

# Public Document Pack



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## **LEARNING AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 14th December, 2022**

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The use of Welsh by participants is welcomed. If you wish to use Welsh please inform us by noon, two working days before the meeting

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### **SUPPLEMENTARY PACK**

<b>1.</b>	<b>LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON - WELSH MEDIUM PROVISION</b>
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To receive and consider the report of the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys.  
(Pages 3 - 54)

<b>2.</b>	<b>CRICKHOWELL AREA REVIEW</b>
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To receive and consider the report of the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys.  
(Pages 55 - 130)

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## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE  
20 December 2022

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Pete Roberts  
Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

**REPORT TITLE:** Welsh-medium provision in Dolau

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The aim of this paper to update Cabinet on the findings of the work undertaken to explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school in the current Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building in Dolau.

1.2 The report is supported by the following appendices:

Appendix A – Report to consider the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau

Appendix B – Questionnaire to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau – Report of findings

Appendix C – Comments from the Welsh-medium Education Forum (To follow)

**2. Background**

2.1 On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the previous Cabinet considered an Objection Report in respect of a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and approved the closure of the school from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

2.2 On the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the new Cabinet considered a further report in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and agreed to delay implementation of the proposal to close the school for 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school at Llanfihangel Rhydithon.

2.3 Officers have undertaken work to explore the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon. This has included the following:

- Development of a report to consider the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau – this is attached as Appendix A

- A questionnaire for parents in the Llandrindod and Presteigne / Knighton areas, to gather their views on the possible establishment of Welsh-medium provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon – the findings are attached as Appendix B.

A summary of the two appendices is provided below.

i) **Report to consider the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau**

2.4 The report includes the following:

- The Strategic Context
- An overview of current Welsh-medium provision in the area
- An overview of the current provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
- Census data relating to Welsh language skills in the area
- Identification of options which would result in establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau
- An assessment of the options against Critical Success Factors
- A SWOT assessment of shortlisted options
- A financial evaluation of shortlisted options

2.5 The report considers the following options which would result in the establishment of Welsh-medium provision in Dolau:

<b>Option 1</b>	Change the language category of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as these pupils move through the school.
<b>Option 2</b>	Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.  This would mean closing Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, opening a new Welsh-medium school starting with Foundation Phase pupils and extending the provision as these pupils move through the school.
<b>Option 3</b>	Establish a Welsh-medium stream at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to operate alongside English-medium provision.

2.6 The 3 options were assessed against a number of Critical Success Factors. Option 3 was discounted after this assessment as it did not meet any of the Critical Success Factors. Whilst options 1 and 2 also failed to meet any of the Critical Success Factors, the assessment identified that there was a possibility that they could meet some of

them, so these options were taken forward for further assessment, including a SWOT assessment and financial evaluation.

### **Financial Evaluation of shortlisted options**

- 2.7 Both shortlisted options have been compared with the status quo (closing the school from 31 August 2023) and the comparative costs are set out in the table below. It should be noted that the per pupil allocations have not been included within the estimated delegated funding for either option as it is assumed that all pupils would attend a Powys school in the status quo and in both options, so those costs would remain the same (the estimated saving for school closure already takes account of this). The phasing in of the Welsh medium is assumed to start in September 2024 for both options.
- 2.8 The table also includes the estimated budget per pupil for each year for each option. The 2022-23 budget per pupil for Llanfihangel Rhydithon is £6,540 and the Powys average primary school budget per pupil for 2022-23 is £4,657.

	Status Quo	Option 1	Option 1	Option 2	Option 2
Financial Year	Estimated Savings from closure	Delegated Funding excl. per pupil allocation £	Budget per pupil (incl. per pupil allocation) £	Delegated Funding excl. per pupil allocation £	Budget per pupil (incl. per pupil allocation) £
2023-24	(45,200)	37,600		(41,700)	
2024-25	(77,500)	88,000	8,433	18,800	22,434
2025-26	(77,500)	112,900	8,109	82,200	13,190
2026-27	(77,500)	112,400	7,667	81,200	10,108
2027-28	(77,500)	113,200	8,596	80,300	8,334
2028-29	(77,500)	113,400	8,817	79,400	7,273
2029-30	(77,500)	78,200	6,848	78,600	6,568
2030-31	(77,500)	67,700	5,779	67,700	5,779
Total over 8 years	(587,700)	723,400		446,500	
Difference from Status Quo	N/A	1,311,100		1,034,200	
Ongoing annual savings / additional running costs	(77,500)	67,700		67,700	

- 2.9 Option 1 means that the school does not close at 31 August 2023 and continues to operate in English medium only from September 2023 to August 2024. It then operates in both languages until the English

medium stream is fully phased out in August 2029. For formula funding purposes, it has been assumed that the school would be funded in the same way as a dual stream school from September 2024 until 31 August 2029 (when the final year of English medium learners leave year 6). This means that both the English medium provision and the Welsh medium provision would receive top ups over and above the per pupil allocations, due to the low pupil numbers at the school. This ensures that the school receives sufficient funding to be able to deliver education in both languages during this transition period.

- 2.10 Option 2 means that that the current school would close on 31 August 2023 and remain closed for one academic year. There would therefore be an estimated saving of £77,500 split over 2 financial years (£45,200 in 2023-24 and £32,300 in 2024-25). Option 2 then assumes a new WM school would start in September 2024 with 5 learners<sup>1</sup> in Reception which is estimated to cost £42,600 for the two terms in the 2024-25 financial year. £6,000 has been added to the costs for the academic year that the school is empty, to allow for any incidental costs of mothballing the school building for 12 months. The school would be a single medium school so would only receive the small school top up (£70,000 per year until over 30 pupils when it changes to £60,000) plus the £3,000 per year bilingual administration top up.
- 2.11 Following the further assessments carried out, the report concludes that Options 1 and 2 are not viable. The reasons for discounting these two options are as follows:

Option	Reasons for discounting
<b>Option 1:</b>  Change the school's language category from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as these pupils move through the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There would be an additional cost to the Council of <b>£1,311,100</b> over 8 years compared with the Status Quo</li> <li>- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with limited ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment</li> <li>- Changing the current school's language category would mean that the school would continue to be run by the same governing body and staff who do not have experience of delivering Welsh-medium education</li> <li>- Does not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> 5 learners is the average intake for a 36-place pupil school

<p><b>Option 2:</b></p> <p>Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There would be an additional cost to the Council of <b>£1,034,200</b> over 8 years compared with the Status Quo</li> <li>- As the new provision would be phased in, the school would initially be operating with very small numbers of pupils</li> <li>- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with limited ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment</li> <li>- Does not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.</li> </ul>
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ii) **Questionnaire to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau**

- 2.12 Between the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Council carried out an engagement exercise to understand the views of parents in the area about the possibility of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau.
- 2.13 An online questionnaire was developed and circulated to parents and prospective parents in the Llandrindod, Presteigne and Knighton areas via schools and early years providers in the area. Information about the questionnaire was also shared in the local press and on the Council's social media platforms.
- 2.14 224 responses were received to the online questionnaire, as well as 4 other written responses.
- 2.15 A report has been produced which summarises the findings. This is attached as Appendix B.
- 2.16 98 of the respondents (45.6%) indicated that they would be interested in their children attending Welsh-medium provision in Dolau if this provision was available.
- 2.17 Comments were also received which indicated support for this. These included the following:
- Dolau would be a suitable site for Welsh-medium provision as there is already a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi
  - This would provide the option of a rural Welsh-medium school which is not currently available in the area

2.18 However, whilst the findings show some support to the idea of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau, a number of concerns are also raised. These include the following:

- The Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building is not suitable
- Concern about staffing arrangements
- Concern about the cost of establishing this provision given the current financial climate
- Welsh-medium provision should be offered in a more central location e.g. larger towns
- Welsh-medium education is already available in the Llandrindod area at the Welsh-medium streams at Ysgol Trefonnen and Rhayader C. in W. School
- Concern that there would be insufficient demand for this provision in Dolau

### **3. Advice**

3.1 Based on the findings of the report to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau and the findings of the questionnaire to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau, the advice of officers is that establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau is not viable.

3.2 The reasons for this are as follows:

- Establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau would not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.
- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with no ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment
- The two shortlisted options would result in an additional cost to the Council of between £1,034,200 and £1,311,100 over 8 years compared with the Status Quo
- The school would continue to have low pupil numbers, high budget share per pupil and teaching would take place in combined aged classes due to the low pupil numbers
- Attracting and recruiting staff who have the proficiency to teach in Welsh may be difficult based on evidence from other schools in the county
- High-quality Welsh-medium provision is available locally at Ysgol Trefonnen and Rhayader C.i.W Primary School with places available at both schools, transport would be provided for parents wishing to access Welsh-medium provision for their children in accordance with the Home-to-School Transport Policy.

3.2 It is therefore advised that the Council does not proceed with establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau. This would mean that



Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, as agreed by Cabinet on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

- 3.3 The paper considered by Cabinet on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 also included a commitment to 'identify steps that the Council could take to mitigate the impact of the closure on the community.' This will be considered as part of the Council's activity to close down the school building.

#### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1 The annual cost of implementing Option 1 or 2 compared to the status quo is £145,200 per annum once either option is fully implemented as implementation would mean foregoing the estimated saving of £77,500 as well as the estimated annual cost of £67,700 of the options. As the report concludes that options 1 and 2 are not viable proposals, Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School will close on 31 August 2023 and the authority will realise the estimated savings of £45,200 in 2023-24 and £32,300 in 2024-25 (total ongoing annual saving of £77,500).
- 4.2 It should be noted that the school's projected cumulative budget position will change from a surplus of £15,748 at 31 March 2022 to an anticipated deficit of £14,663 by 31 August 2023 which will need to be written off on closure. The authority is working with the school to eliminate or minimise any deficit balance.

School	Actual Outturn Cumulative surplus at 31 March 2022	22/23 In year under / (over) spend	22/23 Projected Cumulative Cfwd 31 March 2023	23/24 In year under / (over) spend	23/24 Projected Cumulative Cfwd 31 August 2023
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C P School	15,748	(15,200)	548	(15,211)	(14,663)

- 4.3 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report. The original decision to close the school would realise an ongoing revenue saving of £77,500 per annum which would be redistributed within the Schools Funding Formula across other Powys Schools. Both of the options considered would require additional funding as set out in the report, this funding would create an additional pressure on the Council budget or would have to be accommodated within the Schools Delegated budget reducing what is available for other schools. I note the conclusion that the establishment of Welsh Medium Provision at this school is not financially viable and can support the recommendations.
- 4.4 If agreed by Cabinet, Human Resources colleagues will work closely with the School Governors, management and staff to ensure that the appropriate employment processes are followed.

## **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 Legal: The recommendations are acceptable from a legal point of view
- 5.2 The Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer has commented as follows: I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report

## **6. Data Protection**

- 6.1 N/A

## **7. Comment from local member(s)**

- 7.1 To follow.

## **8. Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 Impact assessments were considered by Cabinet at each stage of the process to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. These were updated at each stage to reflect the issues raised.

## **9. Recommendation**

- To note the officer advice that establishment of Welsh-medium provision in Dolau is not viable.
- To implement the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, as agreed by Cabinet on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

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# **Report to consider the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau**

## **Version control**

Version	Date	Brief Summary of Change	Author
0.1	09/22	Document created	HR
0.2	23/11/22	Draft for consideration by Transforming Education Programme Board	SA
0.3	01/12/22	Draft for consideration by Cabinet	SA

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. The Strategic Context .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys .....	4
2.2 Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys .....	4
2.3 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-32) .....	5
<b>3. Existing Arrangements .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Current Welsh-medium provision in the Llandrindod / Rhayader and Presteigne / Knighton areas .....	7
3.2 Current provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School .....	10
<b>4. Options Appraisal .....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Possible Options .....	15
4.2 Assessment against Critical Success Factors .....	15
4.3 SWOT Assessment of shortlisted options .....	17
<b>5. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>24</b>

# 1. Introduction

During 2021-22, the Council carried out the Statutory Process as outlined in the School Organisation Code on a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, a small English-medium primary school which is located in the village of Dolau in Mid Powys, from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the Council's Cabinet considered an Objection Report related to this proposal and agreed to proceed with closure of the school.

Subsequently, following the Council elections held in May 2022, the Council's new Cabinet considered a further paper related to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, and agreed to delay implementation of the proposal by 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to 'explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school at Llanfihangel Rhydithon.'

The purpose of this paper is to explore the viability of introducing Welsh-medium provision in the village of Dolau on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, as agreed by Cabinet.

## 2. The Strategic Context

### 2.1 Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

The Council's vision for Transforming Education in Powys is set out in its Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. Originally developed and launched during 2019-20 in response to Estyn's inspection of Powys Education Services, the Strategy was updated and relaunched by the Council's new administration in July 2022. The Strategy is available on the Council's website at

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9344/Transforming-Education-Strategy>.

The Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims which will underpin the Council's work to transform the education infrastructure over the coming years. One of these Strategic Aims sets out the Council's commitment to developing Welsh-medium education, as indicated by the Strategic Aim '*to improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages*'.

This is supported by the following Strategic Objectives:

- S.O.3.1      *Move schools along the language continuum*
- S.O.3.2      *Develop new primary and secondary provision*
- S.O.3.3      *Work with Mudiad Meithrin to establish new early years provision*
- S.O.3.4      *Develop immersion opportunities*

### 2.2 Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys

In December 2020, the Council's Cabinet approved a Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys, which recognises the challenges of delivering equitable Welsh-medium provision in the county:

- *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.*

### **2.3 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-32)**

The Council has recently developed a new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32, which sets out how it will develop Welsh-medium provision in Powys over the next 10 years, with the aim of meeting the Welsh Government aspiration to increase the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education. The WESP was approved by both the current Cabinet and Welsh Government in July 2022.

The WESP sets out an ambitious target to increase the year 1 pupils being taught through the medium of Welsh in Powys by 14 percentage points to 36% by 2032. Based on the total number of Year 1 pupils in Powys in January 2021, this would require an increase of 163 Year 1 pupils being taught through the medium of Welsh.

To achieve this, the WESP includes a commitment to the following:

- *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*

In respect of the Ysgol Calon Cymru / Presteigne catchment areas, the WESP also sets out the following commitments:

- Continue to work with Mudiad Meithrin to establish new Cylch Ti a Fi and/or Cylch Meithrin provision in areas where no Welsh-medium provision currently exists, including the Presteigne area
- Plans for capital investment to support Welsh-medium provision in the Llandrindod Wells / Builth Wells area

- Develop new Welsh-medium primary provision in areas where no provision currently exists, including the Presteigne area
- Develop more Welsh-medium provision in the Llandrindod Wells / Builth Wells catchment area
- Continue with plans to provide access to secondary provision which meets the definition of the Welsh Government's 'Welsh-medium' category in the Ysgol Calon Cymru area.

The WESP also sets out the Council's approach to developing / introducing Welsh-medium provision across the county:

*'This will be achieved in a variety of ways, dependent on the particular circumstances within each area, and will be aligned with the Welsh Government's new language categories for schools which have recently been published, as outlined below.*

- *The authority will work with schools transferring to the transitional categories to develop a plan to enable these schools to transfer into one of the main categories within a maximum of 10 years.*
- *The authority will develop a programme of moving schools along the language continuum to improve access to Welsh-medium provision. This will include the following:*
- *Identifying English-medium schools to move into the T2 Transitional category to enable them to increase their Welsh-medium provision so that they meet the definition of a Category 2 Dual Language School, a Category 3 Welsh-medium School or a school that is within two categories – Category 1 and Category 3. This could be achieved in a similar way to the pilot started at Ysgol y Cribarth in September 2021, where a new Welsh-medium Reception class was introduced.*
- *Identifying schools which currently offer Welsh-medium and English-medium provision to move into the T3 Transitional category with the aim of becoming Category 2 – Dual Language schools or Category 3 – Welsh-medium schools.*
- *Where required, the authority will establish new designated Welsh-medium primary provision which meets the definition of a 'Category 3 – Welsh-medium' school. To ensure that any new provision is well placed to stimulate demand, it is expected that this type of provision would be located in Powys' main centres of population.'*



### 3. Existing Arrangements

#### 3.1 Current Welsh-medium provision in the Llandrindod / Rhayader and Presteigne / Knighton areas

##### i) Early Years Provision

Welsh-medium early years provision is currently available in the Ysgol Calon Cymru catchment area and Presteigne catchment areas in the following locations:

##### Cylch Ti a Fi<sup>1</sup>

##### Llandrindod / Rhayader area

##### Dolau Ti a Fi – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Ti a Fi provision is situated in Y Caban at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It costs £1.50 to attend and is open between 12-3:30 on Wednesday afternoons.

##### Llandrindod Ti a Fi – Ysgol Trefonnen

Ti a Fi provision is situated at Ysgol Trefonnen in Llandrindod Wells. It costs £1.00 to attend and is open between 9:30 – 11am on Friday mornings.

##### Presteigne / Knighton areas

There is currently no Cylch Ti a Fi provision in the Presteigne catchment.

##### Cylch Meithrin<sup>2</sup>

##### Llandrindod / Rhayader areas

##### Dolau Cylch – Llanfihangel Rhydithion C.P. School

Cylch Meithrin provision is situated in Y Caban at Llanfihangel Rhydithion C.P. School. It costs £14.00 to attend till lunchtime and £21.00 to attend till 2:30, and is open between 8:30 – 12:30 on Mondays and 8:30 till 2:30 on Tuesday and Thursdays.

It is CIW registered and has 12 maximum places. This provision is not supported or funded by the local authority.

##### Llandrindod Cylch – Ysgol Trefonnen

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<sup>1</sup> Ti a Fi data provided by [www.methrin.cymru](http://www.methrin.cymru)

<sup>2</sup> Cylch data provided by [www.methrin.cymru](http://www.methrin.cymru)

Cylch provision is situated at Ysgol Trefonnen in Llandrindod Wells. It costs £10.00 to attend and is open between 9:00 – 11:30 on Monday to Friday. An afternoon session is open between 12:45 and 3:15pm on Monday to Friday.

It is CIW registered and has 24 maximum places. It was last inspected in 2019. This provision is supported and funded by the local authority.

#### Rhayader Cylch – Rhayader C. in W. School

Cylch provision is situated at Rhayader C. in W. School in Rhayader. It costs £10.00 a session (8:45 to 11:15 or 11:15 to 3:30), £3.50 for breakfast and £4.50 for 11.15 to 3:30, and is open between 8:00 – 3:30 on Monday to Thursday.

It is CIW registered and has 24 maximum places. This provision is supported and funded by the local authority.

#### Presteigne / Knighton areas

There is currently no Cylch Meithrin provision in the Presteigne / Knighton areas.

### **ii) Primary Provision**

#### **Llandrindod / Rhayader area**

Welsh-medium primary provision is currently delivered in the Llandrindod area at two dual stream primary schools – Ysgol Trefonnen in Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader C. in W. School.

Current Welsh-medium pupil numbers at the two schools are as follows<sup>3</sup>:

	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Rhayader C. in W. School</b>	16	7	15	14	7	7	9	75
<b>Ysgol Trefonnen</b>	9	11	12	14	17	9	21	93
<b>Total</b>	25	18	27	28	24	16	30	168

The following table provides information about Welsh-medium pupil numbers (R-Yr6) in the Llandrindod area over the last 4 years:

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<sup>3</sup> Teacher Centre, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

	PLASC 2019	PLASC 2020	PLASC 2021	July 2022
<b>Rhayader C. in W. School</b>	61	66	65	75
<b>Ysgol Trefonnen</b>	89	86	91	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>168</b>

Whilst pupils in the Llandrindod and Rhayader areas can access Welsh-medium provision at a dual stream primary school, there is currently no opportunity for Welsh-medium pupils to access a designated Welsh-medium primary school.

### **Presteigne / Knighton area**

There is currently no Welsh-medium primary provision in the Presteigne / Knighton area.

### **iii) Secondary Provision**

Secondary Welsh-medium provision in the area is delivered at the Welsh-medium stream of Ysgol Calon Cymru, a dual sited secondary school which provides Welsh-medium and English-medium provision in Builth Wells, and English-medium provision in Llandrindod Wells. This provision is also available to any pupils living in the Presteigne / Knighton areas who access Welsh-medium provision.

In the secondary sector, the number of Welsh-medium pupils attending the Builth Wells Campus of Ysgol Calon Cymru during the 2021-2022 academic year was as follows:

Year	Number of Welsh-medium pupils
<b>7</b>	15
<b>8</b>	13
<b>9</b>	29
<b>10</b>	20
<b>11</b>	21
<b>12</b>	16
<b>13</b>	16
<b>Total</b>	130

The total number of Welsh-medium pupils (years 7-11) over the last 4 years has been as follows:

	PLASC 2019	PLASC 2020	PLASC 2021	July 2022
<b>Builth Wells Campus YCC</b>	101	130	139	130

The Council is currently undertaking a review of Ysgol Calon Cymru's current operating model, and has identified a preferred way forward which could result in changing the model, and potentially establishing a new Welsh-medium all-age school in Builth Wells. Initial engagement on the preferred way forward was carried out during 2021-22, and a report outlining the findings of this exercise has been published. Further work is currently being undertaken to determine how to proceed.

### 3.2 Current provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

The following is a summary of key data relating to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

#### Pupil Numbers

##### i) Current pupil numbers<sup>4</sup>

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	2	3	5	10	2	7	5	34

##### ii) Historical pupil numbers<sup>5</sup>

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	31	35	35	29	33	37	35

##### iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)<sup>6</sup>

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.	41	40	36	39	36

<sup>4</sup> Teacher Centre, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022

<sup>5</sup> PLASC

<sup>6</sup> Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

School					
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## **Building Capacity and Condition**

### **i) Capacity**

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

	<b>Current Capacity<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Currently Filled</b>	<b>Surplus Capacity</b>
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	36	34 (94.4%)	2 (5.6%)

### **ii) Building condition<sup>8</sup>**

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school.

	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Suitability</b>	<b>Access to hall on site</b>	<b>Estimated Backlog Maintenance<sup>9</sup></b>
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	B Good	B Good	Yes – community hall	£138,460.76

## **Quality of Education**

### **i) Estyn**

	<b>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School</b>
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	March 2019
<b>Standards</b>	Good
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	Good
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	Good

<sup>7</sup> Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

<sup>8</sup> Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2022

<sup>9</sup> Backlog maintenance figures uplifted using CPI base rates on year of condition survey or base date of 2016.

<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Good
<b>Follow up activity</b>	School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations.

### **Financial information**

#### **i) Cost per pupil (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2022/2023)**

	<b>Budget share per school</b>	<b>Budget share per pupil</b>	<b>Notional SEN budget</b>	<b>Non ISB funds devolved to the school</b>
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	£95,372.00	£6,539.79	£2,696.00	£1,150.00
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,656.50	N/A	N/A

### **Welsh language skills of current staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School**

Information about the Welsh language skills of current school staff is provided by the School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC). The latest SWAC information from November 2021 provides the following information about the Welsh language skills of staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

#### **i) Number of staff by Welsh language ability**

	<b>Number of teachers</b>	<b>Total Number of staff (including teachers)</b>
No Welsh language skills	0	1
Entry Level	2	3
Foundation Level	0	2
Intermediate Level	2	2
Advanced Level	2	2
Proficient Level	0	0
Information not yet obtained	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

#### **ii) Number of staff by teaching / working through the medium of Welsh**

	Number of teachers	Total Number of staff (including teachers)
Teaching / working through the medium of Welsh in current post	0	0
Able to teach / work through the medium of Welsh but not doing so in current post	1	1
Not able to teach / work through the medium of Welsh	2	6
Teaching Welsh as a subject only (*for teachers teaching up to NC year 6 only)	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

**iii) Number of teaching staff by Welsh Language ability and whether they are currently working through the medium of Welsh**

	Teaching / working through the medium of Welsh in current post	Able to teach / work through the medium of Welsh but not doing so in current post	Not able to teach / work through the medium of Welsh	Teaching Welsh as a subject only (*for teachers teaching up to NC year 6 only)
No Welsh language skills	0	0	0	0
Entry Level	0	0	2	0
Foundation Level	0	0	0	0
Intermediate Level	0	0	0	2
Advanced Level	0	1	0	1
Proficient Level	0	0	0	0
Information not yet obtained	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

### 3.3 Census data relating to Welsh language skills in Dolau

The 2011 census provides the following information about the Welsh language skills of residents of the Llangunllo LSOA:

#### Welsh Speakers by LSOA, Census 2011 and Census 2021

Census 2011 – 8%  
 Census 2021 – 7.1%

**Welsh Language Skills by LSOA, Census 2011 and Census 2021**

Census	Can speak, read and write Welsh	Can speak and read but cannot write Welsh	Can speak but cannot read or write Welsh	Can understand spoken Welsh only	Other combination of skills	No skills
2011	6.0%	0.6%	1.4%	2.4%	1.5%	88.1%
2021	5.4%	0.4%	1.1%	2.9%	1.5%	88.7%



## 4. Options Appraisal

### 4.1 Possible Options

The scope of this report is to consider the feasibility / viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in the building currently occupied by Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in Dolau.

The following options have been identified which would result in the establishment of Welsh-medium provision in Dolau:

Option	Description
1	Change the language category of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as these pupils move through the school.
2	<p>Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>This would mean closing Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, opening a new Welsh-medium school starting with Foundation Phase pupils and extending the provision as these pupils move through the school.</p>
3	Establish a Welsh-medium stream at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to operate alongside English-medium provision.

### 4.2 Assessment against Critical Success Factors

The options identified above have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032, to include the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li><li>- Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li></ul></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li> <li>• The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme</li> <li>• The option must align with the aspirations of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32</li> </ul>
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning</li> <li>• The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning</li> </ul>
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must be politically acceptable at local, county and national level</li> <li>• The option must be achievable within current legislation</li> <li>• The option must be operationally achievable / physically achievable</li> </ul>
4 – Supply-side capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must secure sufficient appropriate resources and expertise to be deployed within Powys to achieve the investment objectives</li> </ul>
5 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted revenue of participating organisations</li> <li>• The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding of participating organisations</li> </ul>

The options have been scored against the critical success factors using the following system:

- ✓ - meets the criteria
- ? – may meet the criteria
- X – does not meet the criteria

The following is a summary of the evaluation given for each option:

Critical Success Factor	Option 1: Change the school's language category from EM to WM on a phased basis	Option 2: Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel	Option 3: Establish a Welsh-medium stream at the school to operate alongside
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		Rhydithon C.P. School	English-medium provision
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	?	?	X
2 – Value for money	X	X	X
3 – Potential achievability	?	?	X
4 – Supply-side capacity and capability	?	?	X
5 – Potential affordability	X	X	X
<b>Total ✓</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total X</b>	2	2	5
<b>Total ?</b>	3	3	0

This assessment suggests that all 3 options fail to fully meet any of critical success factors. However, options 1 and 2 will be taken forward for further assessment, including a SWOT analysis and financial evaluation.

Option 3, which is to establish a Welsh-medium stream at the school to operate alongside the English-medium provision, is discounted at this stage because it failed to meet any of the critical success factors. The reasons for discounting this option are as follows:

- The school is already a small school. Introducing a Welsh-medium stream at the school would result in two very small streams.
- The school building does not have an additional classroom available which could accommodate a Welsh-medium class alongside English-medium classes.
- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with limited ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment.
- Does not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.

#### 4.3 SWOT Assessment of shortlisted options

SWOT assessments have been carried out of options one and two as outlined above, in order to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of each option, and any opportunities or threats associated with them.

These have been developed with input from officers working in the Transforming Education Team, the Schools Service, the Finance Team and the HR Team.

### Option 1:

Change the school's language category from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as these pupils move through the school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain primary provision in the village of Dolau</li> <li>- Minimum impact on pupils currently accessing English-medium education at the school – the provision would continue until they left school</li> <li>- Pupils joining the school would have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh and develop full bilingual skills</li> <li>- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys</li> <li>- Could be attractive to families who wouldn't choose the current Welsh-medium provision in the area</li> <li>- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh</li> <li>- Would support the aim of the Council's Transforming Education Strategy to improve access to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of 1m Welsh speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It would take a number of years for the school to become fully Welsh-medium</li> <li>- Most of the current staff at the school do not have the language skills needed to work in a Welsh-medium school</li> <li>- New resources would need to be purchased to ensure the school is equipped to teach through the medium of Welsh</li> <li>- Parents not wishing their children to have Welsh-medium education might choose to send their children to other English-medium schools</li> <li>- There is no current evidence of demand for Welsh-medium provision in the area</li> <li>- Possible additional transport costs</li> <li>- Likely to be unpopular with some members of the local community, seeing English medium education being disadvantaged at the expense of Welsh-medium education</li> <li>- Difficulty recruiting Welsh-medium teaching staff and other staff in a predominantly English language catchment</li> <li>- Cost per pupil would continue to be high and potentially increase</li> <li>- The school's capacity means that pupil numbers in each year group would continue to be small, making it</li> </ul>

	<p>more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The school would remain a small school, making it more difficult for pupils to benefit from the new Curriculum for Wales and extra-curricular activities</li> <li>– The school would continue to be run by the same governing body, who have no experience of Welsh-medium education</li> <li>– There would be no opportunity to realise a capital receipt from the sale of the Dolau site</li> <li>– The Council would not realise the financial saving expected following the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School</li> <li>– Would be a costly way of introducing additional Welsh-medium education in the area</li> <li>– Need for a statutory reorganisation process to change the school's language category</li> <li>– Combined age classes would continue and the age range within the combined classes would widen</li> <li>– Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> <li>– The Council would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building</li> <li>– Would not reduce surplus places</li> </ul>
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision, including pupils who might currently travel out of catchment</li> <li>– Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Llanfihangel Rhydithon school only has capacity for 36 pupils. If the school was successful as a Welsh-medium school, it would have no ability to expand.</li> <li>– Possible effect on pupil numbers at other schools with a Welsh-medium stream in the catchment</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Recruitment of a Welsh speaking headteacher / staff would be a challenge.</li> <li>– May not be sufficient population in the local area to ensure continued growth of the provision – new Welsh-medium provision tends to succeed in more populated areas</li> </ul>
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## Option 2:

Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain primary provision in the village of Dolau</li> <li>- Pupils joining the school would have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh and develop full bilingual skills</li> <li>- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys</li> <li>- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh</li> <li>- Improvement in pupils' Welsh language skills through improved Welsh ethos</li> <li>- Would support the aim of the Council's Transforming Education Strategy to improve access to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of £1m Welsh speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The school would be phased in as pupils move through the school years, and would be very small initially</li> <li>- Parents in the local area not wishing their children to have Welsh-medium education might choose to send their children to other English-medium schools</li> <li>- Possible additional transport costs</li> <li>- A further reorganisation process would be needed to establish a new school</li> <li>- May be unpopular with some members of the local community, seeing English medium education being disadvantaged at the expense of Welsh-medium education</li> <li>- Difficulty recruiting Welsh-medium teaching staff and other staff in a predominantly English language catchment</li> <li>- Cost per pupil would be high</li> <li>- School capacity means that pupil numbers in each year group will be small, making it more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.</li> <li>- No opportunity to realise a capital receipt from the sale of the Dolau site</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Council would not realise the financial saving expected following the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School</li> <li>- Would be a costly way of introducing additional Welsh-medium education in the area</li> <li>- The Council would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Would not address the high budget per pupil</li> <li>- Combined age classes would continue</li> <li>- Additional Welsh language resources would be needed at extra cost</li> <li>- Would take a long time to implement</li> <li>- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> </ul>
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The school would be a new school, with a new name, new identity, new governing body, new staff, which would provide an opportunity for a new start</li> <li>- Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision, including pupils who might currently travel out of catchment</li> <li>- Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Llanfihangel Rhydithon school only has capacity for 36 pupils. If the school was successful as a Welsh-medium school, it would have no ability to expand.</li> <li>- Possible effect on pupil numbers at other schools with a Welsh-medium stream in the catchment</li> <li>- Introduction of the new curriculum - would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum</li> <li>- Recruitment of a Welsh speaking headteacher / staff would be a challenge.</li> <li>- May not be sufficient population in the local area to ensure continued growth of the provision – new</li> </ul>

	Welsh-medium provision tends to succeed in more populated areas
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#### 4.4 Financial Evaluation of shortlisted options

Both shortlisted options have been compared with the status quo (closing the school from 31 August 2023) and the comparative costs are set out in the table below. It should be noted that the per pupil allocations have not been included within the estimated delegated funding for either option as it is assumed that all pupils would attend a Powys school in the status quo and in both options, so those costs would remain the same (the estimated saving for school closure already takes account of this). The phasing in of the Welsh medium is assumed to start in September 2024 for both options. The phasing in of the Welsh medium is assumed to start in September 2024 for both options.

The table also includes the estimated budget per pupil for each year for each option. The 2022-23 budget per pupil for Llanfihangel Rhydithon is £6,540 and the Powys average primary school budget per pupil for 2022-23 is £4,657.

	Status Quo	Option 1	Option 1	Option 2	Option 2
Financial Year	Estimated Savings from closure	Delegated Funding excl. per pupil allocation £	Budget per pupil (incl. per pupil allocation) £	Delegated Funding excl. per pupil allocation £	Budget per pupil (incl. per pupil allocation) £
2023-24	(45,200)	37,600		(41,700)	
2024-25	(77,500)	88,000	8,433	18,800	22,434
2025-26	(77,500)	112,900	8,109	82,200	13,190
2026-27	(77,500)	112,400	7,667	81,200	10,108
2027-28	(77,500)	113,200	8,596	80,300	8,334
2028-29	(77,500)	113,400	8,817	79,400	7,273
2029-30	(77,500)	78,200	6,848	78,600	6,568
2030-31	(77,500)	67,700	5,779	67,700	5,779
Total over 8 years	(587,700)	723,400		446,500	
Difference from Status Quo	N/A	1,311,100		1,034,200	



<b>Ongoing annual savings / additional running costs</b>	<b>(77,500)</b>	<b>67,700</b>		<b>67,700</b>	
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Option 1 means that the school does not close at 31 August 2023 and continues to operate in English medium only from September 2023 to August 2024. It then operates in both languages until the English medium stream is fully phased out in August 2029. For formula funding purposes, it has been assumed that the school would be funded in the same way as a dual stream school from September 2024 until 31 August 2029 (when the final year of English medium learners leave year 6). This means that both the English medium provision and the Welsh medium provision would receive top ups over and above the per pupil allocations, due to the low pupil numbers at the school. This ensures that the school receives sufficient funding to be able to deliver education in both languages during this transition period.

Option 2 means that the current school would close on 31 August 2023 and remain closed for one academic year. There would therefore be an estimated saving of £77,500 split over 2 financial years (£45,200 in 2023-24 and £32,300 in 2024-25). Option 2 then assumes a new WM school would start in September 2024 with 5 learners in Reception which is estimated to cost £42,600 for the two terms in the 2024-25 financial year. £6,000 has been added to the costs for the academic year that the school is empty, to allow for any incidental costs of mothballing the school building for 12 months. The school would be a single medium school so would only receive the small school top up (£70,000 per year until over 30 pupils when it changes to £60,000) plus the £3,000 per year bilingual administration top up.

## 5. Conclusion

In the additional assessments carried out of the two options, a large number of disadvantages / threats have been identified for both options. In addition, the financial evaluation of the two options indicates that the two options would result in an additional cost to the Council of between £941,600 and £1,283,100 over 8 years.

It is therefore concluded that establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau is not viable.

The reasons why the 2 shortlisted options are not considered to be viable are as follows:

Option	Reasons for discounting
<b>Option 1:</b>  Change the school's language category from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as these pupils move through the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There would be an additional cost to the Council of <b>£1,311,100</b> over 8 years compared with the Status Quo</li> <li>- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with limited ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment</li> <li>- Changing the current school's language category would mean that the school would continue to be run by the same governing body and staff who do not have experience of delivering Welsh-medium education</li> <li>- Does not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2:</b>  Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There would be an additional cost to the Council of <b>£1,034,200</b> over 8 years compared with the Status Quo</li> <li>- As the new provision would be phased in, the school would initially be operating with very small numbers of pupils</li> <li>- The capacity of the current building means that the school would continue to be a small school, with limited ability to grow its numbers without additional capital investment</li> <li>- Does not meet the aspiration of the Council's WESP to develop new Welsh-medium provision in Powys' main centres of population in order to stimulate demand.</li> </ul>



# **Questionnaire to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau**

## **Report of findings**

**November 2022**

## Contents

<b>1. SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 The engagement period .....	3
1.2 Responses received .....	3
<b>2. ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. OTHER WRITTEN RESPONSES.....</b>	<b>19</b>

Draft

# **1. SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

## **1.1 The engagement period**

Between the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 and the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, the Council carried out an engagement exercise to understand the views of parents on the possibility of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau, and to understand the possible demand for this type of provision.

A questionnaire was circulated to schools and early years providers in the Llandrindod and Presteigne / Knighton areas and was also available on the Council's website. Information about the questionnaire was shared in the local press and on the Council's social media platforms.

## **1.2 Responses received**

224 responses were received to the online questionnaire. All of the responses were through the medium of English.

In addition 4 written responses were received.

## 2. ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following section summarises the feedback received in the online response forms which were completed.

### Part 1 – About you

1. Please indicate how you are responding to this questionnaire

Response	No.	%
Current parent, carer or guardian	116	51.8%
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	58	25.9%
Other	50	22.3%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

2. Do you currently have children of primary school age?

Response	No.	%
Yes	143	63.8%
No	81	36.2%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

If yes, please indicate their current school:

Response	No.	%
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	33	14.74%
Presteigne C.P. School	22	9.82%
Ysgol Trefonnen	22	9.82%
Rhayader Church in Wales School	19	8.49%
Knighton Church in Wales School	13	5.80%
Crossgates C.P. School	7	3.13%
Llanbister C.P. School	5	2.23%
Radnor Valley C.P. School, New Radnor	5	2.23%
Cefnlllys C.P. School, Llandrindod Wells	5	2.23%
Gladestry Church in Wales C.P. School	3	1.34%
Builth Wells Primary School	2	0.89%
Newbridge on Wye, Church in Wales School	2	0.89%
Newcastle Church of England School, Newcastle on Clun, Shropshire	2	0.89%
Ysgol Calon Cymru, Llandrindod Campus	2	0.89%
St George's Church of England Academy, Clun	1	0.45%
Not answered	81	36.16%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

3. Do you currently have children of pre-school age?

Response	No.	%
Yes	65	29.02%
No	159	70.98%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

If yes, please indicate any pre-school providers they currently attend

Response	No.	%
Cylch Meithrin Dolau	16	7.13%
Presteigne Little People's Playgroup	12	5.35%
First Steps Llandrindod	7	3.13%
Playdays Knighton	7	3.13%
Little Acorns Crossgates	6	2.68%
Rhayader	3	1.34%
Jigsaw Preschool, New Life Church, Llandrindod Wells	2	0.89%
Ysgol Trefonnen	2	0.89%
Children's World Newport	1	0.45%
Clun Nursery	1	0.45%
Little Orchard Nursery, Kington	1	0.45%
Pembridge Pre-school, Pembridge, Leominster	1	0.45%
Ysgol Cefnlllys	1	0.45%
Not answered	164	73.21%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

4. Please provide your postcode:

Response	No.	%
Llandrindod Wells	122	54.44%
Knighton	40	17.86%
Presteigne	32	14.29%
Rhayader	20	8.93%
Builth Wells	3	1.34%
Kington	2	0.89%
Crickhowell	1	0.45%
Ruthin	1	0.45%
Aberystwyth	1	0.45%
Newport (Shropshire)	1	0.45%
Llanwrtyd Wells	1	0.45%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

5. How old are you?

Response	No.	%
Under 16	2	0.89%

16-24	8	3.57%
25-34	58	25.89%
35-44	87	38.84%
45-54	33	14.73%
55-64	12	5.36%
65-74	14	6.25%
75-84	2	0.89%
85+	0	0%
Prefer not to say	4	1.79%
Not answered	4	1.79%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

6. What is your gender?

<b>Response</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	49	21.89%
Female	164	73.19%
Transgender	0	0%
Nonbinary	1	0.45%
Other	0	0%
Prefer not to say	4	1.79%
Not answered	6	2.68%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

7. Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?

<b>Response</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	102	45.53%
No	96	42.86%
Prefer not to say	17	7.59%
Not answered	9	4.02%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

8. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to receive free school meals?

<b>Response</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	15	6.70%
No	135	60.26%
Prefer not to say	7	3.13%
Not applicable	37	16.52%
Not answered	30	13.39%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

9. If you have school-aged children, do they have any additional learning needs?



Response	No.	%
Yes	21	9.38%
No	130	58.03%
Prefer not to say	7	3.13%
Not applicable	33	14.73%
Not answered	33	14.73%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

10. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Response	No.	%
Yes	17	7.59%
No	185	82.59%
Prefer not to say	11	4.91%
Not answered	11	4.91%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

11. What is your ethnic group?

Response	No.	%
White	203	90.61%
Black, African or Caribbean	1	0.45%
Mixed	2	0.89%
Gypsy/Traveller	1	0.45%
Other	1	0.45%
Prefer not to say	6	2.68%
Not Answered	10	4.47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## **Part 2 – Response to questionnaire**

**Q7 The Council is investigating the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in the current Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building in the village of Dolau.**

**If the Council were to establish Welsh-medium provision in Dolau, would your children be interested in attending?**

Response	No.	%
Yes	98	43.75%
No	90	40.18%
Don't know	27	12.05%
Not answered	9	4.02%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q8 The Council has identified 2 options which would result in the establishment of Welsh-medium provision in Dolau.**

To what extent do you agree that each of these options would be an appropriate way forward to establish Welsh-medium provision in Dolau?

	<b>Option 1:</b> Establish a new Welsh-medium school on the current site of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School on a phased basis, starting with the Foundation Phase pupils and attending the provision as these pupils move through the school.	<b>Option 2:</b> Change Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School's language category from English-medium to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, starting with pupils in the early years then phasing in each year as the pupils move through the school.
Strongly Agree	21 (9.81%)	102 (45.94%)
Agree	36 (16.82%)	39 (17.57%)
Don't know	32 (14.95%)	25 (11.26%)
Disagree	53 (24.77%)	19 (8.56%)
Strongly disagree	72 (33.65%)	37 (16.67%)
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>222</b>

**Q9 Are there any other options you think the Council should be considering to establish Welsh-medium provision in Dolau? Please provide details below.**

The comments received are summarised below:

**i) The Council should leave the school to operate as an English-medium school**

- Keep the school as it is
- Keep the school as an English medium school as this would best suit the children and families of this area
- Keep the school as it is as you promised us all at the elections!!
- We do not need a Welsh medium school. We need an English medium school

- The council could consider maintaining the current school and building on its success by introducing more Welsh provision in the current curriculum. In geographical and community terms, Dolau is ideally placed to serve the area of east Radnorshire.

**ii) The Council should proceed with closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School**

- The school closure has cost taxpayers money. The Council needs to be firm and continue with the closure. Dragging this matter further simply wastes more money.
- Is there a viable alternative to closure? Children are either already first language Welsh, or the parents have no desire to have first language Welsh education, or they would have chosen Welsh-medium education.
- You have no money yet kept the school open for another year at a cost, for what? Complete waste of money to educate a handful of children.
- There is no demand for a Welsh language school in Dolau, it would be waste of resources. This would just be a guise to save the school.

**iii) Concerns about the suitability of the school building in Dolau**

- The current school building will be in need of structural changes to make it big enough to be financially viable
- The building is not practical and not energy efficient
- How can you phase in Welsh-medium education on a year-by-year basis in the building at Dolau? It only has 2 or 3 classrooms, surely you can't say the reception pupils are Welsh medium if others in the same room are being taught through English?

**iv) Comments about staffing arrangements should Welsh-medium provision be established in Dolau**

- The staff at the school are not Welsh speakers. There is a huge difference between fluent Welsh speakers and those who are trained on the job.
- For either option – where do you think the staff are to fulfil this dream? Schools that offer Welsh-medium education now struggle to fill Welsh speaking posts.
- The school will not be able to find Welsh staff

- Welsh staff are difficult to recruit in the area, so another Welsh medium school is totally impractical and not well thought out.

**v) Comments about cost**

- The proposal seems ridiculous in the current financial climate. The school is a small school and per pupil already costs much more than other local schools.
- I feel this is a waste of council funds. How much is all this costing Powys?
- How can the council afford to explore Option 2? Can the council justify putting a Welsh teacher in a room with 3 children, whilst a teacher teaching children of the same age in another school has a class of 30? Where is the equality or equity for all Powys children in this proposal?

**vi) Dolau is not the right location for a Welsh-medium school**

- Why are you looking at keeping a small old building open. If a Welsh school is needed then build a new purpose-built school in a central location.
- Focus Welsh-medium provision in larger towns!
- Dolau is not the correct location. You would be taking pupils from Llandrindod and Rhayader who are currently in strong Welsh medium units with fantastic Welsh speaking staff.
- Dolau is the wrong place, with Welsh-medium Secondary education being in Builth Wells. A large number of Trefonnen Welsh stream go to the English stream in Llandrindod. Welsh-medium provision needs centralising in primary locations to match the secondary availability
- Too far to transport children to Dolau, when there is Welsh provision in my local school.
- Why not create Welsh medium schools in Knighton or further North or South? Dolau is not the correct place

**vii) Welsh-medium education is already available in nearby locations to Dolau**

- Is there really a need? Why don't they just attend the Welsh stream at Ysgol Trefonnen where staff are already employed to teach through Welsh? How much is this idea actually going to cost the council?
- No need for a Welsh Medium School in Dolau. If parents wish they should use the current Ysgol Trefonnen or Rhayader.

- There is Welsh provision in Trefonnen and Rhayader and both schools provide good Welsh education in a very English area. It would be more useful to finance those schools properly rather than waste money on Dolau which is a small and old building not fit for 21st century teaching.
- Why try and have a negative impact on local schools who already have superb Welsh units, a strong Welsh community and fluent Welsh speakers? Rhayader and Trefonnen have large Welsh units, why not support those instead?
- There is Welsh-medium provision at Trefonnen already – no need for more?
- Why would parents from Llandrindod consider moving their children to Dolau when there is already an excellent Welsh-medium school in Llandrindod?
- As Welsh medium education is available in Llandrindod and Rhayader why not invest in those schools. Both of those schools could accommodate the extra children at a lower cost per pupil than in Llanfihangel Rhydithon.

**viii) No evidence of demand for Welsh-medium education at Dolau**

- Is there a demand for Welsh education in Dolau? No!
- Why close an English school which there is a demand for, to open a Welsh school where there is no demand.
- How many Welsh speaking children are in the catchment area?
- Is this financially viable? Is there a demand in a small hamlet?
- I hope that the Council have evidence of the need for Welsh medium provision in this locality. Are other Welsh-medium schools in the County full?
- I'd like to know the number of children wishing to be taught through the medium of Welsh in this area of the county.
- There are not enough Welsh speaking children in the area
- It's a crazy idea. No one has any inclination in this area to have their children taught in Welsh full time.

**ix) General comments in support of Welsh-medium education**

- There should be more provision for Welsh first language in our area.
- Teach it better in existing schools so 4 year olds don't have to travel an hour a day to access it
- A lot of children in our area attend nurseries and pre-school education where they learn Welsh, it would be nice to see

them have a local opportunity to be schooled in Welsh not having to travel 12 miles each way to school and back.

- I think we would be really lucky if the school was to become Welsh speaking there are no other rural schools that offer this and feel it will be a huge hit with people in the surrounding area especially Knighton, Presteigne etc.

**x) General comments not in support of Welsh-medium education**

- Welsh should not be used in any local schools - English is a universal language
- Concern about the impact on children. They have so much to learn and contend with as it is without any added pressure of listening to a teacher trying to teach you in a language that is not your first language. It would be a very hard and long process for the children. Learning the basics of Welsh in this part of Wales is sufficient enough.
- Making the school Welsh-medium will disrupt the pupils

**xi) Other options for providing access to Welsh-medium provision**

- Linking with Ysgol Trefonnen - could Llanfihangel Rhydithon become a satellite school?
- Why not strengthen links with Trefonnen instead, possibly providing transport for pupils wishing to attend the Welsh unit.
- Consider dual stream – provides choice

**xii) Other Comments**

- The high school decision needs to be made before looking at primary Welsh education as what provision is there in Llandrindod for high school education!
- What is the provision for secondary education in Welsh?

**Q10 Welsh-medium education is already available in the area at two dual stream schools in the Llandrindod catchment – Ysgol Trefonnen C. in W. Community Primary in Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader C. in W. School.**

**If your child/ren currently attend English-medium education, please provide an overview of the reasons why you did not choose for them to attend one of the existing Welsh-medium providers in the area.**

The comments received are summarised below:

**i) The location was not suitable**

- Location was an important factor when choosing a school
- Children should not have to move out of their community, attending a Welsh stream would have meant they would have had to do so
- We chose our children's school based on location – for parents living and working in Presteigne, Llandrindod and Rhayader are too far away to be realistic choices
- Living in Presteigne or Knighton may dissuade me from sending my children to Trefonnen or Rhayader due to the distance needing to be travelled there and back.
- It was too far for my children to travel to Ysgol y Bannau or Trefonnen (our 2 closest Welsh medium schools). My children would be isolated socially from their peers, living so far away.

**ii) No wish for Welsh-medium education**

- I did not wish for them to attend a Welsh-medium school
- I do not wish my children to be wasting valuable learning time on a language that is of no use to them now or in the future.
- Because we don't speak Welsh in this area. The question should be why would I want my child taught in Welsh

**iii) Other comments**

- As there is insufficient Welsh-medium provision at high school, then what is the point?
- The schools offering Welsh-medium provision are too big
- Chose a school which my school's friends / family were already attending
- Chose Dolau because of its wonderful atmosphere and educational standards – the language in which they were taught was less of a priority than the educational standards and their happiness at school
- Children already learn lots of Welsh in English-medium schools

**Q11 The Council has made a commitment to develop Welsh-medium provision across Powys and to introduce Welsh-medium**

education in areas where there is currently no provision, such as the Presteigne/Knighton area.

If you live in the Presteigne/Knighton area, do you think Dolau would be an appropriate location to provide Welsh-medium education to serve the Presteigne/Knighton area?

Response	No.	%
Yes	83	37.06%
No	33	14.73%
Don't know	30	13.39%
Not answered	78	34.82%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q12 Are there other locations in the Llandrindod / Presteigne / Knighton area where you think the Council should be looking to establish Welsh-medium provision? If so, please list them below.**

Response	No.	%
Yes	70	31.25%
No	32	14.29%
Don't know	2	0.89%
Not answered	120	53.57%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

54 respondents suggested alternative locations in the area, these were as follows:

Response	No.	%
Presteigne	10	18.53%
Knighton	8	14.81%
Dolau	7	12.96%
New Radnor	6	11.11%
Llandrindod Wells	6	11.11%
Llanbister	4	7.41%
Trefonnen	3	5.56%
Beguildy	3	5.56%
Rhayader	2	3.70%
Crossgates	1	1.85%
Glasbury	1	1.85%
Newbridge	1	1.85%
Teme Valley	1	1.85%
Whitton	1	1.85%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The written comments received are summarised below:



**i) Comments mentioning other locations in the Llandrindod/ Presteigne/ Knighton area suitable to establish Welsh-medium education**

- Dolau is too remote from Presteigne/Knighton. It could be one of multiple sites, but would be better if there were others nearer (in Presteigne or Knighton)
- If numbers show demand, then it should be a dual stream school in either Presteigne or Knighton.
- Build a new Welsh school in Presteigne and Knighton. Dolau is too far away.
- Knighton has a large campus and a fair size building, the council could look at running a Welsh and an English stream there for children in the area.
- Knighton as a dual stream, or Presteigne, Gladstry or New Radnor as Welsh medium provision would be a better option.
- Maybe consider a larger school with a larger catchment such as Knighton rather than Llanfihangel Rhydithon
- Creating a dual stream provision in Presteigne would be a good idea. Dolau may be a little too far away for some parents, and would discourage them from sending children there. This would result it under registration at Dolau.
- Llanbister could be both Welsh and English
- Beguildy would have been a good spot or Whitton but both of these schools are now closed

**ii) Comments in favour of Dolau being the best site for Welsh-medium education in the Llandrindod/Presteigne/Knighton area**

- Dolau has already established itself as a location of good education with community engagement - this ought to be utilised, built on and used as a springboard.
- Dolau would be a brilliant location for this as a central basis from Llandrindod Wells and Knighton/Presteigne. They already have the Ti a Fi and Cylch so would be a good transition for younger pupils to begin learning Welsh.
- Dolau would be perfect as long as there is a bus
- Dolau is very central for the area, and an ideal site.
- We are so close to the border which makes Dolau a good place to start

**Q13 Do you have any other comments about Welsh-medium provision in the Llandrindod / Presteigne / Knighton area or about establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau?**

The comments received are summarised below:

**i) Comments generally in support of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau**

- It's a great idea, the Welsh language is needed in so many jobs. Dolau would be the perfect site with Cylch Meithrin and a Ti a Fi already in place
- Llanfihangel Rhydithon already operates a Cylch Meithrin so preschool links are already in existence
- There is no Welsh-medium provision available in Presteigne or Knighton so it would be lovely to have Dolau, as a choice for this area.
- The establishment of a rural Welsh-medium school would provide a new dynamic in mid Wales, an option which is currently unavailable and is one that I believe would be tempting to many prospective parents
- It would be nice to have the choice of a Welsh rural primary school
- Dolau is the perfect opportunity for a rural based Welsh-medium school. Rural communities will always be more willing to send their children to a rural school than to an urban one.
- Welsh-medium in Dolau is a good idea, but there are problems in accessing post 11 and 16 Welsh medium provision, and transportation would need to be provided.
- We live in Dolau and my children have to travel to Trefonnen by bus daily, I wish there had been Welsh provision for them as here as it was important to me for them to go through Welsh-medium education after Cylch Meithrin.
- There is currently no Welsh-medium provision in the east Radnorshire area. Changing Dolau would help to achieve PCC's strategy of more Welsh learners. My child will start school in 2025 and I'd be happy to send them to Dolau to receive a Welsh education

**ii) Comments generally not in support of establishing Welsh-medium education at Dolau**

- There is already excellent provision in Llandrindod – why is this authority prepared to waste money even considering this?
- It's the most stupid idea I've ever heard from the Council regarding education. I'm all for learning Welsh but it's so silly to think those of us who live in this area would want our children taught as Welsh first language. How would we help with homework?

- There is enough Welsh-medium provision and this engagement exercise is a sham to keep Dolau school open, when it should be closed to save money.
- What is the need? Minuscule? We are so anglicised this end of Powys that it is completely unreasonable to expect a Welsh school. It's only been done to save the school which are the wrong reasons.
- I don't see the merit of having an all Welsh medium school in Dolau where numbers are so low, especially when there is provision in 2 neighbouring towns.

**iii) Concern about the impact on other schools**

- If you open this in Dolau, what are you planning for our school in Llandrindod? Will you then close our school? That would be terrible.
- Establishing Welsh-medium education in Dolau is likely to impact on the provision in Llandrindod and Rhayader. If the council is to provide Welsh-medium provision in the Presteigne / Knighton area, provision should be in one of those towns to minimise travel

**iv) Dolau is the wrong location**

- Dolau is absolutely the wrong place. Either keep it open as a small English school or close it. Do not turn it into a Welsh medium school when there are other location with higher pupil numbers and higher demand.
- Dolau is middle of nowhere needs to be in a larger town

**v) Concern that there isn't demand for Welsh-medium education in Dolau**

- If Dolau parents wanted Welsh-medium education for their children, they would already attend in Trefonnen. What they want is a school in their village, but this surely cannot be financially viable. It would be better value for money to invest further in it
- We won't know the true demand for Welsh until school is up and running and has been for several years.

**vi) Difficulty recruiting Welsh-medium staff**

- Recruitment of Welsh-medium staff is difficult, as such the establishment of a Welsh-medium school in an area already difficult to recruit and retain teachers, more so for Welsh

language teachers will only thin the pool instead of providing good quality.

- The pool of Welsh medium teachers and staff is limited.

**vii) Comments about lack of secondary Welsh-medium education in the area**

- Have Powys considered which high school Welsh-medium primary pupils would move on to attend in the Presteigne/Knighton area? PCC should be transforming our secondary schools not our primary schools.
- Pupils need to continue in WM and not change at secondary
- If children living in Knighton travelled to Dolau each day, which might take an hour to get to and home from school, where do you propose they transfer to at 11 – Builth?

**viii) Other comments**

- Close Dolau school as it is just a drain on the education budget. Invest the money on thriving 'excellent' schools in the area.
- How much support will be given to parents as we know very little Welsh!
- There is very good provision at Trefonnen in Llandrindod. The school has just had an excellent Estyn inspection. Surely it would save money to send a child from those areas by bus to Llandrindod rather than trying to turn a school into a Welsh one?
- Current provision in Llandrindod is limited by it being a dual stream school – the stream and the Cylch is not sufficiently promoted. The reduction of the classes from 4 to 3 a few years ago has removed the chance of growth.
- Could there be a halfway house? More Welsh spoken at school all round? I was brought up in Canada and there are good systems with French and English.
- The current playgroup needs investigation as it is not Welsh

### 3. OTHER WRITTEN RESPONSES

4 other written responses were received. 3 of these made comments relating to the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon school in Dolau, but made no comments in relation to the viability of establishing Welsh-medium education in Dolau.

The points raised in the fourth response are as follows:

- Discussion is needed with nearby dual stream providers as key stakeholders in promoting Welsh-medium education
- The current engagement exercise will give some indication of the possible demand for Welsh-medium provision in Dolau, but is likely to be skewed by the depth of feeling there is about keeping Dolau open
- The dual stream provision in the area has helped to grow the numbers being educated in Welsh in the area
- If needed, additional Welsh-medium capacity could be provided by adding capacity at the existing providers
- Any Welsh-medium school at Dolau would continue to be a small school, and the cost per pupil would be close to the highest in the county.
- Any new Welsh-medium provision in Dolau might impact on Welsh-medium pupil numbers at Rhayader and Trefonnen, making it more difficult to keep up the growth in these schools
- Data suggests there is physical space in the Presteigne catchment to add a Welsh stream in one of the current schools, however this would incur additional costs in funding a small Welsh stream

## 4. CONCLUSION

The responses to the questionnaire suggest that should the Council establish Welsh-medium provision in the current Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building in the village of Dolau, there are parents who would wish their children to access this provision – the responses to Question 7 show that 98 of those that responded to the questionnaire (45.6%) would be interested in their children attending Welsh-medium provision in Dolau.

The questionnaire also asked respondents to give their view on the suitability of 2 options would result in establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau. Of the two, option 2 was considered by respondents to be the most suitable, with just over 141 respondents (63.51%) stating that they agree or strongly agree that this would be option would be a suitable way forward.

The questionnaire also asked respondents whether they thought Dolau would be an appropriate location to establish Welsh-medium provision to serve the Presteigne / Knighton areas. 83 respondents indicated that they thought it would be an appropriate location.

Whilst the quantitative data suggests that there would be support for any Welsh-medium provision established in Dolau, many written comments were also included in the responses received.

Some of the comments indicated support for the idea. These included the following:

- Dolau would be a suitable site for Welsh-medium provision as there is already a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi
- This would provide the option of a rural Welsh-medium school which is not currently available in the area

However, the written comments also include some concerns about the idea of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau. These include the following:

- The Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School building is not suitable
- Concern about staffing arrangements
- Concern about the cost of establishing this provision given the current financial climate
- Welsh-medium provision should be offered in a more central location e.g. larger towns
- Welsh-medium education is already available in the Llandrindod area at the Welsh-medium streams at Ysgol Trefonnen and Rhayader C. in W. School
- Concern that there would be insufficient demand for this provision in Dolau

## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE  
20 December 2022

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Pete Roberts  
Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

**REPORT TITLE:** Crickhowell Area Review

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The aim of this paper is to share information with Cabinet on the findings of the Crickhowell Area Review which has been carried out recently and the impact (if any) of the review on the decision of the previous Cabinet to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

1.2 The report is supported by the following appendices:

Appendix A – Crickhowell Area Review – Engagement Report  
Appendix B – Crickhowell Area Review – Options Appraisal

**2. Background**

2.1 On the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the previous Cabinet considered a comprehensive consultation report in respect of a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School and approved the closure of the school from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. That consultation report included a number of alternative proposals (other than closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School) from members of the community.

2.2 Furthermore, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the previous Cabinet considered a comprehensive Objection Report in respect of a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School and approved the closure of the school from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. Once again the report included a number of alternative proposals (other than closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School) from members of the community.

2.3 On the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the present Cabinet considered a further report in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School and agreed to delay implementation of the proposal to close the school for 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to commence an area review of the Crickhowell catchment.

- 2.4 At the time, the new Cabinet were aware that a judicial review process had been implemented with regard to the decision to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The judicial review process has now been concluded with 2 different High Court judges coming to the conclusion that it was unarguable that the school closure process was flawed, and as such the process was “entirely appropriate”. There has been no subsequent appeal to the Court of Appeal.
- 2.5 As instructed by the present Cabinet, officers have undertaken a review of schools within the Crickhowell catchment area. The Portfolio Holder for a Learning Powys met with the Governors and Local Members of/for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School on 26th September 2022 and clearly articulated that they should include in their responses to the Catchment review, any new proposals for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School or new information that might persuade the Cabinet to reconsider the implementation of the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
- 2.6 The review of the Crickhowell catchment has included the following:
- An engagement exercise to provide an opportunity for stakeholders in the Crickhowell area to let the Council know their views on the preferred way forward for the whole catchment – the findings are attached as Appendix A.
  - The subsequent development of an Options Appraisal Paper relating to the Crickhowell catchment – this is attached as Appendix B.
- 2.7 As there was no new information and/or proposals that were put forward for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School in the engagement responses, it is considered that the case for closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, as set out in the reports to the previous Cabinet dated the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, continue to be sound.
- 2.8 Therefore, in light of the absence of new proposals for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School in the engagement responses, it was considered that the appraisal of options would have to exclude consideration of the continuation of Llanbedr C. in W. School.

A summary of the two appendices is provided below.

i) **Crickhowell Area Review – Engagement Report**

2. 9 Between the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Council carried out an engagement exercise to understand the views of stakeholders in the Crickhowell catchment about the current educational provision in the area and the way forward for the delivery of education in the catchment.



- 2.10 An online questionnaire was developed which was available throughout the engagement period. Information about the questionnaire was circulated to all schools in the area to share with their school communities, and was also shared in the local press and on the Council's social media platforms.
- 2.11 In addition, face to face engagement events were held for staff and governors in the catchment.
- 2.12 A report has been produced which summarises the findings of the engagement exercise. This is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.13 228 responses were received to the online questionnaire, as well as 5 separate written responses.
- 2.14 The questionnaire asked respondents to outline strengths related to the current educational provision in the Crickhowell catchment area. The following is a summary of the responses received:
- The schools provide a good standard of education
  - There is a choice of religious and non-religious provision
  - Schools deliver education locally, which minimises travel time and means that pupils can walk / cycle to school
  - Post-16 provision at Crickhowell High School offers a wide range of subjects
  - The sizes of the schools are just right
  - There is good cluster working in the catchment
  - There are strong links between the schools and the community
  - There are town schools and rural schools
  - There is excellent transition to secondary school
- 2.15 The questionnaire also asked respondents to outline weaknesses related to the current provision in the Crickhowell catchment area. The following is a summary of the responses received:
- Insufficient funding is provided
  - The High School is over-subscribed
  - Many of the pupils at the high school are from out of the catchment area
  - Poor quality buildings
  - Class sizes are too big in some cases
  - There is no Welsh-medium provision in the catchment
  - Early years provision needs to be reviewed
  - Threat of closure / school reorganisation activity is causing uncertainty in the area
- 2.16 Respondents were asked to provide suggestions about the way forward for the catchment area. The following is a summary of the suggestions received:

- Retain the status quo
  - Federation options
  - Reduce the number of primary schools in the catchment
  - Multi-sited primary schools
  - Establish an all-age school
  - Enhanced cluster working / sharing resources
  - Review admissions arrangements
  - Provide more funding
  - Improve the buildings
- 2.17 Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that establishing an all-age school would be an appropriate way forward in the Crickhowell catchment. 20 respondents (8.8%) indicated that they agree or strongly agree that this would be an appropriate way forward, whilst 166 respondents (73.2%) indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree that this would be an appropriate way forward.
- 2.18 Respondents were also asked to what extent they agree that there is a need to introduce Welsh-medium provision in the Crickhowell catchment. 76 respondents (33.5%) indicated that they agree or strongly agree that there is a need, whilst 105 respondents (46.3%) indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree that there is need.
- 2.19 5 separate written responses were also received. 4 of these were from schools in the catchment. The points included in each are summarised in the Engagement Report which is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.20 The Engagement Report also outlines the feedback received during the engagement sessions with staff and governors in the catchment which were held during the engagement period.
- 2.21 Staff and governors were asked to complete a SWOT assessment of the current provision in the area. Combined SWOTs which list the responses received in the session with staff and the session with governors are included in the Engagement Report.
- 2.22 Staff and governors were also asked to provide suggestions about the way forward for the catchment area. The following is summary of the suggestions received:
- Retain the status quo
  - Improve collaboration across the catchment e.g. sharing of key roles such as business manager, caretaker, ALN
  - Invest in buildings
  - Distribute funding more evenly across the county
  - Establish 3-19 provision
  - Establish a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School
  - Explore opportunities to introduce a Welsh-medium stream

## ii) **Crickhowell Area Review – Options Appraisal**

2.23 The options appraisal document includes the following:

- The Strategic Context
- An overview of current provision in the Crickhowell catchment
- A SWOT assessment of the current provision in the Crickhowell catchment
- Identification of possible future options for the Crickhowell catchment
- An assessment of the options against Critical Success Factors
- A SWOT assessment of shortlisted options
- A financial evaluation of shortlisted options

2.25 The report identified 9 possible options for the catchment based on a number of assumptions. These options were assessed against a number of Critical Success Factors, and three options were shortlisted for further consideration. The shortlisted options are as follows:

<b>Option 1</b>	Status Quo
<b>Option 4a</b>	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the two existing sites.
<b>Option 4b</b>	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school on the three existing sites.

2.26 Further assessment was carried out of these options. This included a SWOT assessment and financial evaluation.

2.27 Whilst the SWOT assessment identified a number of Strengths / Opportunities associated with Option 4a and 4b, there are no revenue savings to these options.

2.28 Options 1, 4a and 4b have all been assessed for their impact on the ongoing formula funding and other revenue funding requirements for the schools. As the proposals do not involve a reduction in the number of sites used to deliver education in the Crickhowell catchment, there would be no change to the ongoing revenue funding requirements for any of the options.

2.29 Merging the schools would involve the existing schools closing and being re-opened. There would be a range of one-off costs related to this process including ICT implications, providing cover for headteacher time required to establish the new school, new signage / branding, establishing a temporary governing body for the new school and so on. These are expected to amount to approximately £60,000.

- 2.30 In addition, any teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments for existing staff are usually protected for 3 years following such a process, costing £40,000 per year over the three years.
- 2.31 The Council would also be responsible for writing off any deficit / surplus budgets (current overall figure is £62,534 deficit based on March 2022 figures)
- 2.32 Therefore, the conclusion of the Option Appraisal Exercise is that the Status Quo (**i.e. all schools remain separate entities, with Llanbedr C. in W. School closed**) is the preferred way forward for the Crickhowell catchment at this point in time. The reason for this is due to the lack of revenue saving and additional costs associated with establishing a new all-age school in Crickhowell, given the current fiscal climate.

### **3. Advice**

- 3.1 Based on the findings of the options appraisal document and the engagement exercise carried out, the advice of officers is that the preferred way forward for the Crickhowell catchment is to retain primary provision in Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P School and Llangattock C.i.W Primary School, and to retain secondary provision in Crickhowell High School.
- 3.2 No new information came forward during the engagement exercise to suggest that the case for the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School was no longer valid. Therefore, the decision by the previous Cabinet to close Llanbedr C. in W. School should be implemented, meaning that Llanbedr C. in W. School will close on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- 3.3 During the engagement exercise, it became apparent that there is strong collaboration between schools in the Crickhowell catchment, and that there is scope to deepen the collaboration and to share resources to support all the schools. It is therefore advised that the schools further explore this in partnership with the Council.
- 3.4 It is also advised that Crickhowell High School and Crickhowell C.P. School consider the appointment of a shared Headteacher, as both schools currently have Acting Headteacher arrangements. This would enable the development of cross-phase collaboration, which would align with the benefits of the all-age model and would provide a basis for further consideration of the all-age model at a later date.
- 3.5 The current lack of Welsh-medium provision in the catchment is also acknowledged. This does not reflect the aspiration of the Council's WESP to provide access to Welsh-medium provision in each of the 13 localities. It is advised that further work is undertaken to consider

options to introduce Welsh-medium provision in the Crickhowell catchment.

#### 4. **Resource Implications**

4.1 The closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School would realise an estimated ongoing revenue saving of approximately £53,000 per annum. This is a net saving figure made up of £105,500 delegated schools formula funding saving plus estimated catering savings of £9,000 reduced by estimated additional transport costs of £43,700 and for prudence, an estimated loss of RSG of £17,800 should some pupils go to schools in other authority areas.

4.2 As set out in paragraph 2.28 above, as the proposals do not involve a reduction in the number of sites used to deliver education in the Crickhowell catchment, there would be no change to the ongoing revenue funding requirements for any of the options. However, merger would result in one-off costs estimated at approximately £60,000.

4.2 Current indicative formula funding 2023-24 to 2025-26:

	<b>Indicative Formula Funding 2023-24</b> £	<b>Indicative Formula Funding 2024-25</b> £	<b>Indicative Formula Funding 2025-26</b> £
Crickhowell High School	£4,210,912	£4,221,879	£4,215,245
Crickhowell C.P. School	£743,946	£741,911	£698,258
Llangynidr C.P. School	£456,198	£443,508	£414,047
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,411,056</b>	<b>£5,407,298</b>	<b>£5,327,550</b>

4.2 If the decision was made to proceed with either options 4a or 4b, which would involve merging the existing schools to create an all-age school, there would also be the cost implication to the Council of writing off the current schools' deficits/surpluses. Currently Crickhowell High school has a significant cumulative deficit that they are reducing over the future years while both Crickhowell C.P. and Llangynidr C.P. have significant surpluses but are forecasting that these will reduce over the future years. The table below sets out the cumulative positions as at 31 March 2022 which will be detrimentally impacted by the current challenging public finance environment. However, it is acknowledged that the schools are working hard to reduce any deficit and surpluses maybe impacted by the current fiscal crisis and the authority will work with all schools to minimise any deficit on closure if they were to close.

	<b>Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) as at 31 March 2022 (£)</b>
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	<b>(496,605)</b>

<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	259,156
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	174,914
<b>Total</b>	<b>(62,534)</b>

- 4.3 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation as the original decision to close Llanbedr C. in W. School would realise an ongoing revenue saving of £53,000 per annum. Additional costs would be incurred should merger be considered this would create an additional financial pressure on the Council's budget.
- 4.4 If agreed by Cabinet, Human Resources colleagues will work closely with the School Governors, management and staff to ensure that the appropriate employment processes are followed and that the staffing levels are retained at the most suitable level.

## **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows:

I have no comments with regards to the proposals arising out of the Catchment Review. However, Members of Cabinet should take into account the following matters when coming to a conclusion whether or not to implement the decision made by the former Cabinet to close Llanbedr CiW School.

The School Organisation Code provides that;

- 1) Proposals must normally be implemented as determined or approved (with or without modifications).
- 2) If a proposer is satisfied, after consultation with any affected governing body, either that implementation of proposals would be unreasonably difficult or that circumstances have so altered since the proposals were approved that their implementation would be inappropriate altogether, it may determine that the proposals should be abandoned.

The reference in the Code to implementation of proposals being unreasonable refers in essence to the implementation being impracticable and as such the Cabinet should implement the decision to close Llanbedr CiW School unless it is satisfied that "that circumstances have so altered since the proposals were approved that their implementation would be inappropriate altogether".

It is of course a matter for Cabinet to decide whether circumstances have so changed, and in coming to a decision on this issue they should take into account that:

- a) no further proposals were put forward as the engagement process
- b) a judicial review has failed and the court has found the school closure process to be appropriate
- c) it has recently become apparent that the Council's revenue budget is significantly under strain and will continue to do so in future years
- d) there are no significant increases in numbers at the school in future years.

## **6. Data Protection**

6.1 N/A

## **7. Comment from local member(s)**

7.1 To follow

## **8. Impact Assessment**

8.1 Impact assessments were considered by Cabinet at each stage of the process to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. These were updated at each stage to reflect the issues raised.

No further impact assessment is required at this stage as there is no new proposal.

## **9. Recommendation**

- To implement the decision made by the previous Cabinet to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 as circumstances have not altered since the decision of the former Cabinet on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, such that implementation would be "inappropriate altogether".
- To retain primary provision at Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and to retain secondary provision at Crickhowell High School.
- To support the Crickhowell catchment to deepen their collaboration as set out in their responses to the engagement exercise.
- To support Crickhowell High School and Crickhowell C.P. School to explore the option of appointing a shared headteacher which would provide a basis for further consideration of the all-age model at a later date.
- To undertake further work in the Crickhowell catchment, as outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, including discussions with

Mudiad Meithrin to explore the establishment of a Cylch Meithrin.  
This will also include discussions with neighbouring authorities.

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CABINET REPORT NEW TEMPLATE VERSION 3





# **Crickhowell Area Review**

## **Options Appraisal**

**November 2022**

### **Version control**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief Summary of Change</b>	<b>Author</b>
0.1	October 2022	Document created	RW
0.2	22/11/22	Draft for consideration by Transforming Education Programme Board	SA
0.3	07/12/22	Draft for Cabinet consideration	SA

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. The Strategic Context .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys .....	4
<b>3. The Case for Change .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Current provision in the Crickhowell catchment .....	6
3.2 SWOT assessment of current provision .....	10
<b>4. Review of the position in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5. Future Options for the Crickhowell catchment .....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.1 Possible Options.....	14
5.2 Assessment against Critical Success Factors.....	15
5.3 SWOT analysis of shortlisted options.....	18
5.4 Financial Evaluation .....	21
<b>6. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix A – Data .....</b>	<b>24</b>

# 1. Introduction

During 2021-22, the Council carried out the Statutory Process as outlined in the School Organisation Code on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School, a small English-medium primary school which is located in the village of Llanbedr in South Powys, from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the Council's Cabinet considered an Objection Report related to this proposal and agreed to proceed with closure of the school.

Following the Council elections held in May 2022, the Council's new Cabinet considered a further paper related to Llanbedr C. in W. School on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, when they agreed to delay implementation of the proposal by 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to commence an area review of the educational provision in the Crickhowell catchment.

The purpose of this paper is to review and explore the educational provision in the catchment, and to identify a preferred way forward for the catchment for the future.

## 2. The Strategic Context

### 2.1 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, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020.

The Strategy was updated and relaunched by the Council's new administration in July 2022. The Strategy is available on the Council's website at

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9344/Transforming-Education-Strategy>.

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 21<sup>st</sup> century Wales.***

The Guiding Principles are as follows:

- A world class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core
- Schools that are fully inclusive, with a culture of deep collaboration in order to improve learner outcomes and experience
- A broad choice and high quality of provision for 14 – 19 year old learners, that includes both academic and vocational provision, meeting the needs of all learners, communities and the Powys economy
- Welsh-medium provision that is accessible and provides a full curriculum in Welsh from Meithrin to age 19 and beyond Provision for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) that is accessible as near to home as is practicably possible, with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables every learner to meet their potential
- A digitally-rich schools sector that enables all learners and staff to enhance their teaching and learning experience
- Community-focused schools that are the central point for multi-agency services to support children, young people, families and the community
- Early years provision that is designed to meet the needs of all children, mindful of their particular circumstances, language requirements or any special or additional learning needs

- Financially and environmentally sustainable schools
- The highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development

The Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims which will underpin the Council's work to transform the education infrastructure over the coming years. One of these Strategic Aims sets out the Council's commitment to developing a network of all-age schools and reconfiguration and rationalisation of primary provision, as indicated by the Strategic Aim '*to improve learner entitlement and experience*'.

This is supported by the following Strategic Objectives:

- S.O.1.1      *Develop a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations*
- S.O.1.2      *Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision*

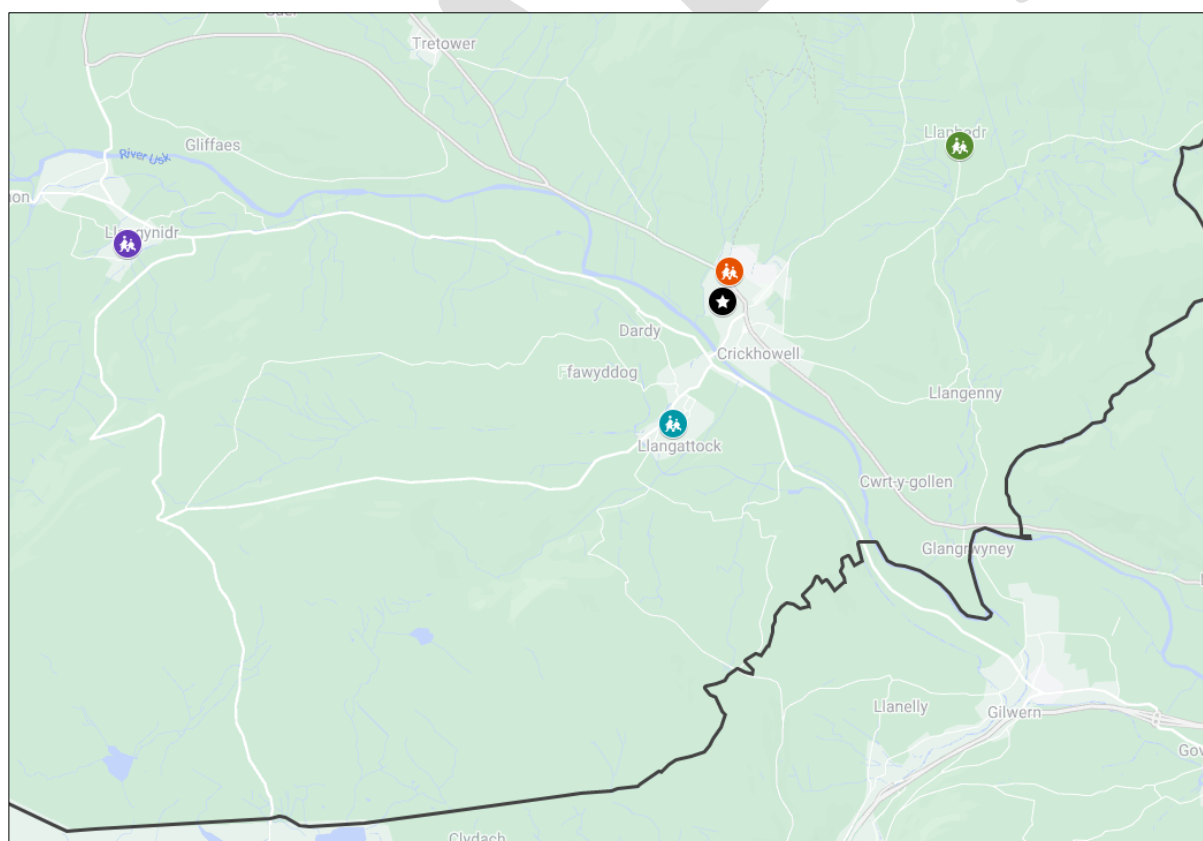
### 3. The Case for Change

#### 3.1 Current provision in the Crickhowell catchment

There are currently 5 schools in the Crickhowell catchment. Secondary provision is delivered at Crickhowell High School, whilst primary provision is delivered at 4 schools, Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School. During 2021, the Council consulted on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 and for pupils to attend alternative schools. On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the Council's Cabinet considered an Objection Report related to this proposal and agreed to proceed with closure of the school.

All 5 schools in the catchment are English-medium schools. There is no Welsh-medium provision in the catchment. The nearest provision for pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium provision is located out of county.

The 5 schools in the Crickhowell catchment are shown on the following map:



*Black – Crickhowell High School, Orange – Crickhowell C.P. School, Green – Llanbedr C. in W. School, Blue – Llangattock C. in W. School, Purple – Llangynidr C.P. School.*

The distances between the schools are as follows:

	<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	<b>Crickhowell High School</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	N/A	3.8 miles	1 mile	1.7 mile	0.2 miles
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	3.8 miles	N/A	3.6 miles	5.3 miles	3.8 miles
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	1 mile	3.7 miles	N/A	2.5 miles	0.8 miles
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	1.7 miles	5.3 miles	2.5 miles	N/A	1.8 miles
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	0.2 miles	3.8 miles	0.8 miles	1.8 miles	N/A

A summary of key data related to the 5 schools in the catchment is provided below. Further data is provided in Appendix A.

### **Pupil Numbers**

#### **i) Current pupil numbers<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>N1</b>	<b>N2</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total N-Yr6</b>	<b>Total R-Yr6</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	0	0	24	19	24	32	26	40	32	197	197
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	0	0	16	13	19	12	16	18	18	112	112
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	0	7	5	4	5	3	12	5	5	46	39
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	0	0	11	13	14	19	15	16	15	103	103

<sup>1</sup> Teacher Centre, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	149	153	145	158	156	99	87	947

### **Building Capacity and Condition**

#### **i) Capacity**

The following table provides information about the current capacities of school and the capacity:

	Capacity <sup>2</sup>	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	230	197 (85.7%)	33 (14.3%)
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	144	112 (77.8%)	32 (22.2%)
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	57	46 (80.7%)	11 (19.3%)
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	121	103 (85.1%)	18 (14.9%)
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	912	966 (105.9%)	-54 (-5.9%)

#### **ii) Building condition<sup>3</sup>**

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school. The assessments were as follows:

	Condition	Suitability	Sufficient	Backlog Maintenance <sup>4</sup>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£1,871,666

<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

<sup>3</sup> Transforming Education PowerBI Dashboard - 2022

<sup>4</sup> Backlog maintenance figures uplifted using CPI base rates on year of condition survey or base date of 2016.



<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	B Satisfactory	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£742,850
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	No	£237,753
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	B Satisfactory	A/B Good/Satisfactory	No	£182,114
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£2,394,024

### Financial information

#### i) Cost per pupil<sup>5</sup>

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	£742,832	£3,951.23	£27,415	£9,200
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	£473,373	£4,226.54	£56,511	£9,200
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	£246,374	£5,474.98	£18,168	£3,450
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	£468,936	£4,552.78	£41,663	£6,900
<b>Powys average (Primary)</b>	N/A	£4,656.50	N/A	N/A
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	£4,270,410	£4,439.10	£117,411	£48,300
<b>Powys average (Secondary)</b>	N/A	£5,436.94	N/A	N/A

<sup>5</sup> Section 52 Budget Statement, 2022/2023

## **Locations of pupils**

Based on PLASC 2022, travel assessments have been carried out for the pupils attending the schools<sup>6</sup>. These are listed below.

<b>School</b>	<b>No. of children living in catchment area</b>	<b>% of children living in catchment area who attend the school</b>	<b>% of pupils attending the school who live in the catchment area</b>	<b>% of pupils the school attending who live outside the catchment area</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	153	71%	59%	41%
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	142	64%	84%	16%
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	28	61%	40%	60%
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	81	73%	57%	43%
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	641	98%	65%	35%

## **3.2 SWOT assessment of current provision**

A SWOT assessment of the current provision in the catchment is provided below. This has been developed with input from staff and governors in the catchment at engagement sessions held on the 27<sup>th</sup> October, and the responses received to the engagement questionnaire which was issued in October 2022:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Standards of education are good and recognised by Estyn</li><li>- Leadership and management is regarded as excellent</li><li>- Community focussed schools provide services for the</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A lack of dedicated Welsh-medium provision in the catchment</li><li>- School buildings are a mixture of conditions, with the majority being poor</li></ul>

<sup>6</sup> The full data, including which schools are closest or chosen can be found on the Transforming Education PowerBI dataset.

<p>community such as the library, leisure centre etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision is provided at value for money</li> <li>- There is a culture of collaboration between all schools in the cluster</li> <li>- Cluster working between schools is good</li> <li>- Transition arrangements are strong</li> <li>- There is a range of opportunities at post-14 and post-16</li> <li>- Largest sixth form in Powys</li> <li>- The catchment attracts pupils from outside Powys</li> <li>- The current school sites are at the heart of each unique community</li> <li>- Pupils can walk and cycle to schools</li> <li>- The schools are located to allow education to be delivered locally</li> <li>- The size of schools is appropriate for level of learning and engagement by staff</li> <li>- School staff have a deep understanding of pupils and their families</li> <li>- Pupil numbers are relatively stable</li> <li>- Choice for parents is expanded through community and Church in Wales provision</li> <li>- Inclusion and well-being standards are good</li> <li>- There are extra-curricular/before and after school opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of funding compared to other schools in Powys</li> <li>- Out of county pupils are leading to a loss of places for Powys pupils</li> <li>- Class sizes at the secondary school are too big</li> <li>- Demographics mean that the cluster receives less in PDG funding</li> <li>- The physical buildings make realisation of the Curriculum for Wales difficult</li> <li>- Concerns within the local community about transformation</li> <li>- Lack of dedicated Church in Wales secondary provision</li> <li>- The benefits of cross-border working are not fully realised</li> <li>- Non-teacher led nursery provision is leading to an impact in skills for foundation phase pupils</li> </ul>
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing closer links with neighbouring schools</li> <li>- Sharing resources and expertise</li> <li>- Sharing of responsibilities within the Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>- Expansion of the community hub model across the cluster</li> <li>- Development of modern facilities / specialist facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change to catchment area may lead to a reduction in pupils</li> <li>- Reduction in size of secondary school would impact on funding and draw of pupils from outside of Powys</li> <li>- Reduction in pupils will lead to a reduction in funding</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced after and before school provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of Welsh speaking pupils to other local authorities</li> <li>- Loss of community engagement</li> <li>- Impact on travel arrangements and the environment</li> </ul>
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## **4. Review of the position in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the Council's Cabinet considered an Objection Report in respect of a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School and approved the closure of the school from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the new Cabinet considered a further report in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School and agreed to delay implementation of the proposal to close the school for 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to commence an area review of the Crickhowell catchment.

The original options appraisal and all other associated papers prepared in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School were revisited, and the latest data related to the school was also reviewed. There have been no significant changes since the earlier decisions were made, so the case for closure of the school remains valid.

For the purposes of the remainder of this paper, the assumption will be that Llanbedr C. in W. School will close on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, in accordance with the Cabinet decision made on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

## 5. Future Options for the Crickhowell catchment

### 5.1 Possible Options

The following section considers future options for the configuration of education provision in the Crickhowell catchment.

The options which have been identified are based on the following assumptions:

- Llanbedr C. in W. School will close from the end of August 2023, as previously agreed by Cabinet – the original options appraisal has made the case for the closure of Llanbedr
- The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes an Objective to create a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations. Identifying options which would lead to establishing an all-age school in the catchment is therefore an important consideration
- Whilst the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes a commitment to capital investment across the Powys schools estate, there is currently no capital funding available to support any developments in the Crickhowell catchment. So, the options considered are those that are not dependent on capital funding.
- Faith provision needs to be retained in the catchment.
- The options do not currently consider the category of any new school (i.e. community or C. in W.). Further consideration would need to be given to this aspect should any of the options be taken forward.
- The options do not currently consider the possibility of introducing Welsh-medium provision in the catchment. This will be considered separately.

The options identified are listed below:

Option	Description
1	<b>Status Quo</b>
2	<b>Federation options</b>
2a	Federate Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangynidr C.P. School to establish a primary federation
2b	Federate Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish an all-age federation

2c	Federate Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish an all-age federation
<b>3</b>	<b>Establish a new primary school</b>
3a	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangynidr C.P. School to establish a new primary school operating on the two existing sites
3b	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new primary school operating on the three existing sites
<b>4</b>	<b>Establish a new all-age school</b>
4a	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the two existing sites
4b	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school on the three existing sites
4c	Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the four existing sites

## 5.2 Assessment against Critical Success Factors

The options listed above have initially been scored against the following Critical Success Factors.

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li> <li>Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li> <li>Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032</li> </ul> </li> <li>The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme</li> </ul>

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

The options have been scored against the critical success factors using the following system:

- ✓ - meets the criteria
- ? – may meet the criteria
- X – does not meet the criteria

The following is a summary of the evaluation given for each option:

	1	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	4b	4c
Strategic fit and business needs	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Value for money	✓	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Potential achievability	✓	?	?	?	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Supply-side capacity and capability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Potential affordability	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	?
<b>Total ✓</b>	4	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	2
<b>Total x</b>	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	1
<b>Outcome</b>	Carry Forward	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Possible	Possible	Discount

Based on this initial assessment, the following options are identified as possible options, and so will be carried forward for further consideration, to include a SWOT assessment and financial evaluation:

**Option 4a** – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the two existing sites

**Option 4b** – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school on the three existing sites

**Option 1** (Status Quo) will also be carried forward for comparison.

The reasons why the other options are discounted are outlined in the following table:

Option	Reasons for discounting
<b>2a</b> – Federate Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangynidr C.P. School to establish a primary federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federating two primary schools does not align with the strategic aims and objectives in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to create a network of all-age schools in Powys.</li> </ul>
<b>2b</b> – Federate Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish an all-age federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federation does not align with the strategic aims and objectives in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to create a network of all-age schools in Powys.</li> </ul>
<b>2c</b> – Federate Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish an all-age federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federation does not align with the strategic aims and objectives in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to create a network of all-age schools in Powys.</li> </ul>
<b>3a</b> – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangynidr C.P. School to establish a new primary school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a new primary school does not align with the strategic aims and objectives in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to create a network of all-age schools in Powys.</li> </ul>

operating on the two existing sites	
<b>3b</b> – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new primary school operating on the three existing sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a new primary school does not align with the strategic aims and objectives in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys to create a network of all-age schools in Powys.</li> <li>• This option is likely to be difficult to achieve as it would potentially result in the loss of Church in Wales provision in the catchment.</li> </ul>
<b>4c</b> – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the four existing sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option is likely to be difficult to achieve. The new school would need to be either a Community school or a Church in Wales school, meaning that all provision in the catchment would be one category. Potentially loss of Church in Wales provision in the catchment would be difficult to achieve, and introducing Church in Wales provision across the whole catchment is also likely to be difficult to achieve.</li> </ul>

### 5.3 SWOT analysis of shortlisted options

SWOT assessments have been carried out of the possible options identified above and the status quo option, to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of each, and any opportunities or threats associated with them.

#### Option 1: Status Quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retention of primary and secondary provision in the Crickhowell catchment</li> <li>- No disruption to pupils, parents or staff</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- No requirement for a reorganisation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would not lead to the creation of an all-age school in the cluster</li> <li>- There is currently no permanent leadership arrangements in place at two schools</li> <li>- Would not lead to any financial efficiencies</li> <li>- Four separate schools, therefore there is no strategic overview of the provision of education in Crickhowell</li> <li>- Unlikely to attract capital investment in the future</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities for greater collaboration between the schools in the future</li> </ul>	

**Option 4a – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school operating on the two existing sites**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimal disruption for pupils and parents</li> <li>- Would not impact on the other primary schools in the catchment</li> <li>- Pupils currently attending the two schools would continue to attend school at the same location</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across all key stages</li> <li>- Would improve transition between each key stage</li> <li>- Would improve the ability to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils</li> <li>- Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc.</li> <li>- One governing body which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages</li> <li>- One leadership team which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents may be unfamiliar with the concept of an all-age school and may have concerns about the model</li> <li>- Other primary feeder schools may have concerns</li> <li>- Impact on staff as management of change process would need to take place to allocate posts in the new school</li> <li>- A statutory process would need to take place which could lead to uncertainty</li> <li>- Both current schools would lose their identity</li> <li>- Additional one off costs to the Council associated with establishing a new school</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to secure permanent leadership arrangements across the age range</li> <li>- Opportunity to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transition process may cause uncertainty for pupils, staff and parents</li> <li>- Parents may choose other schools if they don't want their children to attend an all-age school</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop resilient leadership and management arrangements</li> <li>- Opportunity to access capital investment in the future</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners</li> <li>- Opportunity to streamline policies, procedures and schemes of work'</li> <li>- Opportunity to share best practice between staff from Primary and Secondary sectors</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop a single culture and ethos</li> <li>- Opportunities for greater collaboration between all schools in the catchment in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability</li> <li>- Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes</li> </ul>
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**Option 4b – Merge Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell High School to establish a new all-age school on the three existing sites**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimal disruption for pupils and parents</li> <li>- Pupils currently attending the three schools would continue to attend school at the same location</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across all key stages</li> <li>- Would improve transition between each key stage</li> <li>- Would improve the ability to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils</li> <li>- Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents may be unfamiliar with the concept of an all-age school and may have concerns about the model</li> <li>- Other primary feeder schools may have concerns</li> <li>- Impact on staff as management of change process would need to take place to allocate posts in the new school</li> <li>- A statutory process would need to take place which could lead to uncertainty</li> <li>- The three current schools would lose their identity</li> <li>- Additional one off costs to the Council associated with establishing a new school</li> <li>- Pupils, staff and parents in Llangynidr might feel too detached</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One governing body which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages</li> <li>- One leadership team which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages</li> <li>- Would not impact on the other primary school in the catchment</li> </ul>	<p>from the rest of the school located in Crickhowell town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Likely to be a more complex process due to the inclusion of Llangynidr School which is located approximately 5 miles from Llangynidr</li> </ul>
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to secure permanent leadership arrangements across the age range</li> <li>- Opportunity to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment</li> <li>- Opportunity to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop resilient leadership and management arrangements</li> <li>- Opportunity to access capital investment in the future</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners</li> <li>- Opportunity to streamline policies, procedures and schemes of work</li> <li>- Opportunity to share best practice between staff from Primary and Secondary sectors</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop a single culture and ethos</li> <li>- Opportunities for greater collaboration between all schools in the catchment in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transition process may cause uncertainty for pupils, staff and parents</li> <li>- Parents may choose other schools if they don't want their children to attend an all-age school</li> <li>- Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability</li> <li>- Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Financial Evaluation

Current indicative formula funding 2023-24 to 2025-26:

	Indicative Formula Funding 2023-24 £	Indicative Formula Funding 2024-25 £	Indicative Formula Funding 2025-26 £
Crickhowell High School	£4,210,912	£4,221,879	£4,215,245
Crickhowell C.P. School	£743,946	£741,911	£698,258
Llangynidr C.P. School	£456,198	£443,508	£414,047
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,411,056</b>	<b>£5,407,298</b>	<b>£5,327,550</b>

Options 1, 4a and 4b have all been assessed for their impact on the ongoing formula funding and other revenue funding requirements for the schools. As the proposals do not involve a reduction in the number of sites used to deliver education in the Crickhowell catchment, there would be no change to the ongoing revenue funding requirements for any of the options.

Merging the schools would involve the existing schools closing and being re-opened. There will be a range of one-off costs related to this process including ICT implications, providing cover for headteacher time required to establish the new school, new signage / branding, establishing a temporary governing body for the new school and so on. These are expected to amount to approximately £60,000.

In addition, any teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments for existing staff are usually protected for 3 years following such a process, costing £40,000 per year over the three years.

If the decision was made to proceed with either options 4a or 4b, which would involve merging the existing schools to create an all-age school, there would also be the cost implication to the Council of writing off the current schools' deficits/surpluses. Currently Crickhowell High school has a significant cumulative deficit that they are reducing over the future years while both Crickhowell CP and Llangynidr CP have significant surpluses but are forecasting that these will reduce over the future years. The table below sets out the cumulative positions as at 31 March 2022 which will be detrimentally impacted by the current challenging public finance environment.

	Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) as at 31 March 2022 (£)
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	<b>(496,605)</b>
<b>Crickhowell CP School</b>	<b>259,156</b>
<b>Llangynidr CP School</b>	<b>174,914</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(62,534)</b>

## 6. Conclusion

The SWOT assessments of the two shortlisted options carried out in Section 4.3 above identify a number of advantages / opportunities in respect of both of these options, suggesting that either could be an appropriate way forward.

However, the Financial Evaluation indicates that there would be no revenue saving to the Council following the establishment of an all-age school on the existing sites, and also indicates that there are substantial one off costs which the Council would need to pay for should it proceed with establishing an all-age school. These include:

- set up costs for the new school (approx. £60k)
- protection for TLR payments for existing staff (approx. £40k-£50k per year over three years)
- writing off any deficit / surplus budgets (current overall figure is £62,534 deficit based on March 2022 figures)

Due to the additional costs associated with establishing a new school, and the fact that this would not realise a revenue saving for the Council, it is concluded that the Status Quo is the preferred way forward for the Crickhowell catchment.

This would mean that:

- Llanbedr C. in W. School would close in August 2023, as agreed by Cabinet in July 2022
- All other schools will remain as standalone schools, however greater collaboration between them would be encouraged

There is also a need to consider the introduction of Welsh-medium provision in the catchment, this will be considered separately at a later date.

# Appendix A – Data

## Pupil Numbers

### i) Current pupil numbers<sup>7</sup>

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr6	Total R-Yr6
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	0	0	24	19	24	32	26	40	32	197	197
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	0	0	16	13	19	12	16	18	18	112	112
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	0	7	5	4	5	3	12	5	5	46	39
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	0	0	11	13	14	19	15	16	15	103	103

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	149	153	145	158	156	99	87	947

### ii) Historical pupil numbers<sup>8</sup>

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	233	224	204	203	192	203	186
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	137	136	137	130	116	106	108
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	40	39	43	42	46	52	53
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	118	109	106	105	108	101	117
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	768	832	871	892	933	935	941

<sup>7</sup> Teacher Centre, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022

<sup>8</sup> PLASC



<b>Total</b>	<b>1296</b>	<b>1340</b>	<b>1361</b>	<b>1372</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>1397</b>	<b>1405</b>

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Live birth info)<sup>9</sup>**

	<b>Jan. 2023</b>	<b>Jan. 2024</b>	<b>Jan. 2025</b>	<b>Jan. 2026</b>	<b>Jan. 2027</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	186	183	166	160	147
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	105	103	96	92	94
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	47	52	54	46	53
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	105	100	94	89	81
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	960	969	979	978	966
<b>Total</b>	<b>1403</b>	<b>1407</b>	<b>1389</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>1341</b>

**Building Capacity and Condition**

iii) **Capacity**

The following table provides information about the current capacities of school and the capacity:

	<b>Capacity<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>Currently Filled</b>	<b>Surplus Capacity</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	230	197 (85.7%)	33 (14.3%)
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	144	112 (77.8%)	32 (22.2%)
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	57	46 (80.7%)	11 (19.3%)
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	121	103 (85.1%)	18 (14.9%)

<sup>9</sup> Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates (Reception to Year 6)

<sup>10</sup> Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	912	966 (105.9%)	-54 (-5.9%)

iv) **Building condition<sup>11</sup>**

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school. The assessments were as follows:

	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Suitability</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Backlog Maintenance<sup>12</sup></b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£1,871,666
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	B Satisfactory	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£742,850
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	No	£237,753
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	B Satisfactory	A/B Good/Satisfactory	No	£182,114
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes	£2,394,024

**Standards of Education**

i) **Estyn**

	<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>
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<sup>11</sup> Transforming Education PowerBI Dashboard - 2022

<sup>12</sup> Backlog maintenance figures uplifted using CPI base rates on year of condition survey or base date of 2016.

<b>Date of inspection</b>	Feb 2022	Sept 2015	Apr 2014	Feb 2015
<b>Standards</b>	Good	Good	Adequate	Good
<b>Wellbeing</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Learning experiences</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Teaching</b>	Good	Good	Adequate	Good
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Learning environment</b>	N/A	Good	Good	Good
<b>Leadership</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Improving quality</b>	N/A	Good	Good	Good
<b>Partnership working</b>	N/A	Good	Good	Good
<b>Resource management</b>	N/A	Good	Adequate	Good
<b>Next steps</b>	School to draw up action plan to address the recommendations from inspection.	N/A	School to draw up action plan to address the recommendations from inspection. Estyn to monitor progress.  Estyn monitoring visit in July 2015 removed school from Estyn monitoring.	School to draw up action plan to address the recommendations from inspection.

	<b>Crickhowell High School</b>
<b>Date of inspection</b>	April 2018
<b>Standards</b>	Good
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	Excellent
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	Good
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	Excellent
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Good
<b>Next steps</b>	<p>The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.</p> <p>Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to its work in support of pupil mental health and wellbeing, for dissemination on Estyn's website.</p>

### **Financial information**

#### **ii) Cost per pupil<sup>13</sup>**

	<b>Budget share per school</b>	<b>Budget share per pupil</b>	<b>Notional SEN budget</b>	<b>Non ISB funds devolved to the school</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	£742,832	£3,951.23	£27,415	£9,200
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	£473,373	£4,226.54	£56,511	£9,200
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	£246,374	£5,474.98	£18,168	£3,450
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	£468,936	£4,552.78	£41,663	£6,900

<sup>13</sup> Section 52 Budget Statement, 2022/2023

<b>Powys average (Primary)</b>	N/A	£4,656.50	N/A	N/A
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	£4,270,410	£4,439.10	£117,411	£48,300
<b>Powys average (Secondary)</b>	N/A	£5,436.94	N/A	N/A

iii) **Current budgetary position (as of 1st May submittal by full governing body)<sup>14</sup>**

	<b>2021/22 Actual Cumulative Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Projected Cumulative Outturn</b>	<b>2023/24 Projected Cumulative Outturn</b>	<b>2024/25 Projected Cumulative Outturn</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	£259,156	£196,755	£83,168	£27,021
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	£174,914	£118,562	£72,905	£20,178
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	£43,523	£33,696	Closed	Closed
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	£126,961	£87,045	£49,761	£1,800
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	(£496,605)	(£422,004)	(£338,525)	(£215,113)

**Equalities Information**

i) **Free School Meals<sup>15</sup>**

	<b>Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census Day</b>
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	5%
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	5%
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	12%

<sup>14</sup> Cabinet Report – 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

<sup>15</sup> PLASC 2022

<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	13%
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	8%

ii) **Pupils in care<sup>16</sup>**

	Number of pupils in care
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	0
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	0
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	0
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	0
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	<1%

iii) **SEN/ALN<sup>17</sup>**

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	11.3%	4.3%	0.0%
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	6.4%	5.5%	3.6%
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	18.8%	16.7%	2.1%
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	14.9%	2.6%	1.8%
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	9.1%	7.4%	0.8%

**Locations of pupils**

Based on PLASC 2022, travel assessments have been carried out for the pupils attending the schools<sup>18</sup>. These are listed below.

<sup>16</sup> PLASC 2022

<sup>17</sup> PLASC 2022

<sup>18</sup> The full data, including which schools are closest or chosen can be found on the Transforming Education PowerBI dataset.

School	No. of children living in catchment area	% of children living in catchment area who attend the school	% of pupils attending the school who live in the catchment area	% of pupils the school attending who live outside the catchment area
<b>Crickhowell C.P. School</b>	153	71%	59%	41%
<b>Llangynidr C.P. School</b>	142	64%	84%	16%
<b>Llanbedr C. in W. School</b>	28	61%	40%	60%
<b>Llangattock C. in W. School</b>	81	73%	57%	43%
<b>Crickhowell High School</b>	641	98%	65%	35%

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# **Crickhowell Area Review**

## **Engagement Report**

**November 2022**

# Contents

<b>1. Summary of the Engagement .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 The engagement period.....	3
1.2 Responses received .....	3
<b>2. Responses to the Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Other written responses .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>4. Engagement with staff and governors .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>5. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>37</b>

# **1. Summary of the Engagement**

## **1.1 The engagement period**

The Council has been reviewing the Crickhowell catchment to identify a preferred way forward for the delivery of education in the catchment in the future. As part of this, an engagement exercise was carried out between the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022, to give the opportunity for stakeholders within the catchment to contribute to this work.

As part of the engagement exercise, an online questionnaire was issued, which was available on the Council's engagement website throughout the engagement period.

Alongside the questionnaire, in-person sessions were held for staff and governors within the cluster. A total of 37 staff attended the session for staff, and 21 governors attended the session for governors.

## **1.2 Responses received**

A total of 233 responses were received. 228 of these were responses to the questionnaire. 5 additional written responses were received.

## 2. Responses to the Questionnaire

The following section summarises the feedback received in the response forms which were completed.

### Part 1 – About you

#### 1. Please indicate how you are responding to this questionnaire:

Response	No.	% of responses to this question	% of total responses to questionnaire
Parent, carer or guardian	142	53.8%	62.3%
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	12	4.5%	5.3%
Pupil	3	1.1%	1.3%
Governor	19	7.2%	8.3%
Member of staff	30	11.4%	13.2%
Member of the community	50	18.9%	21.9%
Other	8	3.0%	3.5%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 2. Please indicate which school(s) you are associated with:

Response	No.	% of responses to this question	% of total responses to questionnaire
Crickhowell C.P. School	55	18.3%	24.1%
Llangynidr C.P. School	40	13.3%	17.5%
Llangattock C. in W. School	33	11.0%	14.5%
Llanbedr C. in W. School	39	13.0%	17.1%
Crickhowell High School	110	36.7%	48.2%
No association	11	3.7%	4.8%
Other	12	4.0%	5.3%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 3. Please provide your postcode:

Response	No.	%
Crickhowell	155	68.0%
Brecon	37	16.2%
Vale of Grwynwy/Abergavenny	24	10.5%
Abertillery	4	1.8%
Ebbw Vale	3	1.3%
Cardiff West	1	0.4%
Merthyr Tydfil	1	0.4%
Blackwood	1	0.4%

Hay on Wye	1	0.4%
Ponypool	1	0.4%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 3. How old are you?

Response	No.	%
Under 16	1	0.4%
16-24	6	2.6%
25-34	13	5.7%
35-44	81	35.5%
45-54	70	30.7%
55-64	23	10.1%
65-74	13	5.7%
75-84	3	1.3%
85+	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	14	6.1%
Not answered	4	1.8%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 4. What is your gender?

Response	No.	%
Male	49	21.5%
Female	158	69.3%
Transgender	0	0.0%
Non-binary	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	14	6.1%
Not answered	7	3.1%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 5. Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?

Response	No.	%
Yes	62	27.2%
No	119	52.2%
Prefer not to say	43	18.9%
Not answered	4	1.8%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 6. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to free school meals?

Response	No.	%
Yes	8	3.5%
No	149	65.4%
Not applicable	47	20.6%

Prefer not to say	16	7.0%
Not answered	8	3.5%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**7. If you have school-aged children, do they have additional learning needs?**

Response	No.	%
Yes	22	9.6%
No	130	57.0%
Not applicable	45	19.7%
Prefer not to say	21	9.2%
Not answered	10	4.4%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**8. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?**

Response	No.	%
Yes	11	4.8%
No	187	82.0%
Prefer not to say	21	9.2%
Not answered	9	3.9%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**9. What is your ethnic group?**

Response	No.	%
White	193	84.6%
Asian	1	0.4%
Black, African or Caribbean	0	0.0%
Gypsy/Traveller	1	0.4%
Mixed	1	0.4%
Other	2	0.9%
Prefer not to say	25	11.0%
Not answered	5	2.2%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Part 2 - Area review of education in the Crickhowell catchment**

**Your view on the current provision**

- 4. Based on the data provided and your own local knowledge of the Crickhowell catchment, please outline up to 5 strengths with the current educational provision in the Crickhowell catchment area.**

199 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

**i) Comments about the current provision**

- All schools provide a good all-round standard of education, are supported by their communities, and provide access to their facilities to the community.
- The schools in the Crickhowell catchment provide a good education to the children in the communities in which they are based.
- Estyn rates each of the schools as being at least good. This demonstrates that the schools provide a very good standard of education which is more than can be said for neighbouring clusters both within Powys and across the borders.
- Schools in the catchment have been pioneer schools for the new curriculum and are ahead of expectations for implementation.
- Progressive and forward thinking regarding the national curriculum
- The High School is very strong academically at GCSE and A Level when compared to other schools in Wales and the UK and does well on added value measures.
- Crickhowell High School offer above and beyond education which is excellent.
- Crickhowell High School has a good reputation for providing an excellent education
- Standards of education is very good in Crickhowell High School - best in the county.
- The secondary school performs very well which is a credit to Crickhowell
- Well-being at our local school, Llanbedr CIW is extremely high. The children are like a large family, and the staff genuinely know each individual, therefore offering an extremely effective support network.
- The smaller primaries are noted for their excellence in terms of pupil wellbeing especially with the after effects of the Covid pandemic. A lot of pupils join the smaller primaries from the larger ones for this very reason.

**ii) Comments about religious educational provision**

- There is a choice of religious and non-religious provision in the catchment
- The cluster includes faith schools and encourages all religions and cultural awareness, especially in Llanbedr School with its unrivalled strong community and church links.
- The school provide parents with a good balance of parental choice i.e. CiW/non-CiW

- Llanbedr & Llangattock Schools benefit from being part of the Church family, rooted in village / rural Communities.

**iii) Comments about the location of the schools near to pupils' homes**

- Schools delivering education locally, meaning less travelling time, opportunity to walk to school, less traffic and smaller carbon footprint
- Short journeys to school with many children able to walk or cycle
- The school locations are accessible to all and serve different parts of a close-knit community.
- Provides for the local communities of Powys including Bwlch.
- Most pupils can walk to school with some having only a short bus ride to school which is obviously environmentally much better for our communities and is well managed. This makes the school day length reasonable with no pupils having to travel long journeys before or after school leaving more time at home with their families and for their leisure activities.

**iv) Comments about Post-16 education at Crickhowell High School**

- Crickhowell High has a large sixth form, which allows offering of a variety of different subjects
- The size of the High School means it provides a viable sixth form, a strong sport and extracurricular offering all offered at the lowest funding per student in Powys.
- Larger range of A-levels [on offer] compared to Gwernyfed High and Brecon High
- Crickhowell High School supports strong and effective 6th form which keeps young people in the community.
- CHS seems to perform well in Maths at AS and A Level and with Further Maths and seems to have good teaching in French.
- Crickhowell High School has the largest Sixth Form in Powys and compared to other counties too – this is very positive.

**v) Comments about the size of the schools**

- The primary school sizes are just right. Many parents do not want their children attending a super school.
- Smaller pupil numbers mean there can be greater focus on children's needs
- Small schools allow and encourage children to take part in sporting activities
- The size of school means that children are all known as individuals- no one slips through the gap.



- A distinct advantage to the children is the class sizes. Smaller class sizes encourage closer working relationships between staff and pupils. This creates the ability to balance the learning between those who need additional help to those who find school less of a struggle.
- Most of the children and parents in Crickhowell primary know one another so there is a very safe feeling.
- In Llanbedr the whole of KS2 take part in cluster and Urdd events.

**vi) Comments about the school buildings / outdoor spaces**

- The buildings, although poor are serviceable and could easily be expanded or improved (although would cost a lot of money).
- They each have wonderful grounds, very important for outdoor learning and enrichment.
- It's irrelevant that the secondary school building is in a poor condition when the provision is superb.
- Good building condition of Llangattock and Llangynidr schools

**vii) Comments about cluster working**

- All the schools share close ties through educational, social and cultural activities
- The catchment is starting to work together on many support activities, Professional Development of staff, access to the High schools sport facilities and the Public Library.
- Wellbeing and inclusion for all pupils is shared across the catchment.
- There is a sharing of specialisms and skills within the strong teaching of the cluster staff, especially at Llanbedr with its early implementation of the new curriculum.
- Teachers can work within a supportive "cluster" model of mutual support and resource sharing
- All schools work very closely together with excellent relationships and transition.
- Well established good cluster working/partnership/transition
- The cluster already works collaboratively on a number of projects and is developing how to better share resources and expertise within the structure. If anything, the cluster should be hailed as an example of good practice.
- The cluster are geographically quite close together, which allows great opportunities for collaboration.

**viii) Comments about links between the schools and the community**

- Small schools are able to work with the local business community in an innovative way
- The schools are embedded in the community

- The schools keep the community thriving with a small shop, social events at pubs and village halls.
- Central to community, part of the community with excellent community links.
- Each school well serves its local community, establishing links within it and growing those links as individual schools with a cluster based approach, provide an environmentally stable approach
- Opportunity for children to play an active part in their own community, with schools providing strong links to residents, environment, church and concerns. This relationship is mutually beneficial to the children and the people that live in the surrounding area.
- Local schools keeping local communities alive and enabling pupils to be educated within their own community
- The schools enjoy close links with their local Communities
- Children are able to attend a school near to their home which helps to grow the smaller communities
- Crickhowell Primary School serves the community and enables families to live in town.
- Llanbedr often do litter picks, community harvest festivals, fetes, coffee mornings, village scarecrow competitions, entries for classes at the Royal Welsh etc
- The High School gives depth and richness to Crickhowell as a broader community - cultural life, volunteering, supporting local retail.

**ix) Comments about the rural nature of the schools / the rural area**

- Rural setting means easy access to building environmental knowledge first hand.
- Smaller schools have excellent provision for rural families.
- Being a small school allows for the differentiation between town and rural farming schools
- Small schools are vital in rural communities and allow children to flourish.
- Our rural schools support rural life and communities. In a rural county, the school is the hub and lifeblood of many villages and towns.
- Smaller schools outside of the towns cater to the needs of the many rural villages that make up this catchment and provide a place of support and cohesion to Powys residents that live in more isolated areas.
- The schools meets the needs of the more rural communities in the Vale of Grwyney and Llangynidr as well as the more urban setting in and around Crickhowell.

**x) Comments about transition to secondary school**

- There is a feeling of progression through primary school with an exciting element regarding the move to High school - I think it is good for them to move to a different building and experience something new, it allows them some additional independence.
- Excellent transition to secondary education means that pupils feels supported as their education moves on to the next level with the caring support of teachers that work closely together.

**5. Based on the data provided and your own local knowledge of the Crickhowell catchment, please outline up to 5 weaknesses with the current educational provision in the Crickhowell catchment area:**

128 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

**i) Comments about funding**

- Not enough funding per pupil which means a poorer quality of education.
- Low levels of funding leading to overworked teachers
- Schools have almost no budget for extra things for the school or children and have to do their own fundraising
- We need more funding in order to provide better facilities
- Funding per pupil is low, as the area is considered well off, though many parents with lesser means find ways to get their children into these schools
- Budget share per pupil has always been unfair in the catchment as the calculation benefits city not country schools.
- Distinct lack of funding based on perceived belief that area is affluent and pupils need less funding, giving less educational opportunities to students compared to other areas in Powys
- Not enough funding given to the schools by county. Report shows this. How can some be below the average?
- Unfair budget share per pupil. No equality of education for pupils in Powys.
- Lack of funding for example parents having to pay for swimming classes.
- Premises costs have been allowed to spiral out of control
- CHS gets a very low budget share and may be partially responsible for why CHS is not performing as well as it should given the catchment it has.
- Crickhowell High School suffer from the significant variation in funding described in the transformation document. Our students are disadvantaged because of this variation as compared to other students educated in the county.
- Crickhowell High School is hugely underfunded and not supported by Powys CC in the same way that other secondary schools are across Powys

- There should be fewer primary schools so as to increase funding provision for Crickhowell High School
- There are too many primary schools in the area, this is proving to be costly

**ii) Comments about surplus / oversubscribed places / pan-Powys catchment area**

- The High School is over subscribed.
- High School has taken too many pupils out of catchment area. The school was only built for 600 children.
- High needs to stop accepting out of county pupils and concentrate on its own.
- Given that 33% of pupils from Crickhowell High School reside out of Powys I find this unacceptable. My view is that as Powys residents they should have priority access to a Powys High School over pupils from neighbouring local authorities.
- Crickhowell High has always taken a large number of students that are not Powys residents
- People not in catchment area and "buying" seats on the school buses are making the traffic in the villages very busy.

**iii) Comments about school buildings**

- Poor quality buildings
- Council have not maintained the fabric of the buildings or infrastructure in an organised or timely fashion. Repairs have been delayed and postponed causing more decay and decline in condition.
- The state of the buildings is woefully inadequate, especially Crickhowell High School. After attending a recent open evening, I was shocked to see the bad state of repair of the fabric of the building.
- CHS infrastructure is poor, no library, study areas, sixth form centre, ability to eat in a canteen.
- The high school is oversubscribed meaning that buildings become overused, deteriorate quicker and become unsuitable.
- Building work for Crickhowell high school has been delayed in the past meaning a lack of space for the pupils.
- Crickhowell High School is massively overcrowded, and the building is in dire need of repair & expansion.
- Kids can't get lunch as huge queues.
- Infrastructure for the High School and Crickhowell Primary below par, and buildings need renewal.
- Crickhowell CP School building needs updating and modernising

**iv) Comments about class sizes**

- Class sizes are very big.
- Class sizes too big and not enough support to enhance learning of pupils with ALN or the more able and talented.
- Large class sizes in the high school – more staff and resources are required.

**v) Comments about lack of Welsh provision / support**

- There is no Welsh medium Provision in the catchment. Families moving their children out of the area will have a detrimental effect to the whole town and community.
- There is a lack of Welsh medium provision - only one of the schools has a robust programme within its current curriculum.
- Lack of Welsh medium provision or at least an English medium school with a strong emphasis on Welsh language and culture.
- Welsh needs to be embedded in the system better. Having moved to Powys from another local education authority, it feels to be hugely behind in efforts to improve learning, use and access to Welsh.
- Welsh language is not supported enough - though it should be understood that a lot of parents are not in favour of Welsh
- There is a Welsh Medium primary school in Abergavenny and many of these students come to Crickhowell for secondary provision. There is very limited secondary Welsh Provision in the area.
- The lack of Welsh Language Secondary provision in the area is appalling - I had to send my son 15 miles across a mountain and 2 county boundaries to get secondary Welsh Language provision in a school in special measures.

**vi) Comments about early years provision**

- Inflexible early years (3+ provision) should be reviewed. Poor hours offered, meaning reduced uptake into school linked nursery settings at a key point when parents deciding where to send children to school. It would probably improve numbers at local schools if nursery provision was easier for parents to use / access and provided longer hours. They provide a brilliant feeder 'class' into primary school.
- Hard to get grants for the nursery as not flying start area

**vii) Comments about reorganisation proposals in the area**

- Ongoing threat of school closure provides an uncertain background to young children's learning and development.
- Rumours of changes disrupt the generally positive attitude of the schools.
- We are being constantly threatened by poorly thought out, financially driven plans, that don't consider wider impacts.

- There is a reluctance for other schools in the cluster to support each other and look out for each other as they are all feeling under threat of closure
- Concern about several consultations running side by side.
- The parents, staff and children at Llanbedr are under the constant stress of their school closing due to Powys policy.
- There has been much uncertainty over the fate of Llanbedr which is not fair for pupils, staff and the local area
- Concern about allowing the smallest school to stay open despite the cost
- The recent consultation regarding all through schools has not helped the stability of the cluster and the cluster do not agree that it is a viable model for Crickhowell.

**viii) Other comments**

- Schools are treated as if they are mid Wales, but we are right on the boundary to the valley's regions - we are not recognised as being different, yet similar to both
- Council appears to have a severe dislike and are far less supportive to Crickhowell Catchment compared to other areas.
- Concerns regarding potential plans to adjust the catchment area map to not include Bwlch area.
- Economic weakness. The county cannot sustain such a financial loss. Close Llanbedr and annual review other primary sites.

**6. Please provide any other comments you have about the current provision in the Crickhowell catchment**

128 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

**i) Positive comments about provision in the catchment**

- All schools within the current cluster provides a good, solid education to local children and, more importantly, provides parental choice as to the style of education their child(ren) receive. This is in stark contrast to many other parts of the County and across border. It is not a great look for PCC to be considering closing very good primary schools. The finger should be pointed at many different parts of Powys and this cluster should be held up as an example of good practice.
- A superb provision, a fantastic ethos and working relationship between schools that play such an active role in the community, long may it continue.
- A cluster where there is effective collaboration across the whole cluster where standards are high.

- I think the current provision is excellent - research has shown that smaller schools are safer and result in higher academic achievement and better teaching conditions.
- Crickhowell High School is oversubscribed because it is amazing as it is. It is highly appreciated and sought after by many. The quality and standard of education at the school is like nowhere else in the area.

**ii) Support for retaining the status quo**

- The area benefits from having schools in every village. It helps to keep villages alive and they are central to the community.
- The existing provision suits the nature of the wider community.
- It's vital to maintain secondary in the heart of Crickhowell for local students.
- Notwithstanding financial pressures, I believe any significant change to current arrangements could inflict hidden damage on the wider community and, most importantly, the children themselves.
- It would be a real shame to change the current situation- there haven't been great results from 'through' schools

**iii) Comments about admissions / transport consultation**

- Bwlch village has always been within Crickhowell High School catchment and is closer to Crickhowell High School than any other school. Keeping Bwlch within the catchment is fair, especially as people have moved to Bwlch with the understanding Bwlch is in the Crickhowell high school catchment.
- Bwlch provides numbers to Llangynidr to maintain them and keep what is a clear selling point and community hub for the village.
- Bwlch is a ten min drive to Crickhowell high School and there is a natural transition between primary and secondary education, promoting friendships and community networking for outside of school activities that starts at primary level.
- I wish Bwlch to remain either as a dual catchment (due to some children attending Llangynidr) but if that is not possible Bwlch shouldn't be considered as a catchment school for an already over-subscribed comprehensive in Crickhowell

**iv) Other comments**

- The primary provision is far too generous in the catchment. I would make one all singing and dancing primary hub facility, with opportunity for good transference process. As technology develops the need for so many sites will become a thorny question for the authority. The primary school ratings by Estyn are good but building facilities are poor except for Llangattock so consolidate.

- Breakfast clubs and after school clubs are vital for working parents. If schools don't have both clubs available they might lose out on future pupils, especially from families moving from bigger cities outside the county, eg Bristol or Cardiff, who will opt to move near a school that does have them. It would be great for Powys education authority to support after school clubs.

### **Your view on the future provision**

- 7. The Council needs to review its school infrastructure to ensure that it provides value for money and will provide the best possible opportunities for Powys learners.**

**Please outline your ideas and suggestions about the way forward for the Crickhowell catchment area, which will lead to improving the educational provision in the area in the future:**

176 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

#### **i) Support for retaining the status quo**

- All schools staying open, continuing to serve the local communities.
- Don't mess with what's not broken.
- Education provision is already good, why change it?
- Educational provision within the catchment area is already good and parental choice is good allowing parents to determine where the best provision for their child is. Reducing choice and closing schools will be a detrimental step.
- It doesn't need to be altered; it is working well as it is
- Keep all of our schools open, well maintained and invest in our children and their future by improving what we have not by destroying it.
- Keep the schools separate.

#### **ii) Options relating to federation**

- A federation supporting the rural nature of our community and strengthening the education of all the schools in the catchment.
- Llangattock and Crickhowell primaries could successfully be federated, but to include Llanbedr and Llangynidr would not be feasible or beneficial.

#### **iii) Comments about the number of primaries in the catchment**

- Primary schools to be looked at – to see if all are needed
- Close inefficient schools. Keep secondary provision as is.



- Close one of the smaller primary schools makes sense to address the capacity issue, maintaining schools in their community is important rather than collapsing all schools into a super school in Crickhowell.
- Close small primary schools to allow funding to increase in larger schools.
- Close small schools and redirect and invest the money in the catchment, not on other areas of the council or other school catchments.
- Closing down small, undersubscribed schools to save money
- Close expensive, inefficient, small primary schools to help fund a new high school.
- Close Llanbedr school
- No one wants to consider the closure of their own local school, but I think decision makers have made the wrong decision by giving a stay of closure at Llanbedr.
- For efficiency, maybe look to merge 4 primaries in to 3 or look at more shared resources
- Combine Crickhowell and Llangattock primary schools since they are in close proximity
- Amalgamate all the primaries into one big new build school.

#### **iv) Suggestions relating to an all-age model**

- Create a school which covers all ages.
- Provide one through school while continuing provision in outlying areas.
- The opportunity to work more closely (and regularly) with primary colleagues should there be a through school in Crickhowell would potentially improve provision in the longer time.
- The all through school model for the Crickhowell catchment should be based on a community hub comprising of the existing primary schools feeding into the High School with a business / value based approach with leaner and community outcomes being central to the decision. The cost effective sharing of facilities, expertise, staff and resources is going to be key in ensuring The Crickhowell catchment area not only survives but thrives.
- I can see the value of a multi-site-cluster school, with a collective budget/management, but only if all years are represented in the local community.
- Keeping all the schools open and working as one school is the best option and a lot cheaper than building a completely new school.
- I would strongly consider transforming the HS into a CiW HS. This would enable the council to federate Llanbedr, Llangattock and Crickhowell HS. A similar model has been introduced in the St

David's (Pembrokeshire) cluster where an all-through CiW school has been created on three sites.

- Build a educational campus at Cwrt-y- Gollen for the whole age range.

**v) Suggestions relating to enhanced cluster working / sharing resources**

- Allow schools to work together closely
- A scheme to join the primaries in a network to enable better sharing of resources and skills, potentially sharing key management roles.
- Continue with using the whole cluster as a hub, sharing staff, resources, reduce costs from County maintenance by using local community professionals.
- There could be further savings by cross-site collaboration – admin support, site management
- Closer working and management ties withing the catchment area will allow the unique identities of the school environments to be retained while being cost effective in terms of sharing of facilities, expertise, staff and resources.
- Because Crickhowell catchment especially for primary schools doesn't cover a too big area maybe sharing one headmaster/mistress?

**vi) Comments relating to admissions arrangements**

- Take less children from outside catchment
- Prioritise pupils from Powys more than pupils outside of Powys
- Local children should have priority at CHS, children outside county should attend their local school
- Decrease the intake of pupils from outside the county for the high school, as the high school wasn't built for that amount, this would support the infrastructure of the roads around this area due to less buses travelling from out of county.
- Children living within Crickhowell should have priority but after That whether they live in the county shouldn't be relevant. School choice should be what is the best fit for the pupil
- Bwlch to part of the catchment for Crickhowell High – to have a dual catchment, to be in the catchment of Gwernyed High too.
- Leave Bwlch in the catchment area for Llangynidr primary

**vii) Comments relating to the funding provided to schools**

- Better funding for the High School – more experienced teachers demand higher salaries, we should be able to pay for experience.
- Fair funding for every school. Should be the same per pupil for every school.
- Improve the funding allocation.

- Invest in CHS through increased budget share and maintenance, strengthening the sixth form.

**viii) Comments relating to buildings / facilities**

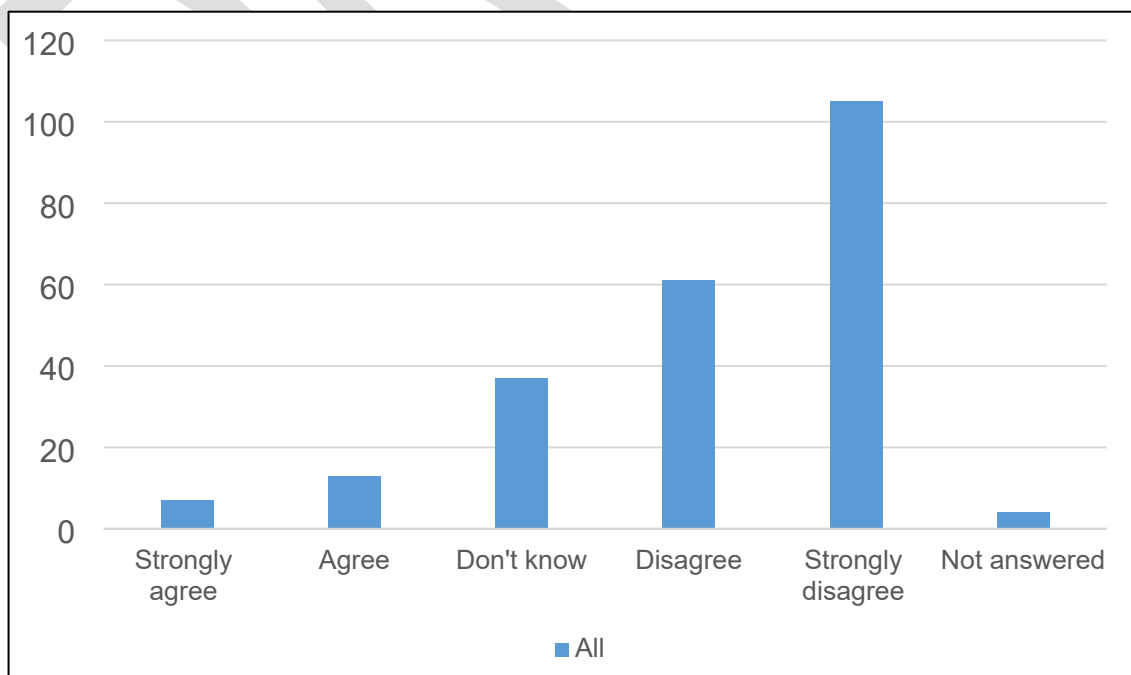
- Improve building infrastructure.
- Provide additional funding to maintain the current buildings
- Improve the build of the high school
- Invest to improve current school buildings rather than spending money on new buildings
- If there is funding, Crickhowell Primary school rebuild is well overdue. This depends on an available site. New provision for the High School sixth form would free space for the rest of the pupils, rather than expense of complete new build.

**ix) Other comments / suggestions**

- I would not wish to have my children attend a religious school or a school part-funded by a religious group and would strongly oppose any plans to seek funding from such groups.
- If the "cluster" was recognised as a budgetary unit, then synergy savings could be developed

**8. The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education sets out an aspiration to establish all-age schools in the 13 current high school catchment areas in Powys.**

**To what extent do you agree that establishing an all-age school would be an appropriate way forward in the Crickhowell catchment?**



Response	No	%
Strongly agree	7	3.1%
Agree	13	5.7%
Don't know	37	16.3%
Disagree	61	26.9%
Strongly disagree	105	46.3%
Not answered	4	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**9. Please provide any further comments about the idea of establishing an all-age school in the Crickhowell catchment:**

168 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

**i) Comments in support of an all-age school**

- After visiting Pembrokeshire and seeing all-age schools in action we can use this as model for the Crickhowell Cluster
- Fully support this idea - with the right leadership and vision in place it is a fantastic opportunity.
- I acknowledge the financial argument for creating centralised all-age schools
- A multi-site school could work, with different sites sharing resources across the progression steps.
- Combining Crickhowell Primary and Secondary schools could mean a new building which would resolve the issue of the state of both current school buildings.

**ii) Comments not in support of an all-age school**

**• Comments relating to a single site all-age school**

- Agree on closer working between primary and secondary schools, but single site would disadvantage other schools in cluster and favour Crickhowell CP
- An all-age school would mean that my children would have to be driven to school, using more cars, more expense to families.
- Concern that this would lead to traffic jams in the area.
- I feel that a single-site, all-age school wouldn't work in the Crickhowell catchment due to the local area & environment that we're in.
- Concern that this would lead to the closure of schools in other villages in the area.

**• Comments relating to impact on pupils**

- All age school loses the closeness of a family feeling at a smaller primary school. My children know all the pupils in the school, this is impossible in an all-age school.
- An overall Executive Head will not have the necessary experience to manage all ages and could well end up being a Business Manager appointment.
- It would ruin the 'innocence' of the children and take away from the small rural community
- Children need to learn as they grow. They need to become confident in every stage of development. The idea that this can happen in an all-age school is nonsense.
- Children feel safe and inclusive in smaller setting with their own age groups. This would be lost.
- Children need a nurturing environment and not be a number and not heard which is the most important factor of success for children in the future for both wellbeing, education and development
- Children needs to stay children for as long as possible. There is a strong push to grow up too early. Mixing primary and secondary kids wouldn't help.
- Children should be educated within their communities, particularly at primary age. All age schools would appear to disadvantage primary pupils, in particular in a large school with older children
- All age schools are not a good model for successful education for all learners. Teachers and leadership teams with a more in depth and skill based knowledge of the learning needs of the children in their specialised age range (primary and secondary) is of far more benefit.
- Better to keep school ages separate, better for children/educational outcomes.
- They're doing this with King Henry in Abergavenny which is why we are avoiding that school as our secondary choice and are crossing border to Powys. They're very much 'one size fits all' schools.
- Super schools are great for children that fit in the box, but a lot don't!
- I believe super schools are just way too big. What about the students who are quieter, shy, anxious, ALN, etc who just can't cope with a large school environment?
- An all-age school would need to be able to offer a sense of well-being, nurturing and security for the primary school children, perhaps in a separate building to the high school, but with use of all facilities.

- **Concerns about impact on the community / families**

- Concern about the impact on the fabric of villages and local communities, and the greater transport time and cost

required to get children to a school (which would be further away for many). Smaller, local schools are part of what make the wider Crickhowell area so special.

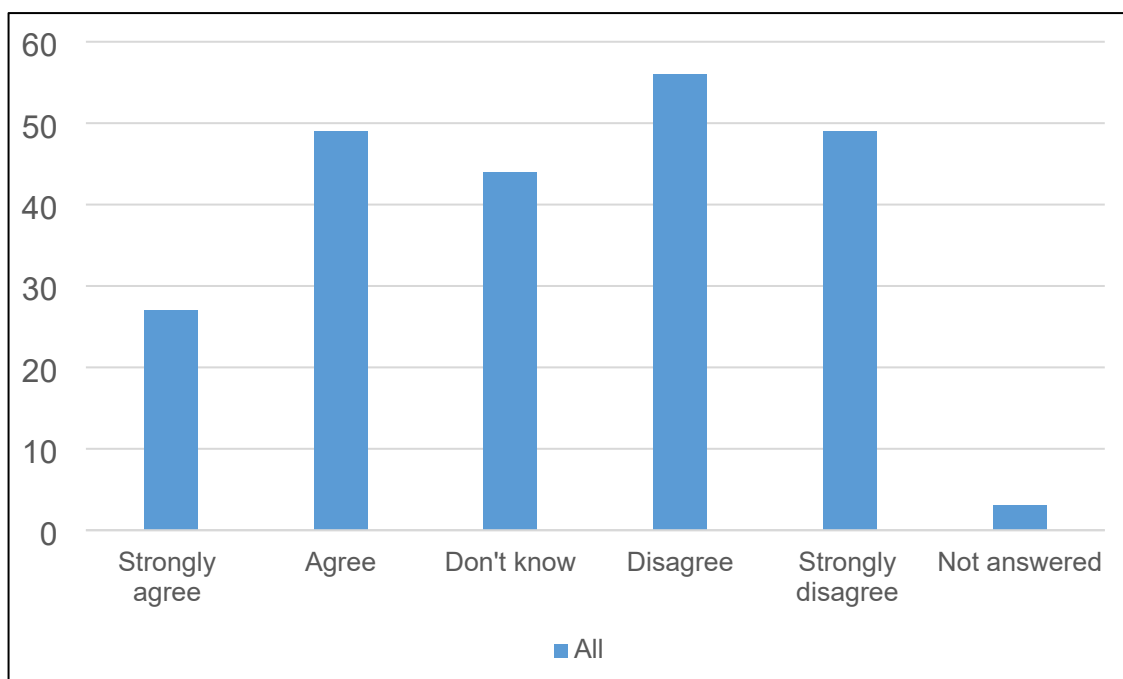
- If you give away the individual communities by doing this, it will never return.
- Concern that this would mean moving the high school to an out-of-town site. This would be a disaster for the businesses on the High Street, for traffic caused by people needing to drive out of Crickhowell, and for the parents who chose to live in Crickhowell due to the presence of a strong, local school.

**iii) Other comments**

- A combined school at junior level would make more sense
- A federation of schools would enable each school to have its own identity yet integrate the education provision from age 5 to 18
- A federation would work well encompassing the faith schools and schools of no faith.
- Cost savings can be made in other ways
- I don't think its addresses the issues in Crickhowell unless at least one primary school is closed. Destabilizing the standards and provision in the secondary sector in Crickhowell to solve a surplus place primary problem seems fundamentally wrong.
- Not enough information is provided.
- This does not make provision for Church of Wales.

- 10. The Council has made a commitment to develop Welsh-medium provision across Powys and to introduce Welsh-medium primary education in areas where there is currently no provision, such as the Crickhowell catchment.**

**To what extent do you agree that there is a need to introduce Welsh-medium primary provision in the Crickhowell catchment?**



Response	No	%
Strongly agree	27	11.9%
Agree	49	21.6%
Don't know	44	19.4%
Disagree	56	24.7%
Strongly disagree	49	21.6%
Not answered	3	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**11. If the Council was to establish Welsh-medium primary provision in the Crickhowell catchment, where do you think would be the most appropriate location for this provision?**

148 respondents provided a response.

The following locations were suggested:

- Add it onto Crickhowell High School
- A stream in Crickhowell Primary School.
- Llanbedr CiW given that they already have a qualified member of staff to assist with delivery.
- Llanbedr is currently the only school offering Welsh medium teaching, which it does well.
- Llangattock or Llangynidr
- Llangynidr would be happy to include a Welsh stream in the school, if more space was made available to accommodate it.
- Knowing that children often travel further to go to a Welsh medium school would not be a problem as Llangynidr already has many

school buses from the outlining villages, so transporting many of the children would not be an issue as they could go on the buses already running from those areas to the school.

- As a stream in an all through school.
- A Welsh stream in every school
- Any of the more rural sites. Crickhowell can't cope with anymore school time traffic
- Crickhowell catchment is a relatively limited geographical area in terms of the location of the main residential areas so could be in any/close to the current primary schools and would be accessible (in terms of acceptable travel times and distances) for the majority of eligible pupils

In addition, the following comments were received:

**i) Comments about assessing demand**

- Careful consideration as to the need and demand for Welsh medium provision in this area should be paramount – concern that limited money and resources would be spent on providing something that is not good value for money and only benefits a very small minority of children.
- A questionnaire would need to be given out to parents to see if this would be an option for their children and then see if this would be financially viable

**ii) Promote access to Welsh-medium provision that already exists in the surrounding area**

- Work with Monmouthshire County Council to make Abergavenny Welsh medium school a choice for Crickhowell kids. Make it more accessible with a bus available etc and provide investment in it to make it a choice for Crickhowell families wishing to send their children to a Welsh medium school. That is all that is needed. They already have the staff available to teach through a Welsh medium which are hard to come by! We don't need our own Welsh Medium school just for Crickhowell. Abergavenny is close enough!
- If students want to go to a Welsh medium school there is one in Abergavenny which meets the demand.
- Welsh provision is strong in Brecon and Abergavenny. For those requiring this, school transport is available.

**iii) There is no need for Welsh-medium provision in Crickhowell**

- With the overwhelming majority of the population being English speaking (many having moved from England too), a Welsh-medium school is not a priority
- This area is not a strong Welsh speaking part of Powys. The Welsh language is an important part of our cultural and historical



significance and it is already taught in High School with its use increasing with Welsh based learning and extra-curricular language use in the primary cluster. There are already Welsh-medium schools within an easy commute of Crickhowell, therefore it is unnecessary to have a new Welsh school in Crickhowell.

- Don't agree, although it is a priority for the Welsh Government it should come second to providing a good English education first.
- I disagree that there is a real need for this development. There is out of catchment provision within a stones throw, this screams of hitting local and National government targets rather than actually understanding the demographics of the area.
- Developments of this nature come with huge financial costs. Utilise any funds to correctly address the outstanding maintenance issues at the successful educational sites we have in the catchment in the first instance before looking to expand provision of Welsh medium education.
- I do not think the provision is needed outside of Welsh speaking communities. Resources might be better spent strengthening school budgets to deal with current socioeconomic pressures. However, offering this provision within schools to enhance educational needs should be considered if it can be proven warranted.

**12. Please provide any further comments you have about the way forward for education in the Crickhowell catchment:**

104 respondents provided a response. The responses received are summarised below:

**i) Comments about keeping the status quo**

- I think provision should stay as it is as it is performing well.
- Leave our schools as they are. Maintain the buildings and support the staff so that they remain doing their best and providing good and consistent learning opportunities for all the children.
- All the current schools (bar Llanbedr which I understand is to close) to remain at their locations with their own heads and governing bodies.
- Ensure you protect a fantastic High School and group of primary schools.
- Shutting any small school in this area would be hugely irresponsible and impactful for our community and children.
- Don't decimate well functioning schools

**ii) Comments about the impact on the community**

- Consider the communities and the impact on the closure of rural schools on the people attached to those schools. Villages and rural communities often use the schools as a focus for socialising and entertainment.

- Schools should be protected as they supply such a positive effect on the communities they find themselves in, they attract younger families to areas where otherwise elderly age groups would dominate. They help create a great balance in rural areas and to upset this balance would be extremely naive and destructive.
- Embrace the communities. Build communities not just houses.
- Our locals schools – proudly and happily existing within their communities – are priceless.
- If villages lose their schools they risk losing one of the key factors that keep them growing and thriving. Villages that used to have schools and lost them (eg Cwmdru) risk an expansion of holiday homes/second homes as people with families will be more likely to move closer to schools. Therefore the closure or weakening of village schools can kill the heart of a village at a time when having vibrant, local communities is more important than ever.

### **iii) Comments about an all-age school**

- An all-age school is not the way forward. People move into this catchment area specifically because CHS gets such good results and its catchment feeder primaries are so good. Take that away and watch the value of your house plummet.
- It isn't progression to make a huge super school, it is regression - children's wellbeing should come before grand master plans. I feel that the fact that this is being considered will be detrimental in so many ways to the children and the community.
- Keep the separated primary and secondary school provisions. As a parent all-age schools really scare me!
- Strongly feel an all-age school in Crickhowell would raise safeguarding concerns and lower the quality of education delivered but more importantly would negatively impact the welfare of younger children.
- All-age school setups in counties close by are and have been chronically mis-managed, leading to lower levels of pupil attainment and in many instances been hugely detrimental to pupil wellbeing.

### **iv) Comments about admissions**

- Bwlch to continue to be able to access Crickhowell High School.
- Please keep Bwlch in the catchment area.
- Proposed boundary changes (in the Bwlch area) for the Crickhowell catchment appear to be unjustified given the large proportion of out-of-county pupils attending high school. There is sufficient capacity for local children to attend their closest secondary school.
- Each of the schools within the catchment has sustainable numbers and a weakness in the catchment could occur if student numbers for admissions were reduced or Bwlch catchment boundaries changed.

**v) Other comments**

- If Llanbedr is no longer viable, you need to make a decision to close it.
- I'm not sure there are enough pupil numbers to justify a Welsh medium primary school in Crickhowell area without jeopardising numbers at English medium schools. But a dual stream bilingual primary school would be an excellent idea.
- Important to retain Church in Wales provision in the catchment
- One faith school of any kind will not be welcomed by some.
- Central, properly funded central/ dedicated sixth form for south Powys which would then provide additional space/ facilities for 11-16 students. An increasing number of students are leaving school sixth forms in south Powys.
- Work with neighbouring LEAs to find solutions. People live/work/school across boundaries so delivery of education services should reflect that.
- You should ask the children and give them a voice – what do they want?

### 3. Other written responses

In addition to the online questionnaire and engagement sessions for staff and governors, a number of written responses were received. 5 written responses were received in English.

4 of these were a letter from Crickhowell C.P. School, Crickhowell High School, Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangynidr C.P. School.

A summary of the comments received are as follows:

#### **i) Positive comments about the provision in the cluster**

- All schools in the catchment work well as a community team
- School leaders are committed to working positively together, supported by strong governing bodies
- There is a willingness to embrace collaboration in the cluster, as well as a commitment to work across the cluster and break down any boundaries.
- Transition is very positive.
- The local communities value the availability of schools of a religious character.

#### **ii) Comments about the geographical area**

- All schools in the catchment take students from Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent, as well as Powys. Gilwern is considered part of the catchment and is closer to Crickhowell than Abergavenny.
- Its geographical position means that the Crickhowell catchment can draw in pupils, parents and staff from a wider area, enriching and strengthening the high standards within the schools. This is a strength which must be preserved going forward.
- The catchment's geographical position means it can attract and retain specialist staff and maintain buoyant numbers of students going forward.
- The catchment is unique within Powys due to its cross-border position in the south of Powys and the fact that it comprises of only four Powys primary schools, supporting transition to one of the larger secondary schools in Powys.

#### **iii) Comments about the high school**

- Crickhowell High School is one of the largest secondary schools in Powys but Wales-wide, a secondary school of just under 1000 would be considered average size or less. The school provides very good standards from a very low funding base as well ensuring specialist teaching in all areas and the largest sixth form in the county.

- Academic results at GCSE and A level mean that the school is in the top five per cent of UK schools with a breadth of curriculum which is extensive and crucially facilitating vocational and academic pathways learners at all levels with great success.
- The school has a large sixth form which means that a wide range of subjects can be offered and specialist staff can be attracted to the school. The school teaches over 30% of Powys Sixth Form students.
- Wellbeing and Inclusion are known as sector leading despite Covid and post Covid challenges and there have been no permanent exclusions since 2005.
- Attendance and behaviour are rated as excellent and the school has been a pioneer school for New Curriculum and Professional Learning with significant innovative work ongoing with Welsh Government and the LA.

#### **iv) Suggested future options**

- The schools maintaining their individuality, but working much more collaboratively to provide all-through schooling for students from 3 to 19
- More sharing of resources e.g. ICT resources, site management, business manager, shared admin and photocopying contracts, inclusion facilities
- Greater emphasis on a community focussed schools model and developing greater access for the wider community outside school hours
- Possibility that a Welsh language stream could be introduced
- Crickhowell High School remains committed to becoming a school of religious character through the establishment of a pluralistic school which welcomes families of all faiths and no faiths

#### **v) Other comments**

- Concern that amending the current catchment as is being considered in relation to Bwlch would be out of step with nearest school protocols and would have an unwarranted impact on the catchment

## 4. Engagement with staff and governors

As part of the engagement exercise, in-person engagement sessions were held for governors and staff in the cluster. A total of 37 staff attended the session for staff, and 21 governors attended the session for governors.

In the sessions, attendees were asked to complete a SWOT analysis for the educational provision within the cluster. A summarised SWOT has been produced based on the responses received.

### Staff

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close community ties and engagement</li> <li>- Good quality education recognised by Estyn</li> <li>- Deep understanding and knowledge of families</li> <li>- Collaboration between schools</li> <li>- Strong transition arrangements</li> <li>- Schools at the heart of villages</li> <li>- Sharing of specialist staff</li> <li>- Strong and effective leadership</li> <li>- Community focussed</li> <li>- Stable pupil numbers</li> <li>- Pull in pupils from other local authorities</li> <li>- Sixth Form is strong</li> <li>- Cost effective provision</li> <li>- Parental choice of school – CiW/CP</li> <li>- Maintaining high standards of well-being</li> <li>- Forest schools, outdoor pursuits</li> <li>- Holiday / summer clubs</li> <li>- Funding from community groups</li> <li>- Sports Centre, Gym and Library ran through the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welsh provision and expertise in the area</li> <li>- Lack of communication and transparency in the consultation / area review</li> <li>- Affluent parents mean lower PDG spend but parents do not cover the shortfall</li> <li>- Transport costs for trips</li> <li>- Lack of dedicated nurture base for ALN</li> <li>- Physical buildings make realisation of Curriculum for Wales difficult</li> <li>- Building conditions are poor</li> <li>- Lack of funding compared to rest of Powys</li> <li>- Rural area impacts opportunities</li> <li>- Private nurseries lead to impact on skills for Foundation Phase pupils</li> <li>- Lack of funding for Post-16 collaborative students</li> <li>- Concerns within the community about transformation</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Closer links with neighbouring schools</li> <li>- Sharing resources and expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cutting cross-border provision</li> <li>- Changing catchment areas</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative projects</li> <li>- Shared responsibilities within the new Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>- Sharing of facilities</li> <li>- School of religious character</li> <li>- Community hub model across the cluster</li> <li>- Ability to create a centre of excellence for ALN or Welsh provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reducing the size of the secondary school</li> <li>- Uncertainty of catchment review and transformation makes people nervous – has impact on pupil numbers</li> <li>- Effects on staff of review</li> <li>- Rumours begin to circulate</li> <li>- Reduction of pupil numbers will lead to reduction in funding</li> <li>- Loss of potential Welsh speakers to other local authorities</li> <li>- Break up of communities</li> <li>- Loss of the Sixth Form</li> <li>- Job losses in teaching and non-teaching staff</li> <li>- Loss of community funding and facilities</li> <li>- Loss of CiW provision</li> <li>- Environmental damages due to increased transport</li> </ul>
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## **Governors**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leadership in schools is excellent</li> <li>- Standards of education are good and recognised by Estyn</li> <li>- Inclusion and well-being is good</li> <li>- The cross boundary provides more funding into the cluster</li> <li>- Community focussed schools providing services for the community e.g. Leisure, Library</li> <li>- Value for money</li> <li>- Strong sense of family</li> <li>- Pupils are diverse</li> <li>- Range of opportunities available at Post-14 and Post-16</li> <li>- Implementation of the National Mission and Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>- Good cluster working between schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standards are benchmarked at Powys level, as opposed to nationally or UK wide</li> <li>- CIW primary schools have no feeder CIW secondary</li> <li>- Poor facilities / buildings</li> <li>- Low level of investment in buildings</li> <li>- Not fully recognising opportunities of cross-border</li> <li>- Change fatigue for staff</li> <li>- Lack of Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> language provision</li> <li>-</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Viable and growing sixth form – largest in Powys, top 3% UK wide in A Level results</li> <li>- Unique learning environments at the heart of communities</li> <li>- Recent and historical achievements in wide areas</li> <li>- Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language provision</li> <li>- Pupils can walk to school on all current sites</li> </ul>	
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to benchmark at UK level</li> <li>- Collaboration between the cluster</li> <li>- Developing modern facilities</li> <li>- Delivering economies of scale through sharing of resources</li> <li>- Enhancing community focussed schools</li> <li>- Multi-agency involvement and space</li> <li>- Specialist facilities for ALN and behaviour across the cluster</li> <li>- Specialist cluster leads for languages, digital, literacy, numeracy etc</li> <li>- Enhance after school provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inability to recognise natural community</li> <li>- Reducing the school size</li> <li>- Transformation strategy may not fit this catchment well</li> <li>- Economically unviable schools if less pupils</li> <li>- Loss of strong community support</li> <li>- Loss of engaged parents</li> <li>- Breakup of communities</li> <li>- Impact on travel arrangements and environment</li> </ul>

In addition to a SWOT analysis for the cluster, attendees also put forward their suggested ideas for the future of the cluster. A summarised list has been produced on the responses received.

### **Staff**

- Stay we are but tighten up the positive things that have been identified
- We have no objections to change if change is for the better
- Maintain high standards of education within the cluster
- Protect the quality of options for education
- 3-19 provision
- Strengthen ALN links between schools
- Distribute funding more evenly across the local authority
- Close old unsustainable buildings
- Allow Crickhowell High School to become a CiW school
- Invest in existing buildings



- Bring back nursery in schools
- Keep Post-16 education
- Create a community focussed schools for centres of excellence
- Create a CiW VA all-age school which is pluralistic, inclusive, all religions & no religions
- Combine all-age school with loose federations of all schools in catchment
- Retain the current sites
- Explore a Welsh-medium stream for primary and secondary
- Specialist centres for behaviour and ALN serving whole cluster
- Keep Llangynidr as it is
- Do not change the catchment admission areas
- Sharing of key roles – business manager, caretaker, key holder, ALN, ICT

### **Governors**

- Develop cross catchment collaboration
- Expansion of catchment to include Powys, Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent
- Data should reflect natural community
- Look at a cluster financial agreement / budget
- Sharing of resources such as business manager, supply staff, caretaker, ALN, ICT
- Multi-sited primary schools under one governance model
- Start a Welsh-medium stream in one primary school to start provision
- Super school would be detrimental to status/standing of primary schools
- Improve energy efficiency
- School of religious character
- Strong 6<sup>th</sup> form provision
- Better collaboration with local businesses
- New curriculum development can take place and share all sites e.g. science on one site, sports on another, languages, culture
- Out of school hour provision for all other site

## 5. Conclusion

The responses to the engagement exercise suggest that in general, those that contributed do not think that any significant changes are needed to the schools infrastructure in the Crickhowell catchment. Respondents to the engagement exercise were asked to list the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision in the catchment. In general, the feedback received suggests that there are no major issues to be addressed in respect of education provision in the catchment.

As part of the engagement exercise, respondents were asked to what extent they agree that establishing an all-age school would be an appropriate way forward in the Crickhowell catchment. 20 respondents (8.8%) indicated that they agree or strongly agree that this would be an appropriate way forward, whilst 166 respondents (73.2%) indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree that this would be an appropriate way forward. This suggest that the majority of stakeholders do not agree that there is a need to establish an all-age school in Crickhowell, although this was a possible way forward that was suggested by some stakeholders as part of the engagement exercise.

Respondents were also asked to what extent they agree that there is a need to introduce Welsh-medium provision in the Crickhowell catchment. 76 respondents (33.5%) indicated that they agree or strongly agree that there is a need, whilst 105 respondents (46.3%) indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree that there is need. This suggests that some stakeholders in the area are of the view that there is a need to develop Welsh-medium provision in the area. This was also reflected elsewhere in the engagement exercise, as the lack of Welsh-medium provision in the catchment was identified as a weakness. However, it is also clear that there are many stakeholders in the area who do not think there is a need to develop Welsh-medium provision in the Crickhowell catchment.