



Ysgol Bro Caereinion

Options Appraisal

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ysgol Bro Caereinion was established in September 2022 following the merger of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion. It is a 4-18 dual stream school that operates from the buildings of the two previous schools, in Llanfair Caereinion in North Powys. The school's primary phase primarily serves the village / town of Llanfair Caereinion, whilst the secondary phase serves a wider catchment area. In particular, the Welsh-medium secondary provision at the school has historically been the main Welsh-medium provision in this part of North Powys, serving the towns of Newtown and Welshpool as well as the traditional Llanfair Caereinion catchment.

When the school was established, a commitment was made to move the school along the language continuum in the future, to meet the aspirations in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision for learners in the area, and to meet the objective set out in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages' by 'moving schools along the language continuum'.

Since the Council carried out the statutory process to establish Ysgol Bro Caereinion, there has been a reduction in English-medium pupils in the school's catchment, which would significantly change the make up of Ysgol Bro Caereinion in the future. The school has recognised this, and has recently contacted the Council to request that consideration is given to the school's future language category.

The purpose of this paper is to consider options for the future language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion.

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1.1 Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

Following the inspection of Powys Education Services carried out by Estyn in the summer of 2019, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, and was approved in April 2020, before being updated following the Council elections held in May 2022, and relaunched in July 2022.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. The Vision Statement is as follows:

All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of the Strategic Aims is to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stage'. Within this aim, the Strategy sets out a Strategic Objective to 'Move schools along the language continuum.'

2.1.2 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-2032 was approved by the Cabinet and the Welsh Government in July 2022. The Plan was prepared in accordance with Welsh Government requirements, and sets out the Council's plans to develop Welsh-medium education in Powys over the next 10 years, with the aim of increasing the number of Powys pupils accessing Welsh-medium education.

The WESP includes an overview of the challenges of delivering equitable Welsh-medium provision in Powys, as outlined in the Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys, which was approved by Cabinet in December 2020:

- Not all parts of Powys have easily accessible primary or secondary education through the medium of Welsh – currently there is no provision in the Presteigne, Crickhowell or Gwernyfed areas.
- Many schools that do provide a dual-stream approach do not deliver enough of their curriculum in Welsh to satisfy their learners. Provision is patchy, and unequal in too many of the secondary schools. It is common for under half of the curriculum to be available in their language of choice for learners in the Welsh stream of secondary education from year 7.
- The choice of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh becomes smaller as the learner gets older, and at post-14 the provision is very poor or non-existent. This includes deficiencies in the provision by the Further Education provider. In some secondary Welsh streams, fewer than 5 GCSE subjects are delivered through the medium of Welsh, and in one case only one non-language course is taught in Welsh.
- There is evidence that some parents in Powys avoid choosing an education through the medium of Welsh because they are concerned that the progression available for their child within the authority will be limited.
- At a time when bilingual/Welsh education has grown across Wales and is often a showcase sector for other counties, Powys has been stagnant, and in some key indicators the local authority has been going backwards. This has happened despite commitments made in the Powys Welsh in Education Strategic Plans over recent years.
- Powys has a smaller percentage of its children learning through the medium of Welsh than the percentage of Welsh speakers in the wider population. It is believed to be the only authority in Wales where this is the case.

The WESP includes a commitment to implement a programme of transformational change to address these challenges and improve access to Welsh-medium education in Powys, in order to increase the percentage of Powys pupils accessing Welsh-medium education, to include the following:

- Ensuring that more parents and families are aware of the benefits of Welsh-medium education and bilingualism from birth, are signposted to Welsh-medium provision with clear progression routes throughout all key phases of education
- Ensuring that there is access to Welsh-medium early years and primary provision in all 13 localities in Powys by:
 - Establishing new Welsh-medium early years provision (Cylchoedd Ti a Fi and Cylchoedd Meithrin)
 - Supporting English-medium/bilingual early years providers to move along the language continuum
 - Establishing new Welsh-medium primary schools
 - Supporting dual-stream/English-medium primary schools to move along the language continuum so that they can provide Welsh-medium immersion education until the age of seven or eleven

- Establishing Welsh-medium secondary provision in at least 3 localities in Powys. In the context of the Welsh Government's 'Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision' that was published in December 2021, this is defined as provision which meets the definition for a Category 3 Welsh-medium secondary school.
- Providing high-quality 'trochi' (immersion) provision to support pupils who move into Powys and don't have Welsh-language skills, and also for pupils who choose to move from an English-medium stream/school within Powys to Welsh-medium education
- Providing high-quality provision for learners with ALN through the medium of Welsh
- Developing the workforce to ensure that there's a good supply of childcare staff, schools staff and authority staff able to provide their services through the medium of Welsh

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

Whilst there has been some reorganisation activity in Powys over recent years, the county's schools' infrastructure largely remains similar to that which was in place 20 years ago.

The Council's new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council, as outlined in the Strategy:

i) High proportion of small schools

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 40% of the primary provision in the county. 21 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to decrease further over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 4% by 2025.

iii) High number of surplus places

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there was 18% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

iv) Building condition

Whilst the Council has invested in its school's estate through the 21st Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,512 to £11,689 in the primary sector and from £4,439 to £6,243 in the secondary sector in 2022-23.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the past has left a legacy in Powys.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN YSGOL BRO CAEREINION

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Ysgol Bro Caereinion is an all-through school located in the town of Llanfair Caereinion in North Powys. It was established in September 2022 following the amalgamation of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School.

The school's primary phase primarily serves the village / town of Llanfair Caereinion, whilst the secondary phase serves a wider catchment area. In particular, the Welsh-medium secondary provision at the school has historically been the main Welsh-medium provision in this part of North Powys, serving the towns of Newtown and Welshpool as well as the traditional Llanfair Caereinion catchment.

Since the school was established, there has been a reduction in English-medium providers in the school's catchment, and therefore a reduction in the English-medium pupils that would be expected to transfer to English-medium secondary provision at the school in the future. Currently Ysgol Bro Caereinion has 5 feeder schools. 4 of these are Welsh-medium, and 1 is dual stream, as well as the dual stream primary phase of Ysgol Bro Caereinion.

The following is a summary of key data relating to Ysgol Bro Caereinion:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number ¹	Rural School? ²
Ysgol Bro Caereinion	Community Middle School (All-through) School building owned by Powys County Council	Dual stream	Primary phase: 27 Secondary phase: 114	No

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

Current pupil numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion are as follows:

¹ Powys County Council's Admissions Information and Arrangements 2024-25

² Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018)

(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)

includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

³ Data provided by the school, 060923.

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
Welsh-medium	12	7	11	7	14	11	12	42	35	30	36	40	14	21	292
English-medium	0	7	6	8	5	8	16	25	43	45	35	38	13	8	257
Total	12	14	17	15	19	19	28	67	78	75	71	78	27	29	549

ii) **Historical pupil numbers⁴**

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	195	185	174	173	166	162	156

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022
Caereinion High School	494	495	487	456	447	459	440

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁵**

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Ysgol Bro Caereinion Primary Phase	142	136	123	121	114

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Ysgol Bro Caereinion Secondary Phase	429	418	401	393	388

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁶**

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026
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⁴ PLASC

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

⁶ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school for the purposes of financial planning – provided by Finance August 2023

Ysgol Bro Caereinion Primary Phase	141	131	119	117
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	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026
Ysgol Bro Caereinion Secondary Phase	381	369	354	338

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

The following table provides information about the school's current capacity:

	Current Capacity⁷	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Ysgol Bro Caereinion – Primary Campus	195	124	71
Ysgol Bro Caereinion – Secondary Campus	603	425	178

ii) Building condition

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Ysgol Bro Caereinion – Primary Campus	C Poor	B Good	Yes
Ysgol Bro Caereinion – Secondary Campus	C Poor	C Poor	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

⁷ Planning School Places Return October 2022

There has been no Estyn inspection of Ysgol Bro Caereinion since the school was established.

The outcomes of the last inspections of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School are as follows:

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	
Date of Inspection	January 2018
Standards	Good
Well Being and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Outcome	The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Caereinion High School	
Date of Inspection	November 2013
Standards	Adequate
Well Being	Adequate
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Adequate
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Adequate
Improving quality	Adequate
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Outcome	<p>The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.</p> <p>Outcome of Estyn review 2018:</p> <p>The school was judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection, and was removed from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.</p>

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals⁸

	Number of pupils who were eligible for a free school meal
Ysgol Bro Caereinion	14.9%

ii) Pupils in care⁹

	Number of pupils in care
Ysgol Bro Caereinion	0.2%

iii) SEN/ALN¹⁰

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement	IDP School	IDP LA
Ysgol Bro Caereinion	13.7%	4.4%	0.5%	3.9%	0

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN YSGOL BRO CAEREINION

Ysgol Bro Caereinion was established as a dual stream all-age school, reflecting the language categories of the previous primary and secondary school in Llanfair Caereinion. However, the strength of Welsh-medium provision in this area was recognised throughout the proposal. In particular, it was acknowledged that the secondary Welsh-medium provision in Llanfair Caereinion was central to the Council's aspiration to provide access to enhanced Welsh-medium secondary provision for pupils in the area.

Throughout the statutory process to establish Ysgol Bro Caereinion, comments were received which suggested that the Council should be proposing to establish a new Welsh-medium all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion, not a dual stream school. Whilst the Council proceeded with the proposal to establish a new dual stream school, a Welsh language vision for Ysgol Bro Caereinion was developed by the school's temporary governing body, which set out its plans to develop Welsh-medium education at the school. This was approved by the temporary governing body, and has subsequently been adopted by Ysgol Bro Caereinion's new governing body.

⁸ Teacher Centre June 2023

⁹ Teacher Centre June 2023

¹⁰ Teacher Centre June 2023

Conversations about the school’s language provision going forward have taken place recently, linked to the introduction of new Welsh language categories by the Welsh Government. As part of these conversations, representatives from the school have explained that the current dual stream model is causing some challenges. These challenges are as follows:

3.1 Changes in English-medium pupil numbers

The English-medium secondary provision at Ysgol Bro Caereinion primarily serves the town of Llanfair Caereinion and other English-medium primary providers in the surrounding area. However, there have been significant changes in the catchment in recent years which have impacted on the number of pupils accessing English-medium primary provision in the catchment, which would potentially impact on the number of pupils accessing English-medium secondary provision at the school in future years.

These include the following:

- Ysgol Meifod, an English-medium primary school which was previously part of the Caereinion catchment, has recently moved to the Llanfyllin catchment
- Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, an English-medium primary school which was previously part of the Caereinion catchment, closed in August 2022.
- Both of the dual stream primary providers in the catchment (Ysgol Bro Caereinion and Ysgol Rhiw Bechan) have seen an increase in pupils choosing Welsh-medium provision, and as a result, a decrease in pupils choosing English-medium provision.

The changes above mean that currently, the only English-medium pupils expected to transfer to Ysgol Bro Caereinion’s English-medium secondary provision are those attending Ysgol Rhiw Bechan and Ysgol Bro Caereinion, however the number of English-medium pupils at both these schools has decreased.

Current Welsh-medium and English-medium primary pupil numbers at the schools that feed Ysgol Bro Caereinion as follows¹¹:

Ysgol Bro Caereinion

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	12	7	11	7	14	11	12	74
English-medium	0	7	6	8	5	8	16	50
Total	12	14	17	15	19	19	28	124

Ysgol Cwm Banwy

¹¹ Teacher Centre, 13th September 2023. Ysgol Bro Caereinion data provided by the school, 6th September 2023

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	5	7	8	5	8	8	3	44
English-medium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5	7	8	5	8	8	3	44

Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	29	32	31	39	24	24	17	196
English-medium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	29	32	31	39	24	24	17	196

Ysgol Gymraeg y Trallwng

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	19	18	11	13	15	7	14	97
English-medium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	19	18	11	13	15	7	14	97

Ysgol Pontrobert

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	14	7	14	8	12	6	5	66
English-medium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	7	14	8	12	6	5	66

Ysgol Rhiw Bechan

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	12	21	16	12	11	12	5	89
English-medium	5	4	4	8	9	11	14	55
Total	17	25	20	20	20	23	19	144

TOTAL

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	91	92	91	84	84	68	56	566
English-medium	5	11	10	16	14	19	30	105
Total	96	103	101	100	98	87	86	671

3.2 Financial challenges

Ysgol Bro Caereinion is funded as two separate streams in the funding formula. Projections for financial year 2024-25 are that it will be funded for 238 pupils in the English stream (74 primary, 188 secondary) and 262 pupils in the Welsh stream (74 primary, 188 secondary).

Both streams are small, which presents challenges in terms of the curriculum offer that the school is able to provide, particularly at GCSE level. For all small secondary phase schools / streams, there is a tension between the funding provided for curriculum delivery (based on pupil numbers) and the breadth of curriculum that the school would like to offer.

The current projections for the school show that the school is projected to be in a deficit position by 31 March 2027.

3.3 No access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision

In contrast to the rest of Wales, pupils in this part of North Powys are currently unable to access designated Welsh-medium secondary provision. This situation does not meet the Council's aspirations as outlined in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), nor does it meet the aspirations of the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. For many years, the Council has aspired to provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision for pupils in this area, however this has not yet been realised.

Ysgol Bro Caereinion has recently contacted the Council to let the Council know that its aspiration is for the school to move along the language continuum, to become a Welsh-medium school in the future, with the intention that this would be implemented on a phased basis.

The purpose of this paper is to consider whether this is the most suitable way forward for the school.

3.4 Impact on pupil numbers transferring to secondary Welsh-medium provision

The lack of designated Welsh-medium secondary provision in the area has had a notable impact on pupil numbers transferring to Welsh-medium secondary provision in recent years.

Whilst historically, the Welsh-medium secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion has served a wide catchment area, including the towns of Newtown and Welshpool as well as the traditional Llanfair Caereinion catchment, the proportion of pupils from Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd in Newtown and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Trallwng in Welshpool transferring to Welsh-medium secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion has been relatively low in recent years, with pupils choosing to transfer to other schools instead, or choosing to transfer to English-medium secondary provision.

The decrease in pupils transferring to the school's Welsh-medium secondary provision has impacted on Ysgol Bro Caereinion's ability to maximise its Welsh-medium offer, and on the Council's ability to offer access to comprehensive Welsh-medium secondary provision to pupils in this area.

PART B – OPTIONS FOR YSGOL BRO CAEREINION

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified to address the challenges caused by the school's current dual stream structure:

Option	Description
1	<p><u>Status quo</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ysgol Bro Caereinion continues to operate as a dual stream school - Welsh-medium and English-medium provision continues to be available to pupils in all year groups
2	<p><u>Change the language of the school's primary provision</u></p>
2a	<p>Change the school's primary provision to Welsh-medium only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All primary aged pupils at the school would access Welsh-medium provision - At the end of the primary phase, parents / pupils could choose either Welsh-medium or English-medium provision
2b	<p>Change the school's primary provision to English-medium only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All primary aged pupils at the school would access English-medium provision - At the end of the primary phase, parents / pupils could choose either Welsh-medium or English-medium provision
3	<p><u>Change the language of the school's secondary provision</u></p>
3a	<p>Change the school's secondary provision to Welsh-medium only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary provision would continue to be provided via a dual stream arrangement, with Welsh-medium and English-medium provision available to primary pupils - Secondary provision would only be available in Welsh - Pupils educated through the medium of English in the primary phase would either need to transfer to Welsh-medium secondary provision, or to alternative English-medium schools
3b	<p>Change the school's secondary provision to English-medium only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary provision would continue to be provided via a dual stream arrangement, with Welsh-medium and English-medium provision available to primary pupils

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secondary provision would only be available in English - Pupils educated through the medium of Welsh in the primary phase would either need to transfer to English-medium secondary provision, or to alternative schools where Welsh-medium secondary provision is provided
4	<u>Change the language of the whole school</u>
4a	Change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All provision at the school would be through the medium of Welsh - Pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to transfer to alternative schools
4b	Change the language of provision across the whole school to English-medium only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All provision at the school would be through the medium of English - Pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium provision would need to transfer to alternative schools

5. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors to identify a shortlist of options:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must align with the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 • The option must optimise the benefits of the Council’s Transforming Education Programme • The option must align with the Council’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-32

2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning • The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must be achievable within current legislation • The option must be operationally achievable • The option must be physically achievable
4 – Supply-side capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must secure sufficient appropriate resources and expertise to be deployed within Powys to achieve the investment objectives •
5 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue • The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets ? – Could meet x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2A	Option 2B	Option 3A	Option 3B	Option 4A	Option 4B
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	?	x	?	x	✓	x
2 – Value for money	?	?	x	?	x	✓	x
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x
4 – Supply side capacity and capability	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x

5 – Potential affordability	?	✓	?	✓	?	✓	x
Total ✓	2	3	1	3	0	5	0
Total x	1	0	3	0	4	0	5
Outcome	Discount	Possible	Discount	Possible	Discount	Preferred	Discount

6. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

The above assessment identifies 3 possible options. SWOT assessments for these three options are provided below, as well as the Status Quo option.

Option 1: Status quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No impact on pupils, parents or staff - No impact on pupil numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion - No need for a statutory process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not enable Ysgol Bro Caereinion to operate more efficiently - Some pupils do not become fully bilingual - Does not provide access to fully Welsh-medium provision - Does not meet the aims and objectives of the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys - Would not increase the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to develop the Welsh-medium provision at the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing numbers of pupils choose to transfer to other schools

Option 2A: Change the school's primary provision to Welsh-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal impact on pupils accessing English-medium secondary education - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently to some extent, by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible impact on non-Welsh speaking staff currently employed in the primary phase - Possible impact on pupils numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion in the long

<p>avoiding the need to duplicate provision in the primary phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All primary aged pupils would study through the medium of Welsh and would develop bilingual skills - Pupils would choose whether to access Welsh-medium or English-medium provision after having access fully bilingual provision in the primary phase which could lead to an increase in the number of pupils choosing Welsh-medium education in the secondary phase - In the long term, more opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh - Increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh - Small potential financial saving to the authority in the long term 	<p>term – pupils wanting to access English-medium provision might attend alternative schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May be unpopular with some members of the local community - Pupils would still be able to choose English-medium provision in the secondary phase, which could result in them losing their fluency in Welsh - If the change results in an increase in pupils choosing to continue to choose Welsh-medium provision after the primary phase, English-medium pupil numbers would reduce and it would become more difficult for the school to provide appropriate provision for English-medium pupils - Would not provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Would not meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP - The secondary phase would still operate as a dual stream school, which could cause challenges in ensuring a Welsh-medium ethos - Further statutory processes would be required to make any changes to language provision in other years in the future
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support - Opportunity to offer support to enable staff to develop their own Welsh language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in English-medium pupil numbers from Year 7 onwards, which would cause further challenges for the school

Option 2B: Change the school's primary provision to English-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently to some extent, by avoiding the need to duplicate provision in the primary phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary aged pupils in Llanfair Caereinion would not have the opportunity to choose Welsh-medium education and become fully bilingual.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small potential financial saving to the authority in the long term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium secondary provision at the school in the future, which would impact on the provision that could be offered. - Potential that pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium secondary provision would increasingly choose alternative schools, which would impact further on Welsh-medium pupil numbers and provision at Bro Caereinion - Would be unpopular with members of the local community - Would not provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Would not meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP - The secondary phase would still operate as a dual stream school, which could cause challenges in ensuring a Welsh-medium ethos
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in Welsh-medium pupil numbers at the school, which would cause further challenges for the school in creating a Welsh ethos and offering full Welsh-medium provision

Option 3A: Change the school's secondary provision to Welsh-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No impact on primary aged pupils - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently through not having to duplicate provision in the secondary phase - More Welsh-medium opportunities could be provided in the secondary phase - Could lead to an increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the primary phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely that pupils that have accessed English-medium primary provision would transfer elsewhere for secondary provision - Disruption for pupils accessing English-medium provision at the school as they would need to transfer out of the all-age school to access English-medium secondary provision

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Opportunity to attract more pupils from Welsh-medium primary schools in the area - Potential financial saving to the authority - Would meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible impact on non-Welsh speaking staff working in the secondary phase - May be unpopular with some members of the local community - Pupils would still be able to choose English-medium primary provision, and would leave the primary phase without fully bilingual skills
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support - Opportunity to offer support to enable staff to develop their own Welsh language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils that have accessed English-medium provision the primary phase would transfer to alternative English-medium secondary provision

Option 3B: Change the school's secondary provision to English-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No impact on primary aged pupils - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently through not having to duplicate provision in the secondary phase - Potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium secondary provision would need to attend alternative schools - Disruption for pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school as they would need to transfer out of the all-age school to access Welsh-medium secondary provision - Would be very unpopular in the local community - Likely to lead to a result in a decrease in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh - Would not provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Would not meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to increase the Welsh-medium provision available at other dual stream secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant reduction in secondary pupil numbers at the school, which

	would lead to questions about the school'
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Option 4A: Change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently - More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh - Increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the longer term - Would provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Opportunity to attract more pupils from Welsh-medium primary schools in the area - Meets the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys - Would meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP - Potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to attend alternative schools - Additional travel for pupils wishing to access English-medium provision - Possible impact on pupils numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion should pupils choose to access alternative English-medium provision - Impact on non-Welsh speaking staff at the school - May be unpopular with some in the local community
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change in language category e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support - Opportunity to offer support to enable staff to develop their own Welsh language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on pupil numbers in the short term

Option 4B: Change the language of provision across the whole school to English-medium only

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently through not having to duplicate provision - Potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium provision would need to attend alternative schools - Would be very unpopular in the local community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely to lead to a result in a decrease in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh - Would not provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision - Would not meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to increase the Welsh-medium provision available at other dual stream secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant reduction in pupil numbers at the school, which would lead to questions about the school's future.

7. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the assessment above, the emerging preferred option for Ysgol Bro Caereinion is as follows:

Option 4A: Change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium only

The reasons for this are:

- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently
- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh
- Increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the longer term
- Would provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision
- Opportunity to attract more pupils from Welsh-medium primary schools in the area
- Meets the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys
- Would meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP
- Potential financial saving to the authority

There are a number of possible implementation options within this emerging preferred option. These are considered below.

8. POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

The following emerging preferred option has been identified for Ysgol Bro Caereinion:

Option 4A: Change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium only

- All provision at the school would be through the medium of Welsh
- Pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to transfer to alternative schools

There are a number of implementation options within this option. These are as follows:

Option 5A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the change in language provision to Welsh-medium in all years on one date - This would mean that from a set date, all provision at the school would be Welsh-medium; pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to transfer to alternative schools - Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents
Option 5B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the change in language provision on a phased basis, starting with Reception, followed by Year 1 the following year, Year 2 the year after etc. - This would take 14 years to implement throughout the school (to year 13) - Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents
Option 5C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the change in language provision on a phased basis starting with Reception and Year 7 at the same time. This would mean that only Welsh-medium provision would be available and Reception and Year 7 during the first year, then Year 1 and Year 8 the following year etc. - This would take 7 years to implement throughout the school - Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents
Option 5D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the change in language provision to Welsh-medium in the primary phase on one date, and the secondary phase on a phased basis, starting from Year 7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This would take 7 years to implement throughout the school, however it would be implemented across the whole primary phase immediately - This would mean that from a set date, all primary provision at the school would be Welsh-medium; pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to transfer to alternative schools - Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents
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9. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

Option 5A: Implement the change in language provision to Welsh-medium in all years on one date

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The quickest implementation option - Would meet the Council's aspiration to provide access to dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision more quickly - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently more quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would impact on all current English-medium pupils who would need to transfer to alternative provision to continue to access English-medium provision - Significant reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion in the short term - Impact on non-Welsh speaking staff – there would be minimal opportunity for staff development - May be unpopular with some members of the local community - Lengthy transition period for the school
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change in language category e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol Bro Caereinion in the short term

Option 5B: Implement the change in language provision on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception.

Strengths	Weaknesses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal impact on pupils currently accessing English-medium education at the school – provision would continue until pupils left school - In the long term, would enable the school to operate more efficiently - Would allow time for any necessary staff development and professional learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lengthy transition period for the school - It would be many years before the phasing was introduced in the secondary phase, so it would be many years before there was access to Welsh-medium secondary provision - The school would have to deal with a decreasing English-medium stream over many years
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change in language category e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support 	

Option 5C: Implement the change in language provision on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception and Year 7 at the same time.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would shorten the transition period to a new delivery model compared with Option 5B - Limited impact on pupils currently accessing English-medium education at the school – current pupils would be able to continue to access this provision throughout the primary or secondary phase, depending on which year group they are in. - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently more quickly - Would allow time for any necessary staff development and professional learning to take place to support the change - Would ensure that designated Welsh-medium provision is available more quickly, thus meeting the aspiration on the Council's WESP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some pupils currently accessing English-medium primary provision at the school may need to transfer to alternative provision if they wished to continue to attend English-medium secondary provision - Possible reduction in secondary pupil numbers in the short term should English-medium pupils choose to transfer to different schools - Possible impact on non-Welsh speaking staff in the longer term
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change in language category e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support 	
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Option 5D: Implement the change in language provision to Welsh-medium in the primary phase on one date, and the secondary phase on a phased basis, starting from Year 7

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would shorten the transition period to a new delivery model - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently more quickly - All pupils in the primary phase would be taught through the medium of Welsh immediately, meaning that they would become fluent in Welsh and English - Would allow time for any necessary staff development in respect of secondary staff - Potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils currently attending English-medium provision in the primary phase would need to either transfer to Welsh-medium provision or move to a different school - Possible reduction in primary pupil numbers in the short term should English-medium pupils choose to transfer to different schools - Impact on non-Welsh speaking staff in the primary phase - More disruption to current pupils compared with option 5A, 5B and 5C
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to offer complementary provision to support the change in language category e.g. Trochi, Welsh language support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible decrease in pupil numbers in the primary phase should parents choose alternative provision

10. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the Critical Success Factors on pages 17/18 above. Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets ? – Could meet x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 5A	Option 5B	Option 5C	Option 5D
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1 – Strategic fit and business needs	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	✓	?	✓	✓
3 – Potential achievability	x	✓	✓	?
5 – Potential affordability	?	?	✓	✓
Total ✓	2	2	4	3
Total x	1	0	0	1
Outcome	Discount	Possible	Preferred	Possible

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred implementation option is:

Option 5C: Implement the change in language provision on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception and Year 7 at the same time.

11. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Bringing together the consideration of options in sections 5/6 and sections 9/10 of this report, the emerging preferred option for Ysgol Bro Caereinion is as follows:

Change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium

- The change in language provision to be introduced on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception and Year 7 at the same time.
- Eventually, all pupils at the school would attend Welsh-medium provision, ensuring that all pupils would be fluent in Welsh and English.
- Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents

The reasons for this are:

- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently
- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh
- Increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the longer term
- Would provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision
- Opportunity to attract more pupils from Welsh-medium primary schools in the area
- Meets the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys
- Would meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP
- Potential financial saving to the authority

- Would shorten the transition period to a new delivery model compared with some other options
- Limited impact on pupils currently accessing English-medium education at the school – current pupils would be able to continue to access this provision throughout the primary or secondary phase, depending on which year group they are in.
- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently more quickly
- Would allow time for any necessary staff development and professional learning to take place to support the change
- Would ensure that designated Welsh-medium provision is available more quickly, thus meeting the aspiration on the Council's WESP

Further consideration of this emerging preferred option will be carried out, to include consideration of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals.

Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, to support Ysgol Bro Caereinion to move along the language continuum over time, on the following basis:

- The change in language provision to Welsh-medium to be introduced on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception and Year 7 in September 2025.
- Eventually, all pupils at the school would attend Welsh-medium provision, ensuring that all pupils would be fluent in Welsh and English.
- Additional Welsh language support would be provided alongside the change e.g. Trochi provision, Welsh language training for staff / parents

12. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

12.1 Likely impact on standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills

The Council would expect supporting Ysgol Bro Caereinion to move along the Welsh language continuum to have a positive impact on provision, standards and pupil progress overall. As the change is phased in, the Council would expect that implementation would lead to more effective and efficient use of resources as the school would no longer need to duplicate provision, which, in turn, would ensure improved opportunities for learners across all ages.

It is anticipated that supporting the school to move along the Welsh language continuum would have a positive impact on provision, standards and progress overall for all pupils, including pupils belonging to specific groups such as English as an Additional Language, eligible for Free School Meals, Looked After Children, Additional Learning Needs. One learning continuum would be implemented across all age ranges, meaning that pupil literacy progress could be monitored and supported more effectively throughout their school career. This would be particularly beneficial for pupils belonging to specific groups such as those outlined above. There would be improved opportunities for all staff to work more collaboratively and share best practice and specialisms and expertise, ensuring that pupils can be more effectively supported throughout their time in the school.

It is also anticipated that supporting the school to move along the language continuum would have a positive impact on the skills of all pupils, in particular Welsh language skills, as it would enable all pupils to become fully bilingual in

Welsh and English. Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to target support across all phases of education more effectively.

12.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Supporting the school to move along the language continuum would mean that eventually, all pupils would receive a fully Welsh medium education. This would mean that all pupils would be taught together, ensuring improved cohesion across the school and impacting positively on pupil well-being.

In the secondary sector, classes are taught in English or in Welsh, however, class sizes are small and the school currently has to prioritise core subjects and this limits options available to pupils. Supporting the school to move along the language continuum would mean that eventually, all pupils would receive a fully Welsh-medium education. This would allow for more subjects to be offered through the medium of Welsh, increasing the opportunities for pupils to engage in learning that interests them, and this would also have a positive impact on pupil well-being.

12.3 Teaching and learning experiences

12.3.1 Quality of teaching

The Council would expect that supporting the school to move along the language continuum would lead to improvements in the quality of teaching at Ysgol Bro Caereinion, due to the improved Welsh medium professional development and collaboration opportunities that could be offered to staff, for example collaborating with other Welsh-medium schools in other local authorities and educational regions to share best practice in pedagogy.

It could also enhance teachers' ability to build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills and provide pupils with a suitably wide range of experiences to develop their interest and literacy skills across a range of subjects and areas of learning.

The proposed change would enable teachers to focus on delivering education in one language medium. It would allow for more subjects to be available through the Welsh language as there would no longer be a need to offer subjects in both languages.

12.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum at the school. Should this be implemented, the school would no longer need to duplicate provision, which should have a positive impact on the curriculum

that could be provided, ensuring that the curriculum meets the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales, as outlined in 'Our National Mission'.

12.3.3 The provision of skills

It is anticipated that supporting the school to move along the language continuum would have a positive impact on the literacy skills of all pupils, through improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources across all age ranges, and through the ability to target across all phases of education.

In particular, the change would have a positive impact on Welsh language skills, as all pupils would eventually be taught through the medium of Welsh, enabling all pupils to become bilingual in Welsh and English. The change would also enable the school to enhance Welsh language skills in formal teaching activities and in informal situations.

12.4 Care, support and guidance

12.4.1 Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding

Operating as a single language stream school would enable the school to improve its tracking and monitoring of pupils throughout their school careers.

The Council would expect that supporting the school to move along the language continuum would enable the school to further enhance its provision to prepare pupils, including those with special educational needs, to become active citizens, for example by making decisions about the life and work of the school.

It would also support how well the school's provision helps pupils to develop their understanding of the Welsh language and culture, the local community and the wider world.

12.5 Leadership and Management

12.5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self evaluation processes and improvement planning

It is anticipated that supporting the school to move along the language continuum would lead to improvements in terms of leadership and management at the school. The proposed change would help the school to establish a clear, strategic rationale for the curriculum in terms of its benefits for pupils in preparing them to learn throughout their lives and to play a full part in society. It would also support the extent to which leaders and

managers are purposeful and successful in meeting the national priority of providing purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in formal and informal situations.

Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to operate more efficiently, and leaders and managers would have more time to focus on developing effective provision across the school.

12.5.2 Professional learning

Supporting the school to move along the language continuum could provide improved professional learning opportunities for staff through greater opportunities for collaboration with other Welsh-medium schools across Wales.

12.5.3 Use of Resources

Should the change be implemented, the school would eventually become a single stream Welsh-medium school, and would be funded as such. As a Welsh-medium school, the school would be able to operate more efficiently, as there would be no need to duplicate provision.

12.6 Impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Ysgol Bro Caereinion is already an all-age school, which provides enhanced opportunities to support pupils belonging to vulnerable groups, by providing opportunities to provide continuity in the support provided to vulnerable pupils throughout their time in school. This would continue to be the case should the school move along the language continuum.

It is noted that should the school move along the language continuum, there could be a negative impact on pupils with ALN who are from families where very little or no Welsh is spoken. This would require the school to provide an enhanced level of support to these pupils in order to meet their needs.

12.7 Ability of the school/schools which are the subject of the proposals to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and each key stage of education, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the ability to deliver the full curriculum in the foundation phase and each key stage of education, as there would no longer be a requirement to duplicate provision in two streams.

It is possible that there could be some challenges during the transition period as the school would need to accommodate decreasing numbers of English-medium pupils, however should the change to the school's language category be implemented, the Council would continue to support the school throughout the transition period to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is provided to pupils in all key stages.

13. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

13.1 Will the alternative provision have sufficient capacity and provide accommodation of at least equivalent quality for existing and projected pupil numbers?

It is not anticipated that the preferred option would impact on the school's capacity or projected pupil numbers.

It is possible that changing the school's language category could lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at the school should pupils from the local area choose to attend alternative English-medium providers.

However, it is also possible that changing the school's language category could lead to an increase in pupil numbers in the longer term, particularly in the secondary sector, as the school would be the only provider in the area offering full Welsh-medium secondary provision.

13.2 Is the alternative provision sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same language category and (if relevant) designated religious character?

The intention would be to introduce the change in language category on a phased basis, starting with Reception and Year 7, with additional Trochi support provided to enable pupils currently accessing English-medium primary provision at the school to transfer to Welsh-medium provision. It is therefore anticipated that pupils would continue to attend Ysgol Bro Caereinion. There is sufficient capacity to accommodate the current existing and projected demand for the school.

The school does not have a religious character – this would continue to be the case following any change to the language category.

13.3 What will be the nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils including SEN pupils?

The plan to introduce the proposed change to the school's language category on a phased basis would mean that pupils would continue to be able to

access the school, therefore there would be no impact on journeys to school or journey times for pupils, including SEN pupils.

Should pupils choose to attend English-medium provision in other locations, there would be an increase in journeys / journey times.

13.4 Is there evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places?

There is currently no evidence of a need for additional places in the future, however it is possible that changing the school's language category could lead to an increase in the number of Welsh-medium primary pupils transferring to the school to access Welsh-medium secondary provision.

13.5 Will the proposals improve access for disabled pupils in accordance with requirements under the Equality Act 2010?

Any change to the school's language category would not impact on access for disabled pupils in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

14. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 What effect will the proposals have on surplus places in the area?

The intention is to introduce the change on a phased basis starting with Reception and Year 7, and moving through the school each year as pupils move through the school. Trochi support would also be provided to enable pupils currently accessing English-medium primary provision to transfer to Welsh-medium provision. The intention is that all current pupils would continue to attend the school, therefore there would be no impact on surplus places.

It is possible that there could be some impact on pupil numbers in the longer term should pupils choose to attend alternative English-medium provision instead of choosing to attend Ysgol Bro Caereinion, however it is also possible that additional pupils may choose to attend the school, particularly in the secondary phase, following a change in the language medium. Pupil numbers and capacity levels at the school will continue to be monitored.

14.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The current plans in respect of Ysgol Bro Caereinion's language category are not part of the local authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning Investment Programme. However, the need for investment in Ysgol Bro Caereinion's buildings is recognised, particularly to support the school's strategic role as a provider of Welsh-medium secondary provision. This will be reflected in the Council's revised Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, which is due to be developed in 2023/24.

14.3 What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?

There are no additional recurrent costs associated with changing the school's language category.

14.4 Will additional transport costs be incurred as a result of the proposal?

The intention is to introduce the change to the school's language category on a phased basis as pupils move through the school. It is not anticipated that additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of the change.

14.5 What are the capital costs of the proposal and is the necessary capital funding is available?

There are no capital costs associated with changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion.

14.6 What is the scale of any projected net savings (taking into account school revenue, transport and capital costs)

It is estimated that changing the school's language category would eventually result in annual revenue savings to the Council of £383k per annum once the school is fully single stream. This figure excludes general pupil number fluctuations over the 7-year period of phasing as these would be taken account of as part of the annual budget process. There would be a saving of £34k in the first year, and there would be further annual savings as the phasing takes place based on current pupil projections. Single-stream schools are a more cost effective delivery model.

It is not anticipated that there would be an impact on transport costs, and there would be no capital costs as a result of changing the school's language category.

Based on current assumptions around pupil numbers, the school could temporarily reduce by a class in the Primary phase for one year in the middle of the phasing and the formula funding would reflect this. As this would be a

temporary drop due purely to the pattern of pupil number changes (as currently projected) in each stream, it would seem reasonable that the school would not be expected to reduce teachers / classes, unless pupil number projections at that time showed a permanent reduction. It is proposed that transformation funding would be made available to support the school with this during that year, should the current pupil number projections be realised. This would need to be reviewed closer to the time to assess whether that additional support would still be required.

These savings are estimated based on current intake projections for both streams. The actual savings realised will be dependent on actual intakes each year and no estimates have been made in relation to an increase / decrease in intake each year. Costings have been based on the school maintaining the total projected intake (both streams) in 2025-26 for future years as the change is implemented.

14.7 Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?

The current projections for the school show an estimated surplus of £103k carry forward at the end of 2023-24 financial year, decreasing to a projected deficit of (£635k) by 31 March 2027.

14.8 Will any savings in recurrent costs be retained in the local authority's local schools budget?

It is intended that any savings would be reinvested into the schools system. This will be a decision made as part of the authority's annual budget setting process.

14.9 Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?

Changing Ysgol Bro Caereinion's language category would not result in any capital receipts.

15. OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

15.1 What impact will the proposals have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds?

The Council's view is that implementation of the preferred option would not have a negative impact on the educational attainment of children from economically deprived backgrounds. Implementation of the proposal would mean that all pupils attending the school would be able to participate in a

fully bilingual curriculum from the beginning of their education, ensuring that they become fully bilingual in Welsh and English.

Implementation of the preferred option would also mean that pupils in the area would be able to access fully Welsh-medium secondary provision, which is not currently available. This would include any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently accessing Welsh-medium primary provision. This would ensure that they would be able to access more comprehensive Welsh-medium provision, which would enable them to retain and develop their Welsh language skills throughout their secondary education.

15.2 Any equality issues, including those identified through equality impact assessments

Supporting the school to move along the language continuum would have an impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups, however in the majority of cases, it is not anticipated that this would be a negative impact.

It is acknowledged that there may be concern about the impact of changing the school's language category on pupils with additional learning needs, however, the school would need to provide intensive and specialist support to these pupils to ensure that they weren't disadvantaged.

15.3 Whether the school / schools involved are subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land.

Ysgol Bro Caereinion is not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the plans to change the school's language category.

16. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF LANGUAGE MEDIUM

16.1 The extent to which existing provision by the local authority of education in the medium of English and/or Welsh exceeds or falls short of demand or projected demand from parents for that type of provision, and the contribution the proposal would make to remedying that situation

There is currently no dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision in the area currently served by Ysgol Bro Caerenion and its feeder schools. Implementing the proposed change to the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion would ensure that this type of provision was available.

Implementing the proposed change would mean that education through the medium of English would no longer be available in Llanfair Caereinion. However the trend in the Ysgol Bro Caereinion catchment area has been an increase in demand for Welsh-medium provision, so the proposed change reflects this. The proposed change would also ensure that all pupils attending Ysgol Bro Caereinion would be fully bilingual, therefore contributing to the Welsh Government's aim to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Should pupils not want to access Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol Bro Caereinion, there are other English-medium providers available in the area.

16.2 The extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion is fully aligned with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32, and would make a significant contribution to implementation of the targets outlined in the WESP.

In particular, the WESP includes a commitment to 'Establish Welsh-medium secondary provision in at least 3 localities in Powys' and the following commitments:

'Complete the statutory processes required to provide access to secondary provision which meets the definition of the 'Welsh-medium' category in 2 further locations in Powys. This will focus on the newly established Ysgol Bro Caereinion and the Ysgol Calon Cymru area.'

The WESP also includes a commitment to 'Supporting dual-stream/English-medium primary schools to move along the language continuum so that they can provide Welsh-medium immersion education until the age of seven or eleven', and includes a commitment to developing more Welsh-medium provision in a number of catchment areas, including Llanfair Caereinion.

In addition, changing the school's language category would meet the Council's objective to 'Move schools along the language continuum' as outlined in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

17. SPECIFIC FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OR TO ADD OR REMOVE SIXTH FORMS

17.1 Whether proposals will lead to an improvement in the educational or training achievements of persons who are above compulsory school age but below the age of 19

Should the proposal be implemented, post-16 provision would continue to be available at Ysgol Bro Caereinion. Eventually, this provision would only be available through the medium of Welsh, however this change would not take effect for a number of years. It is not anticipated that the proposal would have a negative impact on the educational or training achievements of persons above compulsory school age at Ysgol Bro Caereinion.

17.2 Whether proposals will contribute to an appropriate range of relevant courses and qualifications and high quality, employer informed, vocational learning routes targeted at pupils of all abilities, whilst maintaining GCSE, AS/A level and other established courses, as required under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 for 14-19 year old learners

Changing the school's language category would enable the school to operate more efficiently, as there would be no need to duplicate provision in Welsh and English. Eventually, it is anticipated that this would enable the school to offer an improved range of courses for pupils of all abilities. The change would also enable the school to develop enhanced partnership arrangements with other Welsh-medium providers, which would further enhance the opportunities available to learners.

17.3 Whether proposals are likely to lead to an increased participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age, taking into account transport issues and costs to the learner and others, the affordability of such costs, and the likelihood of learners being willing to travel

Changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion would continue to provide access to learning beyond compulsory school age in Llanfair Caereinion, therefore there would be no impact on transport or cost to the learner.

It is not anticipated that there would be a significant impact in participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age. In the longer term, changing the school's language category to Welsh-medium would enable the school to develop enhanced partnership arrangements with other Welsh-medium providers, which would further enhance the opportunities available to learners, and could result in increased participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age.

17.4 The extent to which proposals contribute to the 14-19 agenda taking account of the views of regional 14-19 networks

In the short term, it is not anticipated that changing the school's language category would impact on the range of relevant courses and qualifications

available. However, the change would enable the school to operate more efficiently, as there would be no need to duplicate provision in Welsh and English. Eventually, it is anticipated that this would enable the school to offer an improved range of courses for pupils of all abilities.

In the longer term, changing the school's language category to Welsh-medium would enable the school to develop enhanced partnership arrangements with other Welsh-medium providers, which would further enhance the opportunities available to learners.

17.5 The effect of proposals on 11-16 provision in schools

Should the proposal be implemented, provision would continue to be available for 11-16 year olds through the medium of Welsh. This would be introduced on a phased basis.

Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to operate more efficiently, as there would be no need to duplicate provision in Welsh and English. It is anticipated that this would strengthen the provision and delivery of the Curriculum for Wales for 11-16 year olds, by enabling the school to focus on delivering education through one language medium. This could have a positive impact on the range of courses available for pupils.

17.6 How proposals would affect the viability of institutions already providing good-quality post-16 provision, including school sixth forms, Further Education Institutions and private training organisations

Post-16 provision would continue to be available at Ysgol Bro Caereinion. It is not anticipated that the proposal would impact on the viability of the provision at Ysgol Bro Caereinion or other providers.

17.7 How proposals might affect the sustainability or enhancement of Welsh medium provision in the regional 14-19 network and wider area and promote access to availability of Welsh medium courses in post-16 education

It is anticipated that eventually, changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion would enhance the Welsh-medium provision available for 14-19 year olds in the school. The proposed change would enable the school to operate more efficiently, which could enable an enhanced range of courses to be offered.

Learners would continue to be able to access at least the same range of Welsh-medium courses as what is currently available at Ysgol Bro Caereinion and through the North Powys Learning Pathways offer, in accordance with the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

17.8 The extent to which proposals will provide additional learner benefits compared with the status quo and other tenable options for post-16 organisation

The proposed changes would provide improved opportunities for pupils to develop bilingual skills in Welsh and English, providing them with Welsh language skills which will support them in their future careers.

17.9 How proposals might affect discretionary transport provision a local authority may provide to learners above compulsory school age

Changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Caereinion would not affect discretionary transport provision provided to learners above compulsory school age.

18. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the options appraisal carried out and further consideration of the emerging preferred option against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code, the preferred option is as follows:

To change the language of provision across the whole school to Welsh-medium

- Welsh-medium provision to be phased in gradually year by year, starting with Reception and Year 7 in September 2025
- Eventually, all pupils at the school would attend bilingual (Welsh-medium) provision, ensuring that all pupils would be fluent in Welsh and English
- Additional Welsh language support to be introduced alongside the change in language category e.g. Trochi, additional Welsh language support

The reasons for this are:

- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently
- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh
- Increase in pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the longer term
- Would provide access to designated Welsh-medium secondary provision
- Opportunity to attract more pupils from Welsh-medium primary schools in the area
- Meets the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys
- Would meet the aspirations of the Council's WESP
- Potential financial saving to the authority
- Would shorten the transition period to a new delivery model compared with some other options
- Limited impact on pupils currently accessing English-medium education at the school – current pupils would be able to continue to access this provision throughout the primary or secondary phase, depending on which year group they are in.
- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently more quickly
- Would allow time for any necessary staff development and professional learning to take place to support the change
- Would ensure that designated Welsh-medium provision is available more quickly, thus meeting the aspiration on the Council's WESP

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to move Ysgol Bro Caereinion along the language continuum to become a Welsh-medium school on a phased basis, starting with Reception and Year 7 in September 2025.