county schools (as has been the practice to date), are they also willing to pay for transport for parental choice of English medium provision such as King Henry VIII? Surely this money would be better spent improving the existing provision at a local level to secure high standards of teaching and learning.</p>	<p><i>Home-to-School transport will be provided in accordance with the Authority's agreed policy which includes transport to the closest schools, even if these are in other authorities.</i></p>
<p>3.3.3 Has the council even considered the cost of travel for all the Gwernyfed pupils who will have to travel to Brecon every day?</p>	<p><i>Cost of transport has been factored into the financial evaluation within the Consultation Document.</i></p>

3.3.4	<p>What will be the extra cost per year of providing transport for the extra miles to Brecon or further afield to provide the full subject range that pupils require if there a no school A level provision?</p>	<p><i>A level provision will be available at NPTC Group of Colleges. Learners will be provided with free home-to-college transport if this is their closest post-16 A level provision within Powys.</i></p>
3.3.5	<p>I understand it would cost £225,000 in new transport fees. Do you not think that this is worth the difficulties it would create? Essentially you are removing one problem, and creating another.</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that there will be an additional cost of transporting learners. However, the Proposal aims to address a number of issues that are affecting secondary schools, with the intention that the New School will provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</i></p>
3.3.6	<p>On P36 you detail transport costs for Gwernyfed and Brecon combined as £369,275. Where is the evidence for this figure? To what extent have you used the (flawed) PWC model in which travel times are computed as the times from home postcode to school postcode by private car? How do you explain this increase in travel costs? If it derives from the cost of transporting Welsh-medium pupils to Builth Wells, why does this have no impact on student numbers?</p>	<p><i>The current and estimated travel costs were calculated following an analysis carried out by officers from the Schools Service and the Transport Unit. An analysis of the additional routes required in both catchment areas was undertaken, including the ability to amalgamate such routes, and providing an estimate for each route of the additional costs that would be incurred. The analysis also included the impact of the revised transport network on any linked transport that is used for primary education as well.</i></p>
3.3.7	<p>You say that replacing Brecon and Gwernyfed with a new school in Brecon will result in increased transport costs of £225,320. Please demonstrate how you arrive at this figure. What system or software model have you used to determine these transport costs? Are you able to provide us with access to this system or software? If not, please explain why.</p>	<p><i>The PWC model for travel times was not used as part of this analysis.</i></p>

<p>3.3.8</p>	<p>Case law suggests that if Gwernyfed were closed, Powys would be obliged to foot the bill for transporting pupils to their nearest school, even if it were over the border in Herefordshire. Do the increased travel costs you have arrived at take this into account? If not, please explain why this has been overlooked, and provide alternative costings which do.</p>	<p><i>The transport costs provided in the Consultation Document assumed that all learners would attend the proposed New School in Brecon. However, if some learners obtained places in a suitable school in England, and this was their closest school, the Authority would provide free home-to-school transport at an additional costs.</i></p>
<p>3.3.9</p>	<p>If the proposed housing developments go ahead, if GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL has closed, has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL factored into the Proposals the increased costs of transporting the increased numbers of children from GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL catchment area to the new school in Brecon?</p>	<p><i>These have not been factored into the transport costs in the Consultation Document. However, there would be no additional costs if these additional pupils were accommodated on existing transport. Additional costs would be incurred if there was a need for an additional bus.</i></p> <p><i>The costings also do not include the impact of additional income received by the Authority from the Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant for these additional pupils.</i></p>
<p>3.3.10</p>	<p>In terms of travel costs, the Governing Body asks POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to clarify whether the following have, or have not, been taken into account? Staff travel costs for: the leadership team travelling daily; weekly departmental teachers' and middle managers' meetings; teachers travelling to teach subjects across both schools; and non-teacher travelling. KS4 students wishing to access GCSE options only available on one school site will need to be transported every Tuesday and Thursday at an estimated cost of £20,000.</p>	<p><i>The costings included within the Consultation Document include provision for additional funding in respect of a school operating over a split-site. If this Proposal are implemented, it would be the responsibility of the governing body to budget and plan for the use of the resource.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority already provides funding through the 14 – 19 Futures Programme for learners to access additional subjects. Consideration will be given to using this funding stream to support transport costs for learners, if this was required.</i></p>

3.4 Travel Costs to Parents		
3.4.1	What research has the Council done to establish the extra cost to parents, both financial and time, of collection from a school sited in Brecon?	<i>The Authority has not carried out any research in terms of the extra cost for parents. However, this issue has been raised by a number of stakeholders during the consultation and will inform Cabinet when it considers the Consultation Report.</i>
3.5 Travel Policy		
3.5.1	Is the proposed new School Transport Policy to be used to coerce families to send their children to schools in-County? If not, why has the new policy not yet been published? - wealthier families can choose to send their children to their school of choice, and poorer families must accept the new offer, meaning money will haemorrhage across the border, and choice will be rationed to those who can afford to pay. This is not an acceptable model for comprehensive education.	<i>The new Home-to-School has not yet been considered by Cabinet as was originally intended, as stated in the Consultation Document, due to the need to obtain clear legal advice around the definition of a 'suitable school' and other issues. The new Policy will be considered by Cabinet later in 2016.</i> <i>During this consultation period, many stakeholders have expressed their view that parents will choose for their children to attend schools in England, or they will move out of county. If this happens, there will be an impact on pupil numbers and the available funding for schools.</i> <i>Any revised Home-to-School Transport Policy will be subject to a separate consultation.</i>
3.5.2	County school transport policy is to be reviewed after this consultation concludes, after it failed to consider the new policy on the scheduled date of 12th April 2016. Powys cannot therefore give any indication or guarantee of the new transport arrangements for KS3 & KS4 students. How, then, can these be considered by stakeholders during this consultation process?	<i>The transport network required for pupils currently attending the Gwernyfed catchment is unlikely to be different to the current network.</i> <i>As stated in the Consultation Document and in the impact assessments, there would be a negative impact on pupils who will not be able to access after-school activity due to reliance on transport arrangements. The Authority has carried out an analysis of travel times should the Proposal be implemented, as stated on page 42 of the Consultation Document.</i>
3.5.3	Has there been an analysis of the additional transport for prospective	

	<p>students (presently KS1 & KS2) learners to the new Brecon campus? What impact will this extra travel have on students travelling on scheduled public transport and on after hours travel for students attending after school clubs? Has there been an analysis undertaken to find the number of students who will be denied the opportunity to participate in after school clubs, and the likely impact on academic outcomes that will be the result? If not, why? If the council so sure of transport costs and impact on learners and their families, why has the discussion on the new School Transport Policy been postponed until after this consultation has concluded?</p>	
<p>3.5.6</p>	<p>Why have you brought this Proposal to consultation before publishing or implementing the New Schools Transport Policy, and what does Powys County Council plan to do to remedy its failure to give members of the public the opportunity to respond to the transport elements of this consultation in the context of the new Schools Transport Policy?</p>	
<p>3.5.2</p>	<p>What will be the cost of proposed school transport to the new Brecon campus for Gwernyfed catchment pupils compared to the current cost of same to the Gwernyfed site? What proportion of the proposed saving in running costs does this represent?</p>	<p><i>The current transport costs to Gwernyfed High School, as shown within the Consultation Document, is £369,275. The additional cost of transport is £225,320. The additional transport costs represent 42% of the gross savings, as detailed on page 36 of the Consultation Document.</i></p>

3.5.3	<p>The Council questions <i>how the Proposal considers the goals in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015</i> given that some pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment area will be on a bus for up to two hours per day and that their health and well-being will be damaged by placing time, travel and cost burdens on parents to support friendships and after-school activities. It asks: <i>‘when is Powys Cabinet due to consider a new travel policy and when and how will the new policy be reflected in these Proposals?’</i></p>	<p><i>A Single Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out that considers the goals in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, and this issue has also been identified as a risk in the Consultation Document and supporting impact assessments.</i></p> <p><i>Cabinet will be considering the new Home-to-School Travel Policy in the Autumn. This will be subject to a separate consultation.</i></p>
<p>3.6 Travelling between schools</p>		
3.6.1	<p>Can I be assured that I won't have to travel to Brecon some days a week then to Gwernyfed on others (11-16 provision)?</p>	<p><i>From September 2017, the school will be run as a dual-sited school as a short transition period to the New School in Brecon and therefore it is not expected that pupils will have to move between sites. It would, however, be the decision of the governing body of the new school if it wished to combine certain KS4 subjects on one of the sites.</i></p>
3.6.2	<p>It is unclear whether pupils will need to travel between GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL while the school is operating as one school two sites. Could POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL confirm that pupils will not be subjected to this procedure and it will be staff that move between schools rather than pupils?</p>	
<p>3.7 Impact of travel on after school activities</p>		
3.7.1	<p>If my children want to take part in after school activities at the new school what transport arrangements will be in place by</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges, as noted in the Consultation Document and Impact Assessments that some pupils will find it difficult to access extra-curricular activities after school. However, some activities can take place during lunch times.</i></p>

	the council as neither parent would be able to travel to Brecon to collect?	
3.7.2	What flexibility is there to accommodate students wishing to attend after school activities?	<i>The Authority will not fund any dedicated home-to-school transport and learners will either be dependent on public transport or parental conveyance. However, the Authority will investigate with the Transport Unit the timings of public service transport.</i>
3.7.3	If I attended this new 'super school' I would be unable to go to any after school clubs or participate in extra-curricular activities as it would be impossible for anybody to pick me up. I know what the council would say: 'take the bus home.' I could but this would mean me sacrificing my free time which I use to relax, do homework and revise in order to get home. Surely this cannot be right?	
3.7.4	How will these children be able to participate in after school activities? For example my son plays county golf at a high standard - how would he be able to continue with this sport during the week as he would have reduced evening study time owing to the increased travel times. The Proposal suggests that such activities will be incorporated into the school day. Just how do Powys County Council propose to do that without detracting from learning time?	

3.9 Travel Time Stats

3.9.1 I would like to question how POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL have worked out the travel times - is it based on actual bus times or on a car time from a pupils house to the new proposed school. Pupils already have long journeys to Gwernyfed, do they think that it is acceptable for children who currently catch the bus at 7.40 should have their travel time increased to go to the new proposed school - in my opinion this is without doubt unacceptable. POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL need to look at the increase in bus times from Painscastle and Rhosgoch?

The current and estimated travel costs were calculated following an analysis carried out by officers from the Schools Service and the Transport Unit. An analysis of the additional routes required in both catchment areas was undertaken, including the ability to amalgamate such routes, and providing an estimate for each route of the additional costs that would be incurred. The analysis also included the impact of the revised transport network on any linked transport that is used for primary education as well.

The following table shows the impact on travel for pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School if they were all to transfer to the New School Building in Brecon:

	<i>Pupil Numbers</i>	<i>Average Journey (Miles)</i>	<i><3 Miles</i>	<i>3 to 10 Miles</i>	<i>10 to 20 Miles</i>	<i>Over 20 Miles</i>
<i>Gwernyfed High School (Current Travel)</i>	442	6.3	78 18%	296 67%	63 14%	5 1%
<i>Travel to New School Building in Brecon</i>	442	10.33	40 9%	181 41%	217 49%	4 1%
<i>Impact of Change</i>		4.04	(38)	(115)	154	(1)

3.9.2 Pg. 16 - 'there would be no need for learners to travel between school/colleges...' What impact has the council assessed there to be on the greater distance pupils would potentially have to travel at the beginning and end of day?

3.9.3 At the consultation meeting at Gwernyfed on 20th April 2016, you stated that pupils will only travel on average an extra 5 miles per day. I am not sure how you have arrived at this figure for the Gwernyfed catchment area, some pupils will have to travel up to 2 hours per day to attend the new proposed high school in Brecon.

There would be an impact on the majority of pupils who currently attend Gwernyfed High School, due to additional travel requirements, as shown in the table above. The average journey will increase by just over 4 miles, whilst the maximum additional will be ten miles per journey.

3.9.4	<p>They estimated only an extra 4 miles to travel. ... The next community is Three Cocks, that's 10 miles, Glasbury would be 12 miles, Hay on Wye and Clyro would be 15 miles, Rhosgoch would be 20 miles, and that's not even considering the children in far more rural areas.</p>	<p><i>An analysis of the current pupils being transported to Gwernyfed High School by the Council shows that the maximum journey time is 40 minutes, which is the route from the Dolau-y-Cannau crossroads via Rhosgoch, Painscastle, Clyro and Hay-on-Wye to Gwernyfed High School. The additional ten miles from Gwernyfed High School to the proposed New School Building will normally add no more than 20 minutes to the journey time and the total journey would normally be within an hour.</i></p>
3.9.5	<p>Explain why, when Powys County Council is happy not to impose preconditions on the maximum daily return journey for pupils, preferring to rely on comparison with journey times for special needs pupils rather than the county average for school pupils.</p>	
3.9.6	<p>What time length does the council think is acceptable for children to travel to school?</p>	<p><i>Home-to-school/college transport arrangements for the Proposal would be provided in accordance with the Council's School Transport Policy and the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. The current Policy is that secondary school pupils should not normally travel more than an hour.</i></p>
3.9.7	<p>How has the assessment of home to school transport time being "normally" less than one hour been reached? What has been the method of calculation? Does it include travel from the child's residence to the pick-up/drop off point? What does "normally" mean? Might the hour be exceeded only during exceptional circumstances, or does it apply more generally to a proportion of the pupils?</p>	<p><i>The 'not normally more than an hour' criteria has been agreed following an analysis of learner travel, which recognised the very rural nature of parts of the county with only a very few secondary school learners exceeding this – the Policy was subject to extensive consultation at the time and approved by the Board of the Council. It includes travel from home residence to the pick-up/drop-off point.</i></p>
3.9.8	<p>The document contains no information on how the increased travel figures were obtained. Are they based on the 'Old'</p>	<p><i>The current and estimated travel costs were calculated following an analysis carried out by officers from the Schools Service and the Transport Unit. An analysis of the additional routes required in both catchment areas was undertaken, including the</i></p>

	<p>Transport Policy or the new one that cabinet is refusing to reveal until after the consultation is over? Were the figures produced by the flawed computer program which was based on the travel time direct by private car between a pupil's home postcode and the school?</p> <p><i>ability to amalgamate such routes, and providing an estimate for each route of the additional costs that would be incurred. The analysis also included the impact of the revised transport network on any linked transport that is used for primary education as well.</i></p> <p><i>The PWC model for travel times was not used as part of this analysis.</i></p>
<p>3.9.9 The cost of transporting children from Gwernyfed to Brecon will be far higher than the £225,000 estimated by the Council especially if population increases are accounted for. Can the council confirm the additional travel time and forecasted travel costs have allowed for the fact that many of the 500 new homes will accommodate young families?</p>	<p><i>The additional travel time and forecasted travel costs from the estimated number of additional pupils from proposed housing developments have not been factored into the costs in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
<p>3.9.10 The “<i>potential risk management measures</i>” state that the new school transport policy would reduce the number of pupils attending school out of county. Please explain how the council has arrived at this statement? I am one of those parents who will have to make this decision and I can assure you no child of mine will be going to Brecon High School. I would like to know how this statement has been arrived at, especially as there has been no consultation with the current pupils or parents prior to this document being prepared.</p>	<p><i>The comment refers to the following paragraph in the Consultation Document, which states:</i></p> <p><i>‘On the 12th April 2016, the Cabinet will be asked to consider a recommendation to consult on a new School Transport Policy, and to define what amounts to a ‘Suitable School’ for the purposes of determining the local Authority’s obligation to transport statutory-aged pupils i.e. KS3 and KS4 pupils. In the event that Cabinet approves the recommendation to consult on the new Policy, an addendum to this consultation document will be issued to all consultees, providing the draft new Policy and its potential impact on pupils’ journey to school and on school transport costs.</i></p> <p><i>In the proposed new School Transport Policy, a mainstream school will be deemed “a suitable school” by the Council if it offers and provides the National Curriculum in</i></p>

		<p><i>Wales including the provision of either or both first and second language Welsh as subjects, and has adopted the universal principles of the Welsh Bacallaureate. ‘</i></p> <p><i>However, the new Policy was not considered by Cabinet on this date due to the need to have further legal advice about the definition of a ‘suitable school’. The Policy will be considered by Cabinet later in 2016 and, if approved, will be the subject of consultation.</i></p>
3.9.11	<p>The Governing Body questions whether <i>the impact regarding travel times been seriously considered?</i> They feel that quoting an average journey change of 4.4 miles is not relevant to those in rural communities.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted.</i></p>
3.9.12	<p>Does the Council accept that there will be a significant number of pupils who would find it easier to commute to a school in England rather than Brecon?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has already recognised this issue and has highlighted it as a risk within the Consultation Document.</i></p> <p><i>During this consultation, many consultees have also raised the issue that parents will choose to send their children to schools in England. Analysis of pupil postcodes shows that, for? Of current Gwernyfed pupils, their closest secondary provision is in England.</i></p>
3.9.13	<p>POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL talk about the Proposal as something to combat falling pupil numbers. How will this work if existing pupils simply move to a different school?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal will reduce overall surplus places – there are currently 36% surplus places at Brecon High School and 20% at Gwernyfed High School. It is currently proposed that the new school in Brecon will be built for 1100 pupils – this takes account of projected pupil numbers, (1092 by 2021) as well as an understanding of the available capacity of other neighbouring schools.</i></p> <p><i>It is currently proposed that the new school in Brecon will be built for 1100 pupils – this takes account of projected pupil numbers, (1092 by 2021) as well as an understanding of the available capacity of other neighbouring schools. If the Proposal is supported, then the Authority will carry out a more detailed analysis of demand to</i></p>

		<i>ascertain the size of the new building in Brecon before submitting the FBC for the project to WG.</i>
3.9.14	Has any attempt been made to assess the number of pupils that will move to education in England if Gwernyfed closes, and the effect on the Welsh Language this will inevitably have?	<i>A draft Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been prepared which did not find any effect on the Welsh language due to learners from the Gwernyfed area choosing to attend schools in England, as there are no Welsh-medium schools or streams in the Gwernyfed catchment area. However, the Authority recognises that all pupils living in Wales should be able to access the National Curriculum of Wales, which includes provision for Welsh 2nd Language. Many respondents have stated, during this consultation, that many pupils will choose to attend schools in England if the Proposal is implemented, which will have a detrimental impact on those pupils' abilities to access the National Curriculum of Wales.</i>
3.9.15	Parents in Llangors area also consider sending children to Christ College. It is noted that on page 62 & 67 - details of other affected schools - Christ College both as a secondary school and a provider of Key stage 2 education has been omitted from the analysis and appears not to have been consulted on this matter. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain this scenario?	<i>It is reasonable to assume that the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code relates to local Authority maintained schools only. However, it was the Authority's view that the number of pupils likely to choose to attend Christ College would not be significant, due to the fact that it is a fee-paying school and that the Proposal would have a new school with new facilities and available places for all pupils in the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments.</i>
3.9.16	Why is the council content to approve a Proposal that will lose pupils, not only out of County but from the Welsh education system completely? How does this in any way address the issue of falling pupil numbers and surplus places?	<i>The Cabinet has not approved the Proposal. The Cabinet has only approved to <u>consult</u> on the Proposal.</i>
3.9.17	Could this movement of pupils result in surplus places in the new build primary schools? How will the Welsh Language Commissioner feel about pupils leaving	<i>During this consultation, many consultees have raised the issue that parents will choose to send their children to schools in England – this was a key risk that was identified on page 19 of the Consultation Document. The Authority acknowledges, as stated in the Consultation Document, that there is a risk that parents will choose to</i>

the Welsh education system? How will this help rural community cohesion?

leave the Welsh education system. The Welsh Language Commissioner is not a named key stakeholder in the WG's School Organisation Code. As stated in the Community Impact Assessment, the Authority recognises that there would be a detrimental impact on a rural area such as Gwernyfed if the Proposal were to be approved.

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
4	Welsh Medium Education	
4.1	Welsh-medium	
4.1.1	<p>Brecon high has many activities carried out in welsh, it has its annual eisteddfod taking place on the 15th April with categories in welsh, second language welsh and English that will involve the whole school celebrating the welsh culture in and around Brecon. The carol service held at Christmas in the cathedral in Brecon was a memorable occasion with both welsh readings and songs by welsh speaking students that was very well attended and enjoyed by the community. Students from the welsh stream are regular contributors to ‘papur bro, y Fan a’r lle’ the Brecon and Radnor welsh supplement. Regular Welsh for adults’ courses are held on the campus numerous times a week. Some children even attend a local welsh group in our village of Talybont helping people who are learning the language. None of these are mentioned in the document. Why?</p>	<p><i>This information was not known to the Authority until the consultation took place. The Authority published a draft Welsh language impact assessment alongside the Consultation Document, which will be updated with information gathered during consultation.</i></p>
4.1.2	<p>Explain why, when the demand for Welsh-medium education is larger in the Brecon HIGH SCHOOL catchment than the Builth Wells catchment, Powys County Council considers it wise to remove it from Brecon?</p>	<p><i>The demand for Welsh-medium education is significantly greater in the Builth Wells catchment than the Brecon catchment. It is therefore logical to centralise it in Builth Wells to create a critical mass of learners.</i></p> <p><i>According to Teachers Centre 28/07/16, there are a total of 107 pupils in primary Welsh schools/streams in the Brecon catchment area, compared to 248 in the Builth Wells catchment.</i></p>

4.2 Facts and Figures		
4.2.1	I do not believe that the numbers used in the consultation regarding the numbers of pupils transferring to Builth from Brecon are in any way correct. All of the many parents I have spoken to in the Brecon welsh stream none are thinking of transferring to Builth. We ourselves have not been asked where we would send our children if Brecon were to no longer be able to educate children in welsh. How were these numbers arrived at? Who plucked these numbers out from the data? Are they just a guess?	<i>Data relating to pupil numbers in the Consultation Document are taken from the PLASC 2016 data.</i>
4.2.2	Creation of a greater mass of Welsh-medium secondary learners - what evidence supports this theory?	<i>This is based on an analysis of pupil numbers in the current Welsh streams at Brecon and Builth High Schools, along with the numbers in each year group in the feeder primary Welsh-medium school and streams.</i>
4.3 Decision to Support Welsh in Brecon has been overturned, why?		
4.3.1	In 2014 a report done by the council identified that the largest number of respondents who would prefer a designated welsh medium school were those in the Brecon catchment area. In 2014 the council also insisted they would bring Brecon up to 2B status. At some point the council has reneged on this commitment to Brecon High school welsh stream. Why has this been the case? As it is a fundamental reason that the decision has been made to favour Builth over Brecon for the Welsh streams location.	<i>In the Cabinet minutes of a meeting held on the 22nd November 2011, following an informal consultation on secondary school modernisation, it notes that additional investment and support would be provided to dual stream schools to achieve the target of a Category 2B school. Early discussions took place with Brecon High School about providing additional support, however due to the challenging financial situation at both Powys County Council level and at Brecon High School, it was not possible to fulfil this. The Fair Funding Formula arrangements were reviewed for the 2013-14 financial year, and are very similar in respect of dual stream schools to the model used in Ceredigion. Additional support is provided to schools based on the number of subjects delivered through both languages, and the same level of support is provided to all dual stream secondary schools.</i>

4.4 Main Consultation Document		
4.4.1	On page 6 of the formal consultation document it states that 'continued reductions in Welsh Government funding, meaning that it is becoming impossible to sustain schools as they are, without impacting on standards and limiting the range of subjects provided;' What evidence and research supports the use of the word impossible?	<p><i>PwC carried out a review of the viability of secondary provision in Powys in 2014, which came to the conclusion that secondary schools were becoming increasingly finance-led rather than curriculum-led.</i></p> <p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the current Estyn Inspection Profile for secondary schools in Powys is unsatisfactory.</i></p>
4.5 Proximity of Welsh Primary Schools to Brecon		
4.5.1	I must confess that I for one fail to see the sense in this Proposal for a number of reasons, not least given that there is a Category 1 Welsh language primary school fewer than 100 meters away from Brecon High School. Where is the nearest Category 1 school to Builth High School?	<i>Ysgol y Bannau is the closest Category 1 school to Builth Wells High School.</i>
4.5.2	Why should Brecon suffer for Builth? Someone decided that Builth should be a Welsh School?? Why? Brecon High is across the road from Ysgol Y Bannau. Anyone with an ounce of intelligence can see that providing a well-funded Welsh Stream, as has happened historically, is the right thing to do for wellbeing of the children.	<i>There is no Proposal for Builth Wells HIGH SCHOOL to become a designated Category 1 or 2A Welsh-medium school.</i>
4.5.3	There is a strong feeling that Welsh medium secondary education should be a part of any new school for Brecon. Even if a welsh stream; with POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL can offer strong guidance, influence and leadership (that guidance and support evidentially has not	<i>The Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in</i>

demonstrated over the past few years to date) the provision can strengthen. If this cannot be made to work in Brecon then how can it succeed at Builth Wells?

Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.

The Welsh Government’s Welsh – medium Education Strategy states ‘Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.’

‘The term ‘bilingual provision’ is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those 9 Welsh-medium Education Strategy April 2010 Information document No: 083/2010 where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called ‘dual stream’ schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.’

The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners’ linguistic skills in Welsh are not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.’

Whilst there are no designated Welsh-medium primary schools in the Builth Wells High School catchment, there are a greater number of primary Welsh-medium streams and a greater number of Welsh-medium pupils compared with the Brecon High School catchment. Evidence shows that Welsh-medium provision in terms of pupil numbers and subjects available has grown over the last five years. The Authority has provided the same guidance and support to Builth Wells and Brecon High School over this time.

4.6 Risks to Welsh Language – Going to English Schools																											
4.6.1	If the decision is taken to close the Welsh stream the young Welsh community in the Brecon area would be destroyed. Is this the aim of Powys county council?	<i>The Authority's view is that the current level of Welsh-medium provision in Brecon High School is not sufficient to enable pupils to develop their Welsh language skills throughout their time in secondary school. This is particularly true in terms of pupils from homes where no Welsh is spoken. The Authority's view is that the increased level of Welsh-medium provision at Builth Wells High School will enable pupils to continue to develop their Welsh language skills throughout their time in secondary school.</i>																									
4.6.2	Surely it is more cost effective to invest in Welsh education locally to ensure home grown Welsh speakers are supported? You should consider investing within county rather than transporting children out of county for their education; something which you ... seem to be actively encouraging!	<i>The Authority's view is that the provision in Brecon High School does not provide equality of opportunity for Welsh-medium pupils. The local Authority would provide free transport for eligible pupils to the nearest Welsh-medium provision. For some pupils, this provision could be outside Powys. Should the Proposal be implemented, parents would still be able to choose between accessing Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera or Builth Wells High School, or accessing English-medium provision at Brecon High School.</i>																									
4.6.3	Do all but a few children transfer to the English medium in Brecon on progressing to Secondary School or choose to travel to Builth Wells? There is a need to provide evidence of which secondary school, pupils of the Brecon Welsh medium primary schools transfer to.	<p><u>September 2015</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Brecon High School</u></th> <th><u>Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera</u></th> <th><u>Builth Wells High School</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><u>Ysgol y Bannau</u></td> <td><u>14</u></td> <td><u>3</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Sennybridge</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> <td><u>3</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>September 2016</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Brecon High School</u></th> <th><u>Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera</u></th> <th><u>Builth Wells High School</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><u>Ysgol y Bannau</u></td> <td><u>3</u></td> <td><u>1</u></td> <td><u>9</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Sennybridge</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> <td><u>4</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			<u>Brecon High School</u>	<u>Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera</u>	<u>Builth Wells High School</u>	<u>Ysgol y Bannau</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Sennybridge</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>Brecon High School</u>	<u>Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera</u>	<u>Builth Wells High School</u>	<u>Ysgol y Bannau</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Sennybridge</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
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4.7 Risks to Welsh Language – Leaving for Secondary School in England		
4.7.1	<p>Losing a percentage of pupils to English in the short term is highly likely to be permanent consequence. Significantly more resources will be required to re-establish uptake than continuing to support Welsh in this area. Can you explain how this complies with the Welsh Government’s strategic aims for the Welsh Language including those outlined within the Donaldson report?</p>	<p><i>During this consultation, many respondents have voiced their opinion that many pupils would access education in England. The Authority recognises that this would not allow pupils to access the National Curriculum of Wales. However, the Proposal is intended to create a long-term sustainable secondary education infrastructure that can provide high-quality education.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal is aligned with the strategic aims of the Welsh Government’s Welsh-medium Education Strategy.</i></p> <p><i>The Donaldson Report states that the school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to develop in relation to clear and agreed purposes. The Authority believes that the proposal will deliver this aim.</i></p>
4.7.2	<p>Please explain how the Proposal takes into account the aims of the Welsh Language Strategy 2012-17, as defined in Section 1.1 of the School Organisation Code, in view of the data demonstrating that parents will choose to educate their children in England if Gwernyfed is closed.</p>	<p><i>The Authority is not aware of any data demonstrating that parents will chose to educate their children in England if Gwernyfed High School is closed. However, the Authority believes that the Proposal will enable Welsh-medium pupils in Powys to have robust linguistic continuity throughout their education, which isn’t the case for Welsh-medium pupils in Brecon currently. According to the Welsh Government’s Welsh-medium Education Strategy ‘Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.’</i></p>
4.8 Risks to Welsh Language/Heritage in General		
4.8.1	<p>The removal of teaching in Welsh sends a negative cultural message for the community, particularly when considering the recent changes to the Welsh Language Act. How are you going to address this and develop a population of Welsh speakers within the community of Brecon? The Welsh language grows and develops not only through the teaching of subjects in Welsh, but by the</p>	<p><i>Pupils would still live in the Brecon area even if they were receiving their education elsewhere. The improved choice and linguistic experience for pupils at Builth Wells High School would enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who could still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon.</i></p> <p><i>There is no evidence that the interaction of those in the Welsh stream with those in the English stream leads to an increase in Welsh speakers. The Welsh Government’s Welsh – medium Education Strategy states ‘Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every</i></p>

<p>interaction of those in the 'Welsh' stream with those in the 'English' stream. How are you going to address this deficit by the loss of the Welsh Stream in Brecon High?</p>	<p><i>phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.'</i></p> <p><i>'The term 'bilingual provision' is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those 9 Welsh-medium Education Strategy April 2010 Information document No: 083/2010 where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called 'dual stream' schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.'</i></p> <p><i>The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners' linguistic skills in Welsh are not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.'</i></p>
<p>4.8.2 Your plan to build a new multi million pound school in Brecon with a Welsh medium primary school across the road yet there will be no Welsh stream on the new site. This appears illogical and unfair. Why should Welsh speakers be denied access to this new school? You should be investing in Welsh in this area. You refer to dwindling numbers attending the Welsh stream but these would increase significantly if you invested properly. If you go ahead with your plans the Welsh language will die in the Brecon area.</p>	<p>See 4.5.3, 4.6.1, 4.6.2</p>

<p>4.8.3</p>	<p>Explain how, in the eventuality of no Welsh-medium provision at Brecon HIGH SCHOOL and the consequent eroding of Welsh culture that this will achieve "... an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges."</p>	<p><i>The Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.</i></p>
<p>4.8.4</p>	<p>If Welsh is to be encouraged for future generations then education at school age must be accessible now. Neighbouring Welsh County Councils appear to be promoting the development of education in the Welsh Language. Withdrawal of the Welsh Stream in Brecon when there is a Welsh language primary school serving the area would seem a backward step when 21st Century schools is supposed to be a transformational project. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify this reduction in parental options and backward step against the Welsh Language strategy?</p>	<p><i>The Authority believes that the Proposal will provide an improved choice of Welsh-medium provision compared to that currently available at Brecon High School, as evidence in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
<p>4.9 Impact on Primary Provision</p>		
<p>4.9.1</p>	<p>The lack of a Welsh language educational provision in Brecon High School will have a negative impact on Ysgol y Bannau and the Brecon community. Parents will either relocate, chose another area to move into rather than Brecon, or chose an English medium school. What are your Proposals to address this?</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that the Proposal could have a negative impact on Ysgol y Bannau in the short term, and this is identified in the consultation document. However, whilst Welsh-medium pupil numbers in other parts of Powys have grown over recent years, this hasn't been the case at Ysgol y Bannau. The Authority believes that the uncertainty in relation to secondary progression has contributed to this. Whilst there may be some impact on pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau in the short term, the Authority would work with organisations such as TWF and Menter Brycheiniog to promote the benefits of bilingualism and Welsh-</i></p>

		<i>medium education, and believes that in the longer term, any reduction in pupil numbers would be reversed, with the potential that they could increase.</i>
4.9.2	Explain how removing Welsh-medium education from Brecon HIGH SCHOOL will not undermine dual stream provision at Sennybridge Primary School and first language provision at Ysgol y Bannau. 31. Present evidence to demonstrate how Ysgol y Bannau will remain viable under current Proposals.	<i>Ysgol y Bannau will continue to receive funding in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula.</i>
4.9.3	Explain how, in the face of falling pupil numbers, Ysgol y Bannau would be expected to “be flexible to ensure that it continues to offer appropriate provision to pupils.”	Ysgol y Bannau will continue to receive funding in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula. If pupil numbers at the school decrease, the school would be expected to provide appropriate provision to pupils within its approved budget.
4.9.4	Given that Powys County Council does not know the effect upon pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau, explain how this bolsters Powys County Council’s argument in favour of achieving a critical mass for the Welsh-medium curriculum in Builth Wells.	<i>Evidence has shown that parents are already choosing to send their children from Ysgol y Bannau to Builth Wells to access suitable progression routes through the medium of Welsh. Welsh-medium pupil numbers in other parts of Powys have grown over recent years, however this hasn’t been the case at Ysgol y Bannau.</i>
4.10 Risk to Education Attainment		
4.10.1	Who will take responsibility when educational standards start falling? (Owing to strain of travelling). My eldest child is excelling in Brecon High Schools welsh stream. If this discrimination is allowed to manifest itself I believe his education will suffer.	<i>From the initial calculations made, travel time for the vast majority of learners would be within the 45 minutes stated in the Authority’s Home to School Transport Policy. The provision in Builth Wells already serves both the Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells catchment areas and the distance from the north of the Llandrindod catchment area to Builth Wells is similar to the distances learners would have to travel under this Proposal.</i> <i>Should the Proposal be supported, Builth Wells High School, like all schools, has a duty to provide the best possible education for all learners.</i>

4.11 Financial Support

4.11.1 You state that the same level of support has been provided to the Welsh streams in Brecon High School and Brecon High School yet you claim Brecon High School has succeeded in strengthening and increasing the provision. If this were true, how did POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL allow the provision at Brecon High School to diminish to its current vulnerable position? Please provide details of financial and other resources you have provided to Brecon High School L and Brecon High School over the last five financial years to support Welsh medium education and the monitoring and reporting arrangements in place to ensure sufficient and equitable Welsh medium education in both schools and the action taken by you when the disparity was identified?

The funding of the Welsh-medium streams at both schools is currently provided by the County Council through its Fair Funding Formula. The basis of the allocation of monies to the Authority does not currently take account of the language of education. The Authority's Fair Funding Scheme does provide additional support based on the number of subjects delivered through both languages, and currently amounts to approximately £175,000 across the two schools in the current financial year, in addition to the usual age weighted factors.

All schools are required to complete an Annual Return which provides the current delivery of Welsh, English and Bilingual Education.

In November 2011, the Cabinet agreed a strategy that all dual-stream schools should aspired to provide a curriculum equivalent to that of a Category 2B school. Officers have annually monitored the progress each school has, or has not made, to reach this target, and discussions have taken place with each school about ways to make progress. A Learning Partnership was established in 2012 - Clwstwr y Ffynnon- to include all Welsh-medium/dual-stream schools in the Brecon and Builth Wells catchment areas, to explore and implement ways of strengthening provision.

The following table provides the information relating to financial support for both Builth and Brecon High Schools for Welsh-medium provision over the last five years:

School	Allowance	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014*	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total
Brecon	Bilingual	88,406	84,601	-	-	-	173,007
	Language Choice	-	-	-	72,320	74,659	146,979
Total		88,406	84,601	-	72,320	74,659	319,986

School	Allowance	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total
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<i>Builth</i>	<i>Bilingual</i>	109,137	110,047				219,184
	Language Choice				98,394	101,069	199,463
	Additional Welsh Agreed SSMT					33,503	33,503
Total		109,137	110,047		98,394	134,572	452,150

4.11.2 The historic lack of investment in Welsh medium secondary education in Brecon High School has meant that there has been very limited uptake of Welsh language learning. That, together with a lack of any Welsh medium provision in the Gwernyfed and Crickhowell catchment areas will do nothing to help improve the uptake in the south locality. This is discriminatory and will mean another opportunity missed by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to promote Welsh language. In your December 2015 update of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, you discount the opportunity to increase Welsh provision in primary schools within these areas concluding that provision for the area should be delivered through Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon. You should reconsider this approach to encourage an extension of provision into these catchment areas. Are you basing the outcome of your review on recent parent survey within those catchment areas? If not, what are you basing your review on?

As the current position at both schools does not fully meet the aspirations of the Authority's WESP for linguistic continuity, the Authority has identified the need to centralise provision, in order to ensure that a greater level of provision can be offered to pupils. In particular, the Authority is concerned that the Welsh-medium provision available at Brecon High School is limited, and does not provide sound linguistic progression from one phase of education to the next.

The Authority carried out a survey to identify parental preference with regard to Welsh-medium secondary education in the autumn term 2013.

The survey was sent to the parents of all pupils currently attending a Welsh medium primary school or a Welsh stream in a dual stream primary school, including parents of pupils in the Ystradgynlais area who currently transfer to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera for their secondary education. 36% of surveys sent out were returned.

In the survey, parents were asked which type of secondary provision they would prefer for their children to attend.

The results were broken down by primary school, and by high school catchment. The results for the area currently under review were as follows:

Catchment	Number of surveys issued/response rate	Designated Welsh medium secondary school	Welsh stream in dual secondary school	English stream in dual secondary school	English medium secondary school
Brecon	182/44%	71%	29%	0%	0%
Builth Wells	130/35%	43%	46%	8%	4%

4.11.3 Explain how greater investment in Welsh-medium provision, for example through providing Welsh language apprentices and more peripatetic teachers in the Brecon HIGH SCHOOL catchment, would not provide opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils of all abilities to achieve high levels of attainment.

The Authority does not believe that this model would deliver the same benefits as outlined in 5.1 above, due to the fact that there needs to be a critical mass of pupils for this model to work, and this is not the case currently at Brecon High School.

4.12 Builth Build

4.12.1 Explain why the existing, relatively recently built Builth Wells High School, is no longer fit for purpose. Explain where, and by when, the new school will be built

There are no Proposals for a new school in Builth Wells – the Consultation Document for Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools puts forward a Proposal to establish one school across two sites. It states on page 17 of that document - ‘The Proposal is the first stage of potential wider plans for secondary education in the area. The second stage, which aims to establish the New School on a single site in the locality of Builth Wells, requires further work to understand the overall capital cost and feasibility.’ Builth Wells High School is not considered ‘no longer fit for purpose’, and is categorised as a Condition B building – this is stated in both Consultation Documents for the four high schools.

4.13 Choice		
4.13.1	NPTC does not provide post 16 Welsh medium education. Moving the Welsh medium stream from Brecon High School to Builth, including the post 16 age group, appears to be another way in which POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL is removing obstacles in order to hand over the 6th form education in Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment area to the inadequately prepared Neath Port Talbot group. Is this equitable or fair?	<i>Secondary schools in south Powys have struggled to offer post-16 Welsh-medium provision in recent years due to the small number of pupils involved. With this Proposal, post-16 Welsh-medium subjects will continue to be provided at Builth Wells High School, and as Welsh-medium pupil numbers in the school grow, it is expected that the school will be able to offer a greater number of Welsh-medium subjects. NPTC Group of Colleges has no experience of offering Welsh-medium provision.</i>
4.13.2	What research / modelling has been conducted by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Educational Officers into how new learning / teaching technologies could enable a Welsh A level stream to be retained in all South Powys High Schools?	<i>POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL has facilitated and funded a number of alternative ways of delivering Welsh-medium post-16 education over the last few years e.g. Cam wrth Gam – Welsh-medium Childcare provision through Mudiad Meithrin; Video-conferencing with Coleg Llandrillo; Agricultural courses through collaboration with Coleg Sir Gar; agriculture and engineering in collaboration with Ysgol Penweddig, Aberystwyth.</i> <i>Whilst these models can provide additional courses, they do not address the fundamental issue of low pupil numbers, high costs and viability of courses.</i>
4.14 Travel/Transport		
4.14.1	Those pupils wishing to learn through the medium of Welsh are currently travelling to Builth. However there are also question marks over the future of Builth so how far are you prepared for your Welsh students to travel in order to learn in the language of their culture?	<i>The Proposal that has been the subject of a recent consultation in Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells is to establish one school across two sites, with Welsh-medium provision being retained in a dual-stream school that operates across the current sites of Builth and Llandrindod High Schools.</i> <i>The Authority would not support an educational model that did not have Welsh-medium provision in the South and Mid of the county.</i>

4.14.2	Our daughter and son in law have invested in educating our grandchildren in Welsh medium primary education at Ysgol y Bannau expecting this to be continued at Brecon High School. It makes no sense geographically to now expect them to travel to Builth to continue this provision	<i>See 4.5.3, 4.6.1, 4.6.2</i>
4.14.3	How can you assure us that the management of your transport policy for Welsh Medium education is fit for purpose, legally robust and is being implemented consistently to ensure equality across the county?	<i>Home-to-School transport for Welsh-medium pupils is implemented in accordance with the Council's Policy. Any parental appeals for transport are managed on a two-stage process, with the Senior Manager Central Services considering the initial appeal, and then any subsequent appeals being taken to the Transport Appeals Panel, which is supported by the Authority's Legal Dept..</i>
4.14.4	Please explain how paying for children to be transported to BRECON HIGH SCHOOL prior to the start of the consultation is not considered predetermination.	<i>The provision of transport to Builth Wells High School has only been provided following parents making a successful transport appeal and being awarded transport by the transport appeals committee or, more recently, by the portfolio holder with responsibility for schools.</i>
4.14.5	Prove that families with pupils from the Brecon catchment are not choosing to send them to the Welsh-medium education in either Builth Wells or Ystalyfera as a consequence of the uncertainty created by Powys County Council. Prove that Brecon parents will choose for their children to travel the extra distances to study Welsh-medium curriculum in Builth Wells.	<i>There is evidence that parents are already choosing to send their children to Welsh-medium provision in Builth Wells or in Ystalyfera. Information from admissions dept.</i>
4.15 Impact of Travel to Builth on social, sporting activities		
4.15.1	Why are you so adamant that Sennybridge Welsh stream should feed to YGY when the distance to YGY is 18 miles, ten miles further than to BRECON HIGH SCHOOL? What are your motives?	<i>The transport provided to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera was provided following a transport appeal where it was recognised by the panel members that the level of Welsh-medium provision in Brecon was far below that provided in Ystalyfera.</i>

4.16 Opposed to moving the Welsh Stream from Brecon	
4.16.1	<p>Explain why it is preferable to relocate Welsh-medium secondary education to Builth Wells HIGH SCHOOL, which is categorised as Red under the National School Categorisation System.</p> <p><i>Builth Wells High School was placed in Special Measure by Estyn following an inspection in 2015. The school has been placed in the ‘red’ support category in the 2015/16 National Categorisation of Schools. Brecon High School was also placed in Special Measures by Estyn in 2012, and was placed in the ‘amber’ support category in 2015/16.</i></p> <p><i>The National Categorisation of Schools is a system which considers the performance of schools against a range of criteria – the colour-coding system shows how much support the school will receive from ERW’s Challenge Advisors.</i></p> <p><i>It is preferable to relocate Welsh-medium education to Builth Wells High School due to the reasons outlined in 4.5.3 above, regardless of the categorisation of the school.</i></p>
4.16.2	<p>Explain why pupils wishing to study the Welsh-medium or dual language curriculum would be denied the opportunity to do so in a new Condition A School Building in Brecon.</p> <p><i>As the current position at both schools does not fully meet the aspirations of the Authority’s WESP for linguistic continuity, the Authority has identified the need to centralise provision, in order to ensure that a greater level of provision can be offered to pupils. In particular, the Authority is concerned that the Welsh-medium provision available at Brecon High School is limited, and does not provide sound linguistic progression from one phase of education to the next.</i></p>
4.17 Impact on Primary Welsh Provision	
4.17.1	<p>If this provision is removed the number of pupils starting at Ysgol y Bannau will decline, some are already questioning their decisions even before the consultation has been completed. With two thirds of the children coming from English speaking families they will not consider putting them into welsh education if they then have to travel to Builth to continue with their welsh education, they will choose English medium from the beginning. Some parents are already</p> <p><i>As noted in the Consultation Document, The Authority recognises the risk to pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau, and would work closely with the school and organisations such as TWF and Menter Brycheiniog to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education in the local area.</i></p> <p><i>Ysgol y Bannau would become an official feeder school for the new dual-stream, dual-sited school in Mid Powys, and both schools would work closely to ensure clear transition and progression routes for pupils. The Authority would only provide transport for pupils to the nearest school that provides Welsh-medium education.</i></p>

<p>4.17.2</p> <p>4.17.3</p> <p>4.17.4</p> <p>4.17.5</p>	<p>planning to remove their children from the school next term.</p> <p>I have already spoken with at least 4 different families in the last 2 months School who have opted out of sending their children to Ysgol y Bannau in the next academic year for the simple reason that they have been led to believe that there will be no continuation of 1st language Welsh at the nearest Comprehensive school.</p> <p>Brecon has a thriving Welsh medium primary school and I am concerned that its future will be damaged if you proceed with the Proposal. Sennybridge CP School will also be damaged if Brecon lacks Welsh medium secondary provision.</p> <p>POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL believes that developing close links between YGY and Builth HIGH SCHOOL will increase the number of Welsh learners in the longer term. How long is the short term?</p> <p>Has the Council asked parents who have withdrawn from YGY or BRECON HIGH SCHOOL WS for reasons for their decision? I think the Council could learn from this.</p>	<p><i>If the Proposal is implemented from September 2017, the Authority would expect the school in Builth Wells to have developed transition plans along with Ysgol y Bannau in readiness.</i></p> <p><i>As the Authority will be providing free home to school transport, it is the authority's view that while there may be some parents who choose to opt for the English stream at Brecon High School, the majority of Ysgol y Bannau pupils will continue to transfer to Welsh-medium secondary provision in the long term.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority has not asked parents directly – however, all parents have the opportunity to provide their views in response to this consultation.</i></p>
<p>4.18</p>	<p>Criticism of the Brecon to Builth Publicity/Process/Done Deal</p>	
<p>4.18.1</p>	<p>Comments about the relocation of first language Welsh medium provision to Builth High School were publicised even before the Consultation</p>	<p><i>The Council did not announce the closure as if it was fact, however it may have been reported in this way in the press. The Council cannot control what is published by the press or by anyone else.</i></p>

<p>period was over, suggesting a <i>fait accompli</i> before public discussion had even started ... There is no suggestion that Builth primaries should feed into Brecon-based Welsh provision; a huge oversight given that we are still ‘in Consultation’...? How can parents in the Builth and Brecon area be expected to make informed decisions about their children’s educational provision when a large chunk of pertinent information is omitted from the Consultation Document?</p>	<p><i>In changing the language category of any school, all local authorities have to publish Proposals and carry out the statutory consultation process.</i></p> <p><i>In the Option Appraisal carried out on potential long-list of options for Welsh-medium provision in South and Mid Powys, a Proposal for centralising Welsh-medium provision in Brecon was considered:</i></p> <p><i>Option 2: Maintain a single Bilingual Category 2B/C (“dual-stream”) Secondary School in South Powys and transfer Welsh-medium learners from Mid Powys to South Powys</i></p> <p><i>However, this was discounted due the fact that it did not meet the threshold for further consideration in the short list of options. . This information was included within the Consultation Document at page 75</i></p>
<p>4.19 Equality Issue</p>	
<p>4.19.1 A term used in the Brecon High School Consultation event was “Equality Education”. How is moving Welsh speaking children out of their community so they can move forward with their Welsh language promoting and providing “Equality Education”? It is in fact marginalising them and pushing them away from their local community, which I feel is also a serious case of discrimination towards the Welsh Language.</p>	<p><i>The Authority believes that Welsh-medium pupils are being discriminated against under the current arrangement due to the limited curriculum Welsh-medium curriculum available to them.</i></p>

REF	ISSUES	RESPONSE
5 Finances		
5.1 Cost of Repair/Maintenance of Existing Buildings Vs Cost of New Build		
5.1.1	The finances of the proposed scheme are also extremely troubling. Powys County Council argue that the proposed scheme would save £300,000 per year. However, the modernisation would require funding totalling around £20 million, the interest on which would almost certainly eliminate any such saving.	<i>The savings included in the consultation document relate to the revenue saving the Proposal would achieve. Capital investment to achieve this is included in the Councils overarching Capital Strategy, various funding streams would be used to finance this but these costs are not included in the documentation.</i>
5.1.2	The Council has identified a back log of repairs needed at the school, as a County Councillor I find this a highly embarrassing reason for closure. If this is true, it is the failing of successive Cabinets of Powys County Council and not of the School and Governing Body. However the school is not run down, it is a fantastic setting for learning, and I believe we should be investing in this truly unique environment.	<i>Comment noted Under the schools service asset management plan and its transformation agenda, the Authority is striving to bring all its schools up to a minimum condition B standard, it is recognised by Welsh Government that there has been significant under investment in improving the condition of buildings. It is a key priority for investment under the 21st century schools capital programme. The Cabinet has recently approved that where schools are not spending their delegated premises funding on repair and maintenance they will be required to contribute to any further capital expenditure at the school. It is expected that this will increase the amount of expenditure made on Repair and maintenance.</i>
5.1.3	Why is a new school building needed? If the estimated backlog maintenance cost for Brecon High School is £15,581,541 then surely the proposed 20 million to build a brand new school is more than enough to refurbish the existing Brecon High School building and bring it up to the required standard. The school is currently large enough to be refurbished in sections, why not close off sections of the school and refurbish bit by bit.	<i>In the Strategic Outline Case for the development of the Beacons Campus, which was approved by Cabinet and the Welsh Government in 2015, a number of options were explored using the HM Treasury's Five Case Business Model. A further Outline Business Case subsequently developed. An option of remodelling Brecon High School was considered during this process but discounted as it did not meet a sufficient number of investment objectives and critical success factors.</i> <i>The new school building is needed because Brecon High School is categorised as a Condition D building and some areas have already been put out of use for teaching due to their bad condition.</i>

5.1.4	How much would it cost to carry out the repairs to Gwernyfed High School and how much to maintain this? Would the council consider help from parents to subsidise the cost?	<i>The Cost of refurbishing Gwernyfed High School to a Condition B standard is £3.721.</i>
5.1.5	I understand that the cost between expanding /improving the current GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL site and the cost between building a new one is negligible. The beautiful site at GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL is strategically placed offering a choice to future students. If it were removed the gap in the centre would be too large and students would have to opt for either Builth or an English choice such as Fairfield.	<i>Comment noted</i>
5.1.6	These buildings, which are thrown up in the cheapest way are unlikely to still be standing in 20 years, let alone 200 years. Yes Gwernyfed needs some investment, but surely long term this is more cost effective than a rebuild programme.	<i>Comment noted</i>
5.1.7	Jeremy Patterson noted that 'it would be possible to spend capital money on the maintenance backlog at Gwernyfed but there would need to be a proper business case' (Gwernyfed 2:02). I believe the Governors are willing to present this if they have not done so already.	<i>Comment noted</i>
5.1.8	How much would it cost to bring Gwernyfed school buildings to the standard required in order to correct the defects which places it in category Condition C? Please also project the	<i>The estimated cost of improving facilities at Gwernyfed High School up to a Condition B standard is £3.72m. The cost of a new build 11 – 16 school in Brecon is £20m. The estimated additional transport costs are £225,320.</i>

<p>net cost of same once increased transport costs and loss of sixth form/high school delegated funding caused by pupils choosing to be educated out of county is taken into account. What proportion of the new build cost would this represent? How much investment will be required i) for the new build as a whole, and ii) in the interim to the existing Gwernyfed and Brecon sites? What is the difference in cost between rectifying the premises defects at Gwernyfed and the year on year costs of increased transportation of students and the loss of future funding due to students electing to be taught outside the catchment?</p>	<p><i>Further financial modelling will be undertaken should the Proposal be supported to the next stage of the process.</i></p>
<p>5.1.9 What is the square footage and volume of the proposed new-build, and what is the proposed cost of cleaning and utilities? How does this compare with existing costs of same at Gwernyfed? What is the rateable value likely to be and how does it compare with the rateable value of each of the existing schools? What is the council’s contingency with regards to upkeep and running costs in the event that the new school is under-subscribed?</p>	<p><i>The costs associated with running the school including the property elements are a matter for the Governing Body. The funding provided by the Authority via the schools delegated budget is derived using the funding formula. The current formula in place for secondary schools funds the majority of the Premises allowances on 75% weighted floor area and 25% based on the pupil number element. Factors such as rateable value, condition of the school building, energy source etc. are all considered. The formula is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the funding elements are appropriate when compared with expenditure incurred by the schools. The new school would be funded in accordance with the formula. If the school is undersubscribed the property led elements of the formula do not change, but staffing related elements would reduce. The estimated floor area of the new build is 19,027m2, the school element being 8,550m2.</i></p>
<p>5.1.10 How much has been spent on repairs and maintenance at Gwernyfed in each of the past five years? Has there been a reduction in maintenance of the premises over recent years in preparation for the eventual closure of this school? Does this contribute to the “significant</p>	<p><i>Repair and maintenance of the school building sits within the schools delegated budget and is the responsibility of the Governing Body. Expenditure is recorded as £407k over the past 5 years. The Authority has in addition spent £83k from its centrally held major repairs budget. Capital expenditure across all schools is allocated on an annual basis and funding is allocated against an agreed prioritisation matrix.</i></p>

	backlog” cited in the consultation document, and has this contributed to its Category C status? Why cannot Capital investment be allocated to improve existing premises?	
5.1.11	What is the breakdown of the difference between the £20million cost of development of the new school building and the £44million of the total Beacons Campus Project cost? There is no legitimate reason why capital funding cannot be spent on improving existing premises as part of a planned schedule of improvement. It is a lie to suggest that only new-builds can be funded using capital resources. Why does County refuse to consider this option?	<p><i>The Strategic Outline Case and subsequent Outline Business Case has examined all options in detail. The best economic and educational model is to build a new school in Brecon.</i></p> <p><i>The difference of £24m relates to the NPTC Group of Colleges element of the build.</i></p>
5.1.12	Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain exactly why it will not consider funding maintenance of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL from its capital funds? If a new school is built what funding has been put aside for ongoing annual maintenance in order that the new school does not fall into disrepair, as many POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL owned buildings have for decades?	<p><i>Revenue maintenance costs cannot be funded from capital, the Authority is bound by accounting regulations that prevent this.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing maintenance costs of the proposed new school would be met from the schools delegated budget. The funding for which is included within the figures provided in the consultation documents.</i></p>
5.1.13	The Governing Body asks: <i>how the ‘backlog of repairs’ figure of £3,721,200 has been arrived at? If this is the true cost why have they not been made aware of it until now? And does this figure include the renovation and re-fit of the Mansion House as estimated at £196,500?</i> With regard to the latter question, they argue that this cost includes works no longer required to make teaching spaces accessible and estimate this to	See 6.2.2

	<p>now be nearer £70,000. The Governing Body also asks whether this figure is based upon the cost of the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL FMS service providing the work. If so, they suggest there are externally-procured alternatives available that could reduce the cost by between 25% - 50%.</p>	
<p>5.2 School Budget</p>		
<p>5.2.1</p>	<p>I believe Gwernyfed school has operated with in its budget for a long time,</p>	<p><i>Comment noted. Gwernyfed High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a £206,716 cumulative surplus and has a projected cumulative surplus of £186,076 for the year ending 31st March 2017.</i></p>
<p>5.2.2</p>	<p>Gwernyfed is managing to deliver excellent quality education to their pupils, whilst operating within a balanced budget.</p>	<p><i>Gwernyfed High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a £206,716 cumulative surplus and has a projected cumulative surplus of £186,076 for the year ending 31st March 2017.</i></p>
<p>5.2.3</p>	<p>The true goal is to have a new high school for Brecon and in the process to be able to wipe the current 1.4million of debt that Brecon currently has. To enable them to wipe the debt they need to close 2 schools to create a new one. Gwernyfed has been proposed to be this sacrificial lamb.</p>	<p><i>The Authority disputes this comment. The Consultation Document clearly outlines the significant challenges faced by the secondary sector in Powys and the reasons for the Proposal, along with benefit, risks and impact on a number of factors.</i></p>
<p>5.2.4</p>	<p>Our School has fought hard to remain within budget and we must not close at Brecon's expense. We appreciate that Brecon needs a new school and we will support this.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted.</i></p>
<p>5.2.5</p>	<p>Alongside this, Gwernyfed is one of the few high schools in Powys to be managed effectively within a balanced budget, year on year. Where is the sense to close an 'on budget' school and</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a</i></p>

<p>merge us with a school that is currently lying under a mountain of debt?</p>	<p><i>new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education. There are only three secondary schools in Powys that have achieved a 'good' judgement by Estyn.</i></p>
<p>5.3 Brecon Deficit</p>	
<p>5.3.1 Why was Brecon High School allowed by the council to accumulate a deficit budget of 1.4 million and where in the Proposal are the steps that the council will take to ensure a secondary school in Powys is not allowed to do this again? (Pg. 8)</p>	<p><i>Brecon High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £107k. Forward projections show the impact of falling pupil numbers and the reduction in funding that this has. These figures do not take into account the action the school will take to reduce the projected deficit. All schools must comply with the Scheme for Financing schools, which also includes the powers of intervention available to the Authority should the school not comply.</i></p>
<p>5.3.2 Who will/is being held accountable for Brecon High schools debt?</p>	<p><i>A notice of concern has been issued to the Governing Body in line with the Scheme for Financing schools. The Governing Body must submit a financial recovery plan to the Authority in line with a Cabinet request which demonstrates the action that will be taken by the Governing Body to address the projected deficits.</i></p>
<p>5.3.3 Why did Powys County Council leave the debt go so high before anyone stepped in or alarm bells stated to ring?</p>	<p><i>The Authority works with all schools to offer the appropriate support and challenge to ensure they meet the requirements of the Scheme. Cabinet will review the position upon receipt of the Governing Body's proposed recovery plan.</i></p>
<p>5.3.4 Where has the money gone from Brecon high school? As it's obviously not been spent on the building. As a tax payer I think it's important that we know where our money had gone!</p>	<p><i>Forward projections show the impact of falling pupil numbers and the reduction in funding that this has.</i></p>
<p>5.3.5 Brecon will have accrued a budget deficit of around £1.4 million. Can you explain to me how has this been allowed to happen?</p>	<p><i>Of the 98 schools in Powys, 8 schools are in an unlicensed deficit position. Brecon High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £107k. The school is required to send in recovery plan to Cabinet to identify the action that will be taken to reduce the projected deficit. The Authority works with all schools to offer the appropriate support and challenge to ensure they meet the requirements of the Scheme. All schools must comply with the Scheme for Financing schools, which also includes the powers of intervention available to the Authority should the school not comply.</i></p>
<p>5.3.6 Powys County Council must go on record to explain its own culpability in allowing Brecon High School's finances to slip into the red and allowing so many of the county's high schools to slip to the point that they are now subject to Estyn monitoring and/or special measures.</p>	<p><i>Of the 98 schools in Powys, 8 schools are in an unlicensed deficit position. Brecon High School ended the 2015/16 financial year with a surplus of £107k. The school is required to send in recovery plan to Cabinet to identify the action that will be taken to reduce the projected deficit. The Authority works with all schools to offer the appropriate support and challenge to ensure they meet the requirements of the Scheme. All schools must comply with the Scheme for Financing schools, which also includes the powers of intervention available to the Authority should the school not comply.</i></p>

<p>5.3.7 How is it legal and morally right to simply wipe out a deficit of £1.4 million of tax payers money by closing these schools?</p>	<p><i>All schools in Powys are monitored through the Regional School Improvement Strategy through a team of Challenge Advisers deployed through the regional consortium for South West and Mid Wales, namely ERW. This consists of a core visit during the Autumn Term annually at which a school is categorised for standards and also the capacity to improve and placed on a matrix. This matrix determines the support required by a school. The support required is then brokered through the designated Challenge Adviser to ensure appropriate improvements are made.</i></p>
<p>5.4 Future Financial Management</p>	
<p>5.4.1 There have been budget deficits within Brecon High School in the past and it would appear that this is a constant problem. Why has this happened again? Can you guarantee that this will not happen within a new school in Brecon? What will Powys County Council strategy for School Budget Management be under any new arrangements? How will the Council reward excellent budgetary management? What will be the sanctions for poor budgetary management?</p>	<p><i>Brecon High was in a deficit position at the end of March 2013 and was provided with loan to manage the repayment of the debt. The Governing Body have amended their expenditure at the school and have maintained a surplus position over the last 3 years and met the repayment requirements on the loan. The financial position for Brecon High School as at the 31st March 2016 was a surplus balance of £107k. Forward projections show the impact of falling pupil numbers and the reduction in funding that this has. These figures do not includes action that the school will take to reduce the projected deficit. The policy for the financial management of schools is in place via the Scheme for the Financing of Schools within which all schools must comply, the Scheme sets out the powers of intervention available to the Authority when schools fail to meet the requirements.</i></p>
<p>5.4.2 GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL runs the Sports Centre, hiring this and other school facilities to sports, arts and community groups. In terms of alternative arrangements, the Governing Body highlights that POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL made a £40,000 per annum loss when they ran the Sports Centre prior to the school taking it over in April 2015. They thus ask: <i>does the Council agree that should the school site close, POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL will run the facilities again at a significant annual loss? And does the Council accept that the availability of school facilities to the community is only</i></p>	<p><i>Prior to April 2015, the Sports Centre formed part of the Council's Leisure Services provision, and was staffed by Leisure Services staff including a manager and other staff. The provision transferred to Gwernyfed High School to form part of the school's accommodation, and the facility is now being run with a much-reduced staffing level, as part of the school's letting and community use arrangements. Analysis of the school's current budget and the Council's financial records show that there are no direct staffing charges to the Sports Centre, and that it is operating as a facility that is hired to community groups, rather than a centre that offers staffing support.</i></p> <p><i>If the school was to close, the Authority would, through its Asset Disposal Procedures, undertake consultation with community groups around future ownership</i></p>

<p><i>financially viable whilst the school remains open?</i></p>	<p><i>and delivery from the site. It is recognised that the current delivery model has a lower financial impact on the Council's budgets.</i></p>
<p>5.5 Proposal is designed to wipe Brecon High Schools Debt</p>	
<p>5.5.1 Why is Gwernyfed High School being closed in order to write off Brecon High schools' debt when this is no fault of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and simply to save POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL money in Brecon?</p> <p>5.5.2 Is GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL is being put through this process solely to enable POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to write off Brecon High School's debt and to access 21st Century schools funding from the Welsh Government?</p>	<p><i>This is not the case, the Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i></p>
<p>5.5.3 Budgetary problems of BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and other schools in Powys would appear to suggest that the quality of leadership, advice and support issued by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL has been of a poor standard and that POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL would like to close BRECON HIGH SCHOOL to write off this unauthorised debt, as POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL policy allows this. The Proposal is all about POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL mismanagement of BRECON HIGH SCHOOL which should never have been allowed to happen and is a problem for POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL and not GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL. This reason for closure regarding/due</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i></p> <p><i>There has been no mismanagement of Brecon High School by the Authority. The Authority works with all schools to offer the appropriate support and challenge to ensure they meet the requirements of the Scheme for Financing Schools. All schools must comply with the Scheme for Financing schools, which also includes the powers of intervention available to the Authority should the school not comply.</i></p>

<p>to school budgetary problems is not a valid point for closure of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify involving GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL in BRECON HIGH SCHOOL problems?</p>	
<p>5.6 Savings/costs from Proposal</p>	
<p>5.6.1 The plan “improves the cost effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of education” so why is the projected saving only a rather pitiful £300K per year?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal produces an annual revenue saving in the region of £300,000. The Authority believes that the Proposal, if implemented, would ensure a more efficient use of resources. Due to the current use of lump-sum funding in the funding formula, the reduction in the overall percentage that these lump sums represent is more efficient;</i></p>
<p>5.6.2 What is the breakdown of costs comprising the secondary merger saving? How are the current transport costs calculated? How are the new travel costs calculated? Does the new travel cost include only curricular activities, or is there a sum included for transporting children to and from after school activities?</p>	<p><i>The breakdown of the savings are included in Section 7.1 of the consultation document. The current and estimated travel costs were calculated following an analysis carried out by officers from the Schools Service and the Transport Unit. An analysis of the additional routes required in both catchment areas was undertaken, including the ability to amalgamate such routes, and providing an estimate for each route of the additional costs that would be incurred. The analysis also included the impact of the revised transport network on any linked transport that is used for primary education as well.</i></p> <p><i>The costs do not include any transport costs for extra-curricular activities, as this would not be provided by the Authority.</i></p>
<p>5.6.3 Does the cost of the proposed plan include the Gwernyfed surplus and the Brecon deficit? If so, where are they shown in the figures, and if not, what are they?</p>	<p><i>The figures do not include the estimate of balances in relation to the individual schools if they were to close. The figures in the Proposal relate to the ongoing revenue implications. The projected balances for both schools was included in the consultations documents on page 59, revised projections submitted by the governing bodies of both schools for the 2017/18 financial year as per the Cabinet report dated the 5th July shows Gwernyfed High school projecting a surplus of £157k and Brecon High School £588k deficit. Any school with a projected deficit must submit a recovery plan to the Authority demonstrating how they would balance their budget.</i></p>

<p>5.6.4</p>	<p>A stated advantage of this Proposal is that there is an opportunity to generate economies of scale efficiencies. How can this be the case when the projected saving is only a mere £300,000? And even that saving is highly questionable?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal produces an annual revenue saving in the region of £300,000. The Authority believes that the Proposal, if implemented, would ensure a more efficient use of resources. Due to the current use of lump-sum funding in the funding formula, the reduction in the overall percentage that these lump sums represent is more efficient;</i></p>
<p>5.6.5</p>	<p>Please explain how this new Proposal will improve the cost effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of education for current pupils at Gwernyfed High School when their private study time is reduced significantly by spending more time travelling on a bus?</p>	<p><i>The Authority recognises that there will be additional travel time required for some pupils, once the New School Building opens in Brecon. However, The Authority believes that the Proposal, if implemented, would ensure a more efficient use of resources. Due to the current use of lump-sum funding in the funding formula, the reduction in the overall percentage that these lump sums represent is more efficient;</i></p>
<p>5.6.6</p>	<p>Even more students will move to Hereford Sixth Form College if Gwernyfed closes which will exacerbate the problem of less money into Powys - there will be even less money to spend on those students wishing to continue their sixth form education in Brecon. Surely this is contradictory to what the council wish to achieve?</p>	<p><i>During this consultation process a number of stakeholders have stated the risk of losing post 16 learners to Hereford sixth form college, the Authority agrees that this will impact on the funding received from welsh government. M</i></p> <p><i>However, the Authority believes that establishing a tertiary model for post-16 learners, similar to that provided in Hereford, will be attractive to learners and will therefore increase the numbers of post-16 learners staying in the county.</i></p>
<p>5.6.7</p>	<p>Please provide costs and savings analyses based on alternative (and more real world) pupil number models which reflect the likely reduced intake at the new Brecon school.</p>	<p><i>The estimated savings have been calculated using the 2015/16 funding formula and funded pupil numbers from January 2015 PLASC.</i></p>
<p>5.6.8</p>	<p>How can the Council explain the predicted management savings?</p>	<p><i>The estimated management savings have been calculated by rerunning the Authority's fair funding formula. The formula funding is only providing funding for 1 management structure instead of the 2 currently funded in each school.</i></p>
<p>5.6.9</p>	<p>The Governing Body also questions the proposed additional funding for a split site which they describe as a 'guess' based on POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's only other experience of a</p>	<p><i>The figures stated for split site options have been based on the current fair funding formula with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required for 2017/18 to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on</i></p>

<p>secondary split site at John Beddoes, which was absorbed into an existing successful school. They feel it will cost much more to manage and establish a new school that requires new policies and procedures, structures, leadership team, middle management and departments. The Governing Body asks: <i>does the Council accept that the figure introduced into the costings is insufficient for the true costs of implementing the Proposals?</i></p>	<p><i>leadership scale point 12. These proposed changes were discussed with Senior Education officers and are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.</i></p>
<p>5.6.10 As the majority of primary parents will be sending their children to English schools, does the Council accept that this will significantly impact upon the predicted savings in the Proposals?</p>	<p><i>During this consultation a number of stakeholders have voiced a concern on impact on primary schools in the catchment, should parents choose other schools or leave the area.</i></p> <p><i>The funding received by the Authority from Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) only accounts for 73% of the Council’s overall net expenditure, with the remaining 27% being funded by Council Tax. Any transfer of pupils to schools in England will only impact on the first element of the funding, with the Authority losing the majority of its responsibilities for funding the education of children living in Powys, but educated in other authorities. It is the Authority’s view that the impact of this would be, at the worst case, cost neutral to the Authority and may result in an increase in the projected savings.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority would remain responsible for Home-to-School transport to their closest school, however there is a separate funding stream within the RSG mechanism which is based on population rather than actual pupil numbers.</i></p>
<p>5.6.11 the Proposals take no account of the financial impact upon the area’s cluster primary schools in terms of joint procurement savings (waste management, janitorial supplies, refuse collection and educational resources for</p>	<p><i>All schools are funded on a formula basis and are required to manage fluctuations in pupil numbers as one of the key drivers of the formula delivering the funding. Schools manage these changes on a day to day basis and are required to take the appropriate actions to ensure that spend is within funding provided.</i></p>

<p>example) - and say that there are also plans to develop opportunities for further procurement savings for the primaries in the future. The Governing Body asks: <i>will the Council acknowledge that the Proposals will adversely impact upon the primary schools and their opportunities to make financial savings?</i></p>													
<p>5.7 Proposal Queries</p>													
<p>5.7.1</p>	<p>As 371 x £4248 is £1.576m, where does the figure of £1.929m come from? (p 60)</p> <p><i>The £1,929m is the total delegated funding provided to Gwernyfed High School at the beginning of 2015/16 financial year. The funding per pupil includes the post 16 pupils and element of the formula.</i></p>												
<p>5.7.2</p>	<p>Why is the Gwernyfed budget share given as £1.929m on P60 and £1.694m on P36? What is the true funding per pupil figure for Gwernyfed?</p> <p><i>The £1,694m on page 36 excludes post 16 pupil element of the funding of £252,198 listed further down in section 7.1. The £1,929m is the funding delegated to the school inclusive of Post 16 at the start of the 2015/16 financial year.</i></p>												
<p>5.7.3</p>	<p>Where does the number 946 come from?</p> <p><i>The pupil numbers of 946 are based on the Years 7-11 pupil numbers funded to each school for the 2015/16 financial year.</i></p>												
<p>5.7.4</p>	<p>Which figures are correct - P69 or P51?</p> <p><i>The difference between the primary forecast data shown on page 51 and page 69 of the Consultation Document are due to the fact that numbers have been 'rounded up' differently in the original Excel spreadsheet.</i></p>												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total page 51</td> <td>1847</td> <td>1890</td> <td>1955</td> <td>2020</td> <td>2018</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total page 51	1847	1890	1955	2020	2018
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020								
Total page 51	1847	1890	1955	2020	2018								

	Total page 69	1848	1892	1957	2019	2019	
<p>5.7.5 We were furnished on request with a copy of the funding formula spreadsheet. From this spreadsheet, we can have a guess at where you obtained one of the ‘Secondary merger saving’ figures - £258,278 appears far right in the ‘dual site’ row, but the figure you give for the single site is only £558,042. This is £19,460 less than the figure on P36. Which figure is correct - £558,042 or £577,502?</p>	<p><i>The £19,460 is the additional funding the school received in relation to the Sports Centre in the 2015/16 financial year. The £577,502 is the correct figure.</i></p>						
<p>5.7.6 You claim a saving of £74,659 by removing the Welsh streams, but we know these are being transferred to Builth. Surely this is a redistribution of budget, not a saving, and will in fact incur extra transport costs? Please provide clarification.</p>	<p><i>The language choice element of the formula is based on the % of the curriculum delivered through both English and welsh medium. If these pupils transfer to the Builth High School site this money would be saved as it would not impact on the % delivered through both languages in Builth. The impact of pupils transferring to Builth to access welsh medium has been factored into the transport costs included</i></p>						
<p>5.7.7 ‘Lump Sum’. This provides another saving of £111,736. What is ‘Lump Sum’? Explain how this saving is made.</p>	<p><i>Lump sums are based on the group size of the school which then delivers additional teacher funding. Currently lump sums totalling 5.6 FTE Teachers based on average teacher cost for the sector, are provided to the 2 schools totalling £284k. The lump sum for one school is based on 3.4 FTE totalling £173k. Therefore generating the £111k saving.</i></p>						
<p>5.7.8 ‘Admin’ provides a further saving of £30,180. Demonstrate how this saving is made.</p>	<p><i>Admin allowance is based on 26 hours lump sum per school plus 4.75 hours per FTE teacher. As 2 schools there are 2 lump sums of 26 hours funding provided, with the proposed model based on one lump sum. The number of funded FTE teachers has also reduced from 58.61 as 2 schools and 52.95 as 1 school. Which delivers the remaining reduction in funding to total £30k.</i></p>						

<p>5.7.9</p>	<p>There is a saving under ‘Technician’ of £34,077. How can this saving be the same for both a dual site and a single site school? Demonstrate how the saving is made.</p>	<p><i>Technician allowance is based on 45 hours lump sum per school plus 2.6 hours per FTE teacher. As 2 schools there are 2 lump sums of 45 hours funding provided, with the proposed model based on one lump sum. The number of funded FTE teachers has also reduced from 58.61 as 2 schools and 52.95 as 1 school. Which delivers the remaining reduction in funding to total £34k. The saving is both the same for single and dual sited as the 52.95 is based on the pupil led funding of the formula which would not change from being single or split sited as it based on pupil numbers.</i></p>
<p>5.7.10</p>	<p>Day Supervision is determined by pupil numbers, which you say are not going to change. Show how you plan to make this saving. Why is it the same for both the dual site and single site models?</p>	<p><i>A lump sum is provided per 150 pupils. Both models include a reduction in pupils due to the Proposals around Post 16 education therefore the allowance provided has reduced.</i></p>
<p>5.7.11</p>	<p>‘Leadership Funding’ saving of £18,185. Explain how you plan to make this saving.</p>	<p><i>TLR funding is based on an allowance of £3k per Funded FTE Teacher. Currently the 2 schools receive funding based on a combined FTE of 58.61 which delivers funding of £188k. Funded FTE for 1 school would reduce to 52.95 delivering funding of £170k, as the funded FTE has reduced which delivers the £18k.</i></p>
<p>5.7.12</p>	<p>How does the funding formula you have used to produce this spreadsheet take into account the extra requirements of the interim, dual-site model?</p>	<p><i>The figures have been based on the current fair funding formula (2015/16) with the addition of a change to the formula that will be required for 2017/18 to reflect the funding of a split-site school, which is based on an additional .25 FTE teachers for each year group in Years 7 – 11, and an additional assistant head on leadership scale point 12. These changes are subject to full consultation as required under the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools.</i></p>
<p>5.7.13</p>	<p>We have searched the Powys website for a fair funding formula policy document, to no avail. Where can we obtain a copy?</p>	<p><i>The Scheme for Financing schools is available via the following link: http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/school-budgets-and-finance/</i></p>

5.8 Proposals designed to access 21st Century Schools Funding		
5.8.1	What is Cabinet's position if no Welsh Government money is forthcoming? It seems that there is no 'Plan B'.	<p><i>Welsh Government has allocated £80M to Powys County Council in respect of the Council's Band A 21st Century Schools' Programme. Representatives of Welsh Government liaise with Powys County Council on a regular basis, to ensure that this money is allocated and spent accordingly (progress with business cases is a regular discussion point).</i></p> <p><i>The risk to funding is negligible given these discussion and support from WG.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will develop a contingency plan in the event that this particular Proposal does not progress.</i></p>
5.9 Cost Of New Building		
5.9.1	An Internet search indicates that a new, inner city high school for 1300 pupils might cost £25-£30 Million, so why would a new rural high school for 1100 pupils cost 50 million?	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the total estimated cost for the Beacons Campus (including both school and College elements) is £45m. This is split as follows:</i></p> <p><i>School - £20m</i></p> <p><i>College - £45m</i></p>
5.9.2	Explain why a much cheaper alternative than the current Proposals, of using the £20M for the New School Building, plus retaining Gwernyfed High School, plus revamping the existing Coleg Powys buildings in Brecon, is not considered a viable option.	<p><i>Following a detailed appraisal, the most economic option is to build a new school in Brecon, as per the current Proposal.</i></p>
5.9.3	The council wishes to spend £20 million on building a new school - this figure is likely to be grossly underestimated like most council projects! Is there a contingency plan? For example if the project exceeds the budget or the construction company goes bankrupt halfway through the build? Please also confirm how much the council will need to borrow to fund this	<p><i>The £20m is funded from a combination of Welsh Government Grant, Capital Receipts and prudential borrowing. The project is not funded through cuts to other local services.</i></p> <p><i>There is always an element of risk during any construction project, and this is no different. The Authority manages risk costs by benchmarking construction costs against known indexes and sound financial and project management.</i></p>

	Proposal or what cuts to other local services will be made to fund it?	<i>All contractors are vetted financially before entering into any contract – utilising a Welsh Government approved all-Wales framework with known national contractors.</i>
5.9.4	Has the future maintenance costs of the new school been taken into account when predicting building maintenance cost savings? If not, why not?	<i>The funding provided to a new school would be in line with the formula in place which delivers funding to all schools in Powys. The funding delivered to schools includes a repairs and maintenance element, it would then be a Governing Body decision as to whether they allocated a budget heading for maintenance costs.</i>
5.9.5	Please explain how you plan to open a £20m new school having spent only £11,719,000 on its construction. (Table 9 p 22)	<i>See 11.1.4</i>
5.9.6	What is your estimate of the likely interest rates for whatever borrowing may be necessary to see this project through, and why is the cost of borrowing not included in any of the financial statements?	<i>We have not included the cost of borrowing in the Proposals. The Capital strategy for the council is funded from many sources, capital receipts, reserves, grants and borrowing. We manage this strategy on an overall basis alongside our Treasury Management activity. And if and when we borrow is continually reassessed and considered. We estimate the level of borrowing required to finance the capital strategy and use PWLB Public works Loans Board interest rates to calculate the revenue implications, we have based current projections on estimated interest rate forecasts supplied by our Treasury Management advisors.</i>
5.9.7	Given the Welsh Government’s concern about your ability to fund the construction of the Beacons Campus, it is reasonable that we ask you to explain exactly how you would fund construction of the new school, in the event that money from Welsh Government was not forthcoming.	<i>As noted in the Consultation Document, the Authority would need to identify whether it could fund the school from its own capital resources, in the event that Welsh Government funding was not forthcoming.</i>
5.9.8	Given that the Welsh Government has questioned funding streams open to NPTC, please explain where NPTC will get the money to ‘invest in new facilities which will enhance the post-16 learning environment’.	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges is currently investigating ways to fund its element of the capital development in Brecon – this information is not yet known.</i>

5.10 Other Questions	
5.10.1	<p>Will we have a reduction in Council Tax/rent if Gwernyfed High closes? If not, then why?</p> <p><i>Any decision on council tax/rent is made by Cabinet and Council on an annual basis as part of the overall budget setting process. Financial settlements received by Welsh Government are a key factor in the decision making.</i></p>
5.10.2	<p>Define what is meant by “more cost-effective delivery of learning” and explain what the objective criteria are for this.</p> <p><i>The Proposal will reduce the overall funding required under the current Fair Funding Formula, and will allow the Authority to increase the pupil-led funding element of that formula.</i></p>
5.10.3	<p>How does this Proposal provide a “net saving to the Council”? Please factor in all associated new-build costs, additional transport, potential loss of pupil revenue, and the projected Brecon High School deficit.</p> <p><i>The Proposal provides an ongoing annual revenue saving to the council due to the change in the delivery model, which also nets off the additional transport costs as part of the estimated saving calculation.</i></p> <p><i>The funding received by the Authority from Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) only accounts for 73% of the Council’s overall net expenditure, with the remaining 27% being funded by Council Tax. Any transfer of pupils to schools in England will only impact on the first element of the funding, with the Authority losing the majority of its responsibilities for funding the education of children living in Powys, but educated in other authorities. It is the Authority’s view that the impact of this would be, at the worst case, cost neutral to the Authority and may result in an increase in the projected savings.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority within its Schools Service Asset Management Plan has identified the need to bring all its school buildings up to a minimum of condition B over the medium term. The building in Brecon has been assessed as a condition D (life expired) building, while much of Gwernyfed has been assessed as condition C (In need of significant investment), and the Authority has built in this essential required investment into the Council Capital budget.</i></p> <p><i>On the closure of a school any cumulative deficit or surplus is written off as a one off cost to the council. The level of cumulative deficit at Brecon has reduced significantly over the last two financial years and the Authority continues to support the school in maintaining this progress.</i></p>

5.10.4	<p>Why is it an acceptable mitigation for the reduction in revenue caused by pupils choosing to be educated out of county to be offset against the reduction in the new school's delegated budget? This defeatism is the very worst sort of capitulation to the easy solution universally sought by mediocre managers – the catchment families want sustainable, good quality education in their community, and it is the job of County to ensure that this is achievable.</p>	<p><i>The funding provided to schools is primarily driven by pupil numbers, if pupil numbers decrease, then there is a reduction in the available funding for schools. This is dictated by Legislation.</i></p>
<p>5.11 Buildings/21st Century Schools</p>		
5.11.1	<p>“The 21st Century Schools Programme is designed for the rebuilding or refurbishment of schools and colleges in Wales”. This infers that the money that you are proposing to borrow could, therefore, be used for refurbishing the sites in Brecon and Gwernyfed. Can you comment on this and let me know whether this has been considered as a solution?</p>	<p><i>Option 1 within the business case addresses the refurbishment of both Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools.</i></p> <p><i>This option was short-listed for more detailed appraisal (i.e. economic and qualitative appraisal), but failed to address key issues such as:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Removal of surplus places;</i> <i>2. Size of curriculum; and</i> <i>3. Viability of schools and 6th forms.</i> <p><i>In terms of appraisal, this option performed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 4/5 in the Economic Appraisal</i> <i>• 5/5 in the Benefit Appraisal</i> <i>• 5/5 in the risk appraisal</i> <p><i>This option was therefore discounted.</i></p>
5.11.2	<p>What guarantee has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL received that the necessary funding will be forthcoming from the Welsh Assembly? What is the fall-back position should such funding not materialise?</p>	<p><i>Welsh Government has allocated £80M to Powys County Council in respect of the Council's Band A 21st Century Schools' Programme. Representatives of Welsh Government liaise with Powys County Council on a regular basis, to ensure that this money is allocated and spent accordingly (progress with business cases is a regular discussion point).</i></p>

		<p><i>The risk to funding is negligible given these discussion and support from WG.</i></p> <p><i>The Council has developed a number of contingency plans in the event that this particular Proposal does not progress. These will shortly be considered by Elected Members (September Cabinet) and it is therefore inappropriate to share details at this stage.</i></p>
5.11.3	Options 1 & 4 of the Council's Monte Carlo Appraisal include exactly the same Refurbishment Cost of £19.3m. So does that mean the "New School "in Brecon (Option 4) retains all the existing school buildings and therefore is not a "New" Building?	<i>The refurbishment cost under this option is in respect of Gwernyfed High School and the Vocational College only, with a total new build (value £20.473M) for Brecon High School.</i>
5.11.4	If buildings are retained in Options 4 and 7, please set out, for both, what the approximate Gross Internal Floor Areas are for the buildings to be (a) retained and (b) Newly Built?	<i>Firm plans have not been developed and it is not known what elements of existing building may be retained.</i>
5.11.5	Please itemise and quantify each of the Financial Opportunities that comprise the £4.3m attributed to the Gwernyfed Site and over what period they have been discounted for NPV?	<p><i>For the purpose of this response, we have assumed that the £4.3M you refer to is in respect of the 'opportunities foregone' figure (i.e. the difference between £6.976M and £2.670M).</i></p> <p><i>The £4.3M difference is actually the combined (balance sheet) value of Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL and the Vocational College.</i></p> <p><i>The standard period of NPV discount is 60 years (based on Welsh Government guidance) and the full amount of opportunities foregone (under each option) is shown to fall in year 5 (the sixth year, as appraisals start in year zero).</i></p> <p><i>The standard discount factor for capital projects is provided by the 'green book' (guidance to five case business case model) and is shown at 3.5% for 30 years and 3% thereafter.</i></p>

5.11.6	Please itemise and quantify each of the estimated Cash Releasing Benefits that comprise the £5.8m attributed to the Gwernyfed Site?	<p><i>We assume that this query refers to Option 1 and the treatment of ‘opportunities foregone’ as a cash releasing benefit.</i></p> <p><i>Similar to a previous question, under this option the value stated (£6.976M undiscounted, £5.873M discounted over 60 years).</i></p> <p><i>The value is actually the combined (balance sheet) value of Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL, Brecon High school and the Vocational College.</i></p>
5.11.7	Please explain how the Lifecycle Costs in Option 1 are so high if the buildings are approaching the end of their useful life, (as quoted in the Consultation Document?) Isn't this just a straightforward double-counting of the Refurbishment Cost?	<p><i>The approach to Lifecycle costs has been taken this way, to ensure consistency in appraisal.</i></p> <p><i>There is some truth that elements of lifecycle costs may be double counted, however, that is equally true for new schools, where much of the new build will not require ‘upgrade’ for many years.</i></p> <p><i>In four of the five options, lifecycle costs are all over £19m in value, the exception being Option 7 – which will have lower costs, due to the fact that the floor area is significantly less.</i></p>
5.11.8	Please reconcile the Cost Contingencies built into the Refurbishment and New Build Capital Costs appraisals in options 1, 4 and 7, against the Optimism Bias (to demonstrate the safeguarding against double counting).	<p><i>There are no items double counted between risk and optimism bias. Welsh Government routinely check for this when evaluating business case submissions.</i></p> <p><i>Risk has been calculated in respect of specific construction biased items (items to achieve planning permission, late start on site, business continuity failure etc.) while optimism bias must be included and includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Procurement items, mainly to do with frameworks and contractor capabilities</i> <i>• Complexities of design</i> <i>• Project Management capabilities</i> <i>• The case for change and economic/financial viability</i> <i>• Public relations issues</i> <i>• Environmental issues and</i> <i>• Impact of external influences.</i>

5.12 Comments on the Savings	
5.12.1	<p>As I understand this Proposal, as stated in the consultation document, the total monetary savings will be in the region of £350,000. Is it really a forward thinking and “transformational” for Powys County Council to propose to uproot communities, force children to sit on transport for hours per week, move pupils and staff to a school that none of them want to attend, all to save £350,000?</p>
	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education. There are only three secondary schools in Powys that have achieved a ‘good’ judgement by Estyn.</i></p>
5.12.2	<p>This Proposal is a short term solution to the financial cuts in the education budget in Powys. Is the saving of £300,000 –really worth all the upheaval?</p>
	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education. There are only three secondary schools in Powys that have achieved a ‘good’ judgement by Estyn.</i></p>
5.13 Financial Advantages of the Proposal?	
5.13.1	<p>How much money will this merger actually cost and will it lead to any realistic savings for Powys Council? At the moment I have seen no evidence of any real financial advantages to this Proposal</p>
	<p><i>The financial assessment has been completed and is within the consultation document which consider both revenue and capital savings/costs in Section 7.1 and 7.2.</i></p>

5.14 Big Lottery Funding	
5.14.1 Can the Authority give a precise figure of the Big Lottery grant funds received in respect of Gwernyfed High School?	<i>The Council received a grant of £345,403 in 2004 from the New Opportunities Fund (operating as the Big Lottery Fund) for the development of Playing Fields at Gwernyfed High School. The Council's liability period for this grant is from 2006 to 2026. The Big Lottery Fund is a consultee of this consultation. If the Proposal is implemented, it is possible that a proportion of the grant may need to be repaid. If this happens, the Council would need to identify the funding for this.</i>
5.15 Other Comments on Finance	
5.15.1 Has a valuation of Gwernyfed been carried out? What would Powys County Council hope to gain from a capital receipt for reinvestment and would any capital receipt from the sale of Gwernyfed be ring fenced for educational purposes in South Powys? How will this be demonstrated?	<i>Every property held by the Council carries a valuation for accounting and asset management purposes. The disposal of any asset and the use of the capital receipt is governed by the Asset Management Policy and Capital Strategy of the Council.</i>
5.15.2 Can the Authority provide precise information on other grants for capital projects obtained for Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL (drama studio/dining hall/sports hall/all-weather pitches) and the terms on which those funds were given?	<i>No other Capital Grants have been received by the Authority in relation to Gwernyfed High School.</i>
5.15.3 What measures will the Council be putting in place to ensure the financial mis-management at Brecon High School leading to such a chronic over spend and underinvestment (at both Schools) is not repeated (a) in any New school if it goes ahead and (b) if the two schools remain open. Will the Council be adopting a PbR framework?	<i>The financial position for Brecon High School as at the 31st March 2016 was a surplus balance of £107k. Forward projections show the impact of falling pupil numbers and the reduction in funding that this has. These figures do not includes action that the school will take to reduce the projected deficit. The policy for the financial management of schools is in place via the Scheme for the Financing of Schools within which all schools must comply, the Scheme sets out the powers of intervention available to the Authority when schools fail to meet the requirements.</i>

<p>5.15.4 Figures in the table suggest that Powys makes an annual profit of roughly £35,000 on post-16 education at the expense of the Welsh Government. More importantly, and taken together with the following line, it introduces a mystery. The Welsh Government contribution to post-16 education is listed, but not the much larger contribution to 11-16 education. There may be some technical reason for this, but it is not one that the target audience for the document can be expected to understand. This is not a mere debating point. Clarity is essential in any Consultation Document</p>	<p><i>11-16 funding for Schools is provided by the Authority from its overall Budget which it delegates to individual schools this is shown as a cost to the Authority in the consultation document. Various sources of funding support the overall budget part of which is funded by Welsh Government in terms of the Revenue Settlement Grant. The funding for Post 16 Education is provided by direct grant and is hypothecated, this is therefore identified separately. The post 16 funding is governed by terms and conditions and the expenditure associated with it is subject to Annual Audit to ensure compliance. The Authority has spent 100% of the grant every year.</i></p>
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REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
6	School Buildings	
	6.1 Justification for New Buildings	
6.1.1	<p>Why does a brand new school need to be built? Although some of the buildings at Gwernyfed are old. A lot of them are relatively new. Why can they not be adapted to use as the new school site? Instead of trying to sell off such a large site which must surely have a limited market?</p>	<p><i>The overall condition of Gwernyfed High School is categorised as a C, although a few blocks are categorised as condition B.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal is intended to create a sustainable secondary education infrastructure, with a number of benefits as outlined in the Consultation Document, that will serve both Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment areas, in facilities that are Condition A rather than the current condition C and D of the existing schools.</i></p> <p><i>The build project is not reliant on capital receipts from either site.</i></p>
6.1.2	<p>Pg. 17 - could the 'better facilities' that the new school building will incorporate be listed and explained how they will improve education?</p>	<p><i>The construction of the new school will be being funded via the 21st Century Schools Programme as a joint enterprise between Welsh Government and Powys County Council.</i></p> <p><i>It is a major, long-term and strategic capital investment programme with the aim of creating a generation of 21st century schools in Wales. The programme will focus resources on the right schools in the right places, for early years through to post-16.</i></p> <p><i>It will deliver:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• learning environments in Wales that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes;</i> <i>• greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources;</i> <i>• A sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings.</i>


The new school building would be designed to provide the appropriate level of accommodation for a 21st Century Schools Programme project. Space standards will be derived from Building Bulletin 99, and will provide appropriate teaching, social and administration accommodation for 1100 pupils. In accordance with Welsh Government requirements the school would be designed to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating as an indication of project-wide sustainability. BREEAM is the world's leading sustainability assessment method for master-planning projects, infrastructure and buildings. It addresses a number of lifecycle stages such as new Construction, Refurbishment and In-Use.

The new school building would be Condition A buildings. Investment in Information and Communications technology will provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop a high level of digital competency. It would be designed to be fully accessible in terms of the Equalities Act 2010.

The new school building will be based on the following design principles:

- *safe, well-lit and naturally ventilated teaching spaces throughout;*
- *naturally lit and attractive circulation spaces;*
- *flexible main hall, centrally located resource /library spaces;*
- *purpose designed teaching areas;*
- *other external areas used for educational purposes;*
- *extensive linkage options between teaching spaces to give flexibility in class sizes to suit educational requirements;*
- *special provision for pupils with disabilities;*
- *quiet areas for 1 – 1, small group provision for pupils with additional learning needs*
- *kitchen and dining areas;*
- *fully integrated, modern ICT equipment for teaching and learning;*
- *areas for community use;*
- *Sports facilities.*

<p>6.1.3 Explain what the realistic cost is of bringing school buildings up to Grade A or B. Explain what it is costing for each year of further delay on remedial repairs at Brecon HIGH SCHOOL.</p>	<p><i>Utilising a desktop survey, we have identified the minimum investment for upgrading the school, (please note, this is the minimum investment). Please note that the costs utilise BCIS (Building Cost Information Service), with a baseline data of March 2017. I have enclosed the spreadsheet for Brecon High School, including the methodology and caveats. We do not have the costs for each year of further delay on the remedial repairs at Brecon HIGH SCHOOL.</i></p>  <p>Copy of Brecon HS upgrade estimates 1</p>
<p>6.1.4 Explain why Powys County Council hasn't simply gotten on with designing and building the New School Building.</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority faces a number of challenging issues in delivering a sustainable high-quality secondary education, which this Proposal is intended to address.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority hasn't started the work on designing and building the new school, because it must be considered in the context of the Authority's Secondary School Reorganisation Programme and must adhere to principles of WG's 21st C Schools Programme, which are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• learning environments in Wales that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes;</i> <i>• greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources;</i> <i>• A sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings.</i>
<p>6.1.5 Define what is meant by "improves learning environment" and explain what the objective criteria are for this. Based upon evidence, explain why building a new Brecon High School with an in-school sixth form would not provide an</p>	<p><i>It was recognised at all consultation meetings that the condition, suitability and sustainability of Brecon High School does not provide a fit-for-purpose learning environment. Under the Schools Service Asset Management Plan, the Authority aspires to bring all its school buildings up to a minimum of Condition B. Condition A schools are new buildings.</i></p>

	improved learning environment or achieve more cost-effective delivery of learning.	<i>The Proposal aims to deliver a tertiary model of education for post-16 learners. The benefits of a tertiary model are outlined in an earlier section of this Report.</i>
6.1.6	Explain why Powys County Council could not commence a new school building now with the current allocation of £24 Million, and, apparently, a further £20 Million allocated for the benefit of the NPTC Group of Colleges.	<i>Welsh Government funding is required for 50% of the Council's allocation. WG approval of three stages of business case is required to obtain that funding, and all statutory processes related to school reorganisation must be completed before WG can approve the Final Business Case.</i>
6.1.7	How dare a council, too incompetent to keep on top of these basic requirements, turn around and use them as an excuse to close a beloved community high school? It beggars belief.	<i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority faces a number of challenging issues in delivering a sustainable high-quality secondary education, which this Proposal is intended to address.</i>
6.2 Gwernyfed Buildings		
6.2.1	What business case has been prepared to show how Powys County Council can retain sports facilities at Gwernyfed and sell off the school buildings?	<i>The Authority has not developed a business case around retaining the sports facilities at Gwernyfed and disposing of the school buildings, as this would pre-empt the outcome of consultation.</i>
6.2.2	Some of the best schools in the country provide education out of buildings that were built many hundreds of years ago. Please could you explain what the major defects are at Gwernyfed and provide a breakdown of exact costs?	 <p>Gwernyfed HS Condition Survey Re</p>
6.2.3	Gwernyfed will never be a "Condition A" building simply because of the very nature of the building. I suspect that the expenditure needed has been based upon bringing Gwernyfed up to a "Condition A" from a "Condition C" building, please confirm whether or not this is the case?	<i>The expenditure has been based on a desk top survey, which identifies the minimum investment required to upgrade the school (enclosed). But there is no reason why the building could not be brought up to a "Condition A" with adequate investment.</i>

6.3 Sale of Gwernyfed	
6.3.1	<p>Given that Powys County Council suggest the site should be sold seriously below market value can the Local Authority: Explain why the valuation is so far below market value? How they arrived at this conclusion? The process of calculation used? Or is this just a figure plucked out of the air?</p> <p><i>The Council, in disposing of any surplus asset, has the responsibility to gain best value, this has to be gauged with other priorities such as the provision of affordable housing, community delivery etc.</i></p> <p><i>All valuation exercises are undertaken by professional staff and based on special assumptions which are considered reasonable to assume given the individual circumstances of every case.</i></p>
6.4 Brecon Buildings	
6.4.1	<p>The site is very small, so can you confirm that true consideration has been given to there being sufficient room for a school of 1100 pupils as envisaged by yourselves?</p> <p><i>The grounds area use at Brecon High School is 148,000 sq. m. The proposed area for the Beacons Campus is 19,027m2</i></p>
6.4.2	<p>What are the governments' recommendations for the square footage legally needed for each pupil and does the new school comply with this?</p> <p><i>The capacity of the school will be assessed in accordance with the Measuring Schools Capacity in Wales Regulations, which takes account of the use of each classroom area and provides different weightings in accordance with that usage. The calculation also includes an utilisation factor.</i></p>
6.4.3	<p>There appears to be only 9 or so spare places within this new school. Given the projected rise in primary school pupils both in Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments, do you feel that sufficient consideration has been given to the size of the school needed and should further building work be needed would there be money available for this?</p> <p><i>It is currently proposed that the new school in Brecon will be built for 1100 pupils – this takes account of projected pupil numbers, (1092 by 2021) as well as an understanding of the available capacity of other neighbouring schools.</i></p> <p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document - the current situation is that WG have only approved the first business case – the Strategic Outline Case – for the project. The next stage – Outline Business Case - was submitted in February 2016, without prejudice to the outcome of consultation. WG requested that further clarification was sought about specific issues before the OBC could be re-submitted.</i></p> <p><i>During SOC and OBC stages, there is still flexibility about the details of a project – these are only developed during the last stage – the Full Business</i></p>

	<p><i>Case stage. The Authority has not carried out a more detailed survey at this stage, as that would be pre-determining the outcome of consultation. If the Proposal is supported, then the Authority will carry out a more detailed analysis of demand to ascertain the size of the new building in Brecon.</i></p> <p><i>WG would not be happy to provide capital funding for a project which opened with significant surplus places i.e. more than 25% - without a robust rationale. The impact could be a loss of capital funding from WG or reduced capital funding from WG.</i></p>
<p>6.5 Proposed Site in Brecon – Grounds</p>	
<p>6.5.1 The playing fields at Gwernyfed are vast and expertly kept; can you guarantee that pupils will have the equivalent quality and size of ground within which to take part in physical education?</p>	<p><i>The overall grounds area in Gwernyfed is an 116,000sq meters compared to the 148,000sq meters at Brecon High School.</i></p> <p><i>The grounds will be sufficient to undertake the required curriculum activity.</i></p>
<p>6.5.2 There seems to be little or no space for car parking and buses and still be able to provide facilities for physical education. What are the council’s plans for this?</p>	<p><i>Car parking and access, including bus transport, will be an integral part of the design. As part of the planning application for the New School Building, the Highways Authorities will be one of the statutory consultees.</i></p>
<p>6.5.3 It is surprising that this consultation is about the closure of two schools when planning permission for a new school on the proposed site has not been sought/granted. It would appear to pre determine any future planning application. In this regard, can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify its position regarding the timing of the consultation to close two schools? If building on recreational land is to go ahead how does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL mitigate this? Is alternative recreational land being offered nearby? Where will a new school be built if</p>	<p><i>The timing of the consultation exercise is appropriate and aligned with the Business Case and RIBA stages.</i></p> <p><i>Formal consultation is required on any Proposal for a new school building – obtaining planning permission is a stage that happens during the development of the Full Business Case, and prior to Welsh Government approval of the Full Business Case.</i></p> <p><i>The New School in Brecon will be built to meet the requirements of the Building Bulletin 99 in terms of the internal and external spaces. The availability of recreational land will be considered as part of the planning process. The Authority has already had initial discussions with the planning Authority and is satisfied that the development approval can be obtained for the proposed site.</i></p>

<p>planning permission is not granted at the proposed site?</p>	
<p>6.6 Proposed site in Brecon – Security</p>	
<p>6.6.1 Pupils at Gwernyfed feel safe and secure at their school without the need for fences and are country children whose parents have chosen to live in this area. Why should they have to move to a school with fences around to ensure they are secure?</p>	<p><i>Safeguarding of pupils is a key factor in the design of any new school.</i></p>
<p>6.7 Other Comments</p>	
<p>6.7.1 In order to be fair to all pupils please answer for me why that building could not be built somewhere in between Brecon and Gwernyfed, which would make the impact of the travelling time for pupils fairer.</p>	<p><i>It was agreed to build the new school in Brecon because a) the Council owns the land that has been identified for the development b) there are educational benefits of being close to other provision and facilities e.g. NPTC Group of Colleges and Brecon Leisure Centre c) it would not be cost-effective as all pupils will need to be transported, rather than some of the pupils.</i></p>
<p>6.8 What happens to Gwernyfed High School Site if Closed?</p>	
<p>6.8.1 What are the plans for Gwernyfed if it closes? If it doesn't sell we will have another Talgarth hospital and if ever there was something to be embarrassed about, that is!</p>	<p><i>If the school is closed, the School Service will commence its Asset Management Disposal Procedures as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The sports facilities currently form part of the school estate. If the Proposal was implemented, discussions will take place with the current community users of these facilities to investigate whether a Community Asset Transfer would be feasible.</i> • <i>Investigations will take place to see if there are any other POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL or partner agency services who wish to make use of part of all of the site. If there are no expressions of interest for this, the Authority would dispose of the site and receive a capital receipt, subject to any covenants attached to the site.</i>

<p>6.8.2</p>	<p>Pg. 17 - sale of existing school sites. Who does the council consider to be potential buyers of the school sites? In particular, Gwernyfed as a listed building and with, I believe, listed views, may prove difficult to sell.</p>	<p><i>No investigations have been undertaken about potential buyers – this will not happen until all the statutory procedures have been completed.</i></p>
<p>6.8.3</p>	<p>Jeremy Patterson also stated there was no intention to close the community sports facilities (Gwernyfed 1:50). Who does he think Powys will be able to sell a supposedly crumbling building to when the potential buyer does not have any control over the surrounding sports facilities and pitches?</p>	<p><i>If the school is closed, the School Service will commence its Asset Management Disposal Procedures as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The sports facilities currently form part of the school estate. If the Proposal was implemented, discussions will take place with the current community users of these facilities to investigate whether a Community Asset Transfer would be feasible.</i> • <i>Investigations will take place to see if there are any other POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL or partner agency services who wish to make use of part of all of the site. If there are no expressions of interest for this, the Authority would dispose of the site and receive a capital receipt, subject to any covenants attached to the site.</i>
<p>6.8.4</p>	<p>Please explain how the closure of this school is in line with government planning policy and ensures the future sustainability of rural communities?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal is intended to create a long-term sustainable secondary provision that could provide high-quality education.</i></p> <p><i>The New School in Brecon would serve a wider catchment area which will include rural communities. However, during this consultation, many respondents have stated their view that the Proposal will have a negative impact on the community of Gwernyfed, and this has been reflected in the draft Community Impact Assessment, which will be updated and considered by Cabinet alongside this Consultation Report.</i></p>
<p>6.9 New Buildings in Brecon</p>		
<p>6.9.1</p>	<p>You say it improves cost effectiveness in the delivery of education, but what about the enormous capital costs.</p>	<p><i>There is a need, as evidence in the Consultation Document and raised at many consultation meetings, for a new school to replace the current Brecon High School, which is a Category D school.</i></p>

		<i>Funding for the delivery of education is part of the Council's annual revenue budget whilst capital expenditure, although finance through revenue, is sourced from supported borrowing, use of capital receipts or capital grants.</i>
6.9.2	If the Proposal to have a 'super school' does not go ahead I trust that Powys are still going to honour our pupils with a new build which is well overdue and certainly deserved?	<i>The Authority is acutely aware of the condition of the school buildings in Brecon, and if the current Proposal does not proceed, it will further consider actions required to provide better accommodation for the pupils.</i>
6.9.3	The pupils, teachers, parents, governors and the community of Brecon and its surrounding areas have no objection to the need to replace the outdated, ill-fitting and frankly unsuitable building that is Brecon High School. However, your methods of doing so are questionable. This is the second Proposal for building a new school building, the first involved the leisure centre and this latest, the college. Neither have been acceptable to the community. What other Proposals do you have?	<p><i>The Proposal is intended to create a long-term sustainable secondary provision that could provide high-quality education.</i></p> <p><i>Both leisure and further education services form an important part of the lifelong learning strategy that the Authority and its partners are aiming to achieve.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority is acutely aware of the condition of the school buildings in Brecon, and if the current Proposal does not proceed, it will further consider actions required to provide better accommodation for the pupils.</i></p>
6.9.4	Welsh Government has confirmed it does not have a workable OBC from you. This is completely at odds with the information in the CD (P37) Please explain the contradiction.	<p><i>There is no contradiction. As stated in the Consultation Document, (p37), the OBC was submitted to Welsh Government on 29th February 2016 on a without prejudice basis to any decisions that Powys County Council's Cabinet may make in connection with any statutory Proposals for school organisation following the formal consultation period, or any other decisions that might be necessary in order for the project to proceed.</i></p> <p><i>The OBC was considered by the Welsh Government Capital Funding Panel in March, and the Council is now liaising with Welsh Government officers to clarify specific elements. Once these are clarified, the OBC will be reconsidered by the Capital Funding Panel.</i></p>
6.9.5	You say on P21 of the CD that '[NPTC] is also planning to invest in new facilities which will	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges are clarifying how they are to finance the investment – this will be included in the updated OBC.</i>

<p>enhance the post-16 learning environment,' but you do not provide any explanation of how NPTC plans to finance this investment.</p>	
<p>6.10 Big Lottery Funding Prohibits Sale of Gwernyfed Site</p>	
<p>6.10.1 The all-weather sports pitches at Gwernyfed were purchased using £371,000 lottery fund and they retain an interest in the property for 80 years, if that is the case and Powys County Council proceed to close Gwernyfed, will they have to pay back the £371,000?</p>	<p><i>As stated in paragraph 7.3 of the Consultation Document, 'The Council received a grant of £345,403 in 2004 from the New Opportunities Fund (operating as the Big Lottery Fund) for the development of Playing Fields at Gwernyfed High School. The Council's liability period for this grant is from 2006 to 2026.</i></p> <p><i>The Big Lottery Fund is a consultee of this consultation. If the Proposal is implemented, it is possible that a proportion of the grant may need to be repaid. If this happens, the Council would need to identify the funding for this.</i></p>
<p>6.11 Leisure Facilities</p>	
<p>6.11.1 At the Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL consultation evening it was suggested that the sports facilities could be still used by the community. Please explain Proposals as to how the sports facilities could still be used, while not interfering with any future sale.</p>	<p><i>If the school is closed, the School Service will commence its Asset Management Disposal Procedures as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The sports facilities currently form part of the school estate. If the Proposal was implemented, discussions will take place with the current community users of these facilities to investigate whether a Community Asset Transfer would be feasible.</i> • <i>Investigations will take place to see if there are any other POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL or partner agency services who wish to make use of part of all of the site. If there are no expressions of interest for this, the Authority would dispose of the site and receive a capital receipt, subject to any covenants attached to the site.</i>
<p>6.11.2 Pg. 20 ' As part of this process, the Council will consider any Proposals from the community for continued use of the community facilities located at Gwernyfed High School'. Surely this is the job of the council? It may be suggested by the community that they still want access to all the facilities. Who will allow this if the school is not there to run these facilities - an additional cost to the council? If the site is sold, this becomes even more problematic.</p>	

6.12 Gwernyfed Site/Buildings – Other	
6.12.1 You state that Gwernyfed is a category C building. Can you confirm this is partly because of a lack of lifts? Has anybody done a cost analysis of installing lifts in the building?	<i>The overall assessment of Category C in terms of condition is based on the age and physical quality of the building infrastructure, with a separate analysis around the suitability of the school to provide a 21st C education. In respect of the lack of lifts in the Mansion House, part of the assessment is related to DDA compliance. Of the four blocks in the school, two blocks including the Mansion House was given a rating of C/D, with the Mansion House being rated as a D. The Mansion House is a multi-storey building.</i>
6.13 Maintenance Issues	
6.13.1 One of the reasons given for the Proposal is the current backlog of maintenance issues at both the Gwernyfed and the Brecon sites. It is the ongoing responsibility of POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to manage these costs, to anticipate them and make provision for them. The current backlog is therefore a clear indicator of incompetence at POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL. Why does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL highlight its own incompetence and use it as a justification for their own Proposals?	<i>In terms of annual repairs and maintenance, the Authority provides Gwernyfed High School with an annual revenue stream of £67,500 through the Fair Funding Formula to carry out repairs and maintenance, and statutory testing requirements. As this forms part of the delegated budget, the school can choose how much of this funding it wishes to use for repairs and maintenance.</i> <i>The Authority's capital funding for schools is either through the 21st C Schools Programme, or through the Major Repairs and Improvements Capital Budget. The Authority can fund refurbishments or remodelling of schools through either of these capital streams. However, the Authority can only fund new-build schools through the 21st C Schools Programme.</i> <i>The Authority could decide to refurbish or remodel Gwernyfed High School, but has decided to consult instead on establishing a new school in a new building.</i>
6.13.2 What assurances are there that if a new school was built that there would not be a backlog of maintenance in 35 years after completion of new build?	<i>As part of the conditions of a 21st C Schools –funded building, Welsh Government would require the Authority to ensure that the buildings are maintained on a long-term basis as Condition A or B buildings. The Authority's Cabinet, as part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan, approved in April 2016 a schools requirement to fund capital expenditure if their revenue spend is lower than an agreed level. The Cabinet also approved a five year rolling programme of condition reassessments, which will be utilised to plan future investment to ensure all buildings are maintained.</i>

<p>6.13.3 Will the suggested new school not eventually become an old school building? What long term plans does the council have to prevent the suggested new site becoming 'poor quality'? Has it found a contractor and will there be guarantees in the contract? Should this Proposal go ahead until these details are sorted?</p>	<p><i>As part of the conditions of a 21st C Schools –funded building, Welsh Government would require the Authority to ensure that the buildings are maintained on a long-term basis as Condition A or B buildings. The Authority’s Cabinet, as part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan, approved in April 2016 a schools requirement to fund capital expenditure if their revenue spend is lower than an agreed level. The Cabinet also approved a five year rolling programme of condition reassessments, which will be utilised to plan future investment to ensure all buildings are maintained.</i></p> <p><i>The New School in Brecon will be commissioned on a Design and Build basis, with the Authority’s robust contracting procedures being used to manage all aspects of the project, including post-occupancy processes. However, the Authority is not able to enter into a contract with a Contractor until Welsh Government have approved the Outline Business Case.</i></p>
<p>6.14 Finances – alternative Proposals</p>	
<p>6.14.1 It is stated in the consultation document that the amount needed to refurbish both school, namely around £20 million, is the amount you are proposing to borrow from the 21st Century Schools Programme. Would this not be better used to refurbish both schools allowing education to continue on both sites as preferred by the community, pupils and staff, rather than subjecting Gwernyfed and Brecon pupils to education in a “super school”?</p>	<p><i>There is a need, as evidence in the Consultation Document and raised at many consultation meetings, for a new school to replace the current Brecon High School, which is a Category D school.</i></p> <p><i>The project is funded on a 50/50 basis, with £10m being provided by the Welsh Government as a capital grant.</i></p>
<p>6.14.2 Q.16 Why has the council not looked at other ways to finance the update of Brecon High without creating such dissension within the local community. Why have Powys not considered the sale of aspects of their large property portfolio (have many tenant farmers in place on land worth</p>	<p><i>The Authority, as part of its Strategic Asset Management Plan, is reviewing its property portfolio, which includes the farm estate. Any capital receipts released through this review will be utilised to either fund its share of any new capital programmes, such as 21st C Schools, or to pay off existing capital debt. It needs to be noted that a capital receipt received from the disposal of an asset cannot be used to fund ongoing annual revenue.</i></p>

a lot of money) to release assets to clear the debt/provide future provisions?	
6.15 Brecon Site	
6.15.1	<p>Have they secured land/site for this building? My understanding is that the site currently identified has deeds attached to it and it has been given to Brecon for recreational use only. If this is true and they have to look at another plot how easy will that be and where will it be and how long will it delay the build?</p> <p><i>The land at Brecon High School which is identified for the development is already in the Council's ownership. The Authority is not aware of any deeds attached to the land.</i></p>
6.16 Timetable for New Site	
6.16.1	<p>Will the dual site Proposal not become two schools, left in limbo, for many years to come?</p> <p><i>It is proposed that the dual-sited school is in place for the short period of time.</i></p>
6.16.2	<p>If Gwernyfed closes and my daughter has to attend a school in Brecon how can I be assured that the building work will be completed by the time she is 11? Currently she attends Hay-on-Wye CP School and we are still waiting for a new school building (this was meant to have been built by the time she started in 2015).</p> <p><i>Once the Outline Business Case is submitted and approved by Welsh Government, the Authority will begin work on the Full Business Case, which includes procuring a Design and Build contractor, agreeing designs, submitting designs for planning approval and finalising costs. Once the Full Business Case is approved by Welsh Government, work will commence on site. It is planned that the new school will be open by 2019/20.</i></p>

REF	ISSUES	RESPONSE
7	Surplus Places and Capacity	
	7.1 Surplus Places	
7.1.1	Reduces overall surplus places' - how much research has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL conducted to determine actually how many pupils from Gwernyfed will transfer to Brecon and not to other schools? Surely some current Gwernyfed pupils would then be nearer other secondary schools, potentially outside the county. Listening to views in the consultation evening, provision of transport is not the issue, it is the distance.	<i>The Authority has undertaken a modelling exercise which shows the closest secondary provision for Gwernyfed pupils if Gwernyfed should close based on PLASC 2014 data and PLASC 2015 data. This showed that a number of pupils live closer to Lady Hawkins and Fairfield's High School than Brecon High School.</i>
7.1.2	Reduces overall surplus places-- Does it? What about all the pupils who will travel over the border? Lady Hawkins are already offering to run a bus service from the Clyro area!!	<i>The Proposal will reduce overall surplus places – there are currently 36% surplus places at Brecon High School and 20% at Gwernyfed High School. It is currently proposed that the new school in Brecon will be built for 1100 pupils – this takes account of projected pupil numbers, (1092 by 2021) as well as an understanding of the available capacity of other neighbouring schools. As stated in the Consultation Document, Fairfield's High School is over capacity, although Lady Hawkins has spare capacity. Crickhowell High School is at capacity, whilst Builth Wells has spare capacity.</i>
7.1.3	Gwernyfed has the lowest surplus places at 20% and according to the data provided by the Council will achieve the required 15% by 2019, that's only three years away. The catchment is growing and only last week the National Park Planning Authority gave permission for over 80 houses in the Hay area. This number was not factored in at the time of the Proposal and will need to be considered along with other potential building developments.	<i>Comment noted – in any new build project, the Authority considers potential housing developments in any area.</i>

<p>7.1.4 If we assume Gwernyfed closes and also assume that you fulfil the commitment to build new primaries in the catchment, I foresee that you will in very short time face a greater surplus of places in the newly built primaries caused by the emigration of families to areas served by a secondary school i.e. Herefordshire, Monmouthshire High School, etc. Can you confirm that this scenario has been considered and planned for?</p>	<p><i>The size of the new primary schools in the catchment has been based on an assessment of pupil projections in agreement with all the schools.</i></p>
<p>7.1.5 Recognise that increased demand makes so-called “surplus places” a red herring.</p>	<p><i>The Authority recognises that Increased demand for school places would lead to a reduction in the level of surplus places at any school. Please see 3.1.2</i></p>
<p>7.1.6 Powys County Council must go on record to explain its own culpability, as to why 262 pupils aged 16-19 are studying outside the county.</p>	<p><i>The Authority supports schools to deliver a post-16 curriculum that meets the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. The Authority has received a decreasing post-16 settlement from the Welsh Government for a number of years, which has meant that schools, with support from the Authority, have implemented a collaborative partnership model, where learners can travel (during the school day) between schools/college to study subjects in different option blocks.</i></p> <p><i>However, as funding reduces, the number of subjects available at each school and collaboratively has also reduced. Post-16 providers outside the county are able to provide a broader range of subjects which allows real choice for learners – they are not constrained to subjects within the option blocks, as they are in Powys.</i></p> <p><i>During the consultation, a number of pupils – pre and post-16, have provided their views about the current state of post-16 education in Powys. Some pupils stated that they are content with the collaborative model that Powys schools offer; others choose subjects within their own institution, sometimes at the detriment of their preferred choice whilst others have suggested that the opportunities provided at larger institutions are more attractive to them, and they are willing to travel in order to get these opportunities in one location.</i></p>

7.1.7	<p>The impact of parents seeking alternative secondary provision may negate the requirement for a secondary school of this size and could result in the new school operating significantly under capacity. Why has the Council not proceeded with more detailed survey to determine the likely effects of such a scenario? What would be the financial implications if it is forced to operate at significant under capacity, with the associated loss of delegated funding?</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document - the current situation is that WG have only approved the first business case – the Strategic Outline Case – for the project. The next stage – Outline Business Case - was submitted in February 2016, without prejudice to the outcome of consultation. WG requested that further clarification was sought about specific issues before the OBC could be re-submitted.</i></p> <p><i>During SOC and OBC stages, there is still flexibility about the details of a project – these are only developed during the last stage – the Full Business Case stage. The Authority has not carried out a more detailed survey at this stage, as that would be pre-determining the outcome of consultation. If the Proposal is supported, then the Authority will carry out a more detailed analysis of demand to ascertain the size of the new building in Brecon.</i></p> <p><i>WG would not be happy to provide capital funding for a project which opened with significant surplus places i.e. more than 25% - without a robust rationale. The impact could be a loss of capital funding from WG or reduced capital funding from WG.</i></p>
7.1.8	<p>Please explain how a surplus in a school impacts education? Surely the less crowded the classroom, the more one to one tuition a pupil can enjoy?</p>	<p><i>The Welsh Government and the Welsh Audit Office have identified that the funding and provision of excessive surplus places results in funding being spent on unrequired places rather than directly on the education of children. The position in the secondary sector is not as significant as it is in small primary schools. The Authority is required to plan and manage the level of surplus places and to ensure that it provides a cost-efficient and effective education. The Proposal will reduce the overall funding required under the current Fair Funding Formula, and will allow the Authority to increase the pupil-led funding element of that formula.</i></p>
7.1.9	<p>Please explain why you want to spend tens of millions of pounds building a new school to resolve a surplus places issue which - by your own admission – will not exist by the time building is complete.</p>	<p><i>The Proposal is not intended to resolve a surplus places issue alone, but is intended to solve a number of issues in order only to create a sustainable secondary education infrastructure, with a number of benefits as outlined in the Consultation Document, that will serve both Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment areas, in facilities that are Condition A rather than the current condition C and D of the existing schools.</i></p>

<p>7.1.10 Uncertainty over the last 6 years has meant that parents have and continue to source alternative schools (Crickhowell, Fairfield, and Christ College) to ensure a secure education for their children. Likewise, surplus places are rising in BRECON HIGH SCHOOL with it continuing to be in special measures and running in substantial debt LLCC argue that certainly around the future of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL would reverse this trend and pupil numbers at GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL would increase. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify its role in allowing such a situation to happen and then use the surplus places factor as a reason to close GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL?</p>	<p><i>Any school reorganisation programme causes uncertainty – the issues facing secondary education in particular triggered a review of secondary schools in 2010/11, and Cabinet, at the time, agreed certain recommendations. However, the problems facing the secondary sector have not gone away, but have increased. Powys, along with every local Authority, has a duty to ensure the sustainability of its education infrastructure, to manage school places and to ensure that schools can deliver the highest quality education within the financial and demographic constraints placed upon them.</i></p>
<p>7.1.11 Considering the proposed size of the new school and based on numbers in the report, it would appear that transferring pupils from GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and deducting the number of Welsh Language and post 16 pupils (not to mention those who will potentially move out of County) means there will be a high percentage of surplus places. If one of the reasons for closure is to reduce surplus places how does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain this position?</p>	<p><i>It is currently proposed that the new school in Brecon will be built for 1100 pupils – this takes account of projected pupil numbers, (1092 by 2021) as well as an understanding of the available capacity of other neighbouring schools. If the Proposal is supported, then the Authority will carry out a more detailed analysis of demand to ascertain the size of the new building in Brecon before submitting the FBC for the project to WG.</i></p>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
8	Impact on Pupils and Wellbeing	
	8.1 General Questions	
8.1.1	Explain how the loss of in-school sixth forms, loss of the Welsh-medium secondary education stream, having no choice locally but to attend a FE College to study A levels, and travelling further means that pupils in Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools will enjoy opportunities that are <i>equal</i> (in terms of the 'best possible education') to those of all other high school pupils in Powys.	<i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i>
8.1.2	Given Powys County Council is claiming to comply with UN Convention for the Rights of the child, where in the documentation is it evidenced that Articles 3, 12, 19, 24, 28 and 31 have been complied with, as applied to Gwernyfed High School?	<p><u>Article 3</u> <i>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the Proposals on the quality of: • outcomes (standards and wellbeing); • provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment);and • leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'</i></p> <p><i>Section 5 of the Consultation Document addresses all these issues. The Draft Equality Impact Assessment has assessed the impact on pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment area.</i></p> <p><u>Article 12</u> <i>In accordance with the School Organisation Code, all pupils in Gwernyfed High School received the Consultation Document, either the main document or the</i></p>

young people’s version. Both were made available on the Council’s website. In the Consultation Report, the views of children and young people will be highlighted and given due weight. This is evidenced on page 2 of the Consultation Document – Consultation Details.

Article 19

This is evidenced at 5.1. i)

Article 24

This is evidenced at 5.1 i)

Article 28

The Proposal is intended to ensure a long-term sustainable model of secondary education, with access to academic and vocational provision available at the New School in Brecon. This is evidenced in section 4.1 and section 5 of the Consultation Document.

Article 31

The Consultation Document, and the Equality Impact Assessment, identifies that there would be a negative impact on pupils from the Gwernyfed catchment who would be less able to access after-school activities due to the travel requirements. Section 4.3 provides the mitigation for this risk.

8.2 Impact on Primary School Provision

8.2.1 Has the Council attempted to quantify the social and economic effect of the long threatened closure of Gwernyfed High School on the local primary schools?

No, the Authority has not quantified the social and economic effect of the closure of Gwernyfed High School on the local primary schools. However, during this consultation exercise, many respondents have expressed a view that parents will choose to send their pupils to primary and secondary schools in England, should the Proposal be implemented, which would have an impact on the local primary schools.

8.3 Emotional Impact		
8.3.1	How will morale be maintained among children and pupils during and following the transition period?	<i>It is the responsibility of schools to ensure the well-being of their pupils and the schools would be expected to provide appropriate support to their pupils during and after the transition period.</i>
8.3.2	Do you realise what you are doing and the worries and pressures that you are enforcing on pupils that are attending the school? Think of all the children that are in Primary schools, especially year six pupils who are anxious about transferring as it is. The pressure YOU are putting on pupils, parents and families is not acceptable.	<p><i>The Authority is committed to ensuring the welfare of all children, and accepts that any school reorganisation Proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the Proposals on the quality of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• outcomes (standards and wellbeing);</i> <i>• provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment);and</i> <i>• leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'</i> <p><i>Should the schools close, the new school would be expected to provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The Authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</i></p>
8.4 Mental Health Impacts		
8.4.1	This is not an acceptable way to treat young people. Who will take responsibility for increased mental health problems when all these things start getting on top of them?	<i>As stated in the Consultation Document, 'Any change of school and any disruption not of the learner's or their family's choosing is going to have some impact on feelings of wellbeing. Mitigation of the negative effects of this especially for those with additional needs will need to be well planned and allow for individual plans of support to be in place.</i>
8.4.2	Please answer for me what welfare and counselling provision will you put in place to assist children who are emotionally affected by these changes?	<i>Those with difficulties in managing change; many of whom may be on the autistic spectrum, will be of particular concern given the number attending Brecon High School. However, with careful planning and professional support, the process of</i>

<p>8.4.3 The pupils are also affected. As a pupil in a school labelled as a ‘failing school’, means that the children consider themselves failing. There is increased pressure to succeed, because to fail means responsibility for the failing of the school as a whole. What are your strategies for dealing with these additional stressors on the mental health and wellbeing of the pupils?</p>	<p><i>change to what will be a new and better environment may be seen as a potential for learning that will enable those young people to cope better with adult life.</i></p> <p><i>The school would be encouraged to conduct person-centred reviews and planning which will be very helpful in providing the circles of support and hearing the voice of the young people during this period.’</i></p>
<p>8.5 Other Health/Wellbeing Impacts</p>	
<p>8.5.1 Will the obesity rate increase if the School closes as many pupils will turn to social media to keep in touch with friends in different area of Powys?</p>	<p><i>The Authority does not believe that the obesity rate will increase if the Proposal is implemented. The new school in Brecon will have modern sports facilities, and children will be encouraged to participate in sporting activities.</i></p>
<p>8.5.2 Explain how the Final Business Case and Proposals fulfil each goal of the <u>Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015</u>.</p>	<p><i>A Single Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed – this includes the impact of the Proposals on the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.</i></p>
<p>8.5.3 What support is being given to pupils, primary pupils, parents and teachers with all of this uncertainty to enable them to maintain well-being for all students?</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation Proposal will lead to a period of uncertainty for staff working in any school affected by the Proposal. As stated in the Consultation Document:</i></p> <p><i>‘It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i></p> <p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p> <p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.’</i></p>

<p>8.5.4 The questions for the local Authority to answer, given the above, are if you destroy most of the activities for young people in our 12 communities, how will Powys County Council comply with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2016 to ensure that: Young people in the Gwernyfed catchment area will have a society in which to grow up where their physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood? Young people in the Gwernyfed catchment area will have attractive, viable, safe and well-connected cohesive communities in which to grow up? Young people have a society in which to grow up that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation? Given the range of statutory breaches why are the Chief Executive and senior Legal Adviser still in post?</p>	<p><i>A Single Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed which considers the goals of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. A draft Community Impact Assessment, along with an equality and Welsh Language impact assessment, were published as part of this consultation and will be updated to include information gathered during the consultation. Cabinet will need to consider these alongside the Consultation Report prior to making any further decisions about the two schools.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority is not aware of any statutory breaches that would require the Chief Executive and senior Legal Advisor to leave their posts.</i></p>
<p>8.6 Intercommunity/School tensions</p>	
<p>8.6.1 There is bit of a rivalry when it comes to Brecon and Gwernyfed, in both school sports, and in club sports (rugby), so what would happen if we were to come together? Would the two clubs remain as they are, or would they again close down to make one big rugby club? Over 50 years of fierce competition and rivalry would be lost forever, and for the actual players themselves, cutbacks on the teams would have to be made. For example, in my team (Gwernyfed R.F.C under 14's), we have around 20 players on our team, which is perfect as we are able to evenly make subs and give</p>	<p><i>Comment noted. The arrangements for team sports would be the responsibility of the school and any sports clubs.</i></p>

<p>people game time. But if we add in Brecon's under 14 side, we'd have around 40 players, for one team, which is completely out of the question!</p>	
<p>8.7 After School Clubs/Sports Teams – Risk to Sustainability of Clubs</p>	
<p>8.7.1 What measures will be taken to ensure pupils are able to participate?</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority has recognised that pupils from the Gwernyfed area may not be able to access after-school activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport. As a way of mitigating this, the Consultation Document states:</i></p>
<p>8.7.2 Some pupils from the current Gwernyfed catchment area will be on a bus for up to 2 hours per day. How will these pupils be able to participate in after school activities such as sports training?</p>	<p><i>'The New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</i></p>
<p>8.7.3 You are saying the school will be encouraged to put on extra-curricular activities during the day - will that not have an impact on the learning time?</p>	<p><i>The majority of pupils attending Gwernyfed High School are currently reliant on home-to-school transport and their ability to access after-school activities would be similarly affected if the Proposal is approved.'</i></p>
<p>8.7.4 I go to Gwernyfed High School for football training with my twin brother. Where will we train if the school closes? Can Powys County Council explain how they are going to address the needs of Gwernyfed catchment children and the provision of after school clubs at both secondary and primary level?</p>	<p><i>If the Proposal is implemented, the Council would investigate the possibilities for retaining leisure facilities at the Gwernyfed High School site.</i></p>
<p>8.7.5 How will these children be able to participate in after school activities? For example my son plays county golf at a high standard - how would he be able to continue with this sport during the week as he would have reduced evening study time owing to the increased travel times.</p>	

8.7.6	What plans does the Council have to help community groups, sports clubs and cultural groups continue in light of the fact that they may lose many pupil members and volunteers as a result of these changes.	
8.7.7	What measures will be taken to ensure pupils are still able to participate in community life in and around the Gwernyfed catchment area?	
8.8 After School Clubs/Classes – Impact of Transport Problems on Participation		
8.8.1	What measures will be taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to such activities given the transportation difficulties?	See 8.7
8.8.2	I want to know how they (my children) will continue this vital part of their education if they have to go to school in Brecon. They will not be able to walk home from there. Is POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL going to provide transport? The consultation document suggests that extra-curricular activities could be included in the school day - how could that happen without having a negative effect on their regular lessons?	See 8.7
8.8.3	How will pupils be able to fairly access important extracurricular activities and revision sessions?	See 8.7
8.8.4	How will these pupils be able to participate in after school activities such as sports training?	See 8.7
8.8.5	How will the New School provide extra-curricular activities during a school day which is already packed from registration to the end of the day, especially for year 10 and 11 students who	See 8.7

	<p>already have an over-full timetable? How does a school timetable “accommodate extra-curricular activities during the school day”, when It is already filled with academic, vocational and wider educational commitments? From where, within a full timetable, will this additional ‘extra-curricular time’ be conjured?</p>	
8.8.6	<p>How will children outside of the main public transport routes, be able to take advantage of public transport. There is no public transport to Llanfihangel Talyllyn and many other villages.</p>	<p><i>Children will be reliant on parental transport outside the main public transport routes, in the same way as they are currently are.</i></p>
8.8.7	<p>How will the contingency put forward by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL address the impact that moving children to a Brecon based school will have on Talgarth, Glasbury, Hay etc... Clubs and societies.</p>	<p><i>The Authority has not put forward a contingency plan. However, the issue has been identified within the draft Community Impact Assessment. This will be updated and finalised to take account of issues raised during the consultation period.</i></p>
8.8.8	<p>What measures will be taken to ensure pupils are still able to participate?</p>	<p><i>See 8.7</i></p>
8.8.9	<p>POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL omits to mention the additional financial burden that transport would place on families, and which may compound the problem of reduced access to these activities. Has there been an analysis of the improvement in grades gained by students who attend after school homework clubs? What reduction in attainment does the Council find an acceptable price to pay for this Proposal, how did it reach the decision, and how has it been measured?</p>	<p><i>The aim of the Proposal is to ensure a sustainable, long-term model of high-quality education. The Authority’s aim is to increase attainment rates. The Authority is also aware of the additional value that after-school homework clubs can bring to a pupil.</i></p>

<p>8.8.10 The Formal consultation document should have included detailed planning / research, to show if it is a realistic to increase school day activities / achieve public transport solutions. So as to determine if it is possible to alleviate this serious risk to the wellbeing of children. We ask POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to answer the case that it has a moral and ethical requirement to conduct this work to inform its judgement, prior to any decision to close Gwernyfed school.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted. This has been already been identified as a significant risk in Consultation Document, and reflected in the impact assessments that will be considered by Cabinet alongside the Consultation Report.</i></p>
<p>8.8.11 The Statutory Schools Organisation Code: Where Proposals involve the transfer of learners to alternative provision there should normally be evidence that the alternative would deliver outcomes and offer provision at least equivalent to that which is currently available to those learners. (Paragraph 1.3). -Can the local Authority explain why it thinks a breach of statutory responsibility is acceptable?</p>	<p><i>The Authority is not in breach of its statutory responsibility. In accordance with the School Organisation Code which states 'Where Proposals involve the transfer of learners to alternative provision there should normally be evidence that the alternative would deliver outcomes and offer provision at least equivalent to that which is currently available to those learners (including learners with SEN)' the Code states that 'Advice from Estyn might reasonably be judged as evidence in relation to alternative provision which is brand new.'</i></p> <p><i>Estyn is a statutory consultee and would be compromised if it gave an opinion on a Proposal before the consultation process. Estyn's response is included in the Consultation Report.</i></p>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
9 Impact on Staff, Leadership and Management		
9.1 Insecurity		
9.1.1	What happens to the current staff at Gwernyfed and Brecon high schools?	<p><i>As stated in paragraph 7.2 of the Consultation Document, 'If the Proposal is implemented, a new staffing structure would be developed in conjunction with the shadow governing body. The structure would be developed to deliver the school's business plan and implemented in accordance with the relevant HR Policies for teaching and support staff'.</i></p> <p><i>'If the Proposal is implemented, there would be a reduction in the number of the cleaning, caretaking and catering staff. The catering staff at both schools are employed centrally by the Council, whilst the cleaning and caretaking staff are funded through the schools; delegated budget, with a mixture of employment status across both schools.' For all staff where a reduction in numbers is being implemented a fair and transparent process will be followed</i></p>
9.2 Disruption		
9.2.1	As year 11 pupils, we raised concerns about whether we would lose A-level teachers in GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL sixth form halfway through our courses due to closure and lack of job security for staff. ... How can you justify allowing this to happen and for pupils to be placed in this situation?	<p><i>The Consultation Document explains the reasons why change is necessary. The Consultation Document also highlights a risk for staff 'Staff at both current schools are demotivated and some may choose to leave before the New School is established, affecting their ability to deliver the curriculum.</i></p> <p><i>It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i></p> <p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p>

		<i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.'</i>
9.3 Retention/Recruitment		
9.3.1	What is the impact of the possible loss of high quality staff due to the loss of post-16 provision?	<i>The Consultation Document has recognises that staff retention may be an issue should the Proposal be implemented. It states:</i>
9.3.2	Have you considered the potential loss of inspirational and talented teachers we currently have? Workers in Powys are currently on average the lowest paid in Wales, have you considered the additional impact this decision will make on the difficulty of attracting bright, talented and motivated teachers for our children in Brecon?	<i>'It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i> <i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i>
9.3.3	What is your plan to hold on to good teachers, who with so much uncertainty will surely be looking to secure alternative positions at other schools? What incentives are you offering them whilst their workload and class sizes increase, job security decreases, uncertainty and lack of job satisfaction increases? Lack of commitment and support from the local Authority may result in lack of commitment and support from teachers to children.	<i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change workstream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.'</i> <i>There are a number of 11 – 16 schools in Wales and beyond. There is evidence that good quality teachers choose to teach in these schools, as well as 11 – 18 schools: Evidence can found in Estyn Inspection Reports, and in the National Categorisation of Schools. In 2015/16, both 11 – 16 and 11- 18 schools appear in all four support categories, indicating that no specific model is better than the other.</i>
9.3.4	Why has Retention not been included as a risk of increased travel time? How will this negative impact be addressed?	<i>Discussions have taken place with a number of other authorities, where there are 11 – 16 and 11 – 18 schools. As evidenced by Estyn reports and the National Categorisation of Schools, performance of schools within both categories is varied.</i>
9.3.5	What evidence has been looked at to see if there is a detrimental effect on staff morale and	

	<p>continuing professional development when A' Level teaching is removed from their portfolio. What work has been done to analyse the risk assessment on staff retention, for those staff who would lose A' Level teaching?</p>
<p>9.3.6 Does the Council agree there can be no savings on the cost of technicians and that any cuts to technicians would create an increased Health and Safety risk?</p>	<p><i>Technician allowance is based on 45 hours lump sum per school plus 2.6 hours per FTE teacher. As 2 schools there are 2 lump sums of 45 hours funding provided, with the proposed model based on one lump sum. The number of funded FTE teachers has also reduced from 58.61 as 2 schools and 52.95 as 1 school. Which delivers the remaining reduction in funding to total £34k.</i></p>
<p>9.3.7 Mid-Day Supervisors: the provision for these is based upon a pupil/staff ratio. The Governing Body asks: <i>does the Council agree that with the same number of pupils there can be no savings here?</i></p>	<p><i>A lump sum is provided per 150 pupils. Both models include a reduction in pupils due to the proposals around Post 16 education therefore the allowance provided has reduced.</i></p>
<p>9.4 Morale</p>	
<p>9.4.1 What are your strategies for addressing the stresses and negative impact of these current Proposals on our children and their staff?</p>	<p><i>The Authority is committed to ensuring the welfare of all children, and accepts that any school reorganisation Proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that 'Relevant bodies should place the interests of learners above all others. With reference to the key questions of the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (Estyn), they should give paramount importance to the likely impact of the Proposals on the quality of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• outcomes (standards and wellbeing);</i> <i>• provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment);and</i> <i>• leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management)'</i>

		<i>Should the schools close, the new school would be expected to provide support to pupils to aid their transition. The Authority is keen to conclude this process as swiftly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for pupils.</i>
9.5 Travel Between Sites		
9.5.1	It has not yet been confirmed that it will be teachers who will travel between the two sites to deliver the subjects and not the children travelling between the two sites therefore this needs to be clarified.	<i>Pupils will not be expected to travel between sites during the transition period. It is not expected that teachers will travel between sites either, apart from the senior leadership team. However, it will be the decision of the governing body whether it wishes to teach some subjects on one of the sites.</i>
9.5.2	(Will there) be compensation for travel costs and time or will staff lose lunch, breaks etc.?	<i>The school will be funded in accordance with the Authority's Fair Funding Formula which includes a split-site allowance. It is the responsibility of the governing body how it wishes to utilise the split-site allowance.</i>
9.5.3	What about staff without cars, how will you ensure that they are not discriminated against when considering their application for employment?	<i>The recruitment process will be implemented in accordance with HR Policies – staff without cars will not be discriminated against.</i>
9.6 Staff Contracts		
9.6.1	How do you propose to staff the new school (on two sites) using existing contracts?	<i>As stated in paragraph 7.2 of the Consultation Document, 'If the Proposal is implemented, a new staffing structure would be developed in conjunction with the shadow governing body. The structure would be developed to deliver the school's business plan and implemented in accordance with the relevant HR Policies for teaching and support staff'. Staff would receive new contracts which will specify their location of work during the transition phase to the new school.</i>
9.6.2	Are you confident that the Human Resources department is sufficiently staffed to deal with this matter efficiently, as the timeframe is very tight?	<i>The HR department is sufficiently resourced.</i>

9.6.3	Do you think that you have sufficient time in your timetable to appoint a new Head, re-structure, negotiate new contracts and slot in's plus redundancies all before September 2017. All of which need to comply with employment law and your employment policies?	<i>The Authority has experience of stablishing a new school through the amalgamation of two schools within a period of two terms. However, the Authority recognises that it is now more challenging, due to the Cabinet decision date slipping by 3 weeks from that originally planned.</i>
9.6.4	Will staff contracts reflect that staff will be expected to work on two sites?	See 9.6.1
9.6.5	Will there be pay protection for <u>ALL</u> staff who lose a higher paid post?	<i>Under Powys County Council Policy pay protection does not apply where staff are appointed to a lower paid post as a result of change processes. Instead a compensatory payment for so-called loss of office will be pro rata of the redundancy payment and is based on the actual reduction; i.e. if the employee accepts a 50% reduction in hours, then the compensatory payment will be 50% of the amount payable as if the whole post had been made redundant. (These compensatory payments are subject to both tax and national insurance deductions). The exception to pay protection relates to Teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments which are safeguarded for a period of 3 years.</i>
9.7 Governing Body		
9.7.1	The Governing Body is dismayed that the governing body's good work over the last 5-6 years has been swept aside by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL and ask: <i>how can the Council declare an ambition to establish an effective and resilient leadership team and then destroy one that already exists?</i>	<p><i>As this issue relates to Gwernyfed High School, the Authority acknowledges that the governors and leadership of the school have worked very hard over the last 5 – 6 years, and, in particular, the Authority congratulates the school for its work in coming out of the category of Estyn Monitoring, earlier this year.</i></p> <p><i>Estyn, in its 2013 inspection report, applauds the governance and leadership of the school</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• the leadership has established a clear strategic direction that has secured an upward trend of improvement;</i> <i>• a strategic group of effective middle leaders works well with the management team in implementing changes that are contributing the further improvement in outcomes; and</i>

- *The Headteacher and senior management team have a thorough understanding of the strength and areas for development improvement for the school.*

However, the aim of the Proposal is to establish a secondary school infrastructure that is sustainable in the long-term, and can provide the highest quality education. The reasons for change are documented in the Consultation Document.

With any school reorganisation, the establishment of a new school would require an effective and resilient leadership team.

9.8 Leadership Team

9.8.1 'The new leadership team should be at least as good as the current leadership and management teams.' What performance criteria are POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL using for the Leadership of its schools in its Secondary Schools' Transformation Programme?

Leaders and Managers in Powys schools are expected to meet the standards set out in the Revised Professional Standards for Education Practitioners in Wales 2011.

9.9 Leadership in General

9.9.1 Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL guarantee that they can create a leadership team that is as dynamic, and as effective as the current Gwernyfed team, under their new Proposals, and if so, how?

The Shadow Governing Body would be formed from amongst those governors currently serving on the governing bodies of Llandrindod and Builth Wells. Expressions of interest to serve on the shadow governing body would be invited, and it is anticipated that those individuals would be best placed to determine whether they have the available time to commit.

The new governing body would be established in accordance with the the Education Act 2002, Part 3, Chapter 1, which sets out the framework for the establishment of governing bodies. All school governing bodies are a combination of appointed or elected governors of various types. The composition of each governing body will depend upon the number and age range of pupils at the school and the category of the school i.e. community,

	<p><i>community special, foundation, voluntary aided (VA), voluntary controlled (VC) or maintained nursery (MN). The membership of each governing body will be set out in the Instrument of Government of the particular school, which is produced under section 20 of the Education Act 2002. The Instrument of Government will be made in accordance with The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.</i></p> <p><i>The appointment of a Headteacher is the responsibility of the shadow governing body, and the appointment of a senior leadership team is the responsibility of both the Headteacher and the governors.</i></p>
<p>9.9.2 A merger would conveniently write off the large debts accumulated by Brecon High School. What assurance do we have that the culture of mal-administration that has got Brecon into these difficulties does not get carried over to the new school on the same site?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal would require the establishment of a shadow governing body to oversee the strategic and operational transition to the new school. A permanent governing body would be established upon the formal opening of the new school, replacing the current governing bodies of Gwernyfed High School and Brecon High School.</i></p> <p><i>The new permanent governing body would be responsible for ensuring that there is not a culture of mal-administration.</i></p>
<p>9.9.3 pg. 26 'There would be opportunities to share best practice from both existing school, and to develop partnerships with the wider catchment primary schools, and other secondary schools and providers.' This is already happening. The school has a positive working relationship with the primary schools and excellent transition arrangements. What evidence has Powys County Council gathered to show that there are gaps in this partnership working? Where is the evidence to show that the New School will be more successful in this area?</p>	<p><i>The Authority agrees that partnership working is already happening. The Authority is not suggesting that there would be more opportunities to do this with a new school, but it is expected that this practice would continue with the New School.</i></p>

9.9.4 The Council asks POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to describe how it envisages a shared Headteacher, governing body and leadership will operate effectively and efficiently on a dual-sited school and what the impact on either school will be when Gwernyfed High School's standards are already improving and Brecon High School is struggling financially and educationally?

The benefits of the Interim Proposal are as follows:

- 1) *Improved leadership at all levels: When streamlining the leadership structure following the joining of two schools into one split site secondary school, the newly appointed governing body are able to place the strongest leaders in each position within the new leadership structure. This means we can have the strongest governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and pastoral leaders – those who have the best track record of securing high outcomes and delivering the highest level of care - leading school improvement across the two sites. The joining of two schools represents an opportunity for a step change improvement in the quality of leadership.*
- 2) *Improved leadership leads to improved teaching: Professor David Reynolds has stated: 'We know that effective leadership of a school from the Headteacher and through to other 'middle leadership' positions is important in its own right and important in generating...high quality classroom teaching' (WG PDG guidance 2013-15). Leadership and teaching quality are linked. The research is clear, by securing a step change improvement in leadership, we are able to secure a step change improvement in teaching quality.*
- 3) *Improved coaching and mentoring support opportunities for staff: It is essential that time is allocated to enable the best teaching staff in different subject areas to travel between sites (or communicate regularly via video conferencing arrangements) in order to provide mentoring/coaching/resources for their colleagues on the other campus. This ongoing mentoring support and training can have a considerable impact on teaching quality. One there is a world of difference between the potential impact of loose school-to-school collaboration between separate schools, and the level of collaboration and support in a single school with split sites. The extent to which leaders are willing to invest finite time into engaging in mentoring, coaching and training of staff on the second campus of a single school*

is considerably higher if leaders are going to be held to account for standards and provision on both sites.

- 4) *Economies of scale leads to greater investment in teaching and learning:* *By having a single leader of each curriculum area across the two school sites and a more streamlined senior leadership structure, savings can be generated over time. The new leadership team would be able to invest these savings in whatever way they believe would make the greatest impact on standards.*

REF	ISSUE	AUTHORITY'S RESPONSE																								
10. The Proposal and Facts and Figures																										
10.1 Student Numbers																										
10.1.1	<p>One of the biggest concerns cited as being responsible for POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Proposal to close and merge the schools is falling pupil numbers. However, is this not a self-fulfilling prophecy? If you create uncertainty over the availability of secondary education, are you not going to, at the very least, make people with children not move to the area or to consider to move away if already resident here? Furthermore, on reviewing your consultation document, this admits that pupil numbers are increasing. Whilst they are currently low, they are forecast to increase over the next 3-4 years to levels they were at in 2012. So, what are you saying? Are pupil numbers falling or not falling? Or are you just hoping that they will fall given your disastrous handling of this situation? Perhaps you're hoping that Welsh children will be absorbed into the English schools system and stop being POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's responsibility or concern? I know from being resident in the Hay area that there are house-building programmes currently underway, bolstering the assertion that was made at the meeting that this is an area that people with families could and would move to if there were education facilities in the community. What you, with help from the local primary schools, should be</p>	<p><i>The Authority wishes to deliver a sustainable, high quality secondary education system, within the context of falling pupil numbers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Falling pupil numbers year on year at secondary schools (19% over the last 6 years) making it difficult to provide the full curriculum</i> • <i>Population projections show the position will deteriorate over the next 20 years – the child population (0-15) is projected to fall from 22,761 in the 2011 census to 18,958 by 2036</i> • <i>Projections over that 20 year period can be seen in all age groups with the largest falls in the 0-1, 5-9 and 15-19 age groups, the smallest fall is in the 10-14 but even that shows more than 300 less by 2036. The 5-9 shows a temporary increase in the coming years but an overall decline of more than 1000 by 2036</i> • <i>Pupil numbers in Powys are already falling with numbers dropping from 9,284 in January 2006 to 7,467 in January 2016</i> 																								
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<p>doing is getting together and working out how we boost our school numbers not accepting any fall as a fait accompli.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>HIGH SCHOOL</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>1006</td> <td>968</td> <td>966</td> <td>939</td> <td>952</td> <td>975</td> <td>987</td> </tr> </table> <p>Authority has now updated the pupil projections based on PLASC 2016 data, which indicates the following:</p> <p>The Authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation Proposal creates a period of uncertainty. During this consultation, many consultees have raised the issue that parents will choose to send their children to schools in England – this was a key risk that was identified on page 19 of the Consultation Document.</p>	HIGH SCHOOL								Total	1006	968	966	939	952	975	987
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Total	1006	968	966	939	952	975	987										
<p>10.1.2 Pupil numbers at Gwernyfed High School are already set to rise and by 2021 reach well over 500. Where has Powys County Council’s ‘aspiration to have schools with at least 600 pupils’ come from and where has the number of 600 come from? Lots of successful, well-run and in-budget schools operate with less than 600 pupils. Why does Powys County Council think this is unachievable here? Where is the evidence base for the statement that a school requires at least 600 pupils at KS3 and 4? Please cite all relevant research used to make this statement.</p> <p>10.1.3 How has this threshold of 600 pupils been derived and on what basis? And what evidence supports this nationwide?</p>	<p>The figure of 600 pupils was agreed by officers of the Authority, in discussions with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), following their Study into the Viability of Secondary Schools. The Authority currently funds KS3 and KS4 classes that deliver core curriculum subjects on a teacher-pupil ratio of 1- 23, apart from subjects which have a health and safety aspect where it is expected that no class has more than 20 pupils. e.g. science – (these classes make up approximately 20% of the curriculum), In future, it is expected that the maximum teacher-pupil ratio will not exceed 1 – 30/31 for core curriculum subjects.</p> <p>The county council commissioned a study by Price Waterhouse Cooper to report on the potential financial viability of each of the secondary and of the overall provision of secondary education across the county. The report concluded that ‘all the schools appear to be reaching a point where their options are extremely limited and there is a tangible risk that schools will become finance, rather than curriculum led’, and that ‘in light of the forecasted, deteriorating financial position of the whole county provision, even a concerted, joint effort of cost management may not be enough to avoid the requirement to examine structural changes to the education provision across the county’.</p>																

10.1.4	<p>Has the projected increase in pupil numbers arising out of proposed housing developments within 5 miles of Gwernyfed been factored in to any case for retaining the existing school? Has a review of falling pupil numbers across Powys been broken down by existing secondary school catchments across Powys and does this include data on pupils from ‘out of county’?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document states the following with regard to housing developments:</i></p> <p><i>There may be an impact on pupil numbers from proposed housing developments within the Local Development Plan. The Council estimates one child for every five houses within any new proposed developments – if implemented, these will need to be factored into any future projections.</i></p>									
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Brecon	405	81									
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10.1.5	<p>What evidence does Powys County Council have to demonstrate that parents in the Gwernyfed catchment will send their children to the New School Building in Brecon? Evidence from the public consultations indicates that this won’t happen.</p>	<p><i>Evidence about parental preference has been gathered during this review. During this consultation, many consultees have raised the issue that parents will choose to send their children to schools in England.</i></p>									
10.1.6	<p>The Final Business case explains that primary pupil numbers in Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments will grow by 148 and 119 pupils respectively between 2015 and 2020. Explain why this justifies a Proposal to close both high schools and reopen a single New School Building with a smaller capacity?</p>	<p><i>There are a number of factors that affect potential pupil number growth, one of which is the potential housing growth on the Local Development Plan for the national park. Although there are significant areas of houses planned in each authorities Local Development Plan (Brecon Beacons National Park & Powys County Council) across the two catchments – historical evidence will show that only a small % of houses will be developed over the life of the plan. Both schools have a significant level of surplus places totalling 435 between them and it is the Authority’s view that the secondary education would be best delivered for this area in a single school of which the Proposal outlines the clear reasons for this. The point raised is not the sole justification for the Proposal.</i></p>									

<p>10.1.7</p>	<p>Explain the discrepancy in figures provided for increasing primary school pupils in the table at the top of p.18 in the Final Business Case and the top and middle of p.69 in the consultation document.</p>	<p><i>As stated on pages 15 and 16 of the business case, 'PLASC data for January 2016 is currently unavailable, therefore the data used in this section is based on January 2015 PLASC data, unless otherwise stated. The projections on page 18 of the Final Business Case were based on PLASC 2015 data, whilst the figures used on page 69 of the Consultation Document were based on PLASC 2016 data. The discrepancy between both sets of data is as follows:</i></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>PLASC 2015</i></td> <td><i>695</i></td> <td><i>720</i></td> <td><i>740</i></td> <td><i>770</i></td> <td><i>765</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>PLASC 2016</i></td> <td><i>696</i></td> <td><i>720</i></td> <td><i>741</i></td> <td><i>769</i></td> <td><i>766</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>PLASC 2015</i>	<i>695</i>	<i>720</i>	<i>740</i>	<i>770</i>	<i>765</i>	<i>PLASC 2016</i>	<i>696</i>	<i>720</i>	<i>741</i>	<i>769</i>	<i>766</i>
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<p>10.1.8</p>	<p>How and why has Powys County Council estimated one additional child for every five new houses built in each catchment?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has just under 60,000 houses within it which equates to the equivalent of 62,000 of Band D houses as identified within the Authority's budget book. In January 2016 there were a total of 7500 secondary aged pupils which is the equivalent of 1 pupil for every 7.7 houses. The Authority uses a lower number to ensure that is not underestimating the number of pupils arising from new developments.</i></p>												
<p>10.1.9</p>	<p>Explain how the estimate of one child per new house in the development plan would be likely to change in the event of five new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment and a New School Building in Brecon. 64. Explain how this estimate would be likely to change were Powys County Council to increase its investment in Welsh-medium provision at primary school level within the Brecon catchment.</p>	<p><i>The Authority has not assumed any additional count from outside the county into the 5 new primary schools but has assumed the current trend continues. The forecast pupil numbers is based on the estimated number of additional dwellings to develop in the area. However, the increase in pupil numbers will be dependent on the increase in the number of family groups living across the two catchment areas following the developments and there would need to be an inward migration of outside Powys to affect the pupil's numbers.</i></p> <p><i>In January 2016 there were a total of 7500 secondary aged pupils which is the equivalent of 1 pupil for every 7.7 houses. The Authority uses a lower number to ensure that is not underestimating the number of pupils arising from new developments.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority recognises that its Proposal to close the Welsh Stream in Brecon may have a short term impact on the number of pupils transferring from Primary education at Ysgol Bannau and Sennybridge into Welsh medium secondary provision. However, the offer of an enhanced level of provision at YGY and</i></p>												

	<p><i>Builth will provide learners with a greater option to complete all their studies through the medium of Welsh. If the Proposal goes forward then the Authority will provide support to the primary and secondary schools to promote Welsh Medium education.</i></p>																			
<p>10.1.10 Explain what evidence there is to demonstrate that the current £multi-million pound investment in five new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment, as well as building the New School Building in Brecon, now, would not create the sort of critical mass and increase in pupil numbers (through increased demand) that Powys County Council seeks.</p>	<p><i>The development of the 5 school model in the Gwernyfed catchment will result in an increase in critical demand due to the historical reduction from a 10 school model to the proposed 5 school model. The Authority has achieved this through the closure of Ffynnon Gynydd, Rosgoch, Llanigon, Glasbury on Wye and the proposed net reduction of 1 school through the Talgarth and Bronllys amalgamation. It is estimated that the new model of primary delivery has saved approximately £400,000 per annum and will result in all children receiving education in a condition A building with appropriate staffing levels. The Proposal in respect of the secondary sector will result in a small revenue saving but children will receive their education in a new facility which was recognised as an essential requirement for Brecon in all consultation meetings.</i></p>																			
<p>10.1.11 Forecasted figures show that by 2020 there will be a combined total of 1092 spaces, therefore, the school will already be at capacity not allowing for any future new homes. How does the council propose to accommodate additional children over the 1100 that they have allowed for?</p>	<p><i>During the Design process for the New School Building in Brecon, the Authority will ensure that there is capacity to extend the building in future, should that be required.</i></p>																			
<p>10.1.12 There are a lot of Welsh speaking children in BRECON HIGH SCHOOL who went to English primary schools. Is the Council aware of this? Are these children aware that they could be in the Welsh stream in BRECON HIGH SCHOOL? Does the Council promote options like these two primary schools?</p>	<p><i>The following is an analysis of primary school pupils in the Brecon catchment based on PLASC 2016 data, according to their proficiency in using the Welsh language:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Welsh</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Welsh at home</th> <th>Welsh in School</th> <th>Fluently</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ysgol y Bannau</td> <td>42</td> <td>85</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cradoc CP School</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Llanfaes CP School</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Welsh			Welsh at home	Welsh in School	Fluently	Ysgol y Bannau	42	85	0	Cradoc CP School	0	1	0	Llanfaes CP School	1	0	0
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		<i>Mount Street Juniors</i>	1	0	0	
		<i>Mount Street Infants</i>	1	0	0	
		<i>Priory CIW School</i>	0	1	0	
		<i>Sennybridge CP School</i>	9	1	6	
10.1.13	In view of the fact - shown by your own data - that pupil numbers are expected to rise at Gwernyfed, please justify the reason given for closing the school on P6 of 'falling pupil numbers'?	<i>Page 6 of the Consultation Document refers to the pressures faced by the Secondary School System in Powys, where pupil numbers, as a whole, are continuing to fall.</i>				
10.1.14	Please provide alternative pupil number forecasts which factor in the additional 104 children from new housing developments, and provide a revised appraisal of surplus places at Gwernyfed.	<i>The Authority notes the comment – The provision of revised capacities resulting from housing developments would only be included once the development has commenced and the Authority has an understanding of the expected occupancy. Capacity calculations are based on the physical use of the school buildings and is agreed and signed off by the school and the Local Authority. We would not calculate additional models outside of this procedure.</i>				
10.1.15	Why, when your own data undermines your case around falling school numbers in relation to the Gwernyfed catchment area, do you still prefer an option that closes the school?	<i>The Authority has considered a number of factors that are placing pressure on Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools, and believes that the Proposal will lead to the benefits outlined on pg.16 of the Consultation Document.</i>				
10.2 New Primary Schools						
10.2.1	The consultation document states that five new primaries will be built in the Gwernyfed catchment by 2018. What is the current stage of development, and what timetable does the Council have for delivery of the new schools? Is there a binding schedule? What does delivery of the promised schools depend on, and why has there been so little progress thus far?	<i>In October 2015, The Welsh Government approved the Outline Business Case for the building of five new primary schools in Gwernyfed. The Authority has now appointed a contractor on a Design and Build contract. The designs have been finalised and submitted for planning approval. The Full Business Case will be submitted to Welsh Government in November 2016. Construction is planned to commence in Spring 2017, with the new schools planned to be completed during the 2017/18 academic year.</i> <i>The Authority acknowledges that past progress has been unsatisfactorily slow, but is pleased that there is good progress now.</i>				

10.3 Size of School											
10.3.1	<p>You claim a year group of 120 pupils would maximise the curriculum benefits but you do not mention how these figures would be broken down in class size. Please answer for me what class sizes you envisage and how you think that would be educationally of benefit to pupils?</p>	<p><i>The figure of 600 pupils was agreed by officers of the Authority, in discussions with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), following their Study into the Viability of Secondary Schools. The Authority currently funds KS3 and KS4 classes that deliver core curriculum subjects on a teacher-pupil ratio of 1- 23, apart from subjects which have a health and safety aspect where it is expected that no class has more than 20 pupils. e.g. science – (these classes make up approximately 20% of the curriculum), In future, it is expected that the maximum teacher-pupil ratio will not exceed 1 – 30/31 for core curriculum subjects</i></p>									
10.3.2	<p>If the Council truly believes that Post 16 education is better delivered by a Further Education College model offering greater choice and creating a "critical mass of pupils at post-16, enabling more subjects to be delivered from one location and minimising the requirement for additional inter-school travel and transport " (page 115) it will logically have to close the Sixth form in Crickhowell High School ... If it is not the policy of the Council to provide ALL post -16 education through this model in order to produce all the advantages detailed on page 115 then it should make clear why it is proposing to close one Sixth Form (Gwernyfed) with outstanding outcomes and keep another (Crickhowell) with lesser outcomes.</p>	<p><i>The Council's optimum model for post-16 education is for sixth forms to be able to provide 25 subjects, with a minimum class size of 12 or above. This would enable the Council and schools to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 whilst minimising the need for inter-school travel. On this basis, the ideal size of a sixth form would be at least a 150 pupils.</i></p> <p><i>It is not the Council's current policy to provide a Further Education tertiary system across the county. The Proposal aims to create the required critical mass of post-16 learners in on setting in Brecon, with the added benefits of vocational provision delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>Crickhowell Sixth Form had 169 pupils according to PLASC 2016, which enabled the school to provide 27 subjects at the school, with access to the options within the Post-16 Partnership as well.</i></p> <p><i>A comparison of the number of learners achieving the equivalent of 2 or more A* - C at A level at both schools in 2015 is as follows:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><i>All</i></th> <th><i>Percentage</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Crickhowell</i></td> <td><i>67</i></td> <td><i>70.5%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Gwernyfed</i></td> <td><i>22</i></td> <td><i>84.6%</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<i>All</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Crickhowell</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>70.5%</i>	<i>Gwernyfed</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>84.6%</i>
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10.3.3	We know that there are plenty of successful, well-run and in-budget schools in neighbouring Herefordshire with less than 600 pupils. If Herefordshire can do it, why can't Powys?	<p><i>There are 18 secondary schools in Herefordshire. The majority of these schools are 11 – 16 academies, with a few local Authority maintained or independent schools. They are funded in a different way to secondary schools in Powys, which are maintained by the Authority. The schools range in size from just over 300 to 1400.</i></p>																																
10.3.4	Based on the above, do you agree that the arguments of 'falling pupil numbers' and 'surplus places' have no basis in fact and should therefore be removed from this Proposal, and from the Outline Business Case for the Beacons Learning Campus submitted to the Welsh Government?	<p><i>As previously stated, the projected pupil numbers have been updated, and still indicate that, across both schools as a whole, pupil numbers will continue to fall.</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>2021*</th> <th>2022*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Gwer nyfed High School</td> <td>450</td> <td>429</td> <td>429</td> <td>416</td> <td>424</td> <td>419</td> <td>422</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brecon High School</td> <td>556</td> <td>538</td> <td>537</td> <td>523</td> <td>528</td> <td>556</td> <td>565</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>1006</td> <td>968</td> <td>966</td> <td>939</td> <td>952</td> <td>975</td> <td>987</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*	2022*	Gwer nyfed High School	450	429	429	416	424	419	422	Brecon High School	556	538	537	523	528	556	565	Total	1006	968	966	939	952	975	987
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10.3.5	There is evidence of successful, well-run and in-budget schools with less than 600 pupils: why does Powys County Council think this is unachievable here?	<p><i>There is evidence of successful, well-run and in-budget schools across Wales and England of all sizes. The Authority agrees with the outcome of PwC's Study into the Viability of Secondary Schools:</i></p> <p><i>The report concluded that 'all the schools appear to be reaching a point where their options are extremely limited and there is a tangible risk that schools will become finance, rather than curriculum led', and that 'in light of the forecasted, deteriorating financial position of the whole county provision, even a concerted, joint effort of cost management may not be enough to avoid the requirement to examine structural changes to the education provision across the county'.</i></p>																																
10.3.6	Why did the options analysis not assess how small secondary schools are producing outstanding standards and results?	<p><i>The options analysis did not assess how small secondary schools are producing outstanding standards and results because this is not the case in</i></p>																																

Powys. The following table shows the current Estyn profile for secondary schools in Powys:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Current Performance</i>	<i>Prospects for Improvement</i>	<i>Category</i>
<i>Caereinion High School (494 NOR)</i>	<i>Nov 13</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Estyn Monitoring</i>
<i>Newtown High School (1091)</i>	<i>May-15</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Estyn Monitoring</i>
<i>Welshpool High School (900)</i>	<i>Nov-10</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	
<i>John Beddoes (closed)</i>	<i>Oct-12</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Special Measure</i>
<i>Llandrindod High School (558)</i>	<i>Oct-14</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Special Measure</i>
<i>Builth Wells High School (554)</i>	<i>Oct-15</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Special Measure</i>
<i>Ysgol Maesydderwen (447)</i>	<i>Nov-10</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Local Authority Monitoring</i>
<i>Brecon High School (556)</i>	<i>Apr-12</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Significant Improvement, followed by Special Measure</i>
<i>Gwernyfed High School (450)</i>	<i>Sep-13</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Estyn Monitoring</i>
<i>Crickhowell High School (768)</i>	<i>Sep-12</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Local Authority Monitoring</i>

	<i>Llanfyllin High School (832)</i>	<i>Feb -16</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Estyn monitoring</i>
	<i>Llanidloes High School (528)</i>	<i>April - 16</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	
10.4 Population, Housing, New Homes					
10.4.1	Can you confirm that proper consultation has taken place as to the projected number of homes to be built within the area?	<i>The Authority has analysed the potential housing development in both its and the national parks Local Development Plans, and based its estimates on these figures. The Authority would consider the mix of housing in each development as the applications are presented. Population statistics from the Office of National Statistics are used to look at population forecasts of which it drills down using super output areas across the county.</i>			
10.4.2	Can you confirm that figures being used to calculate the projected number of children moving into the area, are correct and accurate for the type of housing that will be built within the Gwernyfed catchment area?				
10.4.3	The National Parks housing data reveals 137 houses could be built opposite the Brecon High School by 2020 with the total build for Brecon by 2020 could be 273. 152 houses also possible in Talgarth as well as 80 in Hay-on-Wye. I would like to ask POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL, what is the sense in their short sighted destructive plan to close Gwernyfed High School?				
10.4.4	Do the forecast pupil numbers include potential new pupils from increased housing in the Gwernyfed and Brecon catchment areas? Which estate agent reports have been utilised by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL?				
10.4.5	Population forecasts are grossly underestimated. How have you arrived at these forecasted figures – please answer for				

	<p>Gwernyfed catchment only – not whole of Powys. Have the new builds (500 new homes within GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL catchment) been considered within the forecasted figures?</p>
<p>10.5 Criticism of Consultation Documents/Figures</p>	
<p>10.5.1 On pg. 5 of the Consultation document, it is stated that “The business case forms part of the supporting information for this consultation document, and can be found on the Council’s website www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/plans-for-powys-schools. This consultation document updates and expands upon the business case”. This link merely takes the reader to the ‘Plans for Powys Schools’ page on the council’s website and there is no onward link to the document in question.</p> <p>10.5.2 Since the business case is, according to the Consultation Document, an integral part of the consultation process, can the process be valid if the business case is not available?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document clearly signposted the reader to the Business Case. Appendix B of the Consultation Document is a copy of the Option Appraisal exercise within the Business Case.</i></p>
<p>10.6 Timescale</p>	
<p>10.6.1 The health and wellbeing of members of staff and pupils of both schools should be paramount. Does the council understand that if the schools remain as a dual site, then future numbers of pupils and experienced, well trained staff may decline at Gwernyfed due to the uncertainty of this situation and is this yet</p>	<p><i>The potential impact on staff and a decline in future pupil numbers were identified as a key risk within the Consultation Document, with the following mitigation:</i></p> <p><i>‘The intention of the Proposal is for the New School to provide the highest quality education in the best possible facilities, It is hoped that the transparency</i></p>

	<p>another way to close Gwernyfed, “by the back door”?</p>	<p><i>of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i></p> <p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p> <p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.’</i></p>
<p>10.6.2</p>	<p>What are the timescales and how realistic are they?</p>	<p><i>The potential implementation timescale can be found on page 48 of the Consultation Document and are realistic – the Authority has merged schools within this timescale previously. However, following Council’s decision for the Proposal to be discussed at a full County Council meeting, the timescale for implementation by September 2017 is now more difficult to achieve.</i></p>
<p>10.6.3</p>	<p>How long will the transition period be and given recent past experience with the primary school plans, has sufficient contingency been applied - would it be realistic to add on a few more years to your estimates?</p>	
<p>10.6.4</p>	<p>What timetable does the council have for “engaging with stakeholders in order to share the vision”? The ‘sharing’ thus far has consisted of County officials determinedly imposing its ‘vision’ on a constituency that has legitimate and profound misgivings, and has made it clear that it does not want it. Why does the Council intend to discuss plans to mitigate any negative impact only after the consultation has ended? Why is it deemed unnecessary to discuss these issues in a transparent manner in advance of the conclusion of the consultation period?</p>	<p><i>The Council has engaged with stakeholders prior to the consultation period via the Schools Transformation Policy 2014 process. In any school reorganisation, it is essential that the Council listens to, and takes full account, of the view of stakeholders. However, as a local education Authority, it also has a duty to plan the long-term organisation of its schools estate, taking account of all known factors.</i></p> <p><i>In accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code 2013, and the Council’s own Policy, the Authority published draft impact assessments, which will be updated to include information received during the consultation. Cabinet will be required to consider these along with the Consultation Report before it makes any further decisions about the future of either school.</i></p>

10.7 Due Diligence, Options Appraisal, Identifying Preferred Proposal		
10.7.1	On what basis was Option 8B discounted? Establish a new English-medium 'All Through School' in Brecon, with Post-16 education delivered via a Further Education College model.	As stated in the Business Case and Consultation Document, Option 8b was discounted due to the challenge of operating an All Through School in a catchment that could have 13 primary schools: <i>'However, consideration must be given to whether this is an appropriate educational model for an enhanced catchment area which may have 13 primary feeder schools that will join the secondary phase at Year 7 – this could be challenging operationally and educationally, although not insurmountable if appropriate partnerships are made with all the feeder schools.'</i>
10.7.2	Has Powys Council any other Proposals or are they putting their eggs all in one basket? if they only have one I would then question if they have really looked at any other possibilities	<i>The Authority has consulted on this specific Proposal, but also considered a range of potential options to address the pressures on the secondary school system. If the Proposal is not approved, further consideration will be given to other possibilities.</i>
10.7.3	There is no equity across Powys in the recommendation. I do not understand the logic behind the recommendation. If the Cabinet are content to close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School, stripping the sixth forms and Welsh Language out of the educational offer in this part of south Powys and develop a new area school on the recreation grounds at Brecon for the reasons outlined, why are they not looking to do the same at Builth and Llandrindod? As a modernisation process an area school in Llandrindod would make more sense, Llandrindod is considered a hub by the Council. Why didn't this carry more weight in the options appraisals and how was the decision to retain both schools reached set against the decision made for the	<i>The preferred option for Gwernyfed and Brecon included the additional benefits that could be provided by integrating with NPTC Group of Colleges. This was not the case with the Llandrindod and Builth scenario, where the provision of Welsh-medium education to learners from Brecon was also included.</i>

	Brecon/Gwernyfed schools? I do not understand this reasoning. If sixth form provision and Welsh had been provided (as a dual stream option) for both 'area schools', I would have been at least reassured that there was equity of Education in the south of the County even if I had opposed the plans.	
10.7.4	Gareth Jones admitted that there "is another option that the council could look at" that would not affect GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL. Why isn't this the main Proposal and what are the advantages of the actual Proposal over this and the disadvantages of the other Proposal over the actual one?	<i>The Authority has modelled various options for consideration and derived</i>
10.7.5	Your responses on seventeen occasions are "the Authority notes this point" - satisfactory responses as we and others are seeking considered, comprehensive answers. Is this because you have no answers or because the answers, if truthful, undermine your arguments?	<i>The purpose of consultation is to listen to the views of stakeholders, and if a view is put forward that has credence, this point is noted.</i>
10.7.6	On four occasions you "accept and acknowledge" comments/criticisms. Have you carried out any risk assessments to measure the impact of these and can you provide details of these together with any subsequent mitigating actions plans?	<i>In accordance with the School Organisation Code, 2015, the Consultation Document includes a list of risks and mitigating factors. Draft equality, community and Welsh language impact assessments have been carried out, which will be updated following consultation,</i>
10.7.7	On a further six occasions where you "accept and acknowledge" comments/criticisms, you put the onus on the school to work with the pupils and parents to "find a solution". Please	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the Code, the Consultation Document included potential risks and mitigation. Draft impact assessments were also published as part of the Consultation. These will be updated following consultation for consideration by Cabinet before any further decisions

	<p>confirm what risk assessments/action plans have been identified for implementation? Will BRECON HIGH SCHOOL be given additional financial support, advice or direction from Powys County Council to address the solutions? Have these issues been raised with staff from the schools and parent representatives? Are the schools aware of their additional responsibilities to help deliver solutions you don't have an answer for? Are you putting the schools in a situation for which there may be no acceptable solution without you committing additional resources whether it is financial, staffing or otherwise, all of which will be reduced in your current Proposals? This will put BRECON HIGH SCHOOL, already in special measures, under even more pressure. Please provide evidence.</p>
<p>10.7.8 Unfounded assumptions of Option 3B: "reduces overall surplus places" - solved by investments at primary level and by getting on with building a new high school in Brecon now; "improves learning environment" (how?); "more cost-effective delivery of learning" (how is this defined?); "... infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges," (what does this actually mean?).</p>	<p>are taken about the future of either school. No other action plans have been developed for implementation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools are funded in accordance with the Authority's Fair Funding Formula, in both the year of any school reorganisation change and subsequent years. • All schools receive support from both ERW and the Authority in accordance with the support requirements identified via the annual National Categorisation of Schools and other information; • Schools on more than one site receive a split-site allowance, and schools delivering dual-stream education receive an additional allowance – both of these additional allowances reflect any cost additionality due to the nature of the provision. • Issues have been discussed with staff and parent representatives during the consultation process. <p><i>Option 3B – (the Proposal) will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the current level of surplus places at both schools; • Be a new-build school replacing two schools which are Condition D and C; • Be a larger school that is able to better the impact of falling pupil numbers and decreasing funding, compared to a smaller school; and • Provide a more cost-effective delivery of learning i.e. The Proposal will reduce the overall funding required under the current Fair Funding Formula, and will allow the Authority to increase the pupil-led funding element of that formula.
<p>10.7.9 Explain how Powys County Council will avoid prejudicing the outcome of this public consultation when it is currently "liaising with Welsh Government officers to clarify specific</p>	<p><i>The OBC was submitted on a without prejudice basis to any decisions taken by Cabinet or the Welsh Government. Should Cabinet decide not to proceed with the current Proposal, the current OBC will not be pursued further.</i></p>

	<p>elements [of the Outline Business Case considered by the Welsh Government Funding Panel in March 2016].”</p>	
<p>10.7.10</p>	<p>Given that it is entirely plausible and affordable for a New School Building to be built now without the need for additional WG capital funding, explain how submitting the OBC in February 2016 isn't prejudicial to the outcome of Powys County Council's deliberations following this public consultation.</p>	
<p>10.7.11</p>	<p>Pg. 12: Possible options 'collaboration or federation were not pursued as it was FELT that they did not meet the Council's objectives in finding solutions to the problems.' On what basis (research/business case) was this decision to not pursue this as an option taken?</p>	<p><i>Clustering, collaboration or federation do not, on the whole, address the following investment objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;</i> • <i>To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;</i> • <i>To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;</i> • <i>To reduce surplus places in schools;</i> • <i>To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;</i> • <i>To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs.</i> <p><i>There is already a degree of collaboration and clustering between the schools in Mid Powys and the wider area, including the South Powys Post-16 Partnership, and the problems outlined in the Consultation Document still prevail.</i></p>

	<p><i>Also, none of these models would provide a solution that addresses the condition of both school buildings.</i></p>
<p>10.7.12 What criteria, based on improving outcomes, did Cabinet consider when the draft recommendations were drawn up in January 2016? How did the business case under consideration at this stage impact on educational outcomes? How did the business case relate to projected outcomes, specifically when denial of access to extra-curricular activities to families on modest incomes due to increased transport costs was taken into account?</p>	<p><i>The Cabinet considered the Business Case at its meeting on the 23rd February, and this consideration was set within the context of Powys County Council’s vision and aspirations for education: ‘The Council aspires to have an educational infrastructure that¹:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Provides all learners with opportunities to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment;</i> <i>• Provides for first class teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities;</i> <i>• Has high quality resilient leadership and management;</i> <i>• Provides robust linguistic continuity and progression;</i> <i>• Improves cost-effectiveness and efficiency;</i> <i>• Has the right number of schools in the right place for the current and future pupil population of Powys;</i> <i>• Has school buildings and blocks that are assessed as condition A or B;</i> <i>• Minimises dependency on temporary accommodation; and</i> <i>• Reduces overall surplus places in schools.’</i> <p><i>Included alongside the Business Case were draft Equality, Community and Welsh Language impact assessments, which clearly indicated that Gwernyfed pupils, in particular, would be disadvantaged by not having access to extra-curricular activities.</i></p> <p><i>The Business Case considered all key factors that are required by the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code when authorities are making Proposals for school reorganisation.</i></p>

¹ School Reorganisation Policy 2015

<p>10.7.13</p>	<p>What evidence did Cabinet consider on 23 February and what weight was given to the feedback received from the schools under review? Please publish the mark schemes with detailed notes for the meetings where this was discussed so it can be determined how the decision to proceed with the review was reached.</p>	<p><i>It is the responsibility of each individual member of Cabinet to make his or her own decision on any matter, based on the information that has been provided to them. In this case, Cabinet was provided with a copy of feedback from the schools under review – it was the responsibility of each individual member to consider and decide how much weighting this entailed.</i></p> <p><i>There are no mark schemes or detailed notes of any meetings prior to the meeting of Cabinet on the 23rd February.</i></p>
<p>10.7.14</p>	<p>Please publish the scoring which resulted in the preferred choice for KS3 to KS5 to be options 3B & 8B. What determined the “investment objectives and critical success factors” in this decision-making process?</p>	<p><i>In accordance with the HM Treasury’s Five Case Business Model, investment objectives and critical success factors were agreed collectively by officers in response to the strategic case and case for change, using an options framework which:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Identified the options</i> <i>• Assessed how well each option meets the evaluation criteria – the investment objectives and Critical Success Factors; SFs</i> <i>• Decided whether each option is ‘out’ or ‘in’ or a ‘maybe’. In other words, whether it should be discounted immediately; or carried forward, either as the preferred choice in the category or a possibility for consideration.</i>
<p>10.7.15</p>	<p>Given that Powys County Council claims to be applying the Statutory Schools Organisation Code can the Local Authority explain where in its documentation it can demonstrate how it is implementing Principle 3.1 in that document as applied to Gwernyfed High School? The consultation process should: • be undertaken when Proposals are still at a formative stage; (Gwernyfed is in the final stages of consultation and neither the school, parents, children, or community organisations were consulted at the Proposals formative stage); include sufficient reasons and information for particular Proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response; provide adequate</p>	<p><i>The School Organisation Code states that consultation should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Be undertaken when Proposals are still at a formative stage;</i> <i>• Include sufficient reasons and information for particular Proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response;</i> <i>• Provide adequate time for consideration and response</i> <i>• Ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken</i> <p><i>Pre-engagement took place with the governing bodies, Headteachers and local members of Gwernyfed High School. The preferred option was shared with them and they were able to submit their views to the School Organisation Review Panel and the Cabinet. It is the Authority’s view that consultation has taken place when the Proposal is still in its formative stage, because Cabinet can decide to proceed with the Proposal, modify the Proposal or dismiss the Proposal.</i></p>

	<p>time for consideration and response; and ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document explains the reasons for the Proposal and provides all information required by the School Organisation Code.</i></p> <p><i>The required period for formal consultation, according to legislation, is 42 days. The original period provided in this case was 48 days, which was further extended.</i></p> <p><i>This Consultation Report provides evidence of all the issues raised during the Consultation, and Cabinet has a duty to consider all these prior to making the decision.</i></p>
<p>10.7.16</p>	<p>As the business case is – according to the Consultation Document - an integral part of the consultation process, explain why it has not been distributed as part of this consultation and explain how the consultation process is still valid, despite the business case not being generally available?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document clearly stated where the Business Case could be accessed. Relevant information from the business case has been included within the Consultation Document, in particular the Option Appraisal and Financial Evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document was available online, and hard copies were distributed to every family within the catchment areas under review.</i></p>
<p>10.7.17</p>	<p>Why has information contained in the OBC been omitted from the consultation document, and what does Powys County Council plan to do to remedy its failure to give members of the public the opportunity to consider and respond to this important information as part of the consultation process?</p>	
<p>10.7.18</p>	<p>This Proposal is clearly an amalgamation/merger of two very different schools, both educationally and culturally. It is not the fault of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL that education in Powys and particularly BRECON HIGH SCHOOL, is in such a poor state. POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL have to</p>	<p>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</p>

	take responsibility for that situation. Does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL accept that it must take responsibility for this scenario and accept that it must not use its own poor performance and that of BRECON HIGH SCHOOL as a factor to close a school that is functioning well?	
10.7.19	What weighting matrix has been used in deciding which of the two options arrived at by the discredited Options Appraisal Framework was preferred?	<i>No weighting was used to decide on the preferred option.</i>
10.7.20	Why has the “clear disadvantage of [...]no secondary education in the Gwernyfed area, with additional travel for pupils” and the “requirement for significant capital investment to build a new school” been discounted in favour of an option that is described as “challenging operationally” but “not insurmountable” (when the operational challenge is predicated upon the limited view of a through school that involves all 13 primary schools as feeder schools), even when it is described as having “added benefits of improving transition between primary and secondary phases and provides a greater level of savings to the Council”?	<i>The rationale for agreeing the preferred option is stated within the Business Case and the Consultation Document.</i>
10.8 Will the Council take community views on board?		
10.8.1	Please could you explain why the panel’s attitude was so appalling, seemingly disinterested in being at the consultation such	<i>The Authority disputes this view.</i>

	that it exuded through their responses both verbal & non-verbal?	
10.8.2	The consultation response of the area's community campaign group (established in response to the Powys Proposals) is highlighted, and the Governing Body seeks assurances that <i>this document, together with the impact assessments from the community groups and local businesses, will be considered and responded to in full.</i>	<i>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, the Cabinet will consider all issues raised during the consultation along with updated community impact assessment. The Consultation Report contains detailed analysis and appropriate responses have been provided.</i>
10.9 Cabinet Composition		
10.9.1	Cllr Arwel Jones, said in his summing up in Brecon that they would be looking at the north of the county in future but 'logistics would not make it possible to do it all at the same time' (Brecon 2:06). He is right that it would not be possible to implement it all at the same time but it is possible, and indeed fundamental to the process to plan it all at the same time! I would be grateful if you could let me know where I can find this information. If it is not available I can only conclude that there is some truth in the suggestion that the cabinet members, who predominantly represent communities from the north of the county, have their own agenda.	<i>As noted in the Cabinet Report of 24th March 2015, a review of secondary education in North Powys, is taking place. An initial feasibility report on the establishment of a Category 2A school or schools in North Powys was considered by Cabinet on the 29th September 2015, and a further business case has been requested, which will be finalised by the Autumn.</i>
10.9.2	Why are the local councillors not allowed to vote on what is a monumental decision for this area. I believe the executive council of nine members, who hold all the power were chosen by the council leader Barry Thomas,	<i>On the 16th of June 2016, the County Council voted for Cabinet to retain powers of determination on school reorganisation powers. This is legally acceptable.</i>

	<p>none of who come from this area. This is totally undemocratic. Can you please tell me if this is a legal use of the council's power?</p>	
10.9.3	<p>How are the council cabinet members qualified to make these decisions? How many have a background in education? The participants were content to give responses (not answers) that were inaccurate, incoherent, lacking in content and unrelated to the question asked of them.</p>	<p><i>Cabinet members, and their specific portfolios, are determined by the Leader of the Council, with all members of Council selected through a democratic process.</i></p>
<p>10.10 Lack of/Lost confidence in Powys County Council</p>		
10.10.1	<p>Why on the one hand do we as a rational community understand to the nth degree the importance of education, yet on the other hand Powys County Council act to totally undermine the vehicle with which to provide this to our children – Gwernyfed High School? The answer is that no-one at Powys County Council seems to have the vision, or guts, to invest in Gwernyfed.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document clearly explains the reasons why secondary education in Powys has to change, and the pressures that it faces. The Authority has put forward this Proposal in order to achieve the benefits described within the Consultation Document, at a time when there are significant pressures on the education system.</i></p>
10.10.2	<p>How can we trust a county council education department that appears to be simply failing and ruining lives in the process?</p>	<p><i>The education department of Powys County Council is not failing. It has not at any time been in the Estyn category of special measures. Estyn inspections of Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People (LAESCYP) are wide ranging and not limited to the Education Department. LAESCYP in Powys was placed in the category of requiring “Significant Improvement” in October 2012 following an Estyn Monitoring visit. Subsequently due to the progress and improvements made it was removed from the category in June 2014.</i></p>
10.10.3	<p>We have no confidence in Powys Education Department Officers – cites personal experience regarding the primary schools. How</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that the progress of primary school reorganisation in the Gwernyfed catchment has been unsatisfactorily slow. However, the Authority is very pleased with the current level of progress.</i></p>

	would Powys Education Officers rate the level of confidence that the South Powys Communities have in their ability to manage their portfolios?	
10.10.4	Do Powys Cabinet and Educational Officers really have the competence to manage finance or any educational innovation?	<i>Members of Cabinet and Officers have the required skills, knowledge and skills to manage change.</i>
10.10.5	Does Powys County Council still not understand why no one connected with Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL (or Brecon HIGH SCHOOL for that matter) trusts anything the local Authority states or does?	<i>The Authority acknowledges that any period of school reorganisation creates a lot of uncertainty and mistrust. However, it is the intention of the Authority for the New School to provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</i>
10.11 Powys County Council Performance		
10.11.1	Powys County are unable to answer specific questions and concerns raised about the decision to close. If Powys are to go ahead with this Proposals, who's to say they haven't covered all the legal work and thought of every outcome and possibility?	<i>The Proposal is still at a formative stage. If issues and concerns are raised that have not been previously considered, then they will be acknowledged and included within this Consultation Report.</i>
10.11.2	Ian Roberts did not have pupil number figures to hand during a council meeting on 16 May. Can we trust such a massive reorganisation to someone with such a tenuous grasp of what is actually going on?	<i>Comment noted</i>
10.11.3	[At GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL KS4 meeting] I feel that some of my questions were not answered fully and that the response from the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff was simply vague and unacceptable. What they	<i>Comment noted.</i>

appeared to fail to understand is that this Proposal is extremely selfish as Gareth Jones openly admitted that one of the driving forces behind the Proposals was that financially, the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL education department would be better off as the huge BRECON HIGH SCHOOL debt could be simply wiped off. This, in my opinion has no bearing on GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL at all and therefore as pupils we questioned why such an innocent and successful school with a strong management team are being dragged into a situation through no fault of its own that doesn't even benefit it. This question was one that couldn't be answered suitably ... What the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff soon established was that the GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL pupil's stance was strong and therefore admitted to us that there, and I quote from Gareth Jones "is another option that the council could look at" that would not affect GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL. From this, it must have been obvious that we asked the question so why isn't this the main Proposal? However, the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff appeared foolishly unprepared and again a sensible answer was not given.

10.11.4 [At GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL consultation meeting] How can a meeting be viable when the 'official representatives' of the education system and Welsh cabinet, appeared to have little idea of the community's requirements, let alone the school's outstanding achievements? They were totally inconsiderate to audience

Every effort was made at the Consultation Meeting at Gwernyfed to ensure a full and robust answer was provided to all questions raised.

	<p>questions; all 'representatives' using avoidance language, consistently not answering specific questions and at times totally unable to respond</p>	
10.11.5	<p>A done deal?</p>	<p><i>The Authority's Proposals are never 'a done deal'. All Proposals for any school reorganisation must follow the statutory procedures as laid out in the Schools Standards and Organisation Act and the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2013.</i></p>
10.11.6	<p>Why, when the council were required to supply a taxi to Builth from Upper Chapel did it decide to supply two coaches from Brecon to Builth having the obvious intention of removing as many students from the Brecon Welsh stream as possible, thereby predetermining the outcome of the consultation?</p>	<p>When parents from the Brecon catchment area chose to send their children to Builth Wells High School for Welsh-medium education in 2015 and in a previous year, the decision to award home-to-school transport was initially refused by the Authority. However, following a successful appeal process, home-to-school was awarded.</p>
10.11.7	<p>Once again the suggestion of a fait accompli is strong – are the Builth feeder primaries not included as they are not directly affected given that the decision to move Welsh provision has already been made even though the Consultation period is still open? There is no suggestion that Builth primaries should feed into Brecon-based Welsh provision; a huge oversight given that we are still 'in Consultation'...?</p>	<p><i>The Proposal is still at a formative stage. Consultation Documents were distributed to all schools in the Gwernyfed and Brecon catchment, and all other affected schools. Builth catchment primaries were not deemed to be schools affected by this Proposal – according to the School Organisation Code 'an affected school is defined as 'a school to which it might reasonably be considered that pupils may wish to transfer'.</i></p>
<p>10.12 Primary School Proposals/Consultations</p>		
10.12.1	<p>Despite promises to the contrary, new schools at Hay and Clyro have not been built. Who is</p>	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that the progress of primary school reorganisation in the Gwernyfed catchment has been unsatisfactorily slow.</i></p>

	<p>to say that the new Brecon school will ever be built given past history?</p>	<p><i>Should the Welsh Government approve the OBC for the Brecon Campus, the next stage will be to engage a Design & Build contractor and submit a Full Business Case to Welsh Government. The current timescale for submission of the FBC is April 2017, which will mean that construction can begin in Summer 2017.</i></p>
<p>10.12.2 Do you not have a responsibility to give those children a more secure secondary education that they have been denied in their primary education?</p>		<p><i>It is the intention of the Authority for the New School to provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities. It acknowledges that the development of new primary schools in the Gwernyfed area has been slow, and that some pupils who transferred from closing schools have not benefitted from having new facilities because of this.</i></p>
<p>10.12.3 Should GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL close there will be loss of friendships and change of peer groups as some pupils have no option but to go along with the proposed change whilst friends are moved to schools out of County. This does not encourage a positive school life for those involved with the changeover of schools, some of whom have already been through this process already when primary schools in GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL catchment area have been closed. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify putting some pupils through this process on more than one occasion in their 3-18 years of education?</p>		<p><i>The Authority accepts that every school reorganisation Proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils. It is also acknowledged that some pupils in the Gwernyfed area have also been part of a primary school reorganisation. However, the aim of this Proposal is to ensure the future sustainability of high-quality secondary education in the area in light of the significant challenges that are outlined in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
<p>10.13 Public Consultation Events</p>		
<p>10.13.1 The ORS representative who chaired the meeting at Llandod told us in that meeting that his aim was "to ensure that you all get ample opportunity to ask questions". Was that</p>		<p><i>The Authority was keen to ensure that all consultation meetings at all four schools under review were consistent in terms of time and format, and therefore all public meetings were held for 2 hours. The Gwernyfed meeting continued</i></p>

	<p>laudable aim achieved at Gwernyfed? You know very well that many of those who wanted to speak at Gwernyfed were unable to speak because the meeting ended before everyone had a chance to do so. Is it acceptable to allocate the same insufficient amount of time for questions at a meeting at the failing school in Builth Wells, which is to be improved and expanded under the cabinet's plans, as for the meeting at the successful school at Gwernyfed, which faces closure? If the answers to those two questions is no, as it has to be, is not the entire consultation process a sham?</p>	<p><i>for longer than this and the facilitator ensured that as many people as possible had the opportunity to speak.</i></p> <p><i>A public meeting, however, is only one part of the consultation process, and there are a number of ways of responding, which were publicised within the Consultation Document, during the consultation meetings, on the Council's website and in the press.</i></p>
<p>10.13.2</p>	<p>Criticises the fact that not everyone who wanted to speak at the consultation meetings was allowed to do so. Does it not demonstrate an almost unbelievable naivety on the part of your company to allocate the same time to a meeting at the failing school in Builth Wells, which is to be improved and expanded under the cabinet's plans, as for the meeting at the successful school at Gwernyfed, which faces closure? If the answers to those two questions is no, as it has to be, is not the entire consultation process a sham?</p>	
<p>10.14 The Questionnaire</p>		
<p>10.14.1</p>	<p>On page 2 of the ... Questionnaire, I am asked to comment on whether I believe the council is right to make changes to respond to their belief that there is a case for change in Powys education. Is this not potentially misleading -</p>	<p><i>The School Organisation Code sets out the requirement to present supporting information on the case for change in a clear and coherent way. The question on page 2 of the questionnaire is designed to seek responses (either positive or negative) to that case for change. The distinction between asking about the need for change and support for the specific Proposals is important as an</i></p>

	<p>as responses may indicate that a change is needed but not the one suggested in the Proposal? I am concerned as to how the cabinet will present this data.</p> <p><i>individual could agree that there is a need for change but might not necessarily agree with the solutions being proposed. Of course, they may also say there is no need to change. The questionnaire then goes on to ask for responses to the specific Proposals around the future of English and Welsh medium provision. Furthermore, open text boxes allow respondents to explain why they agree or disagree with the Proposals and to suggest alternative Proposals including no change.</i></p> <p><i>The specific concern being raised appears to be around whether or not any support for the case for change might be conflated with support for the specific Proposals, so it is worth clarifying then that ORS will present data on each question separately as they appear in the questionnaire with supporting verbatim comments to ensure that no such conflation occurs. The bottom line is that the consultation is asking for responses the specific Proposals for the reorganisation of schools and this- not response the case for change- is the key measure.</i></p>
<p>10.14.2 While the questionnaire states the case for change, it does not provide any reasons why the Proposal should NOT be considered. Is this not potentially creating a bias in responses and is a consultation document allowed to be one-sided?</p>	<p><i>The questionnaire was meant to accompany the Consultation Document – disadvantages and risks have been included within the Document.</i></p>
<p>10.14.3 Last year the response from the local community was clearly against the closure of Gwernyfed High School, so this year why would the response be any different?</p>	<p><i>In 2015, the Authority did not consult on a Proposal related to Gwernyfed High School, and it is important to adhere to the fundamental principles of consultation, as stated in the School Organisation Code, when bringing forward Proposals for school reorganisation.</i></p>
<p>10.15 Reporting</p>	
<p>10.15.1 Will Powys County Council produce a review of the consultation process, showing responses of all the groups included in the list of consultees? And if not, why not?</p>	<p><i>A Consultation Report will be published which will include reference to all the issues raised. It will also note Estyn’s response, as required by the School Organisation Code, and highlight any responses from children and young people.</i></p>

10.16 The Proposal		
10.16.1	Explain how these Proposals fulfil the seven goals in the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015.	<i>A single Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out which considers the impact of the Proposal against the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.</i>
10.16.2	For CSF 2, define what “good value for money” means. Where do quality of education experience, quality of teaching, equality of opportunity within the county, life opportunities and minimal adverse environmental impact fit in? Where does avoiding disruption to families’ lives fit in? Where does community cohesion and economic regeneration as a consequence of a stronger and growing high school fit in? Where does the added value of attracting new families into the area as a consequence of the new primary schools, New School Building and investing in better primary Welsh-medium education fit in?	<i>CSF2: ‘good value for money’ is defined as ‘The option must maximise return on the required investment (benefits optimisation) in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness; and the option must minimise associated risks.’ Quality of education is addressed is addressed within the Investment Objectives. Community cohesion and economic regeneration are considered via the impact assessments.</i>
10.16.3	For CSF 3, what “better outcomes” are defined? Better in what way? Better quality of teaching and education experience? Better equality of opportunity within the county? Better life opportunities as a consequence of the education? Lower environmental impact? Lower disruption to family life? Stronger community cohesion?	<i>CSF3 is defined as ‘improved attainment’ for learners.</i>
10.16.4	For CSF 4, why is Potential Achievability defined in terms of political acceptance? Whose politics, Powys County Council’s or the Welsh Government’s? This appears to reveal that the future of Brecon’s and Gwernyfed’ s	<i>CSF – Potential Achievability is a standard Critical Success Factor in HM Treasury’s guidance for Five Case Business Models. It states that there needs to be political acceptance of the Proposal across all levels of politics. The</i>

	sixth form and Welsh-medium education is down to political point scoring. Education should be apolitical.	<i>Proposal is part of a statutory process where the decision-making is based on a political system.</i>
10.16.5	The consultation document states that the maintaining the status quo “will not create a sustainable resilient infrastructure for secondary education in the current and forecasted financial climate”. What is the basis for this statement?	<i>The basis for this statement is evidence from schools, as stated in PriceWaterhouseCoopers’ Study into the Viability of Secondary School in Powys. Other sources of evidence are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Pupil projections</i> - <i>Financial projections</i> - <i>Quality profile of secondary schools</i> - <i>Condition of buildings</i> - <i>Surplus places</i> <i>Curriculum assessment</i>
10.16.6	What are the local priorities referred to on page 18 that reflect the actual expressed views and wishes of those in the Gwernyfed catchment? How does this compare with the local priorities that Powys Council has for this area of the County? Why does Powys feel it necessary to inflict this plan on a local population that is clearly antagonistic about the plan generally, in addition to questioning the motives of the local Authority?	<i>Page 18 of the document refers to the potential advantages and disadvantages of the Proposal. It states that the Proposal will lead to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opportunities to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities</i> <i>Local priorities are defined as those of Powys County Council’s Schools Service.</i> <i>The Consultation Document explains the challenges facing the secondary sector in Powys. The Authority disputes the claim that it is ‘inflicting this plan on a local population’ – Cabinet has given its approval for the Authority to consult on the Proposal – all views will be considered before any further decisions are taken.</i>
10.16.7	Tell me, where is the enhancement of the quality of life for future generations of children in the Gwernyfed area? How is this sustainable, equitable or fair?	<i>Please refer to the Single Integrated Impact Assessment.</i>
10.16.8	What is transformational about this Proposal?	<i>The Proposal provides an opportunity to transform the secondary education infrastructure in the area.</i>

10.17 Legality		
10.17.1	Is the Proposal to close Gwernyfed LEGAL? You are closing a yellow category school, out of ESTYN monitoring, to merge it with Brecon, a failing school in red banding and in special measures. Why should Gwernyfed be sacrificed to help Brecon get themselves out of a mess? If Gwernyfed have managed to work hard and get themselves removed from ESTYN monitoring, is it fair to then merge them with a failing school, which has had a similar amount of time to turn things around and failed to do so?	<p><i>The Proposal is legal, and is compliant with the statutory process for school reorganisation.</i></p> <p><i>The Proposal is not the merger of two schools: it is the closure of two schools and establishment of a new school.</i></p>
10.17.2	For some children affected by the closure they have already been through the closure of their primary school (Ffynon Gynon , Rhos coch, Llanigon and bronllys) Is it Legal to be able to disrupt a child's education in this way twice during their schooling.	<p><i>The Authority accepts that any school reorganisation Proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved, and accepts that some pupils have already experienced their schools closing, due to that the reorganisation of primary schools in Gwernyfed catchment.</i></p> <p><i>However, the Authority has a duty to ensure the long-term sustainability of schools within the context of falling rolls and challenging economic times.</i></p>
10.17.3	Could you please explain how this is passed off as a legal process when you are not undertaking part of that process by listening to local opinion? Just by holding meetings does not mean you are listening.	<i>The Consultation has been carried out in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act, and the School Organisation Code. The Consultation Report will be considered by Cabinet prior to any further decisions being made.</i>
10.17.4	If approved NPTC would offer 25 AS/A Levels but you do not confirm if they will be offering chemistry as they do not currently have a viable chemistry lab ... Surely under the Welsh Assembly Education policy which states you are not allowed to close a school if it	<i>NPTC Group of Colleges proposes to increase the range of A levels on offer, not reduce it. Chemistry was missing from the original provisional list; this was as an oversight which was pointed out during consultation. Chemistry has been added to the provisional list as will other subjects where there is demand</i>

	<p>disadvantages the pupils and their welfare, you are now illegally disadvantaging them?</p>
<p>10.17.5 Taking Welsh education out of Brecon is bordering on illegal. Every child in Wales should have access to their language and culture.</p>	<p><i>The Authority’s intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.</i></p> <p><i>The Welsh Government’s Welsh – medium Education Strategy states ‘Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.’</i></p> <p><i>‘The term ‘bilingual provision’ is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those 9 Welsh-medium Education Strategy April 2010 Information document No: 083/2010 where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called ‘dual stream’ schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.’</i></p> <p><i>The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners’ linguistic skills in Welsh are</i></p>

		<i>not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.'</i>
10.17.6	The School Organisation Code states that the consultation document must include the " <i>Likely benefits to children and young people, in accordance with the seven core aims of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</i> " Can the council please explain how they have addressed this within the consultation document? As far as I can see, they have not and I therefore suggest that the document has not met the criteria of the SOC and hence is not legal.	<i>The Consultation Document is compliant with section 3.2 of the Code. This section outlines what proposers must include in a consultation document and does not include the statement outlined in italics (left). This statement comes from Annex C of the Code, which is an example of a Consultation Document template. It states 'The following template sets out a suggested but not mandatory format for the Information which is required to be included in a consultation document. This outline of the contents is not exhaustive and proposers would be expected to include additional elements depending on the nature and context of the Proposals under Consideration.</i>
10.17.7	The Proposal is clearly a merger of schools to deal with BRECON HIGH SCHOOL debts. To suggest that this is not a merger is not acceptable. It is noted that a merger between a successful and a failing school is illegal. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain that this is not a merger?	<i>This Proposal will see the closure of both schools and the establishment of a new school. It is not a merger.</i>
10.18 Big Lottery Issue		
10.18.1	pg. 38 'The Big Lottery is a consultee of this consultation. If the Proposal is implemented, it is possible that a proportion of the grant may need to be repaid. If this happens, the Council would need to identify the funding for this.	<i>Whilst this issue has not been included as a risk, it has clearly been included within the Consultation Document, at page 38. Any repayment of the grant, or proportion of the grant, would be funded from Council reserves or capital budget, e.g. capital receipts.</i>

<p>'Why is this not included in the Risk Assessment for the Proposal? What budget would this come out of? What guarantee can the Council give that this would not come out of the Education budget? Why is the repayment not built in as one of the costs of the Proposal?</p>		
<p>10.19 Inclusiveness</p>		
<p>10.19.1</p>	<p>How can developing an inclusive education model be included as an advantage in the Proposal, if it is already available in the current settings? Where is the evidence this is not currently provided at GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL or BRECON HIGH SCHOOL? There is no evidence given for this in the documentation. In fact, it is included as an Advantage of the status quo, pg. 11.</p>	<p><i>It is not inferred that Gwernyfed or Brecon High Schools do not have an inclusive education model. Instead, the statement asserts that here would be an opportunity, if the Proposal is implemented, to develop an inclusive model of education. This is expected of all schools, even if they are current or new schools.</i></p>
<p>10.20 Managing Change</p>		
<p>10.20.1</p>	<p>Please explain how the Council will offer this support at a time when staff numbers at the Council are reducing due to Public Sector cuts.</p>	<p><i>The Schools Transformation Programme has been budgeted, including provision for the appropriate staffing.</i></p>
<p>10.20.2</p>	<p>Once a decision is made on the changes, when will the Council provide a Change Management strategy and plan to support the schools?</p>	<p><i>A Change Management Plan will be implemented on completion of the required statutory process.</i></p>
<p>10.21 Ethics</p>		
<p>10.21.1</p>	<p>You say you have a duty to take into account the impact of your decisions on people with</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority has recognised that pupils from the Gwernyfed area may not be able to access after-school</i></p>

<p>10.21.2</p>	<p>protected characteristics but please answer for me what about a pupil's Human Rights to have a full educational life as in being able to attend extracurricular activities?</p> <p>Llangors Community Council area, like so many areas in this rural part of Wales, has no public transport and for those travelling longer distances to a school in Brecon there is an issue of inequality as pupils will not be able to access such extra-curricular activities. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify treating pupils on an unequal basis?</p>	<p><i>activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport. As a way of mitigating this, the Consultation Document states:</i></p> <p><i>'The New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</i></p> <p><i>The majority of pupils attending Gwernyfed High School are currently reliant on home-to-school transport and their ability to access after-school activities would be similarly affected if the Proposal is approved.'</i></p>
<p>10.22 Alternative Proposals/ides – through schools</p>		
<p>10.22.1</p>	<p>Why has the Proposal for a through school on the Gwernyfed site not been given due consideration? There have been plans for the rebuilding of 5 primary schools within the Gwernyfed catchment area and as yet, nearly 8 years later, not a brick has been laid. Would it not be prudent, therefore, to give further consideration to investing this money in adding to the Gwernyfed site and bringing all pupils from age 4 to 18 onto one site?</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, during the option appraisal exercise, an All Through School on multi-sites in the Gwernyfed area was considered. It was not considered feasible to consider an All Through School on one site in Gwernyfed due to the fact that plans to build five new schools in the catchment was in progress, and Welsh Government had already approved a Strategic Outline Case and Outline Business Case for this. The scope of the Secondary Schools Review was the secondary sector. It was necessary to define the scope of the Review, and the caveat for primary schools allowed officers to consider the inclusion of primary schools only if there were specific issues relating to the primary sector in that area e.g. leadership, quality, building condition, surplus places or the need for additional places.</i></p>
<p>10.22.2</p>	<p>I can understand that it is not ideal to taxi A-level students across Powys, and Gwernyfed does not offer the breadth of subjects that meets the proposed standard. So why not build a new school in Brecon from 4 years old until 19 years old, with excellent teaching facilities?</p>	<p><i>The Authority does not believe that All Through Schools in either catchment would meet the majority of the following objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;</i> <i>• To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;</i>
<p>10.22.3</p>		

<p>10.22.4</p>	<p>Have they thought of combining the primary and secondary school provision in Brecon, would this not be “transformational and creative” as Powys County Council claim they want to be?</p> <p>Explain why Powys County Council has pre-determined and limited the scope of this option by imposing an arbitrary criterion, namely that they “will only be considered if there are specific local conditions related to primary schools in a particular area ...” Explain why it would be disadvantageous to establish All-through schools in each of the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;</i> • <i>To reduce surplus places in schools;</i> • <i>To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;</i> • <i>To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs.</i> <p><i>There has been no pre-determination. The Proposal has been brought forward through a detailed option appraisal exercise and business case, as evidenced in the Consultation Document. The reasons for discounting other options can be found in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
<p>10.22.5</p>	<p>Explain why Powys County Council has predetermined that the All-through option is only possible for the New School Building in Brecon, loading 13 feeder primary schools onto this one campus</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document (page 100)</i></p>
<p>10.22.6</p>	<p>Why are we not considering building a primary school on the Gwernyfed site? This would give us the opportunity to increase the numbers at the school by increasing the age-range catered for. Locally, Christ College Brecon has done exactly that in order to improve their income streams to stay viable. Surely we could do something similar in the public sector, to make Gwernyfed a more financially secure unit by boosting numbers? We have a huge site for further buildings and it is a safe and secure site for younger pupils. There seems to be so much practical sense in this option. It keeps the</p>	<p><i>‘For the purposes of this exercise (the option appraisal exercise), the only two schools that have been considered are Mount Street Infant and Mount Street Junior Schools – all other schools in the catchment have been discounted from consideration at this stage. It is also assumed that an All Through School in Brecon would be a single-sited All Through School, given there is already a planned capital investment to replace the current building of Brecon High School. ‘</i></p>

10.22.7

community cohesion by increasing the numbers of students on this site making it more financially viable and offering a continuity of education on one site.

10.22.8

We understand that GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL support a Proposal to build an all through school at Brecon and include pupils from Mount Street primary school on the one site, this allowing GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL to remain as it is now. This would appear to be a transformational project that would meet all the 21st century schools criteria and assist with budgetary matters in Brecon. Why has this Proposal not been properly analysed in the Consultation Report and how does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify putting this approach to one side when it is supported by the schools involved?

10.22.9

I believe that given the travel distances between high schools in this rural, sparsely populated county, Powys need to be seriously considering options such as federation and 3 - 16/18 through schools. These options would save money, provide scope for improving educational standards and allow children to be educated in their own communities.

If Brecon so desperately needs a new school why is Powys County Council not looking a revolutionary 21st century model of a through school in Brecon? - where they could consolidate primaries and secondary with a

<p>10.22.10</p>	<p>seamless transition, as modelled successfully in other areas of Wales and the primary schools could be redeveloped as much needed housing within this National Park area.</p> <p>I believe that the new Brecon Community School must be a bilingual 4-18 school with an emphasis on quality of provision and inclusivity. Alongside academic excellence, this would offer transformational vocational pathways developed through links with major employment providers in the Brecon area, e.g. public services and the National Park. ... The location of one or more primary schools into the new school.</p>	
<p>10.22.11</p>	<p>In view of the overwhelming opposition to your current plans, what are your alternatives, what is your plan B?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Reports will be considered fully by Cabinet before any further decisions are made about the way forward.</i></p>
<p>10.22.12</p>	<p>Explain why Powys County Council has predetermined that the All-through option at Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools has been excluded in favour of a tertiary, post-16 FE college model.</p>	<p><i>There has been no pre-determination. The Proposal has been brought forward through a detailed option appraisal exercise and business case, as evidenced in the Consultation Document. The reasons for discounting other options can be found in the Consultation Document.</i></p>
<p>10.22.13</p>	<p>Why has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL not considered an option with enhanced use of ICT, leaving schools to remain open, more subjects to be offered, greater efficiency of staff, and increased choice for pupils?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i></p>
<p>10.22.14</p>	<p>Why don't any of the Proposals for a transformational model make more about the potential for investing in technology to deliver</p>	<p><i>The Authority does not believe that enhanced use of ICT would address all the issues faced e.g. falling pupil numbers, financial efficiency, surplus places,</i></p>

<p>the curriculum between schools in south Powys?</p>	<p><i>condition of school building, equity of provision, or meet the following investment objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;</i> • <i>To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;</i> • <i>To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;</i> • <i>To reduce surplus places in schools;</i> • <i>To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;</i> • <i>To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs</i>
<p>10.22.15 Why is it not possible to have a simple and straightforward Proposal to build a new school building? I appreciate that funds are tight, but is it not possible to replace the buildings without impacting on the fabric of the community? Perhaps, by employing an open and transparent strategy of selling off some of the land? Perhaps asking for help, financial contributions or ideas from the communities that your Proposals will affect and therefore will be motivated to act?</p>	<p><i>This is possible. However, the Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i></p>
<p>10.22.16 Please explain to me why “alternatives such as clustering, collaboration or federation were not pursued as it was felt that they did not meet the Council’s objectives in finding solutions to the problems”.</p>	<p><i>Clustering, collaboration or federation do not, on the whole, address the following investment objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;</i>

- *To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;*
- *To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;*
- *To reduce surplus places in schools;*
- *To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;*
- *To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs.*

There is already a degree of collaboration and clustering between the schools in Mid Powys and the wider area, including the South Powys Post-16 Partnership, and the problems outlined in the Consultation Document still prevail.

Also, none of these models would provide a solution that addresses the condition of both school buildings.

10.22.17 You have other options. You could build a 6 form in Brecon and have a new school for Brecon children. Why have no other options been offered?

The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.

The Proposal has been brought forward through a detailed option appraisal exercise and business case, as evidenced in the Consultation Document. The reasons for discounting other options can be found in the Consultation Document.

An option for a single-sited All Through School in Brecon was considered, but discounted – the reasons for this are outlined in the Consultation Document.

10.22.18	<p>[Welsh Proposal]It was stated in the Builth Wells consultation evening that teams of teachers will travel between the two sites (being Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod-Wells High school) which would allow them to deliver lessons to both sites. Why can't a Welsh speaking team of teachers travel between Builth Wells High School and Brecon High School? Not only will it drastically cut travel costs, it would also ensure the security, safety and welfare of our children by keeping them off the roads and prevent anxiety and stress of pupils and their families.</p>	<p><i>The Proposal for Welsh-medium provision is intended to create a critical mass of learners in one place in order to be able to provide robust linguistic continuity throughout the key stages of education. This would not be possible with a peripatetic team of teachers.</i></p>
10.22.19	<p>What research / modelling has been conducted by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Educational Officers into how new learning / teaching technologies could enable a reduction in student travel, enable interschool collaboration around subjects taught and increase numbers of A levels offered, etc.?</p>	<p><i>The Authority, through its 14 – 19 grant, has already invested in installing video-conferencing equipment in every school and College Campus in Powys. Video-conferencing courses, and other distance learning technology, have been funded by the Authority. However, this alone, does not address all the issues facing the secondary sector nor meets the investment objectives listed in the Consultation Document (see 14.10.4)</i></p>
10.22.20	<p>Has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL considered the WG report of March 2016? Does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL accept that this Proposal now has to be urgently reviewed with a view to retaining individual 6th forms at both GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and understand that evaluating the current South Powys Consortium system and possibly updating it by using virtual learning techniques is likely to be more effective? There is a rural sixth form system operating in Pembrokeshire which Welsh Government support. Has POWYS</p>	<p><i>The Welsh Government published a 'Think Piece on the possible options for improving the performance and efficiency of sixth forms in Wales' on the 15th March 2016. This was published after Cabinet had made its decision to proceed to Consultation. The purpose of the Report was 'to set out the possible options available to the Welsh Government (WG) for improving the performance and efficiency of sixth forms in Wales, based on a review of the latest robust evidence. This included an appraisal of relevant literature and policy documentation, as well as feedback and opinion from a range of key stakeholders.' There is, to date, no clear policy direction from the Welsh Government based on this Report.</i></p> <p><i>Officers have had discussions with officers from Pembrokeshire County Council.</i></p>

	<p>COUNTY COUNCIL examined the Pembrokeshire structure/case study with a view to assisting with this matter?</p>	
<p>10.22.21</p>	<p>The Council asks why POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL cannot <i>take the good and positive aspects of Gwernyfed and import them to Brecon to help turn it around ready for when its new building is complete.</i> It says that the South Powys Curriculum Consortium shows that communities and schools can work together.</p>	<p><i>The Authority believes that the issues facing the secondary sector are so significant that this softer approach would not, on the whole, address all the issues nor meet the following investment objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;</i> • <i>To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;</i> • <i>To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;</i> • <i>To reduce surplus places in schools;</i> • <i>To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;</i> • <i>To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs.</i> <p><i>There is already a degree of collaboration and clustering between the schools in Mid Powys and the wider area, including the South Powys Post-16 Partnership, and the problems outlined in the Consultation Document still prevail.</i></p> <p><i>Also, none of these models would provide a solution that addresses the condition of both school buildings.</i></p>
<p>10.23</p>	<p>Urban/Rural</p>	
<p>10.23.1</p>	<p>Scottish Government: “Commission on the delivery of Rural Education” highlights that: local Authority actions are not always joined up with community Proposals for new housing and</p>	<p><i>A draft Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken which recognised the negative impact of the Proposal on the community of Gwernyfed. This will be updated to include issues raised during the consultation, and Cabinet will be required to consider this before making any further decisions.</i></p>

	<p>school closure at the same time; the impact on community wellbeing of threats to close schools; that rural school closures should be subject to thorough community impact assessments; that thriving rural communities depend in part on retaining local services and facilities like schools, shops, venues etc. If English and Scottish governments recognise the importance of rural schools, why is Powys County Council struggling to do so? Can the council please explain how they are complying with this statement within their suggested Proposal?</p>	
<p>10.23.2</p>	<p>In our opinion we think that closing Gwernyfed is a bad idea and instead of closing a superb high school why don't you not build a new school in Brecon but renovate and re-furbish Gwernyfed then this spectacular school will be the best school in Wales.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document outlines the pressures facing secondary schools in Powys. The intention of the Proposal is to establish a sustainable secondary school infrastructure that could deliver high-quality education within financial and demographic constraints. The Authority believes that a larger secondary school, in a new built facility, will enable the provision of the best possible education.</i></p>
<p>10.23.3</p>	<p>The Councils' Consultation Document is notable for its omission of the Option to maintain Gwernyfed High School and make new provision for schooling in Brecon.</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document includes all the options that have been assessed, which includes 'Option 1 - Status Quo - Retain separate Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools'.</i></p>
<p>10.23.4</p>	<p>What are the options available that do NOT include school closures? What are the options available that do NOT include Gwernyfed' s closure? How could the secondary provision be changed in Brecon without first looking at the Primary School provision? Why is an 'all through school at Brecon' age 4-18, excluding Gwernyfed, not a viable option?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document includes all the options that have been assessed, which includes 'Option 1 - Status Quo - Retain separate Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools'. The reasons for discounting an All Through School option are outlined in the consultation Document.</i></p> <p><i>Clustering, collaboration or federation do not, on the whole, address the following investment objectives:</i></p>

10.23.5

Why was this considered too challenging? This would obviously need specific governance to ensure a level playing field for all Brecon catchment Primary schools- this should HAPPEN ANYWAY! POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL is worried there would be a two tier approach within catchment if there was combined primary and secondary school provision. What about the two tier approach that would be adopted in respect to the combination of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL pupils? GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL pupils would be severely disadvantaged compared to the Brecon pupils. See Page 105. There are No disadvantages to Brecon pupils if the Proposals are implemented. Where are the options including federation and increased collaboration? Why has this not been considered or costed? Where is the SWOT analysis for this? Closures were predetermined.

The other options put forward by Powys were inadequate. Gwernyfed should stay as it is. Brecon needs a new school but not at the expense of Gwernyfed. Why can't Powys combine primary and secondary schools in Brecon? This is a rural area, federation and collaboration of services of different schools (keeping the sites and provision the same) would also be another option that has been disregarded.

- *To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;*
- *To maximise the curriculum benefits at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;*
- *To provide post-16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;*
- *To reduce surplus places in schools;*
- *To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education;*
- *To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs.*

There is already a degree of collaboration and clustering between the schools in Mid Powys and the wider area, including the South Powys Post-16 Partnership, and the problems outlined in the Consultation Document still prevail.

Also, none of these models would provide a solution that addresses the condition of both school buildings.

<p>10.23.6</p>	<p>“The provision of post-16 education on a single site would remove any requirement for additional inter-school/college travel during the school day.” So would an in-school sixth form; an All-through 4 to 18 model in Brecon and Gwernyfed, and retaining Welsh-medium provision in Brecon.</p>	<p><i>The Authority agrees that the provision of post-16 education on a single site would remove any requirement for additional inter-school/college travel during the school day, if that provision was based in Brecon. Learners would have to travel to access vocational subjects at the College if the post-16 was sited in Gwernyfed.</i></p> <p><i>There is no post-16 Welsh-medium provision for learners in Brecon, therefore they would have to travel anyway to access this.</i></p>
<p>10.23.7</p>	<p>THINK OUTSIDE the BOX! Include the 6th form at Crickhowell in the development of Proposals for a dedicated 6th form at the site of one of the schools (probably Brecon) and the removal of 6th form provision at Crickhowell and Gwernyfed with the NPTC to provide a complimentary vocational education (which is the bit they might be good at). This would create more 11-16 spaces at Gwernyfed and Crickhowell and allow the benefits of a critical mass of 6th students.</p>	<p><i>The Authority agrees that this option would create the necessary critical mass for post-16 learners with access to vocational subjects at NPTC Group of Colleges. However, Crickhowell HIGH SCHOOL was not included in the review as the school is over the Council’s threshold for size of school at KS3 and KS4, and at Post-16, and can deliver a range of curriculum choices.</i></p>

REF	ISSUE	RESPONSE
11	The Consultation Process	
	11.1 Timescale	
11.1.1	the timescale is so small parents need to know what is going to happen to make plans for their children	<i>The Authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation Proposals creates a period of uncertainty. However, the Authority has to adhere to the legal procedures laid out in the School Organisation Code when bringing forward Proposals.</i>
11.1.2	How is the new building at Brecon expected to be finished by 2019-2020? There has been no planning passed, Brecon Town Council is against it, and The Brecon Beacons National Parks will have to be involved. No funding has been secured. The primary school projects were to be finished at Clyro by 2016. They have not been started. Pupils are all in temporary classrooms. How will this NOT happen at Brecon?	<i>Obtaining Welsh Government funding for investment requires the approval of business cases, which are also dependent on the successful outcome of any statutory consultation processes in relation to school reorganisation Proposals. Should the Proposal be supported by Cabinet, the Outline Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Government. It is only after approval of an Outline Business Case that the Authority can enter into a contract with a design and build contractor to develop designs. At that stage, plans will be submitted to the planning process.</i>
11.1.3	If the consultation does not follow the anticipated timescales, you MUST give all appropriate support and resources to Brecon High School to ensure the current cohort of children are not neglected for the sake of you long term vision. What assurances can you provide that will instil us with some confidence? The new school in Brecon High School, if the timescales are adhered to, will be built 10 years after it was officially classed as a Category D. If your Proposals don't proceed according to plan, what	<i>The Authority will continue to provide support to Brecon High School should the Proposal be abandoned, and a contingency plan for the school building will be developed in the event that this particular Proposal does not progress.</i>

	assurances can you give us parents that our children's health and safety will not be compromised as a result of your insufficient governance in this area?	
11.1.4	<p>We refer you to the table 9 on page 22 of the Outline Business Case for the Beacons Campus Project. This table details when you plan to spend money on building the proposed school. It shows 'New Build Capital Cost' expenditure as:</p> <p>Year 0: £50,000 Year 1: £41,000 Year 2: £295,000 Year 3: £11,333,000</p> <p>Therefore, by Year 3 (2019-20) – the year the new £20m school opens – you have only spent £11,719,000. (A quarter of the £45m Beacons Campus budget). You still have over £8m to spend on the new school. Please explain how you plan to open a £20m new school having spent only £11,719,000 on its construction. [Gwernyfed Campaign Group]</p>	In this table, year 5 is 19/20 (September 2019), so year 0 is actually 2014/15 (September 2014). It is reasonable to assume that £50k was spent in this year (that may be some form of feasibility or consulting fees).
11.2 Due Diligence – Options Appraisal, identifying preferred Proposal		
11.2.1	All the Council's arguments for closure were effectively refuted (in the consultation meeting on 20 April)	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.2.2	I do have specific concerns about the Powys County Council Cabinet meeting held on 24th February . Firstly, the	<i>The decision-making process followed the process outlined in the Council's Schools Transformation Policy 2014.</i>

	<p>decision making process was fundamentally flawed. A previous successful legal challenge forced Powys County Council to re-start the process, having failed to comply with their own and Welsh Government published policies for developing school transition Proposals. Powys County Council brought back to the table the same Proposals with no real evidence of them having considered alternative truly transformational options in any depth whatsoever. Also, the Proposals do not reflect the fundamental change to the curriculum now taken forwards by the Welsh Assembly Government and as described in Curriculum for Life. With more foresight and imagination Powys County Council could be at the forefront of these changes. There is nothing stated in the Proposals that anyway hints at the schooling for the pupils would be at any higher standard than what is currently being taught at Gwernyfed High School.</p> <p><i>A detailed Business Case was developed which followed an agreed methodology of appraising options.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority is fully aware of the fundamental changes to the curriculum in Wales, and the Proposal is intended to provide an infrastructure where that curriculum can be developed and flourish.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority has not attempted to ‘ram through its agenda in ignorance of the vocal and compelling views of local people’. With reference to an informal consultation on a variety of options for reorganisation secondary schools, which took place in 2011, not 2009, Cabinet listened to the views of local people and proposed a number of alternative models which maintained the current infrastructure of schools.</i></p> <p><i>This Proposal is part of a consultation which means that the Authority wishes to hear the views of local people, before taking any further decisions.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation has not been intentionally scheduled to clash with the exam period. Rather, the Authority wished to proceed with the consultation in order for the decision-making process to be carried out in a reasonable time, in order to avoid more uncertainty.</i></p>
<p>11.2.3 Since the Proposal to close the school was first sprung in 2009, the Council has attempted to ‘ram’ through its agenda in ignorance of the vocal and compelling views of local people. It has purposefully timetabled key and burdensome meetings during the exam period in an attempt to dissuade staff, pupils and parents from expressing their views. At a recent Cabinet meeting, the Council</p>	<p><i>The Authority does not agree with this statement. Given the scale of the responses to this consultation, it is apparent that the consultation was not scheduled to dissuade stakeholders from expressing their views.</i></p>

	<p>changed the agenda fifteen minutes before hand to include discussion of the proposed closure and had not provided its scrutiny committee with the documents necessary for it to evaluate the merits of the Proposal.</p>	
11.2.4	<p>I do not think that there has been sufficient investigation of other options that allow Brecon High School to continue to offer Welsh Medium Education and to retain an 11 – 18 offering.</p>	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.2.5	<p>From the start of this process only one option has been pursued and when you failed at the first hurdle it was pursued again, maybe with slightly different wording but none the less exactly the same Proposal was on the table. This make us all think that there has been no other consideration or avenue explored to make sure that the very best outcome is reached</p>	<i>A number of options were considered during the option appraisal process, as noted in the Consultation Document. These options were considered to be the most appropriate to meet the investment objectives and business needs.</i>
11.2.6	<p>There are numerous options mentioned in the consultation document, yet none are very forward looking. I was under the impression that all options should be explored or shown to have been ruled out as part of these consultations</p>	<i>A number of options were considered during the option appraisal process, as noted in the Consultation Document. These options were considered to be the most appropriate to meet the investment objectives and business needs.</i>
11.2.7	<p>Pg. 12: Possible options 'collaboration or federation were not pursued as it was FELT that they did not meet the Council's</p>	<i>Comment noted</i>

	<p>objectives in finding solutions to the problems.'</p> <p>On what basis (research/business case) was this decision to not pursue this as an option taken? [Using the word FELT demonstrates the lack of strategic approach throughout the whole of the consultation document. In the public, voluntary and commercial sectors we do not FEEL which decision is the best to take, we DECIDE based on evidence against clear expected qualitative and quantitative OUTCOMES.]</p>	
<p>11.2.8</p>	<p>In our opinion, the appraisal exercise beginning on P99 is flawed, and has been slanted in favour of the preferred option. 'Ticks' and 'double ticks' are arbitrary, subjective and do not appear to be directly linked to factual data. The significance of the 'X's in some columns has not been explained. Some aspects of the matrix on P101 are utterly bizarre - the first line, for example: 'To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners...' Somehow, for this objective, every option gets a tick. Even doing nothing gets a tick.</p> <p>It comes as no surprise that Option 4 is classed as non-achievable, since it is apparently to "Establish a new English-medium Secondary School in Gwernyfed" but the school would operate "from a single site in Brecon". This sort of sloppiness makes it impossible to take</p>	<p><i>The Option Appraisal Exercise was carried out in accordance with HM Treasury's Guidance for 5 Case Business Models. The Investment Objectives including within the Option Appraisal Exercise are focused on achieving educational outcomes, rather than community/social outcomes. These are included in the Draft community impact assessment. The justification for 'doing nothing' meeting the criteria for improving learning outcomes is because it would be expected that, should the two schools remain as they currently are, standards would be continually improving.</i></p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that there was an error in the description of Option 4 – it should have read 'Gwernyfed' instead of 'Brecon'.</i></p>

	<p>the matrix seriously. ... Please explain why negative impacts [such as 'Avoids negative social and economic impact on communities within the Gwernyfed catchment'] have been omitted from the appraisal exercise, and please provide an alternative appraisal which does take them into account. [Gwernyfed Campaign Group]</p>	
<p>11.2.9</p>	<p>What is not explained is how an option meeting the criteria can receive two ticks or why, if it meets the criteria, it only gets one tick. For instance the first criteria is 'To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range'. Each option gets one tick including the status quo ... in this framework the appraisers consider that doing nothing will as significantly improve learner outcomes as establishing a new English-medium Secondary School ... [more examples given] ... The Framework is shown to be deeply flawed, the marking pointless and the short-list thereby arrived at of no value whatsoever. ... What weighting matrix has been used in deciding which of the two options arrived at by the discredited Options Appraisal Framework was preferred? Why has the “clear disadvantage of [...]no secondary education in the Gwernyfed area, with additional travel for pupils” and the “requirement for significant capital</p>	<p>Se 11.2.8</p>

	investment to build a new school” been discounted in favour of an option that is described as “challenging operationally” but “not insurmountable” (when the operational challenge is predicated upon the limited view of a through school that involves all 13 primary schools as feeder schools), even when it is described as having “added benefits of improving transition between primary and secondary phases and provides a greater level of savings to the Council”?{	
11.3 The Council will ignore views		
11.3.1	The current Proposal definitely illustrates that the learners’ opinions and concerns have not even been slightly considered and therefore has left everyone feeling completely opposed and disgusted to the Proposal.	<i>The views of learners will be included within the Consultation Report. All comments and alternative options will be included within the Consultation Report that will be considered by Cabinet before any further decisions are made.</i>
11.3.2	Powys knows that the community do not want this merger to go ahead and so are ignoring comments and alternatives offered by the community.	
11.3.3	Powys knows that the community do not want this merger to go ahead and so are ignoring comments and alternatives offered by the community	
11.3.4	The panel could not have made it any clearer that they did not wish to be there, did not wish to listen and could not care about what the local community and	<i>The Authority refutes this comment. All consultation meetings were essential in order for the panel members to hear and understand the views of the community, and pupils.</i>

	more importantly the pupils affected by the Proposal had to say.	
11.3.5	The Council is treating the above Proposal as a fait accompli which is massively frustrating, which disenfranchises people from the democratic process and denies them their say in their children's education.	<i>The Authority refutes this comment – the Proposal is subject to a formal consultation, and the Cabinet will need to consider all views before it makes any further decision.</i>
11.3.6	I know the Gwernyfed Governors have tried (as have many others) to make constructive suggestions to POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL cabinet for alternative Proposals. This has continuously fallen on deaf ears. I urge POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to develop a strategy that builds on the success of Gwernyfed High School to drive up the standards in both schools without the continual threat of closure hanging over them. Gwernyfed must be retained as a stand-alone school or as part of a federation arrangement which crucially also includes “A” level provision.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.4 Cabinet Composition		
11.4.1	The Powys County Council Cabinet's members are nearly <i>all</i> from Montgomeryshire and this area has only 1 representative. In Montgomeryshire, they aren't closing any schools at all because they know that they'd get voted out. In this part of Powys we can't vote	<i>The Cabinet consists of 5 councillors from Montgomeryshire, 2 from Radnorshire and 2 from Brecknockshire.</i>

them out or do anything about it so they close *our* schools ... It means that they can do whatever they want to us and we are powerless to stop them.

11.4.2 I feel I have more of a right to say what is best for my children, business and town than councillors from Builth Wells and Montgomeryshire.

11.4.3 The cabinet system when organised (as it is presently) on broadly geographical lines disenfranchises residents of large parts of the county and is highly undemocratic.

11.4.4 Not one of the Powys County Cabinet lives in Brecon. Their lack of support for Brecon High School is obvious.

11.4.5 The decision will sit with a cabinet of nine members, most of whom live in Montgomeryshire. The members of the cabinet present at the evening did not instil confidence that any decisions will be well informed, objective and forward thinking. How are the council cabinet members qualified to make these decisions? How many have a background in education? The participants were content to give responses (not answers) that were inaccurate, incoherent, lacking in content and unrelated to the question asked of them.

<p>14.4.6</p>	<p>I was appalled at the recent consultation meeting at Gwernyfed to discover that most of the members proposing these changes were not from this area of Powys ...I notice that NO schools in their areas are planning to close.</p>	
<p>14.4.7</p>	<p>Why are the local councillors not allowed to vote on what is a monumental decision for this area. I believe the executive council of 9 members, who hold all the power were chosen by the council leader Barry Thomas, none of who come from this area. This is totally undemocratic. Can you please tell me if this is a legal use of the council's power?</p>	
<p>11.4.8</p>	<p>There is an apparent and/or perceived bias of POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL in favour of schools and the status quo in the north of the county.</p>	<p><i>On the 24th March 2017, Cabinet approved the start of the Secondary School Reorganisation Programme based on four priorities – this includes a review of secondary schools in North Powys, with a focus on Welsh-medium provision. This is currently underway.</i></p>
<p>11.5 Cabinet Decision</p>		
<p>11.5.1</p>	<p>If the "Cabinet" (whom I understand are made up mainly from individuals outside the local area) are ultimately responsible for making this decision and can do so based on the facts presented by these individuals then it is a very sad world indeed.</p>	<p><i>A separate review of secondary schools in North Powys is expected to report back to Cabinet in the autumn.</i></p> <p><i>The Cabinet will be considering the Consultation Report and updated impact assessments which will reflect all views put forward during the consultation, before any further decisions are made.</i></p>

11.6 Lack of/Lost confidence in Powys County Council		
11.6.1	I would like to take my children out of the Powys education system. It is not fit for purpose. There is a high-handed culture of presenting plans to the people and communities of Powys with very little interest in engagement and dialogue. This causes huge amounts of stress to communities directly affected and, presumably, makes the process of carrying out any plans extremely difficult, if not impossible. The cabinet at POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL need to be reminded that they exist to serve the people of Powys and not their own egos.	<i>The Proposal has been subject to an extensive consultation exercise. Cabinet will consider this information prior to making any further decisions.</i>
11.6.2	I attended the Public Meeting on Wednesday 20th April 2016 and was very disturbed at the lack of information given by the Councillors and what answers were given were not satisfactory. Clearly the community have lost faith in the Council and do not feel that our education is safe in their hands.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.6.3	I have absolutely zero confidence in Powys county council. This is for several reasons. In 2009, Powys proposed to close Gwernyfed, but they backed down as their process was flawed and done so illegally. Then again in the summer of 2015 the Proposal to close the school was challenged successfully once more as Powys county council failed to comply	<i>In 2011, not 2009, the Council carried out an informal consultation on a number of options for secondary school reorganisation. Cabinet, following consultation, decided to proceed with an alternative initiatives which maintained the number of high schools. This process was not illegal or flawed.</i> <i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority did receive a legal challenge to a Cabinet recommendation in 2015, and started the process again.</i>

	with their own and Welsh Government published policies for developing school transition Proposals. They then brought back to the table the same Proposals with no real evidence of them having considered alternative options in any depth whatsoever. Surely this alone proves that the people behind this plan are totally inadequate ... Also in this meeting they failed to address specific questions asked and concerns raised about the decision to close Gwernyfed.	<i>A Business Case was developed which considered a number of different options, in accordance with an agreed option appraisal methodology.</i>
11.6.4	I will not believe anything POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL say here because I have seen first-hand their complacent destruction to youngsters and their exclusion.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.6.5	I am extremely concerned about other elements of your Proposals and have no confidence in the ability of Powys County Council to implement the elements with which I do agree.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.6.6	Why on the one hand do we as a rational community understand to the nth degree the importance of education, yet on the other hand Powys County Council act to totally undermine the vehicle with which to provide this to our children – Gwernyfed High School. The answer is that no-one at Powys County Council seems to have the vision, or guts, to invest in Gwernyfed.	<i>Comment noted</i>

<p>11.6.7</p>	<p>I firmly believe that if a vote of confidence in Powys County Council's ability had taken place, it would, quite rightly have ended in a 'No'.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.6.8</p>	<p>The Proposal severely damages the reputation of Powys County Council among the general public, as it includes the complete closure of the only one of the four Mid Powys high schools not currently in Special Measures, to be operating within budget to at least satisfactory standards (as judged by Estyn) and in buildings some of which are barely 10 years old; and is also blessed with excellent outdoor sporting and recreational facilities. [Welsh Liberal Democrats]</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.6.9</p>	<p>However, TTC has much deeper concerns about the decision-making process itself: it has no confidence in the decision-making abilities of the current POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Cabinet, which <i>does not appear to have the necessary expertise or levels of competence required to make such a fundamental decision about secondary education.</i> [Talgarth Town Council]</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.6.10</p>	<p>The campaign team members, obtained, via a Freedom of Information request, a copy of the County Councils outline business case for the new campus in Brecon, lodged with THE Welsh</p>	<p><i>The Authority has been transparent about the status of the Outline Business Case. The Consultation Document clearly explains that it had been submitted to Welsh Government without prejudice to the outcome of any decisions taken by Cabinet following consultation, and the reasons why.</i></p>

<p>Government before the start of the Consultation process at Gwernyfed. By withholding the document the Local Authority has acted unlawfully and has severely compromised its own Consultation process because of a major pre- determination action. This should be a reason for abandoning the whole process. At the public Consultation meeting officers kept saying the Authority was listening and we could trust them. Does Powys County Council still not understand why no one connected with Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL (or Brecon HIGH SCHOOL for that matter) trusts anything the local Authority states or does? [Gwernyfed Campaign Group]</p>		
<p>11.7 POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Performance at Consultation Meetings</p>		
<p>11.7.1</p>	<p>I attended the consultation meeting in April at Gwernyfed ... Now I finally know what the phrase “pulling the wool over one’s eyes” means! Thank goodness for the many members of the public who DID take the time to get their facts right and spoke so eloquently and passionately for saving Gwernyfed school. Unlike those members of the council in attendance who clearly did NOT have the means to back up their reasoning for closure, evident in the stammering and spluttering and indeed the number of NON responses!</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>

11.7.2	At the meetings I have attended Powys just do not seem to have any answers	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.7.3	I was ... unimpressed by the representatives of Powys County Council and NPTC. Fundamentally, the almost, if not total, lack of trust which the local community have in Powys County Council to do the right thing for our children was brought to bear ...	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.7.4	All of the people who asked questions, raised concerns and made statements about their fears spoke eloquently, with passion and balance. Powys County Council 'listened' and hid behind a barrage of statistics. At the end of the meeting, there was a palpable sense of a community having come together to stand up for themselves. Those members of the community left feeling buoyed by their actions and empowered to do more to support the future of their community. I got the distinct impression, all the members of Powys County Council left with their tails between their legs.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.7.5	It was clear from the responses and expressions of the Officers and Councillors present that they held the people's views in contempt by either declining to answer questions properly or merely responding by saying that their views would be 'taken into account'. This	<i>Comment noted</i>

	<p>is a legally meaningless obligation which only has significance if the Council's actions satisfy the Wednesbury test of unreasonableness, that is to say, the Proposal is "so outrageous in its defiance of logic or accepted moral standards that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question to be decided could have arrived at it." In truth, I suspect that in light of my observations 1 above, the Council are not far away from satisfying this test.</p>	
<p>11.7.6</p>	<p>[At GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL KS4 meeting] I feel that some of my questions were not answered fully and that the response from the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff was simply vague and unacceptable. What they appeared to fail to understand is that this Proposal is extremely selfish as Gareth Jones openly admitted that one of the driving forces behind the Proposals was that financially, the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL education department would be better off as the huge BRECON HIGH SCHOOL debt could be simply wiped off. This, in my opinion has no bearing on GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL at all and therefore as pupils we questioned why such an innocent and successful school with a strong management team are being dragged into a situation through no fault of its own that doesn't even benefit it. This question was one that couldn't be</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>

	<p>answered suitably ... What the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff soon established was that the GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL pupil's stance was strong and therefore admitted to us that there, and I quote from Gareth Jones "is another option that the council could look at" that would not affect GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL. From this, it must have been obvious that we asked the question so why isn't this the main Proposal? However, the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL staff appeared foolishly unprepared and again a sensible answer was not given.</p>	
<p>11.7.7</p>	<p>There is no doubt, based on the community feelings expressed at the public meeting, that the local community is against the Proposals with many questions being asked to which the assembled officers and councillors had no coherent answers.</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.8 A Done Deal?</p>		
<p>11.8.1</p>	<p>I believe that the outcome of the reorganisation of schools is already predetermined by the council, from the beginning it has been implied that this must succeed and that the whole process has got behind on its schedule, from the way the consultation paper is skewed in favour of the Proposal just goes to reinforce this ... I feel not</p>	<p><i>The outcome of the consultation has not been predetermined. All school reorganisation Proposals have to be carried out in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document is fully compliant with the requirements of the Code and provides both advantages and disadvantages of the Proposal, along with risks and impact assessments.</i></p>

	<p>enough thought and consideration will be given to this decision (to close Welsh provision at Brecon) and it will be waved through as a small part of a ‘bigger’ decision (to close Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL ... why when the council were required to supply a taxi to Builth from Upper Chapel did it decide to supply two coaches from Brecon to Builth having the obvious intention of removing as many students from the Brecon Welsh stream as possible, thereby predetermining the outcome of the consultation?</p>	<p><i>Cabinet will be considering all issues raised, which have been included in the Consultation Report, before making any further decisions, including those related to Welsh-medium education.</i></p> <p><i>Question previously answered</i></p>
<p>11.8.2</p>	<p>Powys also made a number of comments during the consultation meeting held on 20th April 2016 which strongly suggests that they had pre-determined the outcome, which is outrageous. This was brought to our attention when talking about the legal challenge last summer. Powys said they had ‘fallen behind’ and needed to ‘catch up’ showing they have no intention at all of changing their decision and are not going to listen to people’s views and take them on board constructively, again showing their inadequacy.</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the Authority did receive a legal challenge to a Cabinet recommendation in 2015, and started the process again.</i></p> <p><i>A Business Case was developed which considered a number of different options, in accordance with an agreed option appraisal methodology.</i></p>
<p>11.8.3</p>	<p>I am most angry at the number of comments that came from the Powys County Council meeting that appears to suggest that the Cabinet had predetermined the outcome. This is without consultation because Powys</p>	<p><i>The outcome of the consultation has not been predetermined. All school reorganisation Proposals have to be carried out in accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code.</i></p>

	County Council know full well that the community is not behind this Proposal	<i>Cabinet will be considering all issues raised, which have been included in the Consultation Report, before making any further decisions, including those related to Welsh-medium education.</i>
11.8.4	It seems to me that a decision has been taken already to close Gwernyfed High School, to move Welsh medium education from Brecon to Builth Wells and to transfer all post 16 education to NPTC, which in my opinion would be a disaster. If the representative of NPTC attending the consultation meeting was there to 'sell' the proposed provision, he failed on all counts!	
11.8.5	I believe the whole tenor of the document is contained in those words. It shows that the ideas behind the Proposals are merely to satisfy the policies of the council and have no bearing on, or thought for, the lives of children, parents, teachers or the general community.	<i>The Consultation Document outlines the case for change, and the issues facing secondary education in Powys.</i>
11.8.6	Arwel Jones stated, "We are entering a crucial phase in our secondary school plans and are determined to see them through ..." The formal consultation period has yet to end, but he appears to already know the result.	<i>Cllr Arwel Jones is fully aware of the statutory process related to School Reorganisation Proposals.</i>
11.8.7	The preferred options do not take in consideration the option of opening a new or keeping the current school in Gwernyfed. It only takes into	<i>The option appraisal includes options for retaining the status quo, and establishing the new school in Gwernyfed.</i>

	consideration of the opening a new school in Brecon completely dis-regarding the needs and problems that will face the Gwernyfed community, if the new school in Brecon was to open.	
11.9 Primary School Proposals/Consultations		
11.9.1	I also went through the shambles of consultation meetings during the closure of my son's primary school, Ffynnon Gynydd. Education in Powys is becoming a joke.	<i>Noted</i>
11.9.2	The Council is not renowned for delivering on their promises. Before 2015, they closed many small primary schools in the area with the promise that we'd have a nice, new school in Hay and it would be <i>finished by</i> September 2015. Now it is April 2016, and not a single brick had been laid since then. This leads me, and many other people, to have no reason to believe that we are going to have the high school built either. We have been given no evidence that the Council isn't just going to close Gwernyfed and Brecon and then put the whole plan to the side and start on a new project. That is what happened to the primary schools and the Council shouldn't be starting to close anything else before they've built the new primary school in Hay.	<p><i>The Authority acknowledges that the primary school reorganisation in the Gwernyfed catchment has been unsatisfactory in terms of the time that it has taken. However, the Authority is confident that the new schools will be open by 2018/19.</i></p> <p><i>The Authority is committed to building a new school to replace the current Brecon High School, and the process is explained within the Consultation Document.</i></p>

<p>11.9.3</p>	<p>Hay Primary school. A new school was promised and POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL presented the community with a plan for how they would deliver it and what the school would look like. There was no dialogue, there was no discussion with the different user groups and there was no genuine consultation with the community. The community objected to POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's proposed method of delivery (which involved the sale of the school site to a supermarket developer) and POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL were sent back to the drawing board with their tails between their legs. To date there is still no new primary school in Hay, although many of the smaller outlying village schools have been closed, but there are still hollow promises and rumours of supposed new school opening dates. There have been plans for the rebuilding of 5 primary schools within the Gwernyfed catchment area and as yet, nearly 8 years later, not a brick has been laid.</p>
<p>11.9.4</p>	<p>Powys have already caused problems with primary school closures in the catchment area of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL, and the promised new primary schools which still ,after years, - have not been started - have they even bought the</p>
<p>11.9.5</p>	<p>land? This does not bode well for this Proposal.</p>

11.9.6

Despite promises to the contrary, new schools at Hay and Clyro have not been built. Who is to say that the new Brecon school will ever be built given past history?

POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL have embarked on a similar model of closing school and building larger schools for the primary school estate, no doubt using the same arguments of falling pupil numbers and ageing buildings, it should be highlighted that despite this process being ongoing for the last 7 years, so far not a single brick has been laid for a new school with pupils being educated in porta cabins and temporary locations. Powys County Council are adamant that building will start post December (although they didn't state which December) even though in Talgarth a site hasn't been bought, planning hasn't been agreed and a school design hasn't even been out for public consultation yet. This situation has angered most local residents and eroded our ability to trust POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL. The primary school program shows that POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL is not capable of running these programs to time and budget and putting another group of pupils at risk to try and cover budgeting issues is not morally acceptable.

11.9.7	Powys County Council has a history of bungling 'Grand Schemes'. Look at Mid Wales hospital and Hay junior school.	<i>Comment noted</i>
11.9.8	How would Powys Education Officers rate the level of confidence that the South Powys Communities have in their ability to manage their portfolios?	<i>During the consultation process, many stakeholders have indicated that they are not confident in the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL officers' ability to manage their portfolios.</i>
11.9.9	The Playgroup comments on POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's very slow proposed changes to Clyro School under the Primary Schools Modernisation Programme and thus doubts that it is capable of successfully carrying out such extreme changes to the secondary school system. [Parents at Clyro Playgroup]	<i>Noted</i>
11.9.10	Erwood Community Council says that the lack confidence in POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's leadership as it has failed to progress the primary schools modernisation programme – and that the plan to close Gwernyfed School without any certainty about the funding of a proposed replacement school in Brecon is very worrying. It also says that the current Proposals are only to find a fundable solution to the problems at Brecon High School so that it gets a new school. [Erwood Community Council]	<i>Noted</i>
11.9.11	The Group says it feels <i>let down</i> by unfulfilled promises made about the	<i>Noted</i>

	closure of Rhosgoch and thus questions how it is expected to believe new promises being made about secondary education in the area. [Rhosgoch and Painscastle Toddler Group]	
11.10 Public Consultation Events		
11.10.1	The sheer numbers at the consultation meeting at Gwernyfed should tell you what the people think. This is not just a small but vocal action group. This is the people en-masse – the ones you represent.	<i>Noted</i>
11.10.2	I applied for a ticket for the public consultation meeting in Gwernyfed but was told that it had 'sold out', I was added to a 'reserve list' but heard no more. I feel that if people were refused entry that another meeting needs to be added. It cannot be regarded as a public consultation if some are excluded from the process.	<i>The Authority ensured that everyone who applied for a ticket to any of the consultation events were accommodated.</i>
11.10.3	I wish to have another meeting to hear <u>ALL</u> views (politicians and local councillors) as they have not had their say. I deemed this meeting unfair as Kirsty Williams AM was unable to attend due to the Leaders debate, to my knowledge she asked quite nicely to Powys County Council to rearrange the meeting so she could attend, but was refused. I wish you could reply to this	<i>Public meetings are only one way that stakeholders can make their views known. It must be noted that the meeting was arranged by the Council, and therefore the responsibility for its management, remains with the Council. The Authority decided that the meeting should be ticketed to ensure that everyone who wished to attend could be accommodated.</i> <i>The public meeting at Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL had been widely publicised from the beginning of April, and it would not have been possible to change it to accommodate Kirsty Williams AM.</i>

	<p>email and the last. I feel that by the meeting of Gwernyfed High, that the chair was biased as Roger Williams, our former MP for Brecon & Radnorshire, had his hand up like John Fitzgerald for most of the meeting, but was unfortunately he was unable to ask. We all know about "the time limit", but we wish for another meeting, but <u>WE WILL</u> decide what time we leave whether it'll be 8:30pm, 9:05pm or 1:00am the next morning. We ALL want answers from Powys County Council Cabinet and not a single sentence referring to "the document" coming from their lips. We all know that the document is completely false in figures and to what I can see <u>NO</u> reference to the Big Lottery Fund, to which I gather has yet to respond with an agreement letter. We also wish that if the next meeting is arranged, that it will <u>NOT</u> be ticketed. A public consultation should not under any circumstances be ticketed.</p> <p><i>The Chair of the meeting was a member of Opinion Research Services, an independent company that is supporting the Authority with the consultation. As a Chair of a meeting with over 900 people in attendance, distributed across four rooms, managing video – technology, there was a clear need to provide clear parameters for the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>The Consultation Document is fully compliant with the WG's School Organisation Code, and provides accurate facts. A reference to the Big Lottery Fund can be found on page 38.</i></p>
<p>11.10.4 I recently attended the Gwernyfed High School consultation meeting, as well as watching the videos of the Brecon meeting and I found it very hard to find anything that was said by the cabinet members which showed that the interests of the learners were indeed being held above all others. In particular, I heard much that made me feel that Gwernyfed students in particular could experience a decline in standards.</p>	<p><i>Noted</i></p>

11.10.5	<p>The council has a legal requirement to hold consultation meetings but this particular meeting amounted to nothing more than a superficial attempt to tick a box. Concern with time, no answers to any questions asked and the controlling over who was able to speak does not demonstrate the Council's legal following of the School closure procedure.</p>	<p><i>There is no legal requirement to hold consultation meetings during any consultations related to school reorganisation Proposals, as evidence in the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act and the School Organisation Code. It must be noted that the meeting was arranged by the Council, in order to provide a chance for members of the public to contribute to the consultation.</i></p>
<p>11.11 Quality of Officers in Powys County Council</p>		
11.11.1	<p>The education service in Powys simply does not have the capability to deal with the significant and far-reaching issues at stake here ... they will hand you this Proposal and ask you to vote for it. They will try to hoodwink you into thinking it is the best option, when in fact it is just the best they can come up with. You can be hoodwinked, and you can cow down and vote it through, or you can stand up and say '<i>no – this is wrong</i>'. It's your decision – it's what you were elected to do.</p>	<p><i>Noted</i></p>
<p>11.12 Suggests to Powys County Council</p>		
11.12.1	<p>Really listen to the people that this is going to affect in the 21st Century, this is a unique and special area with people who really care about the community and the education of their youngsters ... Find a way to put the future of education for all young people in this area first and make it something to really be proud of.</p>	<p><i>Noted</i></p>

<p>11.12.2</p>	<p>Listen to the voices of the children, if not the adults! Remember that our future is in their hands and if they don't get the very best schooling we can provide then the outlook for Powys is very bleak indeed.</p>	<p><i>The Authority has met with pupils from the high schools and the catchment primary schools as part of this consultation, and pupils views will be highlighted in the Consultation Report which will be considered by Cabinet prior to making any further decisions.</i></p>
<p>11.12.3</p>	<p>Is it not a code of the United Nations " <i>The Local Authority must take the views of the learners with serious and consideration</i>", to which I think you have not done so.</p>	<p><i>See 11.12.2</i></p>
<p>11.12.4</p>	<p>Due to the level of campaigning it is evident that local interests are not being taken into account neither are they being engaged. If they had developed a dialogue with the community, they would know just how vital Gwernyfed is. The reorganisation is in no way balanced or meeting the need of the community.</p>	<p><i>The consultation is an opportunity for the community to give its views.</i></p>
<p>11.12.5</p>	<p>[The Proposal] carries huge elements of educational, financial and general project risk, which far outweigh any potential educational or financial gains [Welsh Liberal Democrats]</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.12.6</p>	<p>The closure and consequences flies in the face of the contents of the Donaldson Report which stresses the need for creative education as well as cohesion between education and communities, the Maguire paper stressing the need for wider models of education in rural areas</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>

	<p>which are not dependent on larger buildings, the Peck study which found that smaller secondary schools are not costlier or less effective in rural areas because in part of greater community involvement, the Upton report which spelt how to turn around schools in difficulty by using support from successful schools. [Gwernyfed Campaign Group]</p>	
<p>11.12.7</p>	<p>It is our view that the Council's preferred option only too clearly demonstrates that no thought whatsoever has been given to the substantial curriculum changes now being developed across Wales ... This Proposal focusses on the established curriculum and fails to reference Successful Futures and Qualified for Life at all. [</p>	<p><i>Comment noted</i></p>
<p>11.13 The Questionnaire</p>		
<p>11.13.1</p>	<p>I am choosing to write to you directly having attempted to complete your questionnaire on line and finding it very restrictive in giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion.</p>	<p><i>The School Reorganisation Code sets out the requirement to present supporting information on the case for change in a clear and coherent way. The consultation questionnaire sets out a brief summary of POWYS COUNTY COUNCILs view on why POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL believes change is needed because that is what POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL believes are the issues faced and what POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL believe the solutions to be. If it was not clearly stated that the POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL holds this position on the need for change, then the document could be accused of being misleading. The full consultation document also sets out the arguments and evidence around the case for change and details of each of the Proposals in significantly more depth and is signposted within the questionnaire.</i></p>

	<p><i>The questionnaire is designed to seek responses (either positive or negative) to that case for change and then to each of the Proposals for the future of English and Welsh medium education in turn. The distinction between asking about the need for change and support for the specific Proposals is important as an individual could agree that there is a need for change but might not necessarily agree with the solutions being proposed. Of course, respondents may also want to say there is no need to change or that only some issues in the case for change need to be addresses, and that is why the questionnaire provides adequate open text space to outline why respondents might support or disagree with the case for change and Proposals -including the option for no change or to suggest alternative suggestions. Furthermore, respondents are able (if they wish) to provide additional written qualitative comments which can attached to the questionnaire or sent as standalone response directly to ORS. Each of these responses is included as a unique written submissions in our analysis and reporting.</i></p>
<p>11.13.2 On page 2 of the ... Questionnaire, I am asked to comment on whether I believe the council is right to make changes to respond to their belief that there is a case for change in Powys education. Is this not potentially misleading - as responses may indicate that a change is needing but not the one suggested in the Proposal? I am concerned as to how the cabinet will present this data.</p>	<p>See 11.13.1</p>
<p>11.13.3 While the questionnaire states the case for change, it does not provide any reasons why the Proposal should NOT be considered. Is this not potentially creating a bias in responses and is a consultation document allowed to be one-sided?</p>	<p>See 11.13.1</p>

11.13.4	I was disappointed that the documents published by Powys County Council (POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL) for consultee responses were poorly designed. Some of the questions were leading and it was not possible to provide full and open answers. For example you may strongly agree that Brecon needs a new High School building but strongly disagree that Gwernyfed should close or merge with Brecon.	<i>Noted</i>
11.13.5	The first question asked is unsatisfactory because it lumps together eleven issues and then simply asks whether the Council is "right to makes changes to respond to these issues". How are you meant to respond if you acknowledge the legitimacy of some issues and deny any significance to others?	<i>Noted</i>
11.14 Reporting		
11.14.1	Will Powys County Council produce a review of the consultation process, showing responses of all the groups included in the list of consultees? And if not, why not?	<i>A Consultation Report will be published which will include reference to all the issues raised. It will also note Estyn's response, as required by the School Organisation Code, and highlight any responses from children and young people.</i>
11.15 Council Documentation/Cabinet Meetings/Media Statements Biased		
11.15.1	Council documentation, cabinet meetings and media statements ... pitched only to provide or consider a negative profile of Gwernyfed High School ... failing to	<i>The Consultation Document includes facts that are related to both schools. The draft impact assessments clearly show the education, social and economic impact of the Proposal.</i>

portray in an equal way the strengths of Gwernyfed High School , or demonstrate the negative educational, social and economic consequences of closing the school

12 Equality and Diversity

12.1 General

12.1.1 Explain why pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools will not be given ‘opportunities’ that are *equal* to those of other High School pupils in Powys.

*The Proposal aims to provide a high-quality tertiary model of post-16 education, with a number of benefits – this model can provide **more** opportunities than other areas of Powys.*

Tertiary Colleges provide the solution to the dilemma facing many young people today as they ponder their future - Tertiary colleges are a single establishment meeting educational and skills needs for all young people, their communities, and local employers.

Tertiary colleges were originally defined as educational establishments which combined the functions of a further education college and a sixth form college, offering further education through a full range of courses, both vocational and academic, primarily to the 16-19 age group. In a pure tertiary model, schools within a given area do not operate sixth forms, but instead young people progress to a single local institution that provides both their 16-19 education and adult learning for the wider community.

Tertiary Colleges offer, within one institution, readily accessible pathways of progression from foundation level to level 3 qualifications and beyond, across a wide range of subjects and skills sectors. They promote personalised programmes for young people and adults alike, enabling individuals to combine academic and vocational studies. The breadth of offer and the opportunity for individuals to fulfil their potential by moving from lower to higher levels of programmes are key characteristics of Tertiary Colleges.

In addition to their considerable portfolio of 16-19 provision, Tertiary Colleges are important providers of adult education and training. They play a major role in developing employer responsive provision, working closely with local enterprise, business and industry, to meet their demands and local, regional and sometimes national skills needs; they successfully deliver Apprenticeships and traineeships and have been key in supporting individuals and businesses.

<p>12.1.2</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment - where are the contingency plans to address all of the issues identified? Where is the Action Plan?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has published a draft Equality Impact Assessment, in accordance with the Schools Transformation Policy 2014. This will be updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation, before being presented to Cabinet as part of the decision-making process. Plans to mitigate any issues identified will form part of this document.</i></p>
<p>12.1.3</p>	<p>Vulnerable learners may suffer: pg. 110 One of the weaknesses listed of the post-16 Proposal is: 'does not provide a clear learning pathway within a school environment.' This directly relates to vulnerable students and school be acknowledged and addressed in the Equality Impact Assessment. Where is the cross referencing between the Equality Impact Assessment and the Risk Assessment? The Equality Impact Assessment identifies many, many RISKS. Where is the evidence that the potential Equality Impacts of the Proposal have been addressed in the design of the Proposal? Currently the EIA smacks of being a paper exercise.</p>	<p><i>A draft Equality Impact Assessment is published once a Proposal has been agreed, and will be updated as outlined in 6.2. The earlier Option Appraisal process simply identifies the strengths of the High School and weaknesses of a number of options, <u>at that time.</u></i></p>
<p>12.2 Deprivation</p>		
<p>12.2.1</p>	<p>I went to the Grammar school in Brecon. There wasn't a chance for me to stay after school for activities. My parents didn't have the money or the time to fetch me. Do you really want to prevent children having a top notch education because their families are too poor?</p>	<p><i>The Authority has recognised, as evidenced in the Consultation Document and Equality Impact Assessment, that there would be a negative impact on pupils from deprived backgrounds.</i></p>

12.3 Opportunities Limited by Not Being Able to Access After School Activities		
12.3.1	How is Powys County Council going to ensure that as they live 14 miles from the school they won't be discriminated against as a result of transport constraints?	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</i></p> <p><i>The majority of pupils attending Gwernyfed High School are currently reliant on home-to-school transport and their ability to access after-school activities would be similarly affected if the Proposal is approved</i></p>
12.3.2	In closing GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL, POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL will be failing to support the current 107 children of these areas (and future generations) on an equal basis to all other pupils being educated in Wales and within the guidance relating to journey times. It would appear the geographical location of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL is a strong reason to retain 11 to 18 education and community facilities at the site. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify discriminating against these pupils by inevitably enforcing them not to be able to enjoy Welsh Culture and education on an equal basis to all other pupils in Wales?	<p><i>The Council's intention is for the New School to provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</i></p> <p><i>However, the Council recognises that there would be additional travel requirements once the New School Building is opened in Brecon, especially for those pupils living in Clyro and Hay-on-Wye Primary School catchment areas</i></p> <p><i>The Council's view is that the current transport arrangements for these pupils are suitable because the journey does not take an unreasonable amount of time. As such, the proposed travel arrangements for secondary pupils to the New School Building in Brecon are deemed suitable. The Welsh curriculum and culture would be available to these pupils.</i></p> <p><i>However, the Authority recognises that, during this consultation, many responses have stated their preference to educate in England, should the Proposal be implemented.</i></p>
12.4 Why only losing Brecon/Gwernyfed 6th Form		
12.4.3	It is noted that whilst this appears to be a Proposal for post 16 education for South Powys, there is no Proposal to change 6th form education at Crickhowell High	<p><i>In March 2015, the Cabinet of the Council agreed to commence a new Secondary School Reorganisation Programme with four priorities – one of these was to review 6th form provision at Ysgol Maesydderwen. This review was concluded and a new Local Commissioning Model for the school was approved by Cabinet in? 2015.</i></p>

	<p>School and Ysgol Maesydderwen. This appears to highlight a lack of equality among the South Powys Schools which has not been recognised on the equality impact assessment. Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain this inequality issue? It is also noted that some pupils attending Crickhowell High School also attend GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL or BRECON HIGH SCHOOL for some “A” level provision. It would, however, appear that parents of pupils at Crickhowell High School and its catchment area primary schools have not been duly consulted about this current Proposal. Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain why that sector of the public has not been duly consulted?</p>	<p><i>There were no Proposals to review Crickhowell Sixth Form provision on the basis that pupil numbers are over the County’s agreed threshold.</i></p> <p><i>Crickhowell High School was deemed to be an affected school in the consultation process i.e. ‘any school which is the subject of the Proposals and of other schools likely to be affected by the Proposals, including those that might receive any displaced pupils’. A link to the Consultation Document was sent to Crickhowell High School for distribution to governors, parents, staff and pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Primary schools in the Crickhowell catchment were not deemed to be ‘affected’ schools. The School Organisation Code includes a list of stakeholders which includes the following:</i></p> <p><i>‘In the case of Proposals affecting secondary provision, parents of pupils attending primary schools from which pupils normally transfer to that secondary school.’</i></p>
<p>12.4.4</p>	<p>Why is the Council prepared to deliberately discriminate against post-16 learners in the Gwernyfed and Brecon catchment areas by withdrawing from them alone in the whole county the option of taking A-levels in a High School?</p>	<p>See 6.1.1</p>
<p>12.5 Brecon Pupils Benefit Gwernyfed Pupils Do Not</p>		
<p>12.5.1</p>	<p>In closing GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and shifting such expenditure to the bigger town is POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL discriminating between rural small towns and larger towns/hubs?</p>	<p><i>As stated in the Consultation Document, the draft Community Impact Assessment has identified the detrimental impact on the Gwernyfed community, and the impact on a rural area. However, the Proposal is intended to establish a sustainable secondary school model for the future.</i></p> <p><i>The School Organisation Code states the following:</i></p>

	<p><i>'The prime purpose of schools is the provision of education and any case for closure should be robust and in the best interests of educational provision in the area. Nevertheless, in some areas, a school may also be the main focal point for community activity, and its closure could have implications beyond the issue of the provision of education. This may be a particular feature in rural areas if school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community.'</i></p>
<p>12.6 Loss of Choice</p>	
<p>12.6.1 The closure of GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL removes parental options/choice – for those living in the majority of Llangors Community Council area it means pupils are likely to have no option but to attend a new school at Brecon for secondary education. Llangors Community Council oppose the removal of any parental choice for secondary school education in this manner. How does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify the removal of parental choice for secondary school options for the residents of Llangors Community Council area in this manner?</p>	<p><i>The Consultation Document clearly explains the reasons why secondary education in Powys has to change, and the pressures that it faces. The Authority has put forward this Proposal in order to achieve the benefits described within the Consultation Document, at a time when there are significant pressures on the education system.</i></p>

REF	ISSUES	RESPONSE
13 Community		
13.1	Community Impact	
13.1.1	<p>Powys' method for information gathering to support the community impact assessment is not robust enough and should have included direct contact with community groups. Why does Powys County Council think it acceptable to treat this exercise as something to be dealt with superficially when the future of whole communities are at stake? • Why did the local Authority not think it important to talk direct with the thirty five community groups and members using and involved with Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL?</p>	<p><i>The consultation process is compliant with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, and a draft community impact has been prepared. The Code states the following:</i></p> <p><i>1.7 Specific factors relating to school closures</i></p> <p><i>'There is no presumption in favour or against the closure of any type of school. The prime purpose of schools is the provision of education and any case for closure should be robust and in the best interests of educational provision in the area. Nevertheless, in some areas, a school may also be the main focal point for community activity, and its closure could have implications beyond the issue of the provision of education. This may be a particular feature in rural areas if school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community.</i></p>
13.1.2	<p>Given that local Authority claims to be applying The Statutory Schools Organisation Code can Powys County Council explain how closing Gwernyfed High School meets the requirements of paragraph 1.7 of the code? "The prime purpose of schools is the provision of education and any case for Closure should be robust and in the best interests of educational provision In the area. Nevertheless, in some areas, a school may also be the main focal point for community activity, and its closure could have implications beyond the issue of the</p>	<p><i>The case prepared by those bringing forward Proposals should show that the impact of closure on the community has been assessed through the production of a Community Impact Assessment, and how any community facilities currently provided by the school could be maintained.</i></p> <p><i>When considering whether a closure is appropriate, special attention should be given to the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option;</i> <i>• whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered (taking account of the scope for use of ICT links between school sites) or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative;</i> <i>• whether the possibilities of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or an educational resource could be explored; (Local authorities should</i>

13.1.3

provision of education. This may be a particular feature in rural areas if school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community. The case prepared by those bringing forward Proposals should show that the Impact of closure on the Community has been assessed through the production of a Community Impact Assessment, and how any community facilities currently provided by the school could be maintained.” The Community Impact Assessment does not meet that requirement.”

“The prime purpose of schools is the provision of education and any case for Closure **should** be robust and in the best interests of educational provision in the area. **Nevertheless**, in some areas, a school may also be the main focal point for community activity, and its closure could have implications beyond the issue of the provision of education. This may be a particular feature in rural areas if school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community. The case prepared by those bringing forward Proposals **should** show that the Impact of closure on the Community has been assessed through the production of a **Community Impact Assessment**, and how any community facilities currently provided by the school could be maintained.” The Community Impact

consider whether it would be feasible and economical to co-locate local services within the school to offset the costs of maintaining the school);

- *the overall effect of a closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community), particularly in rural areas or those receiving funding as part of regeneration activity; and*
- *how parents’ and pupils’ engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils; particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities).’*

Until a Proposal has been recommended for consultation, the Authority is reliant on information received from the school itself about the community’s use of school facilities. At this stage, the school can provide additional information if it so wishes to be included in the draft community impact assessment.

The main method of gathering further information about the impact of a Proposal on a community is during the consultation itself, when the information provided will be used to inform the final community impact assessment that will be considered by Cabinet prior to making any further decisions.

The formal consultation process allows all those wishing to voice their opinion to do so through a number of methods. The 35 community groups with links to Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL have the same opportunity to participate in the consultation process as all stakeholders.

The draft Community Impact Assessment states that there would be a negative impact on the communities served by Gwernyfed High School if this Proposal is implemented, and is compliant with the requirements of the Code.

Assessment does not meet that requirement.”		
13.1.3	The paragraph Communities served by Brecon and Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL’s 3 is completely muddled because there is no differentiation between the community council and Town Council areas’ in relation to the schools. Therefore: Why is Powys County Council insisting on this false perspective?	<i>Comment noted</i>

The following issues relate to the impact on the community (economic and social) and have been included in the updated Community Impact Assessment. Most issues were highlighted in the draft Community Impact Assessment and will be included in the updated Final Impact Assessment

13.2 Local Economy

13.2.1	Does the Council accept that there will be huge economic downfall in the Gwernyfed catchment area when they take away the excellent school and sports facilities?
13.2.2	If you are shutting local schools you are less likely to have people moving in to the area which will then have an adverse effect on the people willing to look at the area to move for work. Please answer for me what will you do to counter-balance this affect?
13.2.3	Specifically, what long term economic impact assessment has been made on the communities around Gwernyfed (e.g. Hay on Wye, Talgarth, Glasbury, Clyro, etc.) in terms of employment, families moving into the area, loss of council tax as people leave, growth prospects, etc.
13.2.4	How can these negative effects to the local economy and job losses be overlooked and ignored?
13.2.5	Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL report in detail about what it judges will be the economic consequences of the GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL closure upon the catchment community and how it intends to mitigate such consequences?
13.2.6	Has the council calculated what financial cost the closure of Gwernyfed High School will have on the local economy? If not, why not, and if so how much?
13.2.7	Has Powys Council fully considered how local businesses, which would see a loss in revenue and would be unable to sustain their current number of employees, will fare if Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL closes?
13.2.8	Businesses currently within close proximity have strong links within Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL, offering invaluable work experience and fundraising events. Businesses have confirmed their serious concerns that these links would be lost if the school closes, how will Powys County Council counteract and reconnect these broken links between our communities and local businesses?
13.2.9	How can businesses in communities in the Gwernyfed area have confidence in work-based learning in Brecon when it is easier and more effective to link with Hereford College?
13.3.1	Has Powys Council calculated the specific number of jobs that would be lost if Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL were to close?

13.3.2	How does Powys County Council suggest local businesses successfully attract and retain young professionals to this rural area if the Proposals to close Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL go ahead?
13.3.3	Local businesses have expressed a fear of losing the pool of flexible, young, part time employees, which the consultation document accept that this is inevitable if Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL closes, so will the local Authority be offering business rates reductions to absorb additional pay roll costs or are there alternative plans Powys County Council are considering and if so what are they?
13.4.1	Rural businesses will be affected by a loss of trade. How can these negative effects to the local economy & job losses be overlooked and ignored?
13.4.2	Have you considered the effect this displacement will have on the businesses which service the school?
13.4.3	Has the council calculated or made an assessment of how much revenue it will lose from local taxation as businesses that depend on a thriving community begin to close?
13.4.4	How does Powys County Council plan to support local businesses which the consultation document accepts will see a decline in revenue if Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL closes?
13.5.1	Pupils from farming backgrounds play a huge role in the day-to-day running of their family farms. Can the Council justify the increased travelling times for these pupils who are going to spend significantly more time on a school bus rather than helping on their farms?
13.6.1	Have you considered the long term effect this Proposal will have on the housing market as parents search for a more viable education for their children?
13.6.2	What is Powys County Council going to do to mitigate the possible downturn in house prices that the loss of a great secondary school will inevitably cause?
13.6.3	More realistically, if GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL is closed, then people will not want to move into the area and the housing allocation will not be built, with the knock on effect on the local rural economy, lower than anticipated council tax revenue and

	negative effect on all local services. Under the One Powys Plan how does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify such potential short sightedness?
13.6.4	It also questions how POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL <i>will alleviate the impact of a negative effect on the housing market and the area being less attractive to newcomers</i> , which will have a harmful effect on whole communities and their demographic balance given that families will be less keen to move to the area.
13.7.1	If the merger does go ahead what will happen to the sports facilities at Gwernyfed High School?
13.7.2	... We will have no sporting facilities left in our area. Why would our young people want to move here when there will be nothing left?
13.7.3	There are sports groups that would cease to exist should the school closure go ahead such as Gwernyfed Ladies Hockey and Kettle Bells ...
13.8.1	We know that Powys council, and the Welsh government, are concerned about the changing age patterns and the increasingly ageing demographic in rural areas. Do they not realise how much a contribution to this is being made by the relentless programmes of school closures that have been implemented under the cover banner of 21 th Century Schools?
13.8.2	Considering the current difficulties in recruitment in Powys, how are you going to attract and retain residents to Brecon and the surrounding area if we can only offer a High School with no Welsh language provision and no 6th form provision?
13.8.3	Where other schools have closed the whole demographic of the area has changed. How will you counter that?
13.8.4	This dreadful decision will discourage families from moving into the area and thereby potentially have a long term impact on education at all levels. Have Powys even thought about these future implications? Where are our future doctors and teachers supposed to come from? Are Powys pupils not good enough to achieve this status?
13.8.5	Given that families with children do not move to an area where the local school is under prolonged threat of closure, please describe how the council has adjusted for this in its (pre-Proposal and post-Proposal) pupil demographic statistics? If this has not been attempted, please explain how the distorted demographic figures can be used to justify the Proposals?
13.8.6	What economic modelling has or will be done to quantify the financial risks of closing Gwernyfed High School in relation to a predictable demographic bias shift towards an older and absent (second) home owner population in the area?

13.9.1	If Gwernyfed' s closure means the end of your group or sports club, ask Powys what plans they have to ensure it is able to continue.
13.9.2	Will the County Council help fund the community projects to keep them going if Gwernyfed High closes?
13.9.3	What I would like to know is what are your plans as to the relocation of the sports facilities and how far would we have to travel?
13.9.4	POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL should be striving to preserve smaller educational centres as they, "provide more functions beyond being an educational institute and provides economic, and social opportunities, an arena for local politics, a delivery point for services and a resource for community development". Why is POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL not striving to preserve High Schools as Educational Centres given their educational economic, social, political, service delivery and community development functions?
13.9.5	Where exactly are the gym classes, badminton groups, football teams, dance classes, keep fit sessions, Glasbury arts members etc. meant to take their interests? Although the council say, "This would be taken into consideration by the cabinet in making a decision in relation how to proceed" I'd like to know what, if anything, this actually means?
13.9.6	Has the council considered how the 35 community clubs provided by Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL will survive once the school closes?
13.9.7	Given that the local Authority claims to be applying The Statutory Schools Organisation Code can Powys County Council explain where in the code it gives any credence whatsoever to the destruction of community activities within a school, as applied to Gwernyfed High School?
13.9.8	Given that the local Authority claims to be applying The Statutory Schools Organisation Code can Powys County Council explain how the closure of Gwernyfed high School and Community Organisations meets the following statement: "where Proposals involve the transfer of learners to alternative provision there should normally be evidence that the alternative would deliver outcomes and offer provision at least equivalent to that which is currently available to those learners. (Paragraph 1.3)"
13.9.9	Given the almost complete closure of the community activities at Gwernyfed if the high school closes and the damage to leisure and cultural activities in the area it is clear that this is a total failure to comply with article 32 (Of the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child) and we await the Powys response with interest.

13.9.10	Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain why they have not consulted directly with these Community Groups (the groups have only been notified of the Proposal via GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL support groups) and why there is such little respect for these highly valued often voluntary organisations within our rural communities? Withdrawal of such community facilities would contravene all the policies listed above. Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL explain how it proposes to keep the Community Facilities open and accessible to all, as they are now, in order to comply with the following policies? Welsh Government circular 34/2003; Welsh Government schools organisation code 1.7; The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2016; UN Convention for children's rights, article 31
13.9.11	Of the 35 groups that currently use the school facilities, 33 have indicated that they would have to cease to operate if the school closes. The Governing Body thus questions: <i>why did the Council choose to ignore such a detrimental community impact analysis?</i>
13.9.12	... What parents realistically would want to move somewhere there is no high school for their children? Not many. How does the council intend to keep the hockey facility open to ensure our club can continue to function? How are we, as a club meant to continue to grow when we are potentially going to lose our entire junior section that we have worked so hard to develop? How can the council justify forcing a club to fold especially one that promotes women's sport and physical activity?
13.9.13	Where will my hockey team train and how can we fund training at the privately run centre in Brecon?
13.9.14	What attempts will be made to monetise the jeopardising of the future of Gwernyfed RFC, the most prolific and successful junior rugby club in Mid Wales?
13.9.15	Has the Council considered that the proposed school closure would certainly see a decline in YFC membership and participation of pupils in Gwernyfed catchment areas as a result of families moving out of the area?
13.9.16	My son plays for Hay St Mary's Junior Football club, they train on the lottery funded sports facilities at Gwernyfed - what are Powys County Council going to do to ensure that this club continues - what are their plans?
13.10.1	The potential for boredom, leading to unsavoury behaviour looms large and in the event, the finger of blame could easily be pointed at Powys County Council. Building 'Strong communities in the green heart of Wales'? Completely questionable.
13.10.2	Explain what effect the reduction in extra-curricular participation will have on a pupil's sense of belonging and involvement in their local community.

13.11.1	Hay Primary and other primaries in the Gwernyfed cluster currently enjoy a number of benefits from their proximity to the school: the use of mini-busses; access to sports facilities; access to additional learning resources; ease of integration when pupils leave the primary school etc. These things are of great value to the primary schools. How will they be replaced under POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's Proposals?
13.11.2	Has the Council attempted to quantify the social and economic effect of the long threatened closure of Gwernyfed High School on the local primary schools? What demographic modelling has been done to quantify the risks...?
13.11.3	The council assumes any possible drop of pupils attending Hay Primary "would not be significant" Why do they assume this?
13.12.1	I currently use the badminton courts at Gwernyfed and my daughter has gymnastic lessons at the school. Many hundreds of people in the local community make use of the sports facilities that exist at Gwernyfed. How will equal access to sporting facilities be made available to the community under POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL's Proposals?
13.12.2	The consultation document admits that there are no suitable alternative venues in which to host the activities enjoyed by the wider community. Is there not a legal obligation to provide alternative premises, or at least ensure that they exist to be utilised if these groups are to be given the possibility of survival?
13.12.3	Can Powys County Council, given it intends to sell the site make clear how those facilities could be retained for community use in the middle of another development and whether community activity charges would be maintained at an affordable level for the groups currently using the facilities?
13.12.4	Given Powys County Council states it is implementing the Statutory Schools Organisations Code then it MUST show how it will comply with the Schools Organisation code and ensuring community activities are not damaged: How will Powys County Council ensure all the current community activities can continue if Gwernyfed closes? How will Powys County Council repair the damage the local Authority has already caused to some organisations?
13.12.5	Given that Powys County Council have a responsibility under the Statutory Schools Organisation Code to facilitate replacement community facilities where a school closes can the local Authority: Explain how it plans to make it possible for community organisation's to continue in the area? Where they are going to find the £3 million + to make this possible? Explain why that this course of action is better than spending £3.5 million to make Gwernyfed disability compliant thereby negating the need to spend on replacement buildings whilst retaining one of the best schools in Powys.

13.13.1	What is Powys County Council going to put in place to ensure local business, trade, house prices and the future of the community is not lost?
13.13.2	I'm not sure what would happen to Hay Festival because at the moment it uses the school amenities. ... What happens if the Festival can't continue? And what happens to all the community activities should the school close?
13.13.4	The potential economic impact of a school closure - Grunewald & Smith (2008) (2): 'Sixty percent of the communities with schools saw population growth from 1900 to 2000; while only 46% of those without schools grew. Average housing values in the communities with schools are 25% higher than those without schools. Communities with schools enjoy higher per capita incomes, a more equal distribution of income, less per capita income from public assistance, less poverty and less child poverty. Can POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL please explain how this ambivalence around strategic intention, is justified?
13.13.5	How does the proposed destruction of our communities meet the following objectives within the new Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2016, as applied to Gwernyfed High School, which local authorities are required to promote? A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected cohesive communities. A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
13.13.6	The plans to close Gwernyfed risks diminishing quality of health as the Accessibility to local community health services will no longer be easily accessible. What if anything does, Powys County Council intend to do to remedy this?
13.13.7	Gwernyfed High School has very strong links with the local community and so the Governing Body asks: <i>how can these be sustained and developed when our young people are attending school away from their local community as the preferred option suggests?</i>

14 Alternative Options	
14.1	Brecon Town Council recognises the urgent need for the development of modern, fit-for-purpose secondary educational facilities in Brecon, and calls on POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to do all it can to access the opportunities available under the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme. However, the Council also firmly believes that a new school should offer a full range of post-16 opportunities to make it an attractive choice for students and professionals – and that it should offer full Welsh medium provision to nurture and enhance the Welsh language and culture in the community. [Brecon Town Council]
14.2	The WLD Group recommends the following alternative Proposal:- 1) That both Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools be retained as 11-18 schools for the foreseeable future 2) That work on Proposals to either – (a) create a new 3-18 school in Brecon, or (b) build a new 3-11 school on the same or an adjacent site as a new 11-18 school in Brecon, be commenced 3) As part of 2) above that consideration and consultation begin in to the closure of Mount Street Infant and Junior Schools, with provision to transfer as per 2) above 4) That work to create a seamless, fully-integrated post-16 learning system in the Brecon, Gwernyfed and Crickhowell HIGH SCHOOL catchment areas should commence immediately (or as soon as practically possible), so that in future all post-16 learning in this part of Powys is planned and funded in a fully-collaborative system involving the 3 schools, the NPTC Group of Colleges and the main Work-Based Learning providers operating in the area 5) That as part of 2) and 3) above work begins in preparation for the disposal of the Mount Street Infant and Junior School sites, to produce a capital receipt to assist in the funding of the project [Welsh Liberal Democrats].
14.3	We understand that GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL support a Proposal to build an all through school at Brecon and include pupils from Mount Street primary school on the one site, this allowing GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL to remain as it is now. This would appear to be a transformational project that would meet all the 21st century schools criteria and assist with budgetary matters in Brecon. Why has this Proposal not been properly analysed in the Consultation Report and how does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL justify putting this approach to one side when it is supported by the schools involved? [Llangorse Community Council]
14.4	A rebuild of a 3 to 16 years (through) school at Brecon for Brecon pupils could centralise resources within the whole town and be part financed by the sale of primary school sites. This would allow Brecon pupils to have their own new school with no requirement to involve Gwernyfed pupils to “make up numbers “in order to seek financial support from Welsh Government. What action is being taken to assess this option? [Llangorse Community Council]

<p>14.5</p>	<p>I was fortunate enough to be educated at Bourne Grammar School in Lincolnshire in the 1980s. It was a high performing school at the time, and it has simply gone from strength to strength. I know of parents who, rather than take their children to their nearest school, will travel a little further to get them to Bourne Grammar School (BGS). It is a real pull to the town and not surprisingly, the reason for the school's success is a high quality management team, supported by their local Authority, receiving decent amounts of investment. Going hand in hand with the success of BGS is the continued development of the local community. People are relocating to Bourne to take advantage of the school and the related groups and facilities. They have even recently built a new primary school, taking the number in the town from 2 to 3. But I am suggesting that Powys County Council adopt the principle, i.e. to help make Gwernyfed an outstanding destination school. Wouldn't that be a feather in their cap and a superb legacy for those involved?</p>
<p>14.6</p>	<p>[Welsh] I am also a former pupil of Ysgol Gyfun Rhydyfelen – the first Welsh language school in South Wales established in 1962 with 80 pupils on the school roll in that inaugural year. With the support of the local Authority, parent's teachers and the local community, the school grew to over a thousand pupils within a decade. It sparked a renaissance in Welsh language education and remains through its alumni a testament to what can be achieved with passion and imagination. It also offers an example that a successful school offering excellent Welsh language provision could easily provide a critical mass of new learners to provide the numbers so desired by the Authority. It would require a broader base of Welsh language primary schools in the area to feed the secondary school. This in turn would be in keeping with the Welsh government's education strategy regarding Welsh language education.</p>
<p>14.7</p>	<p>I wonder if they are afraid of losing face by backing down, but maybe they can use the precedent set recently by Pembrokeshire council which did what the residents wanted and spared two schools and their sixth forms which were due to suffer the same fate as Gwernyfed High School and Brecon High School.</p>
<p>14.8</p>	<p>Look to Hereford if a central 6th form is proposed and take their model, not use a provider who has little attachment to the area.</p>
<p>14.9</p>	<p>Has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL considered the WG report of March 2016? Does POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL accept that this Proposal now has to be urgently reviewed with a view to retaining individual 6th forms at both GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL and BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and understand that evaluating the current South Powys Consortium system and possibly updating it by using virtual learning techniques is likely to be more effective? There is a rural sixth form system operating in Pembrokeshire which Welsh Government support. Has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL examined the Pembrokeshire structure/case study with a view to assisting with this matter? [Llangorse Community Council]</p>

14.10	Surely both schools deserve the individual help to ensure that its pupils are given the best support; if the schools were to merge then the emphasis would be taken off the pupils themselves and instead be put on the financial implications.
14.11	What research / modelling has been conducted by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Educational Officers into how new learning / teaching technologies could enable a reduction in student travel, enable interschool collaboration around subjects taught and increase numbers of A levels offered, etc.?
14.12	YOU SHOULD LEAVE US ALONE AND CONCENTRATE ON MAKING BRECON A BETTER SCHOOL
14.13	Representatives of Powys County Council need to grasp the metal and look to other ways to sort out Brecon High School and find the money to invest in and secure the future of Gwernyfed High School. I strongly urge you to stand by your words of 'Strong communities in the green heart of Wales'.
14.14	Why has POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL not considered an option with enhanced use of ICT, leaving schools to remain open, more subjects to be offered, greater efficiency of staff, and increased choice for pupils?
14.15	We can understand that taxiing (sixth form) students between campuses is not sustainable, but with modern technology of video conferencing, webinars etc., there must be scope for some innovative link ups with other education authorities.
14.16	Why don't any of the Proposals for a transformational model make more about the potential for investing in technology to deliver the curriculum between schools in south Powys?
14.17	During the Public meeting one parent raised the suggestion that the teachers could commute between the different sites. Rather than asking the pupils to do so. Meaning the cost of staff would be reduced across the County. This idea was laughed off as impractical. This seems odd given the fact that it was also made clear that this is exactly what happens with the teaching staff within the NPTC Group of Colleges. No real thought was given to whether or not this could solve the problem.
14.18	Would combining aspects of primary and secondary school provision be more transformational? This would encourage a 'learning continuum' for pupils and keep facilities local, in line with the Donaldson Report. Were better ways of working considered, such as federation schools with shared governance, resources, facilities, staff and services, thus keeping schools in specific localities? Perhaps the option of building a new school at Brecon at the expense of Gwernyfed was only chosen to access 21st Century Schools funding from the Welsh Government?

14.19	Why is it not possible to have a simple and straightforward Proposal to build a new school building? I appreciate that funds are tight, but is it not possible to replace the buildings without impacting on the fabric of the community? Perhaps, by employing an open and transparent strategy of selling of some of the land? Perhaps asking for help, financial contributions or ideas from the communities that your Proposals will affect and therefore will be motivated to act?
14.20	If it's student income financial input then why not consider adults learning alongside pupils. I realise that there are Child Protection Issues to overcome but there are such Models of High School Education.
14.21	My suggestion would be to fund a new building for Brecon High School as a matter of urgency, to give the hard working pupils and teachers the support and facilities they deserve. I would also urge the council to get behind Brecon High School and support the teachers, pupils and parents who want it to survive and thrive.
14.22	A tenth option that has not be considered is 'Establish a new English-medium school in Brecon that retains its Welsh medium stream'. If then there needs to be a sharing of resources or teaching staff with Builth Wells Welsh medium stream then it is simpler & safer for a three or four teachers to commute between the two sites than bus 130+ children up & down the A470 every day i.e. Geography, History & Science teachers can spend Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays in Brecon In Builth & Tuesdays & Fridays in Brecon - This will be the cheaper option too!
14.23	You have other option's, you could build a 6 form in Brecon and have a new school for Brecon children. Why no other option have's been offered?
14.24	I am more than happy to pay more council tax to keep Gwernyfed open for future generations which will encourage people to move to the area for its excellent school and beautiful countryside. I think most residents would pay more, providing it would be ring fenced.
14.25	Rather than trying to force the critical mass by joining Gwernyfed and Brecon High schools, build this new building, invest in the site at Brecon and I think you will find that people are naturally attracted to this building and they will want to come to the school.
14.26	Retaining GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL as a standalone school or as part of a federation or cooperative arrangement.
14.27	We would like Powys County Council to build Brecon a new school and use what money is left to renovate Gwernyfed. Gwernyfed High School must stay open.

14.28	There is no objection to Brecon having a new school, but, in times of economic crisis, why spend what will no doubt be in excess of £50 million when a new school for the Brecon area could be built for much less? The amount of money saved by a merger is debatable, since the cost of transport would be huge, not to mention the congestion which already occurs outside Brecon High School every day of the week.
14.29	We think you should leave Gwernyfed High School alone and make a new school for Brecon.
14.30	Why close GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL to build a super school when you can use the money to help save Brecon High School.
14.31	I was promised a new school by 2016. They haven't even kept the plans up. I don't trust them to build a new school, they could just waste the money. If they don't change anything, they can spend the money for the school on improving Brecon.
14.32	Gwernyfed becomes a campus for the 'Beacons School' – a similar model to John Beddoes and Newtown
14.33	Why not simply use the £22 million to rebuild Brecon High School and leave the successful and well-loved Gwernyfed out of the equation?
14.34	<p>Alternative Proposal – as a major contribution to a Brecon Regeneration Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impose no pre-conditions on options appraisals. • Invest now in interim repairs at Brecon and Gwernyfed Schools, using the £24M already ring-fenced for the NPTC Group of Colleges. • Alongside the five new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment, start building the New School Building at Brecon High School now (designs and planning permissions etc. pending) using the £20M already ring-fenced for this. • Rescue Welsh-medium education in South Powys by investing now in its better provision and support in all primary schools in the Brecon catchment, creating a Welsh-medium critical mass here where demand is highest. • Consider the merits of All-through (four to 18) education encompassing all of the primary schools in each of the rural Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments. • Support FE education in Brecon to provide the traditional complementary vocational studies that are required in this rural area.
14.35	Explain why it wouldn't be advantageous to retain an in-school sixth form in Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, and a separate complementary vocational FE college.

14.36	When designing the New School Building adjacent to the Brecon Leisure Centre, run a thorough public consultation to maximise the other public benefits achievable on site and help to develop regional, national and international learning opportunities.
14.37	If this was put out as a questionnaire to area ratepayers - they would be more than happy to meet that small shortfall, so why not be fair and ask them.
14.38	Give Brecon the money to build a new school and leave [Gwernyfed] alone!
14.39	I really don't understand why you cannot just build a new school in Brecon because yes they need one desperately and then get someone in there to manage it and its finances, and have the teachers there to teach and maybe then the standard of the school will improve as I know it has since it went into special measures and the school and staff need to be recognised for this. I know there is a long way to go but they will get there with a new building and it being managed correctly.
14.40	I propose that Powys go ahead immediately with a new building in Brecon, and that the new school be open in 2017/18 AT THE LATEST. From a Freedom of Information Act request I have made it appears that Powys County Council has enough money to build a 1000+ student school without dependency on the 21 st Century schools programme. I object to the statement in the Proposal that the sale of the existing Brecon High School site goes into the Councils General Accounts, not into the school itself or to funding the school. The new build should be a phased project, with the immediate phase 1 delivering a new school for the existing students at Brecon (1000+ spaces), with phase 2 to be developed pending a decision on closure of Gwernyfed and Phase 3 the building of a 6 th form centre to include ALL pupils in the current Brecon/Gwernyfed/Crickhowell catchment. These should all be submitted as one planning application with separate build dates.
14.41	Yes, repair Brecon, or even give them a new school. But under no circumstances, should Gwernyfed be a part of this major act.
14.42	<i>Build a new school in Brecon for Brecon school children but smaller than your current plans thereby giving them the new building they deserve and clear the debt that they have and keep Gwernyfed open for Gwernyfed children and spend the money required to carry out the relatively small amount of maintenance required</i>
14.43	Why are we not considering building a primary school on the Gwernyfed site? This would give us the opportunity to increase the numbers at the school by increasing the age-range catered for. Locally, Christ College Brecon has done

	<p>exactly that in order to improve their income streams to stay viable. Surely we could do something similar in the public sector, to make Gwernyfed a more financially secure unit by boosting numbers? We have a huge site for further buildings and it is a safe and secure site for younger pupils. There seems to be so much practical sense in this option. It keeps the community cohesion by increasing the numbers of students on this site making it more financially viable and offering a continuity of education on one site.</p>
14.44	<p>A new school is all that's needed for Brecon HIGH SCHOOL ... forget building a fantastic school and give BRECON HIGH SCHOOL a really good facelift and maintain Welsh stream and sixth form.</p>
14.45	<p>The Governing Body urges POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL to re-visit option 7. They believe that a through school (3-18) for Brecon would achieve many of the Council's aims: it would provide the desperately needed new building; create a critical mass of learners; wipe out Brecon High School's deficit; and potentially secure the match funding being sought from Welsh Government. The Governing Body fully supports Brecon High School's wish for this to be accepted as the preferred option. For Gwernyfed, this would: retain a high performing secondary school that is ready and willing to work with the Council to explore closer working relationships with its primary cluster; safeguard the health and wellbeing of young people; and secure the future of the rural communities that depend so much on GSH's existence. [Gwernyfed HIGH SCHOOL Governing Body]</p>
14.46	<p>(welsh Proposal) Establishing the first ever designated Welsh-medium secondary schools in Powys would break the existing vicious cycle and transform the current landscape in terms of Welsh medium education throughout the county, in line with Welsh Government expectations to strengthen and increase bilingualism in Wales. More than one school is needed to realise this vision.</p>
14.47	<p>[Welsh Proposal] Fund Brecon High properly and a Welsh stream will again flow through the school.</p>
14..48	<p>[Welsh Proposal] Think outside the box. South and Mid Powys should have a 2A school and every effort should be made to try and achieve this. A parental questionnaire by RhAG in 2011 indicated 80% support for a 2A school in South/Mid Powys.</p>
14.49	<p>[Welsh Proposal] You could also boost the numbers in the Welsh stream at Brecon High School by stopping sending pupils across the border to Ystalyfera. Paying for children to be schooled out of county just seems ludicrous to me. I was also extremely shocked to hear that Sennybridge Primary School has been designated as a feeder school for Ystalyfera. Crazy! If you look at the pupil numbers in the nursery class at Sennybridge Welsh Stream and the number in the nursery class at Ysgol Y Bannau (and made parents aware that you wouldn't be paying for them to be schooled out of county or</p>

	bussed to Builth) you would see that there are enough children between these two schools to have two classes in the Welsh stream at Brecon High school.
14.50	[Welsh Proposal] I would imagine the money paid out on buses would pay the salaries of quite a few Welsh medium teachers who could be used to boost the Welsh stream at Brecon High School rather than making the pupils travel. Or, as an alternative, why don't you get the teachers to travel between Brecon and Builth High Schools? Give the teachers a travel allowance, keep the Welsh streams open in both schools and save yourselves some money?
14.51	[Welsh Proposal] I urge you to reconsider this Proposal in favour of a more visionary and creative strategy for The Brecon Learning Campus where Brecon High School is supported in its bid to attain the appropriate staffing and leadership capacity to become a 2B school. For BRECON HIGH SCHOOL, to be supported, occupying as it does a key geographical hub, in a bid to become the natural school of choice for Ysgol y Bannau and Sennybridge and a centre of excellence for The Welsh Language within a state of the art new build. Given these reassurances the future of Welsh language uptake in the Brecon area would be guaranteed.
14.52	[Welsh Proposal] In the face of the proposed investment in the English medium provision, there should be the same vision for Welsh medium provision as it is an opportunity to transform Welsh language provision for the whole of Powys. A Welsh medium secondary school in Powys would break the current cycle and change the linguistic typography of Powys, also bringing the county in line with the Welsh Government's aim of strengthening bilingualism. Powys needs more than just one Welsh high school to achieve this. Providing a category 2a school in Builth Wells would be the best way to achieve this and would replicate the similar Proposal for a 2a school in the north of the county. Establishing a 2a Welsh medium school in Builth would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbolise the growth in the Welsh medium sector, would attract more pupils to it over time and help to develop the Welsh medium primary sectors as has happened in other parts of Wales. • Provide a fully equal provision and experience for Welsh medium pupils by ensuring a full suite of subjects are available in key stages 3 and 4. • Improve and consolidate the continuity between key stages • Provide an opportunity for the school to attract qualified staff across the full subject range • Create a fully Welsh ethos in the school that will set the best foundation to foster and develop confidence in the use of the Welsh language amongst pupils • Help Powys meet the Welsh Government targets for developing and strengthening Welsh language education
14.53	[Welsh Proposals] Repatriating children taught out of county would boost the financial support available which would enable better provision in BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and make it more attractive to those parents. This provision should have been maintained years ago and not left to diminish through poor management and lack of support from the relevant authorities. Poor provision is influencing current trends rather than potential demand for Welsh-medium

	<p>education.</p> <p>Deliver on the Proposals outlined within your WESP document as a minimum but also aim to achieve the targets set for other schools in KS3 and KS4 to address inequalities across the county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to pursue a new school to replace BRECON HIGH SCHOOL with equal access to English and Welsh medium students – the inclusion of Welsh medium education would strengthen your chance of securing funding to develop a new school - more likely to attract students and high quality teaching staff which would address some of the issues around recruitment and retention. • Consider sharing Welsh teachers between primary and secondary settings. • Consider a 4-18 year old provision sharing facilities with the new BRECON HIGH SCHOOL. • Boost Welsh medium education by introducing dual streams in primary schools in the east (Gwernyfed) and south east (Crickhowell) to act as feeders to BRECON HIGH SCHOOL and reinstate Sennybridge as a feeder for BRECON HIGH SCHOOL, with the option of sharing Welsh medium teaching staff. You acknowledge no Mudiad Meithrin provision exists in the easterly catchments; you are unlikely to engage the interest of parents of preschool children without it! You should communicate any commitment clearly to parents at the outset ensuring the provision is sufficient to attract interest whilst not misleading them into pursuing an option that may be short-lived as has been the case with us.
<p>14.54</p>	<p>[Welsh Proposal] Using modern technology such as video conferencing, etc. would enable the continuation of a Secondary welsh stream in both Brecon and Builth Wells High Schools, reduce student travel and embed a vibrant Welsh educational culture in all areas of South Powys. What research / modelling has been conducted by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL Educational Officers into how new learning / teaching technologies could enable a Welsh A level stream to be retained in all South Powys High Schools?</p>
<p>14.55</p>	<p>[Welsh Proposal] Investment in technology may be able to facilitate a small core group of Welsh medium teachers to teach lessons to pupils across multiple sites, using video-conferencing facilities, online seminar software and so forth - a more attractive and viable option than shipping pupils who want a Welsh medium education to and from Builth Wells every day.</p>
<p>14.56</p>	<p>[Welsh Proposal] I would much rather see a system of enhanced collaboration between existing institutions, involving imaginative use of modern technology to facilitate and enhance learning, the sharing of teaching and learning resources between existing schools, and so forth.</p>
<p>14.57</p>	<p>[Welsh Proposals] Consider alternative solutions for maintaining and building up Welsh-medium provision in the Brecon HIGH SCHOOL catchment, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in increasing primary Welsh- medium provision through education apprenticeships and peripatetic teachers • Use the RDP Wales to increase the availability of Welsh language apprentices and peripatetic teachers, e.g., RDP

	<p>Measure 7 (Rural Community Development Plan), investing in cultural services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that increasing the support for Welsh-medium provision at primary level will boost demand at secondary level, creating the critical mass in the Brecon catchment to retain and build dual stream provision • Invest more widely in the Welsh-medium culture and learning in the Brecon catchment, e.g., using the Powys LEADER Fund Arwain to add value to local identity.
15.58	<p>[Welsh Proposal]It was stated in the Builth Wells consultation evening that teams of teachers will travel between the two sites (being Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod-Wells High school) which would allow them to deliver lesson to both sites. Why can't a Welsh speaking team of teachers travel between Builth Wells High School and Brecon High School? Not only will it drastically cut travel costs, it would also ensure the security, safety and welfare of our children by keeping them off the roads and prevent anxiety and stress of pupils and their families.</p>
14.59	<p>The Proposal may look the most suitable option on paper and may be an option for an urban environment but in a rural setting and in the real world it is a poor option. (criticism of Proposal for Welsh medium and travel implications)</p>
14.60	<p>There are significant contrasts between them. BRECON HIGH SCHOOL is a town school, where pupils are brought up in an urbanised area, and the nature of this is very different to GWERNYFED HIGH SCHOOL, a very rural school incorporating many local communities with children brought up differently to those in Brecon.</p>
14.61	<p>"Small" can be good. "Big" does not necessarily mean better, and a model that can work in densely populated urban areas is NOT the answer in a sparsely populated rural environment. If POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL wish to improve education, focus on the areas that need it (e.g. Brecon High School).</p>
14.62	<p>I would refer you to another Welsh Government document - A Think Piece on the possible options for improving the performance and efficiency of sixth forms in Wales- which says;</p> <p>3. Implement an adaptable tertiary model across Wales Given the geography of Wales and the patterns of existing provision, a 'one-size fits all' approach would be extremely difficult to operationalise. Although a tertiary model may be successful in urban areas, the capital and political costs required to introduce this model across Wales appear prohibitive.</p>
14.63	<p>Proposals are based on what has worked in urban areas where closing schools does not involve pupils in long journeys to school.</p>

	Merging schools to create larger establishments is a city solution that only works when the schools are within walking distance of each other - not in a rural situation where students must be transported over tens of miles. [Talgarth Town Council]
	It would seem that you don't seem to think that [Crickhowell] need to be a part of this process again, we would be grateful if you could explain this?
14.64	The document also states that there are surplus places at Brecon and Gwernyfed however it does not state that Crickhowell High School have been allowed to increase their intake by twenty pupils which was confirmed at the consultation meeting. Again this smacks of mismanagement by POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL. Whichever way you look at these facts they represent a lack of parity for the communities of Brecon and Gwernyfed
14.65	The case to close Gwernyfed is very flimsy; the reasons given are to do with Brecon NOT Gwernyfed' s. There is no common sense being used at ALL.
14.69	Revise the investment objectives and CSFs for the revised Proposal to include education experience, quality of teaching, quality of leadership, the essential links between high schools and their local communities, and the integral role that both primary and secondary education, including Welsh-medium provision make to regeneration, inward investment and inward migration in the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchments. National Park Authority.
14.70	Revise the investment objectives and CSFs so that they provide the towns of Brecon and Talgarth with opportunities to develop long term Place Plans in partnership with the Brecon Beacons
14.71	Re-design these Proposals so that they are the centrepiece of a Brecon Regeneration Plan.

**APPENDIX C – FINAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools**

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Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Decision Assessment reporting template

This EqIA reporting template is designed to assist in the analysis of gathered data and evidence, to determine the equality impact of a proposal to change existing practices of a Council service. Once complete, the template should be made fully accessible to the public e.g. inclusion with publicly available Cabinet reports and/or publication on the Powys County Council website. For confidential matters, this should be made available once a decision has been taken.

N.B. Please contact the Council's Organisational Development Officer (Equalities) early on in the process if you require advice to conduct an assessment.

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<p>Proposal</p>	<p>a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;</p> <p>b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;</p> <p>c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation; and</p> <p>d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.</p>	<p>Lead Person undertaking the assessment</p>	<p>Marianne Evans</p>
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Service Area	Schools Service	Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Ian Roberts Head of Schools
Date of Assessment	March 2016		

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

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1. AIM or PURPOSE

Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change proposal being assessed.	<p>The School Review Process as outlined within the School Transformation Policy 2014 was restarted in September 2015. The stages of the Process are outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Initial Assessment of Schools in accordance with Stage 1 of the School Review Process was carried out, during which data for all schools was considered. Schools were considered against the criteria outlined in the School Transformation Policy. As a result of this Initial Assessment of Schools, SORP agreed to carry out a detailed review of the two schools. • Dialogue took place with the governing bodies, headteachers and local members during 2015 and 2016 in accordance with Stage 2 of the School Review Process as described in the School Transformation Policy, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial meetings held on 21st September 2015 to agree data in respect of the school and to discuss future options relating to the school;
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- An opportunity for the governing bodies to provide feedback on the options presented to them;
- Following the initial meetings with governing bodies, headteachers and local members, the Council carried out a review of secondary education across South and Mid Powys, and developed a business case which considered the case for change in both areas, assessed and costed a range of options and included Proposals relating to the secondary schools under review.
- The business case and its Proposals were considered by the SORP on the 20th January 2016, and the SORP agreed draft Proposals in respect of the all schools under review.
- Feedback meetings were held with the governing bodies, local members and the headteachers on the 26th January 2016 to discuss the SORP’s draft Proposals and to give the governing bodies a further opportunity to present additional evidence.
- On the 23rd February 2016, Cabinet considered the SORP’s Proposals, together with the business case and additional evidence presented by the governing bodies following the feedback meeting. Cabinet resolved to commence formal consultation on the Proposal outlined above.
- The consultation period commenced on the 6th April 2016, and ended on the 1st June 2016.
- The Consultation Document was available on the Council’s website throughout the consultation period. The Document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2013).

2. OBJECTIVES

Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.

Investment Objectives

- To significantly improve the learning outcomes for learners across the ability range;
- To maximise the curriculum benefits at key stages 3 and 4 for learners who study through the medium of Welsh or English;
- To provide post 16 provision that improves access to, and participation in, both academic and vocational courses and which meets the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure, whilst minimising the need for additional travel during the school day;
- To reduce surplus places in schools;
- To provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh Medium provision across all key phases of education;
- To achieve efficiencies through economies of scale, reduced management, premises and running costs, whilst maximising the percentage of the budget spent on teaching and learning.

3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES	
i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a critical mass of pupils that meets the Authority’s agreed minimum threshold of 600 pupils at KS3 and KS4 • Creates a critical mass of pupils at post-16, enabling more subjects to be delivered from one location and minimising the requirement for additional inter-school travel and transport. • Meets the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure in a single location, with the added bonus of the proximity of NPTC Group of Colleges and therefore opportunities to broaden the offer for pupils, both academically and vocationally. • Reduces overall surplus places. • Improves learning environment. • Provides for a more cost-effective delivery of learning • Removes backlog maintenance costs • Provides an opportunity to develop an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges • Provides a net saving to the Authority which can be reinvested in the education sector • Provides a capital receipt to the Authority which can be reinvested in the education sector • Enables Welsh-medium education to be delivered in a more cost – effective way, providing improved linguistic progression and more subject choice for learners • Creation of a greater mass of Welsh-medium secondary learners in a single school which will enable the Authority to build on the linguistic continuity already present • Social and educational benefits to Welsh-medium pupils from being part of a larger group of Welsh-medium pupils • Additional Welsh-medium opportunities would be provided to Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon through access to the wider range of Welsh-medium subjects than the offer currently provided • More opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities through the medium of Welsh • An increased number of Welsh-medium pupils would enable the school to further develop its Welsh ethos • Given the location of Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Builth Wells is in a more central location for the majority of Welsh-medium primary providers in mid / south Powys.
4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE	
How does this change proposal relate to the Powys	The proposal supports Powys County Council’s vision for education, which is outlined within the One Powys Plan for 2014-17. ‘Transforming Learning and Skills’ is one of the priorities within this plan, and within this priority, the Plan states

Change Plan and/or Powys One Plan?	that <i>'We need to re-organise schools (primary, secondary and post 16) to ensure affordability, sustainability and appropriate leadership capacity'</i>
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5. DATA USED

5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment? Tick/shade boxes as appropriate. Page 1438	Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
	Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
	Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
	Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	✓
	Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics	
	Wider research reports and findings.	
	Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment	
5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No ✓

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Quantitative Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire. Key questions:	Information on pupils who attend both High Schools, along with information on pupils who attend each feeder school in both catchment areas is obtained via the Pupil Level Annual School Census 2016 (PLASC), which shows the profile of pupils according to a range of criteria, including age, free school meals, gender, special educational needs, ethnicity, use of Welsh and disabilities. In relation to the protected characteristic groups, the profile of pupils at the school is provided below: <u>Brecon High School</u> - 565 pupils in total including 92 pupils in the Sixth Form.
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- i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?
- ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?

- Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 286 are boys and 279 are girls.
- Free school meals: 7% are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: 1% of pupils in the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Less than 1% of these pupils have physical or medical difficulties.
- 16% of pupils have additional learning needs but do not have a statement.
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for 8% of pupils.
- Welsh Language: 3% of pupils are recorded as being able to speak Welsh fluently at home. 5% do not speak Welsh at home but are fluent. 0.5% speak Welsh at home but not fluently.
 - The ethnic group of pupils at the school is as follows:
 - White British –(89%)
 - Nepali – (4%)
 - Other ethnic groups (7%) – 17 other groups identified

Gwernyfed High School

- 456 pupils in total. 6 subsidiary pupils. 84 pupils are in the Sixth Form.
- Gender: Of the pupils attending the school, 219 are boys and 237 are girls.
- Free school meals: 5% are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: 0.5% of the school have Statements of Special Educational Needs. There are no pupils with physical or medical difficulties.
- 34% have special needs but do not have a statement.
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for less than 1% of pupils
- Welsh Language: less than 1% speaks Welsh fluently at home. Less than 1% speaks Welsh at home but not fluently.
 - The ethnic group of pupils at the school is as follows:
 - White British –96%
 - Other ethnic group – 4% (10 groups identified)

Primary schools in the Brecon catchment area

- 1040 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11.
- Gender: Of the pupil attending schools in the catchment area, 51% are boys and 49% are girls.
- Free school meals: 10% are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: 0.5% in the catchment area have Statements of Special Educational Needs, and less than half of these have physical or medical disabilities.
- 17% pupils have special needs but do not have a statement
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for 7% of pupils.
- Welsh Language: 5% of pupils speak Welsh at home. 7% pupils speak Welsh but not at home.
- Race/ethnicity: PLASC only provides information about the nationality and ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over.
 - The ethnic groups of pupils aged 5 and over attending schools in the catchment area is as follows:
 - White British – (90%)
 - Nepali 4%
 - Other ethnic groups – 7% (22 other groups identified)

Primary Schools in the Gwernyfed catchment area

- 631 pupils in total, aged between 3 and 11.
- Gender: Of the pupils attending schools in the catchment area, 51% are boys and 49% are girls.
- Free school meals: 5% pupils are eligible for free school meals.
- SEN: Less than 1% of pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs.
- 12% pupils have special needs but do not have a statement, and less than 0.5% of the pupils have physical or medical difficulties.
- English as an Additional Language: English is an additional language for less than 1% pupils.
- Welsh Language: 1% pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. 0.3% pupils come from homes where Welsh is not spoken but can speak Welsh.
- Race/ethnicity:
 - The ethnic group of pupils aged 5 and over attending schools in the

	<p>catchment area is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White British – 96% - Other ethnic group – 4% (5 groups identified)
<p>6.2 Qualitative Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</p> <p>iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</p> <p>iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</p>	<p>Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.</p> <p>A total of 1047 questionnaires were analysed, of which 625 were responses to the main consultation questionnaire, 148 to the Young Persons’ questionnaire, and 274 to the primary school consultation questionnaire;</p> <p>29 statutory written submissions were received concerning the proposals for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools. These were from: Assembly Members and Members of Parliament; Estyn, other political groups; school Governing Bodies; Town and Community Councils; and other affected local organisations. In addition, 409 other submissions were received from local residents and non-statutory organisations. The vast majority of submissions were sent in by those within the Gwernyfed catchment area.</p> <p>During the consultation period, meetings were also held with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Councils and other pupils of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools • School Councils and other pupils of all primary schools in both catchment areas • Staff of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools • Governors of Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools • Parents / community of both schools • Protected Characteristics Group <p><u>Impact of the Proposal on key characteristic groups</u></p> <p>ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report which can be found on http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/corporate/find-out-about-consultations-in-powys/past-consultations/brecon-and-gwernyfed-high-schools/, along with the Authority’s responses to issues raised. The main themes from the consultation are summarised on pages 45 – 49 of the Report. Specifically, the sections relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of education • Post-16 education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh-medium education • Other pupil impacts • Other staff impacts and • Community Impacts <p>describe views about the potential impact on pupils, pupils with ALN and staff. Many respondents stated their view that there would be a significant impact on equality of pupils within the Gwernyfed catchment, and Welsh-medium pupils in the Brecon catchment should the Proposal be implemented.</p>
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7. EqIA RESULT

<p>Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Age 1442</p>	<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]</p>	
	<p>The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]</p>	✓

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) All pupils at Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School, and in the primary catchment schools fall within the protected characteristic groups of <u>sex and/or age</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main impact on Brecon High School and Brecon catchment pupils may be due to the need to integrate with a new cohort of pupils. There are no additional travel implications for these pupils. • Pupils with statements of special needs/additional learning needs may be affected emotionally due to the transition to a much larger school.
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- The main impact on pupils living in the Gwernyfed catchment would be due to the additional travel required to attend a school in Brecon, rather than attend a school in Gwernyfed. This would mean a longer school day and longer journeys for these pupils than that currently required. This could have a detrimental impact on the performance and well-being of pupils – particularly those of a younger age or those with additional learning needs. It would also be more difficult for these pupils to access after-school activities due to their reliance on home-to-school transport, and it would be more difficult for parents to arrange their own transport due to the distance from their homes.
- Pupils who are within the protected characteristic groups of **disability** may also experience a negative impact due to the additional travel requirements. Learners with statement of special needs/additional learning needs may be affected due to the transition to a much larger school that is unfamiliar to them.

ii) Pupils on low income from the current Brecon catchment would not be adversely affected as provision would remain within the area. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for parents of pupils from low income families living in the Gwernyfed catchment to travel to Brecon if their children wished to stay in Brecon for after-school activities – the authority would not provide free home-to-school transport for this situation. Pupils would therefore be dependent on parental conveyance or public transport.

iii) As this Proposal is to establish an English medium secondary school in Brecon, replacing the current Brecon High School, which is a dual-stream school, the proposal would impact on Welsh speakers. It may be argued that the removal of Welsh-medium secondary education may have an adverse impact on Welsh speakers and Welsh-medium pupils in the Brecon area, however the authority's view is that Welsh speakers and Welsh-medium pupils in the Brecon area are not being treated

	<p>equally under the current arrangement due to the limited Welsh-medium curriculum available to them.</p> <p>Gwernyfed High School and the catchment primaries are all English-medium schools and the numbers of pupils who are fluent in Welsh is very low, therefore it is not anticipated that the draft Proposal would have an adverse impact on Welsh speakers in this catchment area.</p>
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9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done? ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact? iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>A new recommendation will be proposed to Cabinet by the Portfolio Holder for Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To abandon elements a),b), and d) of the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with new draft recommendations for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015; • To re-consult on element c) of the Proposal, i.e. the closure of the Welsh-stream at Brecon High School from September 2017; • To immediately submit a revised Outline Business Case to Welsh Government's 21st C Schools Programme for capital investment in both campuses. This will include a new build 11 – 18 campus in Brecon and improvements to the Gwernyfed campus.
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<p>9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</p>
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10. ONGOING MONITORING

<p>How will the decision now be monitored on an ongoing basis to consider its impact over time?</p>		Please tick/shade
	Equality monitoring of uptake of the service within which the decision was made	
	Satisfaction monitoring of service users (broken down by protected characteristic)	
	Recording and analysing complaints/requests/compliments	
	Targeted periodic focus groups/service user interviews/feedback sessions	
	Other (please specify)	

Monitoring arrangements

The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the Transformation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.

Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council’s arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.

The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.

Publication of results of the Impact Assessment

The results of the Impact Assessment will be published on the Council's website

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Any actions identified as a result of this Impact Assessment will be taken forward for inclusion in the Schools Service Business Plan

Final Community Impact Assessment

1. Introduction

Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 23rd February 2016, the Authority has carried out formal consultation on the following proposal:

- a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;
- b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;
- c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation; and
- d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.

The Council published a draft Community Impact Assessment on the Proposal as outlined in 1) above, as part of a Formal Consultation that took place between the 6th April and the 1st June 2016.

The draft Community Impact Assessment was prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2013. In order to prepare the assessments, a questionnaire was sent to each school on the 10th December 2015 to gather initial information about the community's use of school facilities. Following the Council's School Organisation Review Panel (SORP)'s feedback meetings with the school on the 26th January, the schools were invited to review and resubmit the questionnaires, having been informed of the SORP's draft recommendations. An example of the questionnaire is attached at the end of this document.

The draft Impact Assessment was based on the information received from the schools via the questionnaire.

Following the consultation period, this Community Impact Assessment has been updated to incorporate relevant information gathered during the consultation.

2. The communities served by Brecon and Gwernyfed High School

The catchment of Brecon High School includes the town of Brecon itself as well as the surrounding rural area. The catchment area for the school's Welsh-medium stream is larger, and includes the catchment areas of Gwernyfed High School and Crickhowell High School. However, as there is no Welsh-medium primary provision in either of these catchments, pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium provision travel from these catchment areas to Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon.

The catchment of Gwernyfed High School includes the towns of Talgarth and Hay-on-Wye and a number of smaller villages and hamlets.

- Brecon Town Council
- Crai Community Council

- Felinfach Community Council
- Glyn Tarrell Community Council
- Honddu Isaf Community Council
- Llanddew Community Council
- Llanfrynach Community Council
- Llywel Community Council
- Maescar Community Council
- Merthyr Cynog Community Council
- Trallong Community Council
- Talybont on Usk Community Council
- Ysgir Community Council
 - Gwernyfed Community Council
 - Hay-on-Wye Town Council
 - Bronllys Community Council
 - Clyro Community Council
 - Glasbury Community Council
 - Llangors Community Council
 - Talgarth Town Council
 - Erwood Community Council
 - Painscastle Community Council
 - Bronllys Community Council
 - Llanigon Community Council

4. Community Impact Assessment

4.1 Extra-curricular activities

Brecon High School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- Sports Clubs – Rugby, Football, Cricket (Summer), Netball, Basketball
- Subject catch up sessions – a range of subjects
- Art Club
- Additional Maths GCSE

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

Duke of Edinburgh award; Drama – School Play; Lunchtime Art Club; Revision Sessions – KS4 and KS5; Music – additional study for KS4 pupils; Peripatetic Music Lessons.

Gwernyfed High School

The following clubs are provided by the school outside school hours:

- GCSE Revision Clubs – English, Maths, Science
- GCSE Additional Maths
- Homework Club
- KS3 and KS4 Arts Club
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Film Club
- 5x60 activities
- Badminton Club

- Fitness for Sixth Form
- Music Tuition and Clubs – Junior choir, junior band, peripatetic lessons

The following extra-curricular activities are provided by the school:

Sports teams year 7-11 – Netball, Rugby, Football, Gymnastics, Cricket, Athletics, Badminton, Table Tennis, Hockey

4.2 Community Use of School Building

Brecon High School

The school's facilities are used by the community for the following activities:

- Regional Eisteddfod – annual
- South Powys Music groups
- Brecon Athletic Club
- Brecon Basketball Club
- Brecon Fit Club
- Brecon Netball Club
- Brecon Triathlon Club
- Welsh National Karate Squad
- Hosting Charity Events – e.g. Dementia Awareness
- Provide facilities for local community events – Nepalese Community celebrations

Gwernyfed High School

The school's facilities are used by the community for the following activities:

- Local Sports Teams (Hay Juniors Football, Branson FC, GRFC minis, Rebecca Saunders Football, Kasasian Norris Badminton, Gwernyfed Hockey Team, Talgarth Town Junior FC, Hay St Marys FC, Steve Wouldiams FC, Mertyr Town FC, Simone Hodges Fitness, Fencing Draig Wern Club, 14's Gwernyfed RFC, Cadence Cycle Club, Dawn Edwards Badminton, Powys Rugby, Gwernyfed RFC Warriors, Richard Jenkins Football)
- 5x60 activities
- All Wales Ploughing Championship
- Welsh Netball Association
- South Powys Badminton Association

The school building and facilities are also used by the following:

Sports Centre, Glasbury Arts, Gwernyfed RFC, Church Groups – summer holidays and weekends, Scout Camps, Private Childrens Parties, Car Boot Sales, Hay Festival wet weather parking.

The school took ownership of the Sports Centre in 2015.

The Council received a grant of £345,403 in 2004 from the New Opportunities Fund (operating as the Big Lottery Fund) for the development of Playing Fields at Gwernyfed High School. The Council's liability period for this grant is from 2006 to 2026.

4.3 Other links between the schools and the community

Brecon High School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

Use of school facilities by Penmaes Special School – pupils also attend some lessons, Mount Street Primary use hall for rehearsals, Rugby Development Officer – Formal links to Brecon Rugby Club, Links with Army Base, Links with Brecon based organisation e.g. Brecon Food Bank, Brecon Rotary – Cooking competitions and interview experience for year 11 students, Fire Service – Road Safety Events

Brecon High School also makes their facilities available for other organisations.

Gwernyfed High School

The school has strong links with the community, which include the following:

Sporting events for surrounding areas e.g. Llangors, Felin Fach, Brecon Volleyball Club, Gwernyfed Geckos Netball Club, Strong Links with Gwernyfed RFC, Glasbury Arts, Friends of Clyro, Hay Veterinary Clinic – Work Experience, Shepherds Ice Cream – Trains students in customer relations.

5. Feedback from the Consultation

Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.

ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report which can be found on <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/corporate/find-out-about-consultations-in-powys/past-consultations/brecon-and-gwernyfed-high-schools/>, along with the Authority's responses to issues raised. The main themes from the consultation are summarised on pages 45 – 49 of the Report. A summary of respondents' views about community impact can be found on pages 29 – 31 of the Consultation Report and pages 214 – 223 of the Consultation Report – Responses.

6. Conclusion

The conclusion that was included in the earlier draft Community Impact Assessment is confirmed by evidence gathered during the consultation period:

Brecon

- It is clear that the community of Brecon makes use of the school's facilities for a range of activities. However, the Proposal would involve retaining secondary provision in Brecon, therefore school facilities would continue to be available. It is likely that the proposed new building for the school would provide additional opportunities for the community to make use of the school's facilities.
- The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. The expectation is that a similar range of activities would be provided in the new school, and the proposed new school could offer opportunities to offer additional activities.

- As the proposed new school would be located on the current high school site, there would be no impact on travel for English-medium pupils currently attending Brecon High School. However, the proposal to centralise Welsh-medium provision in the Builth Wells area means that there would be additional travel for Welsh-medium pupils from the Brecon area. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided for Welsh-medium pupils, the authority accepts that it would be more difficult for them to access after school activities due to their reliance on home to school transport.

Gwernyfed

- From the evidence gathered during the consultation, it is clear that the communities served by Gwernyfed High School make significant use of the school's facilities for a wide range of activities and events. There are no similar facilities in the area that would meet the needs of the users – the centre is extremely popular with local groups, with at least 34 different user groups.
- Due to the fact that there is no other suitable location to hold these activities in the area. It is currently unclear where these activities could take place within the catchment area, should Gwernyfed High School close.
- If these facilities were removed from the area, then it may be more difficult for clubs/groups to meet, leading to a reduction in the number of clubs/groups – this would have a detrimental impact on people's ability to contribute to the community, and could potentially have a negative impact on people's health and wellbeing, as well as the social cohesion of the community.
- School journey times would be longer therefore may impact on the ability of pupils to access out-of-school activities and clubs.
- Brecon Leisure Centre may not be a feasible alternative for these clubs/groups due to its geographic location. If the usage of Brecon Leisure Centre increases due to these recommendations, then it may be more difficult for groups/clubs to book slots at the Centre, leading ultimately to the demise of groups/clubs.
- In terms of extra-curricular activities for pupils, it would be expected that the new school in Brecon would have a range of different activities. If these were provided after school hours, then it would be more difficult for those pupils for whom Gwernyfed High School is their closest school to access these activities if they were reliant on home to school transport.
- Gwernyfed High School has a drama studio that is well used as a venue for local arts activities, and without this facility, it may be difficult for arts societies to operate. For example, there is a strong linkage between Glasbury Arts, a community-based charity, and Gwernyfed High School. This manifests itself in arts-based partnership work with pupils of the school and also as a centre for the promotion of visual and performing arts within the community. There are no other non-commercial facilities that would be a suitable alternative within the community.
- Removing a secondary school from a rural area would impact negatively on the future housing market – people would not want to move to the area if there isn't a local, medium sized secondary school that they can access.

- There may be a possibility that families move away from the area to be closer to secondary provision. In the Gwernyfed area, many families live closer to secondary schools in England, and may prefer to transport their children to these schools. This may lead to a loss of skilled, educated and experienced workers in the area.
- Without a local secondary school, the area may not be attractive to young families, and the demographic of the area becomes unbalanced, with more of an ageing population. This could have an impact on pupil numbers in the primary schools.
- Local rural businesses would be negatively affected. Businesses in the vicinity of Three Cocks and other areas would be particularly affected through the removal of over 400 pupils from the area – loss of sales from shops, loss of fuel sales to parents - parents also use these businesses when they pick-up or drop-off their children, and therefore are critical to supporting the local rural economy.
- The future social interaction of pupils would become Brecon-centred, which would have an impact on businesses within the communities served by Gwernyfed High School. There would also be a further impact on the current supply chain that serves the school.
- Many local people are employed by Gwernyfed High School, or in the supply chain that supports the high school – leading to a loss of employment which would affect the local economy.
- Impact on the agricultural sector. In a traditional farming area such as Gwernyfed, many children offer a valuable additional resource for family farms. The impact of a longer school day, due to additional travel requirements, could have a detrimental effect on the industry.



Community use of school facilities - questionnaire

School:

Date questionnaire completed:

1. Please list any after-school clubs provided by the school:

2. Please list any other extra-curricular activities provided by the school:

3. Please list any other facilities or services the school accommodates e.g. youth club, play group:

4. Please list any other use by the community of the school building:

5. Please list any other links between the school and the community:

6. Please provide any additional comments you would like to submit:

Please return this questionnaire to:

School Transformation Team, Schools Service, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, Ld1 5LG

Or by e-mail to school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit incorporating Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation. **Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Ian Roberts	Strategic Director	Jeremy Patterson	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Arwel Jones
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Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	School Transformation Policy
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Outline Summary

This Impact Assessment relates to the following proposal:

- a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;
- b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;
- c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation; and
- d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.

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1. Version Control (services should consider the Impact Assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	26/08/16

2. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's strategic vision?

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council
Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



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Council Priority	How does the policy / change objective impact on this priority?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
<p>Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives</p>	<p>The aim of the Proposal is to establish a secondary school infrastructure that is sustainable in the long-term, and can provide the highest quality education for pupils in the Brecon and Gwernyfed catchment areas. The reasons for change are documented in the Consultation Document.</p> <p>For the Brecon community, the Proposal will support people in the community to live fulfilled lives by providing a new sustainable secondary school in brand new facilities, along with investment in a sixth form centre and College Campus. It is clear that the community of Brecon makes use of the school's facilities for a range of activities. However, the Proposal would involve retaining secondary provision in Brecon, therefore school facilities would continue to be available. It is likely that the proposed new building for the school would provide additional opportunities for the community to make use of the school's facilities.</p> <p>Concern has been expressed during the formal consultation about the potential impact of closure of Gwernyfed High School on the communities served by the school, as outlined in the Consultation Report The draft</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>		<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>Consultation Report Community Impact Assessment</p>

	community Impact Assessment also highlighted the significant detrimental impact of closing Gwernyfed High School.				
Developing the economy	Whilst the economy of Brecon and its surrounding hinterland could benefit significantly from the opening of a new secondary school in Brecon, along with capital investment in the NPTC Campus, it can be argued that there would be a negative impact on the communities served by Gwernyfed High School.	Poor		Poor	Consultation Report Community Impact Assessment
Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage	<p>The proposal aims to ensure that high quality education is accessible to all, and that it is affordable and sustainable with a focus on high quality leadership, teaching and learning.</p> <p>All children and young people (including those in receipt of free school meals and with additional learning needs) will be supported to achieve their full potential at the New School.</p> <p>Concern has been expressed that closure of Gwernyfed High School would have a negative impact on learner outcome, however the authority's view is that the proposal would maintain or improve learner outcomes.</p> <p>Concern was also expressed that post-16 outcomes and experiences would not be as good in a College-led tertiary system compared to that currently provided by the High Schools.</p>	Good	Should the schools close, transition plans would be put in place to support pupils with their move to the New School or to the new Post-16 provision to ensure that disruption is minimised and to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.	Neutral	Consultation Report, ERW School Improvement Strategy, One Powys Plan

<p>Remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>The proposal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reduce overall surplus capacity ii) Deliver a more cost-effective delivery of learning iii) Provide an infrastructure that is resilient to future demographic or financial challenges iv) Provide a new school building, replacing two schools that are condition C and D 	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Report</p>
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3. How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the Welsh Assembly's well-being goals?

<p>Well-being Goal</p>	<p>How does the policy / change objective contribute this goal?</p>	<p><u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below</p>	<p>What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p><u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below</p>	<p>Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement</p>
<p>A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation Document</p>
<p>A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy</p>	<p>Brecon High School is graded D for condition, meaning it is 'life-expired', and Gwernyfed High School is graded C for condition.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	

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Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



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<p>functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Gwernyfed High School.</p>				
<p>A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the well-being of pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School due to the proposed change of school and the additional travel that would be required.</p> <p>Concern was also raised that the wellbeing of Welsh-medium pupils from the Brecon area would be adversely affected due to the additional travel to Builth Wells, and not being able to access after-school activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport,</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Full support will be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to limit the impact on pupil well-being.</p> <p>The authority notes the concern in relation to the additional travel, however travel times would be within the authority's suggested maximum journey time.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Consultation report</p>

<p>A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p>Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the communities served by Gwernyfed High School.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>		<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>Consultation report</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>Brecon High School is graded D for condition, meaning it is 'life-expired', and Gwernyfed High School is graded C for condition.</p> <p>The authority's long term strategy is to improve all its learning environments, and the authority supports the Welsh Government's aspiration for 21st Century Schools which are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning environments that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes - greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources - a sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings <p>However, the authority recognises that there will be additional travel involved for pupils that currently live closer to Gwernyfed High School.</p> <p>The proposal seeks to improve the learning opportunities and outcomes for all children, and has the best interests of the child at heart. However, concern was expressed during the consultation period about the</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Full support would be provided to pupils transferring to the named receiving school or any other school to aid their transition, in order to ensure the well-being of all pupils.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Consultation report</p>

	proposal's impact on pupil well-being, and on the well-being of the communities served by Gwernyfed High School.				
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A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

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<p><i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</i></p>	<p>The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon to the Builth Wells site of the New dual-sited school in Mid Powys.</p> <p>The concerns were that the Proposal would lead to a decline in the use of the Welsh Language in the Brecon area, and a decline in the number of parents choosing Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon.</p> <p>There were also concerns that pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged by not being able to access after-school activities easily, due to the reliance on home-to-school transport, which would affect the opportunities for those pupils to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The Authority’s intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School currently provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.</p> <p>The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Consultation Report Impact assessment</p>
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<i>Treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	The Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision.	Good	See above	Good	Consultation Report Impact assessment
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	<p>The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon to the Builth Wells site of the New dual-sided school in Mid Powys.</p> <p>The concerns were that the Proposal would lead to a decline in the use of the Welsh Language in the Brecon area, and a decline in the number of parents choosing Ysgol y Bannau, Brecon.</p>	Neutral	As above	Good	Consultation Report Impact assessment
<i>Welsh Language impact on staff</i>	There will be a requirement for more Welsh-medium teachers at the New School in Mid Powys should numbers of pupils in the Welsh stream in Builth Wells increase. There will be a negative impact on Welsh-medium teachers in Brecon.	Poor	<i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.</i>	Good	Consultation Report Impact assessment

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<p><i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i></p>	<p>The New School in Brecon would have new sports facilities and a larger group of pupils to be involved in sports activities. There would be appropriate opportunities for all pupils to participate.</p> <p>However, concern has been raised that if sports facilities were removed from the Gwernyfed area, then it may be more difficult for clubs/groups to meet, leading to a reduction in the number of clubs/groups – this would have a detrimental impact on people’s ability to contribute to the community, and could potentially have a negative impact on people’s health and wellbeing, as well as the social cohesion of the community.</p> <p>There were also concerns that pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged by not being able to access after-school activities easily, due to the reliance on home-to-school transport, which would affect the opportunities for sport, art and recreation.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the New School in Brecon to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners.</p> <p>The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Community Impact Assessment, Consultation Report</p>
<p>A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>					
<p><i>Age</i></p>	<p>Please see separate Equality Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p><i>Disability</i></p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>	

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Gender reassignment	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Race	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Religion or belief	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Sex	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Sexual Orientation	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Equality Impact on PCC Staff	As above	Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

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How does your policy / change objective / budget saving impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the policy / change objective impact on this principle?	<u>Inherent Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to positive or mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>Residual Judgement</u> Please select from drop down box below	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Sustainable Development Principle					

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<p>Long Term: <i>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</i></p>	<p>The School Transformation Programme considers the general long term forecasts for the Powys population, where it is identified that the population figures for school aged children will continue to fall.</p> <p>This proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Pupils will be transferred to a larger school where the quality of education is at least as good as the current provision, enabling them to develop skills that will prepare them to enter the workforce.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	
<p>Collaboration: <i>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>The New School will continue to work in collaboration with other schools in the cluster and regionally, and with other partners, to ensure that every pupil is fully supported.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Involvement: <i>The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</i></p> <p>Communication and Engagement</p>	<p>An extensive consultation exercise has taken place on the Proposal.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Gwernyfed, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for parents and others to engage with the school.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>If the proposal is implemented, there will be an opportunity for any parent to seek election to the governing body of the New School in the future, and there will be an opportunity for all parents to continue to engage with the school and governing body.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	

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<p>Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.</p>	<p>The proposal will provide better value for money for the council in the long term, by ensuring more equitable distribution of funding and a more sustainable model of education.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Good</p>	
<p>Integration: Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	<p>Most of the issues raised during the consultation exercise were not supportive of the proposal.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>If the proposal is implemented, the authority will work with the New School to support those parents and their children to become fully integrated in the school community.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Preventing Poverty: Prevention, including helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty.</p>	<p>Should the school close, free transport would be provided to all qualifying pupils. However, it is acknowledged that it may be more difficult for the parents of pupils on low incomes for whom Gwernyfed High School is currently the closest school, due to the additional travel required of parents in order to attend activities at the school, or to collect pupils from after school activities.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>The authority will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body of the named receiving school and other schools pupils may wish to transfer to, to ensure that participation in all school activity is maximised for all learners and their families.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
<p>Safeguarding: Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</p>	<p>Safeguarding is of the utmost importance and safeguarding measures would be in place at the New School.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>	
<p>Corporate Parenting: Enabling our looked after children to fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>The New School would need to meet the needs of looked after children, therefore the authority would have no major concerns about looked after children moving to this school.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Neutral</p>	

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<p>Impact on Workforce</p>	<p>Staff at both Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools would be affected if the Proposal was implemented.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p><i>The potential impact on staff and a decline in future pupil numbers were identified as a key risk within the Consultation Document, with the following mitigation:</i></p> <p><i>'The intention of the Proposal is for the New School to provide the highest quality education in the best possible facilities, It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</i></p> <p><i>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</i></p> <p><i>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change work stream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	
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			<i>transition arrangements are managed well.</i>		
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5. Achievability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Impact on Service / Council	Deliverability of Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving	Inherent Risk
High	Very High	High

6. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving?

Description of risks	
Risks outlined in the Consultation Document:	
Risk	Risk management measures
Parents choose for their children to attend schools other than the New School – potentially in England, leading to a loss of funding through the revenue support grant (RSG) system for the Council	<p>The reduction in the funding provided through the RSG mechanism would be largely offset by the reduction in the budget provided to the New School through the Fair Funding Formula</p> <p>The proposed new School Transport Policy, if approved, might reduce the number of pupils attending schools out of country</p>
Parents choose for their children to attend schools other than the New School, leading to more surplus places in the New School	<p>The Council's intention is for the New School to provide the highest quality education in the best possible facilities, and the Council will engage with stakeholders in order to share the vision during the planning and construction stages</p> <p>The current over-subscription for places in Crickhowell High School reduces the potential for pupils to obtain places at Crickhowell High School</p>
Parents choose for their children to attend schools other than the New School, potentially in England, which would mean that pupils would not be able to participate in the Welsh curriculum	<p>The Welsh Curriculum would be available in the New School and other secondary schools within Wales</p> <p>The proposed new School Transport Policy, if approved, might reduce the number of pupils attending schools out of country</p>
Negative community and economic impact on the current Gwernyfed	A draft community impact assessment has been issued as part of this consultation,

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<p>catchment area</p>	<p>and will be updated to reflect information and feedback provided during the consultation. The updated community impact assessment will include the Council's plans to mitigate any negative impact and will be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting in September 2016. As part of this process, the Council will consider any Proposals from the community for continued use of the community facilities located at Gwernyfed High School</p>
<p>Additional travel time has a negative impact on pupil well-being and attainment.</p>	<p>The Council's intention is for the New School to provide the highest quality education, with the appropriate care and support for all pupils, in the best possible facilities</p> <p>However, the Council recognises that there would be additional travel requirements once the New School Building is opened in Brecon, especially for those pupils living in Clyro and Hay-on-Wye Primary School catchment areas</p> <p>An assessment of the home postcodes of pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School has been carried out, and it is expected that the maximum travel time for pupils currently attending Gwernyfed High School to travel to the New School in Brecon would be not normally more than an hour</p> <p>The Council already transports pupils with special educational needs from the Gwernyfed catchment area to Ysgol Penmaes, Brecon; the ASD Unit at Brecon High School and other primary specialist provision. The Council's view is that the current transport arrangements for these pupils are suitable because the journey does not take an unreasonable amount of time. As such, the proposed travel arrangements for secondary pupils to the New School Building in Brecon are deemed suitable.</p> <p>The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 does not specify a time limit for journeys. However, local authorities are required to assess the individual needs of learners when considering if a journey time is reasonable. This would be done on an individual basis, if the Proposal is approved.</p> <p>However, the old Learner Travel Operational Guidance April 2009 stated that Welsh Ministers considered that normal journey times should be no more than 60 minutes for secondary school aged pupils. This is reflected in the Council's proposed new School Transport Policy</p> <p>The provision of post-16 education on a single site would remove any requirement</p>

	for additional inter-school/college travel during the school day
Pupils from the Gwernyfed area may not be able to access after-school activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport	<p>The New School would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport</p> <p>The majority of pupils attending Gwernyfed High School are currently reliant on home-to-school transport and their ability to access after-school activities would be similarly affected if the Proposal is approved</p>
Additional transport has a negative environmental impact	It is expected that although there would be an increase in overall level of learner mileage, the overall number of private vehicles used will be fewer than current
Non-availability of Welsh Government capital funding to build the New School Building	In the event that Welsh Government do not give approval for funding for the New School Building, the Council will look at the capacity to fund this from its capital programme
Post-16 learners choose other providers rather than attend NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon, making it difficult for the College to provide the expected range of subjects	The intention is that the new post-16 'tertiary' provision in Brecon delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges would provide the highest quality post-16 education with a broad choice of both academic and vocational subjects, which would be attractive to the majority of post-16 learners in the area. The College is also planning to invest in new facilities which will enhance the post-16 learning environment.
Difficult for both current schools to focus on improving outcomes due to the uncertainty caused by the Proposal - may affect standards	The Council will continue to provide advice and support to both schools and the shadow governing body of the New School to ensure that standards and performance continue to improve during the transition period.
Staff at both current schools are demotivated and some may choose to leave before the New School is established, affecting their ability to deliver the curriculum	<p>It is hoped that the transparency of the process and the ability of staff to participate in the consultation exercise will help to reduce the levels of demotivation</p> <p>It is also hoped that the prospects of being part of a transformational development including a New School with better facilities may go some way to mitigating this risk</p> <p>Should the Proposal be implemented, the Council would establish a Management of Change workstream to work closely with the staff and shadow governing body, ensuring that transition arrangements are managed well.</p>
Heavy workload for governors who are appointed to the shadow governing body, during the transition to the New School	<p>The Shadow Governing Body would be formed from those expressing an interest and it is anticipated that those individuals would be best placed to determine whether they have the available time to commit</p> <p>The Council would provide officer support from a range of service areas – HR, Challenge Advisor, Central Services, Finance etc. The Council would also provide</p>

	clerking services to the shadow governing body and to the new governing body of the New School for a minimum period first school year
Challenging for governors, headteacher and SLT to focus on establishing and operating a New School across two sites, whilst also planning and overseeing the transition to the New School Building	The Council would provide officer support from a range of service areas as outlined previously and also provide support for the transition to the New School Building. Governors, headteacher, staff and pupils would be key stakeholders in the planning and transition stages of the New School Building, and would be supported by Council officers and the appointed developer
Pupils from Brecon choose to attend English-medium provision at Brecon High School instead of travelling to Builth Wells	In the short term, the Authority would expect there to be some reduction in the proportion of pupils from the Brecon area continuing to access Welsh-medium provision in the secondary sector. However, the current Welsh-medium provision in KS 4 in Brecon is very limited, and there is no provision at all at Post-16. The Council will work with the primary schools concerned and the secondary school provision in Builth Wells and the expectation is that any reduction in transfer rates into KS 3 would be reversed in the longer term
Pupils from Brecon choose to attend alternative Welsh-medium secondary provision outside Powys instead of the secondary school provision in Builth Wells	Ysgol y Bannau would become an official feeder school for the new dual-stream, dual-sited school in Mid Powys, and both schools would work closely to ensure clear transition and progression routes for pupils. The Authority would only provide transport for pupils to the nearest school that provides Welsh-medium education
Pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau decrease due to the lack of Welsh-medium secondary provision at Brecon	In the short term, there may be a reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol y Bannau. The Authority would work with Ysgol y Bannau, Menter Brycheiniog and other organisations to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium primary education in the Brecon area.
The school site in Builth Wells is unable to accommodate the additional pupils from Brecon	There is sufficient capacity at the current site of Builth Wells High School to accommodate the additional pupils from the Brecon area.
The new school in Mid Powys does not have sufficient staff to deliver Welsh-medium provision to 2 teaching groups per year in all year groups in the short term	The Council would support the school in appointing the required staff in readiness for September 2017, and provide additional resource in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula arrangements.

Judgement (to be included in service risk register)			
Very High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
	X		
Mitigating Actions			Residual Risk
Abandon the Proposal related to elements a,b and d of the Proposal and bring new recommendations for Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools forward. Reconsult on element c, and submit a revised Outline Business Case to the Welsh Government for capital funding to build a new 11 – 18 school in Brecon and remodel Gwernyfed High School.			Choose an item.

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	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
Does the Policy / Change Objective / Budget Saving have potential to impact on another service area?	
Regeneration	

7. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
It is concluded that there are too many risks for the Council and stakeholders to proceed with elements a,b, and d of the Proposal, but there are benefits to proceeding with element C of the Proposal.	

8. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
Consultation responses, consultation report, impact assessments.

On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
The Schools Transformation Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the Transformation agenda: setting direction, implementing change, monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet of the Council.
Equality monitoring will form an integral part of the County Council's arrangements for any school reorganisation and will be undertaken where a significant or material change in provision is proposed.
The Head of Schools Service will be responsible for on-going monitoring.
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
n/a

10. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Service Manager:	Marianne Evans	Marianne Evans	26/08/16

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Head of Service:	Ian Roberts	Ian Roberts	
Strategic Director:	Jeremy Patterson	Jeremy Patterson	
Portfolio Holder:	Arwel Jones	Arwel Jones	

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Appendix D Final Welsh Language Impact Assessment

South & Mid Powys

1. Introduction

The Council published a draft Welsh Language Impact Assessment on the following Proposal, as part of a Formal Consultation that took place between the 6th April and the 1st June 2016:

- a) To close Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School on the 31st August 2017, and to establish a new English-medium 11 – 16 secondary school that will operate across the current sites of the two schools from 1st September 2017;
- b) From the 1st September 2017, Post-16 provision (academic and vocational) to be delivered by NPTC Group of Colleges in Brecon;
- c) From the 1st September 2017, Welsh-medium secondary education to be delivered at the Builth Wells site of the proposed new school in Mid Powys (provided that the Proposal is approved by Cabinet following consultation; and
- d) To close the school sites at Gwernyfed and Brecon upon the opening of a new build campus in Brecon, in 2019/20.

This impact assessment also relates to the proposed way forward for Welsh-medium provision in Mid Powys.

2. Background information

The proportion of Welsh speakers in the communities where the two dual stream high schools – Brecon and Builth Wells - in south Powys are located are fairly similar. Information from the 2011 Census shows that 21.6% of the population of Brecon town have one or more skill in Welsh, whilst 23.3% of the population of Builth Wells town have one or more skill in Welsh. The percentage of Welsh speakers in the surrounding communities is varied.

Based on the Welsh Government's language categories, Brecon High School is currently categorised as a category 3 bilingual school, whilst Builth Wells High School is categorised as a category 2C bilingual school. The number of Welsh-medium subjects at both schools during the current academic year (2014-15) is as follows:

Welsh-medium Issues – across South and Mid Powys

- There are two Welsh-medium streams in secondary schools in Mid and South Powys – one in Brecon High School and one in Builth Wells High School. The Council is worried that there are not enough pupils to keep both streams open;
- Builth Wells High School has 129 pupils in the Welsh stream this year, but here are only 30 pupils in the Welsh stream in Brecon High School and the school is unable to provide a wide range of subjects in Welsh, especially at KS4;

- The Council is also concerned about that there aren't enough subjects available in Welsh at Post-16;
- This situation doesn't provide Welsh-medium pupils the same learning experience as pupils studying in the English-stream and doesn't help to develop their Welsh Language skills.
- The following tables show the number of pupils in the Welsh stream in both Brecon and Builth High School over the last two years:

Brecon High School	2014/15	2015/16
Year 7	14	3
Year 8	13	7
Year 9	9	4
Year 10	8	8
Year 11	13	8
Total	57	30

Builth Wells High School	2014/15	2015/16
Year 7	18	28
Year 8	23	23
Year 9	28	31
Year 10	21	27
Year 11	17	20
Total	107	129

- During the 2015/16 academic year, the Welsh-medium provision at Brecon High School and Builth Wells High School in years 7 to 11 is as follows¹:

Brecon High School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Number of Welsh-medium subjects	7	6	6	2	2
Number of English-medium subjects	14	14	14	17	18
Number of bilingual subjects	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of subjects	14	14	14	17	18
% Welsh-	50%	43%	43%	12%	11%

¹ Information received from the schools in October 2015

medium subjects					
Language² category	2C	3	3	4	4

Builth Wells High School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Number of Welsh-medium subjects	12	12	13	9	9
Number of English-medium subjects	16	16	16	24	20
Number of bilingual subjects	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of subjects	16	16	16	24	20
% Welsh-medium subjects	75%	75%	81%	38%	45%
Language category	2C	2C	2B	3	3

The Council is also concerned about the limited post-16 opportunities currently available to Welsh-medium learners in South and Mid Powys. Currently, there is no Welsh-medium post-16 provision at Brecon High School, and only a limited number of subjects are offered at Builth Wells High School.

One of the Strategic Aims stated in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is 'to provide robust linguistic continuity of Welsh-medium provision across all key phases of education'. The Authority's current policy as stated in the WESP is to aim that all dual stream schools become category 2B³ bilingual schools by 2020. However, schools' progress towards achieving this aim has been limited.

As the current position at both schools does not fully meet the aspirations of the Authority's WESP for linguistic continuity, the Authority has identified the need to centralise provision in south Powys, in order to ensure that a greater level of provision can be offered to pupils.

3. Standards in Welsh

The following tables provide information about Standards in Welsh First Language at Brecon High School and Builth Wells High School for the last 3 years.

Whilst this is useful as background information, the relatively small number of pupils in each year group at each school mean that it is difficult to draw any firm

² Defining Schools According to Welsh-medium Provision – Welsh Government 2007

³ As stated in the Welsh Government document, 'Defining Schools according to Welsh-medium Provision', published in 2007.

conclusions from this information with regard to standards in Welsh at the two schools.

i) **End of Key Stage 3**

Brecon High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh First Language	19	13	8
Number of pupils that achieved Level 5+	19	10	8
% of pupils that achieved Level 5+	100%	76.9%	100%

Builth Wells High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh First Language	17	17	22
Number of pupils that achieved Level 5+	15	16	20
% of pupils that achieved Level 5+	88.2%	94.1%	90.9%

i) **End of Key Stage 4**

Brecon High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of GCSE Welsh First	18	12	18

Language entries			
Number of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	7	6	14
% of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	38.9%	50%	77.8%

Builth Wells High School

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of GCSE Welsh First Language entries	13	22	17
Number of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	10	13	13
% of pupils that achieved grades A* - C	76.9%	59.1%	76.5%

4. Welsh language activities provided by the schools

Brecon High School

The majority of extra-curricular activities at Brecon High School are carried out through the medium of English, however some activities take place in Welsh or bilingually, depending on which member of staff is responsible and which pupils are taking part.

The south Powys Urdd Eisteddfod is held in Brecon High School each year.

Builth Wells High School

A number of the school's extra-curricular activities and clubs are Welsh or bilingual, depending on which member of staff is responsible and which pupils are taking part.

In addition, the school provides a range of additional opportunities for pupils to use Welsh outside the classroom. The school choir takes part in Urdd competitions, and pupils also take part in written competitions. Workshops are arranged with Welsh speakers from speciality areas, as well as workshops with Welsh poets and Welsh bands. The school holds an annual Eisteddfod, which gives additional opportunities for pupils to use their Welsh. The school puts on a musical every two years, and this is always bilingual, with some of the songs being in Welsh.

The school also supports the local 'papur bro', 'Y Fan a'r Lle', by submitting information to be included in the paper, and also supports the local Eisteddfod held annually in Llanwrtyd Wells.

Welsh for Adults lessons are held at the school on a weekly basis.

5. Feedback from the Consultation

Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by the Authority to support the consultation. Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing a questionnaire, online and paper, or by writing to ORS.

ORS have prepared a comprehensive Consultation Report which can be found on <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/corporate/find-out-about-consultations-in-powys/past-consultations/brecon-and-gwernyfed-high-schools/>, along with the Authority's responses to issues raised. The main themes from the consultation are summarised on pages 45 – 49 of the Report. A summary of respondents' views about the element c) of the Proposal and the impact on the Welsh Language can be found on pages 35 - 41 of the Consultation Report and pages 58 - 75 of the Consultation Report – Responses.

6. Conclusion

The Authority recognises that concerns were raised by many participants during the consultation period about the proposed removal of the Welsh-stream from the New School in Brecon. However, the Authority's intention is to provide equality of provision. Builth Wells High School provides a more equitable distribution of subjects between English-medium and Welsh-medium streams. The Authority believes that building the critical mass in one school will develop a vibrant and viable Welsh stream. The improved choice and Welsh-medium experience will enable them to be even more confident Welsh speakers who can still contribute to the development of the Welsh language in Brecon. We believe that learners will be more attracted to Welsh-medium provision in future if there are clear progression routes and continuity of provision throughout their educational life – this is currently not the case in Brecon High School.

The Welsh Government's Welsh – medium Education Strategy states 'Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.'

'The term 'bilingual provision' is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. Bilingual schools can include those where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams – Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called 'dual stream' schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum or only a small number are taught through the medium of Welsh.'

The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where a pupil from a Welsh-speaking background attends a bilingual school, a

balanced curriculum through the medium of Welsh and English can be effective in ensuring fluency in both languages. This is the case in some areas of Wales. However, where learners' linguistic skills in Welsh are not reinforced by family or community, they are unlikely to achieve full fluency and confidence in Welsh when learning in a bilingual setting. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker.'

Whilst there are no designated Welsh-medium primary schools in the Builth Wells High School catchment, there are a greater number of primary Welsh-medium streams and a greater number of Welsh-medium pupils compared with the Brecon High School catchment.

Evidence shows that Welsh-medium provision in terms of pupil numbers and subjects available has grown over the last five years. The Authority has provided the same guidance and support to Builth Wells and Brecon High School over this time.

Whilst Welsh-medium pupils would be leaving Brecon to access Welsh-medium secondary provision, they will continue to live in the town and surrounding areas, and will continue to be able to participate in Welsh language activities in the local community. The Council's view is that the increased level of Welsh-medium provision available to them will enable all Welsh-medium pupils to become more confident Welsh speakers, who will be able to play a greater role in terms of the Welsh language in the community.

The Authority acknowledges that concerns were raised about whether Welsh-medium pupils from the Brecon area would be disadvantaged as they would find it difficult to access after-school activities at Builth due to reliance on home-to-school transport. The New School in Mid Powys would be encouraged to provide as many extra-curricular opportunities for Welsh-medium pupils from Brecon during the school day, and the Council would work with the school to explore possible transport solutions, including the use of public transport.

Another risk highlighted during the consultation was that the New School in Mid Powys would not have sufficient staff to deliver Welsh-medium provision to a larger cohort of learners. The Council would support the school in appointing the required staff in readiness for September 2017, and provide additional resource in accordance with the Fair Funding Formula arrangements.

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**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

Brecon High School and Gwernyfed High School

The Portfolio Holder for Education advised that following consultation he was proposing to change the recommendation to Cabinet to recommend the following:

1. To abandon elements a,b, and d of the Proposal and to bring a new report back to Cabinet with draft recommendations for Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, in accordance with the Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, by no later than February 2017;
2. To reconsult immediately on element c) of the Proposal i.e. the closure of the Welsh stream at Brecon from September 2017.
3. To immediately submit a revised outline business case to Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme for capital investment on both campuses. This will include a new build 11-18 campus in Brecon and improvements to the Gwernyfed campus.

County Councillor Melanie Davies welcomed the revised recommendations and added that she would like to see the Welsh stream retained in Brecon.

County Councillor Matthew Dorrance congratulated the staff, governors and pupils of the schools on the exam results achieved despite the uncertainty hanging over the schools. He asked about the proposals for Welsh medium education and was advised that consultation on Welsh medium education in Brecon couldn't begin until the Cabinet came to a decision on Builth Wells High School and Llandrindod High School as the consultation would have to include a named school where provision would transfer to. It was also confirmed that capacities could be changed between the submission of the outline business case and that the final business case and that the consultation would not impact on the business case.

County Councillor James Gibson-Watt thanked the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Education for their willingness to listen to the views of members. He felt that earlier consultation with schools, governors and communities would have identified flaws in the proposals such as the move to a tertiary system for sixth form education. He felt it was incumbent on the Council to keep Welsh medium education in Brecon High School. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that there would be consultation with stakeholders at an early stage.

County Councillor Alexander congratulated the schools on their exam results and noted that they were producing high quality results in facilitating subjects.

County Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick said the consultation proposals had created unnecessary distress and had led to some pupils moving schools. He asked for and received confirmation that there was no predetermination over the provision of Welsh medium education.

County Councillor Aled Davies asked if Welsh Government would accept the proposal as being sufficiently transformational and was advised that there was a high degree of confidence that the proposals would deliver a new build in Brecon and the refurbishment of Gwernyfed.

County Councillor Ratcliffe thanked the Portfolio Holder for Education and the Leader for changing the recommendations. He asked for the timetable for consultation to be made available and for details of the courses on offer. The Head of Schools advised that not all A Level courses were offered at every school but that every pupil had access to them through the collaborative north Powys and south Powys curriculum. He would arrange for details to be circulated to members.

County Councillor William Powell also thanked the Leader and Portfolio Holder but said that the process had damaged the reputation of the Council. He asked that lessons be learned from what had happened. He asked whether it would be appropriate or legal for proposals to be brought in February 2017 just before the Council went into purdah. The Solicitor to the Council confirmed that the Council would be legally able to proceed in February 2017.

County Councillor David Meredith whilst welcoming the recommendations said that he would continue to fight for the retention of Welsh medium education at Brecon High School. The retention of the sixth form had been warmly welcomed by the community. He noted that 74% of pupils had achieved the level 2 plus standard in GCSE results, a 9% increase on the previous year, and congratulated the Headteacher, staff and pupils on the excellent results achieved. He hoped that this would lead to Estyn taking the school out of special measures.

County Councillor John Morris argued that there had been a fundamental flaw in the piecemeal approach taken to secondary school provision in the county. The Cabinet now needed to show how the new proposals would raise standards.

County Councillor Gary Price asked if there would be an additional capital allocation and the Strategic Director Resources confirmed that the capital programme would be adjusted. Councillor Price said that whilst he was happy for investment in the schools, it shouldn't be at the expense of other schools and that additional funding would have to be found.

County Councillor David Jones noted the reasons why the original proposals had been made and asked what had changed. The Portfolio Holder for Education said that he had taken account of the strength of feeling from the public during the consultation.

County Councillor Timothy Van-Rees urged the Council to get on with the building of a new school in Brecon.

County Councillor Fitzpatrick asked the Portfolio Holder for Education if he would take the opportunity of sorting out secondary school provision in north Powys. The Portfolio Holder advised that this was not possible at the moment given the amount of work required and resources needed.

County Councillor David Price asked if the proposals would stem the flow of young people out of county to access secondary education and the Portfolio Holder said that he was hopeful that the provision of modern buildings would help in this regard.

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