

# Archived Decisions for the Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure 2011

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

13th May, 2011

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mr. John Ward	Brynlywarch Hall School	County Councillor K.M. Roberts-Jones
County Councillor John Evans	Llandrindod High School	County Councillor L.G. Davies, County Councillor M.D. Hodges, County Councillor J. Evans
Mr. Bernard Jones	Builth Wells High School	County Councillor D.R. Price and County Councillor A. York
Mr. Dennis Sockett	Ysgol Bro Cynllaith	County Councillor A.W. Davies
Miss Rhoswen Elizabeth Charles	Llangedwyn C. in W. School	County Councillor A.W. Davies
Mrs. Joanne Moller	Llangedwyn C. in W. School	County Councillor A.W. Davies

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning \_\_\_\_\_)

Dated: 13 May 2011

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**24th May, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor	School	Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)
Mrs. Sue Farmer	Rhosgoch C.P. School	County Councillor M.E.Morris

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 25 May 2011

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**14th June, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
County Councillor A.M.C. Weale	Llanfaes C.P. School	County Councillor A.M.C. Weale
Mr. Philip Breeze	Montgomery C. in W. School	County Councillor S.M. Hayes
Mr. W. Snape	Ysgol Gynradd Carno	County Councillor R.E. Davies

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 16 June 2011

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Rec'd 4/7/2011



**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**28th June, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mr. C. McDonald Scott	Berriew C.P. School	County Councillor D. Davies
Reverend J.B. Thelwell	Berriew C.P. School	County Councillor D. Davies
County Councillor R. Harris	Llangynidr C.P. School	County Councillor R. Harris
Mr. D.I. Price	Llanigon C.P. School	County Councillor G.G. Hopkins

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 28 June 2011

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**Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes  
Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

**Closure of Aberhafesp Community Primary School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for decision:</b>
<b>To publish statutory notices for the closure of Aberhafesp CP School as soon as possible with the closing date for objections being before the end of the school year.</b>	<b>To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.</b>

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# CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

## CABINET REPORT 6th June 2011

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Senior Manager, Central Support Services

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Aberhafesp Community Primary School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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### **Summary**

Following a review of small schools in Powys by the Council's Learning in the Community Programme Board earlier in the year, on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011 the Council's Board approved the commencement of a consultation process to close Aberhafesp CP School and to proceed to statutory notices for its closure. At the time of that Board report the school was projected to have 7 pupils by the start of the next academic year. The school is in Special Measures following an Estyn inspection in November 2010.

At the time of writing there are 12 pupils at the school. 4 of these will transfer to High School next year and a further 5 have applied to transfer to other schools in September leaving a maximum of 3 pupils on roll at that time. It is quite likely that the school will have no pupils by September 2011.

A consultation meeting with staff, governors and the community was held on 14<sup>th</sup> April where the proposals were explained; this included a timetable explaining that the school could be formally closed by Christmas 2011. The Council must give one term's notice to a school proposed for closure as well as undertaking the formal statutory notice procedure.

The closing date for comments to be received on the proposals outlined at the 14<sup>th</sup> April meeting is 31<sup>st</sup> May. The only comment received by the deadline was from the Aberhafesp Community Association who have made representations about retaining the community's use of the community hall but have not objected to the school closure itself.

Statutory notices need to be published for one month and are subject to Assembly Government regulations. They must be displayed at all school entrances and published in at least one local newspaper as well as other prominent public places. If one objection to a statutory notice is received, the decision falls to the Minister at the Assembly Government to determine. The Council must make its comments on the objections received and send them to the Assembly Government within two weeks of the end of the objection period.

### **Proposal**

To publish statutory notices for the closure of Aberhafesp CP School on 16<sup>th</sup> June with the closing date for objections being 16<sup>th</sup> July. There should be a managed transfer of the remaining pupils at the school with Caersws CP School named as the receiving school.

A priority of the Corporate Improvement Plan is to provide high quality educational opportunities for all.

### **Options Considered/Available**

The school could remain open but this would be a very inefficient use of resources and the number of pupils is so low that it would be extremely difficult for a reasonable standard of education to be provided.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

It is in the best interests of the pupils in the school that statutory notices for closure are published as soon as possible.

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

The closure of the school will inevitably have a detrimental impact on a community which falls within the Severn Valley Strategic Regeneration Programme Area. The community hall is also the venue for many community activities and the Council will endeavour to support the village's ambition to retain the community hall for community use.

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

All necessary steps will be taken to minimise the impact of these proposals on the education and welfare of the pupils at the school. This will be done through a supported transfer to the receiving school or a school of the parents' choice.

### **Local Member(s)**

Councillor Joy Shearer has commented as follows:

The school and Community of Aberhafesp have gone through a very difficult period in the last six months since the Estyn inspection. As the local member I will continue to support of the parents and local community, but it is essential that the learning outcomes for the children of the community are central to the decisions made over the future of the school. I trust that the interests of The Community Association are taken into consideration and will be given as much support as possible, so that the thriving user groups may continue into the future safeguarding the community spirit that is present in Aberhafesp and the surrounding area.

### **Other Front Line Services**

No implications identified.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant for Community Skills and Learning comments that Appendix A provides details of the estimated savings and costs if closure were to be approved at the end of the Autumn Term 2011. The figures quoted are based on the maximum costs and in year 1 the costs associated with staff severance are higher than the expected savings in the three months ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. The revenue savings from year 2 onwards are projected to be £102k per annum would be achieved. The payback period of meeting the redundancy and severance costs is 5.82 months.

As stated the figures are based on the maximum costs for a school closure on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012, officers are expecting that the school will have no children from

September and the projected additional costs for the 2010/11 year may reduce due to this factor.

The Schools budget has a surplus balance of £30,218 at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, the budget proposal for 2011/2012 based on current staffing levels is projecting an in year deficit of £36,300. If the school closes from 31<sup>st</sup> December it is projected to have a surplus at closure of approximately £3,000. If the school were to remain open action would be required to significantly reduce staffing levels in order to bring the budget back in line, this would incur approximately £8,000 of the severance costs included in the above costings.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

No implications identified.

### **Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) has commented:-

The proposals need to follow the normal procedures for school closure and advice from Legal Services obtained as necessary.

The Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-

I note there is a slight cost in the first year and significant savings thereafter.

### **Members' Interests**

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

### **Future Status of the Report**

Members are invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>To publish statutory notices for the closure of Aberhafesp CP School as soon as possible with the closing date for objections being before the end of the school year.</b>	<b>To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>Councillor Joy Shearer</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Head of Schools</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> December 2011</b>

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Owen James	01597 826709		Owen.james@powys.gov.uk

### **Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Aberhafesp Consultation paper 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011  
 Aberhafesp Community Impact Assessment May 2011

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## Appendix A.

### Detailed Costings for Proposed Closure 31st December 2011

#### Aberhafesp County Primary School

	Year 1	Year 2
2011-12 Pupil Numbers Funded	13	13
2011-12 Delegated & Devolved Budget	34,347	137,647
2011-12 Estimated Current Transport Costs	357	1,427
2011-12 Subsidy of School Meal Provision	2,000	8,000
<b>Total Direct Costs of School</b>	<b>36,703</b>	<b>147,074</b>
Less Annual Budget that Would Transfer with Pupils	(4,327)	(17,306)
<b>Gross Saving in Year</b>	<b>32,377</b>	<b>129,768</b>
<b>Less Estimated H to S Transport</b>		
Assumed 2 additional routes at £125 and £75 per day	(9,500)	(38,000)
<b>Net Saving in Year on Direct Costs</b>	<b>22,877</b>	<b>91,768</b>
Saving of Central Costs at an Estimated £12,500 per school	3,125	12,500
<b>Total Net Savings before 1 off Costs</b>	<b>26,002</b>	<b>104,268</b>
<b>Estimated Early Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs (Max)</b>		
<b><i>One Off Costs in First year</i></b>		
Current Policy	49,883	600
Local Government Pension Strain	835	835
Statutory Provision	43,665	600
<b>Projected Savings/(Costs) Including Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs)</b>		
<b>Current Policy</b>	<b>(23,881)</b>	<b>103,668</b>
<b>Statutory Provision</b>	<b>(17,663)</b>	<b>103,668</b>
<b>Current Policy &amp; LGPS</b>	<b>(24,716)</b>	<b>102,833</b>
<b><u>Current Budget Position (Estimated Balance).</u></b>		
At 31.3.2011	30,218	
At 31.3.2012	(6,082)	
At 31.3.2013	(42,122)	



**Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes**  
**Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 21 June 2011**

**TEMPORARY GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – MAESYDDERWEN  
CATCHMENT REVIEW**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>That the Temporary Governing Body Arrangements for the Maesydderwen catchment review are approved as a basis for appointing shadow governing bodies for the four new primary schools.</b>	<b>To ensure that the temporary governing bodies are in place in good time to appoint staff and ensure efficient governance of the new schools.</b>

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET REPORT  
FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION  
14<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Gareth Jones  
Senior Manager, Central Services

**SUBJECT:** TEMPORARY GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS –  
MAESYDDERWEN CATCHMENT REVIEW

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**Summary**

The purpose of the report is to approve the temporary or shadow governance arrangements for the Maesydderwen catchment review.

**Proposal**

A ministerial decision is still awaited on the review of primary schools in the Ystradgynlais area involving the closure of the existing ten schools and the construction of four new ones. Given the desire to complete these new schools by September 2012 and particularly to appoint staff, it is necessary to set up the shadow governing body arrangements.

The attached document sets out the proposed process for establishing the temporary governance arrangements for the Maesydderwen catchment review.

The New Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005 dictate that for temporary governing bodies of community primary schools there can only be 13 governors comprising 3 LEA, 4 parent, 4 community, 1 teacher and 1 staff governor. The table below outlines the responsibilities and the process for each type of governor that is being proposed.

The new process has been put together following consultation with headteachers, chairs of governors and elected members for the area. The main differences from the existing process for appointing governing bodies are as follows:-

LEA governors – The proposal is for member(s) from the wards containing the schools that feed in to the new schools to nominate this type of governor, as opposed to the member(s) from where the new school is located. It also introduces a decision making role for the portfolio holder if no agreement can be reached by local members.

Parent/staff governors – The proposed process identifies new criteria to be used by the portfolio holder and the Head of Schools when choosing from expressions of interest submitted. The criteria are length of service, relevant experience and representation from closing schools.

An earlier draft of the temporary governing body arrangements was considered by the Learning in the Community Programme Board on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011 where it was agreed as a basis for consultation. The amended document following local consultation was

considered again by the Programme Board on 24<sup>th</sup> May where it was agreed that the portfolio holder would sign off the final arrangements.

Type of governor	Number (Total 13)	Responsibility of	Process
<b>Temporary LEA Governors</b>	3	Powys County Council	Local member(s) nominate from existing LEA governors. If no agreement – Portfolio Holder to decide.
<b>Temporary Parent Governors</b>	4	Powys County Council	Invite expressions of interest from existing parent governors. Head of Schools and Portfolio Holder to appoint on behalf of PCC.
<b>Temporary Staff Governors</b>	1	Powys County Council	Invite expressions of interest from existing staff governors. Head of Schools and Portfolio Holder to appoint on behalf of PCC.
<b>Temporary Teacher Governors</b>	1	Shadow governing body	
<b>Temporary Community Governors</b>	3	Shadow governing body	
<b>Additional Temporary Community Governors</b>	1	Shadow governing body	Nominated by the Town/Community Council(s) served by the school.

### **Corporate Improvement Plan**

A priority of the Corporate Improvement Plan is to provide high quality educational opportunities for all.

### **Options Considered/Available**

An option was considered which involved using the existing process for appointing governors but following consultation this was amended to take in to account the representations received and the particular local circumstances in Ystradgynlais.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

The preferred choice was selected following consultation with the ten head teachers and their governing bodies as well as local members. There were concerns that there should be local arrangements that suited local circumstances and that the process needed to be transparent and clearly understood. The head teachers are now happy with the proposed arrangements and that their comments have been taken on board.

The target for implementation of the new arrangements is the end of the school year 2010/11 for the composition of the four new governing bodies to be known, although the lack of ministerial decision may make this difficult to achieve. The target is for the shadow governing bodies to appoint the four head teachers in the autumn of 2011 with other teaching staff appointed in the early part of 2012.

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

One of the proposed new schools is a Welsh medium school which will promote the Welsh language in the locality.

Parts of the Ystradgynlais area are a priority for the council and the Welsh Government for regeneration.

The arrangements for governance need to be mindful of equalities legislation as the temporary governing bodies will be responsible for the appointment of head teachers and other staff.

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

It is in the best interests of children and young people that robust arrangements are in place for the organisation of the temporary governing bodies of the new schools.

### **Local Member(s)**

Local members in the Ystradgynlais area were consulted on the draft arrangements and their comments incorporated in to the final document.

### **Other Front Line Services**

None identified.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Solicitor has confirmed that the proposals meet with the appropriate governance regulations.

The Principal Accountant for Community, Skills and Learning comments that there are no financial implications associated with this proposal, the process will be actioned within existing staffing resources.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

None identified

### **Communications**

The outcome of this process will need to be communicated to the schools in the area and to local members. An e-bulletin will be circulated to these and other stakeholders by the middle of June 2011.

### **Statutory Officers**

The view of the Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) is "I have no views to add to those made by the Principal Solicitor".

The view of the Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) is that there are no financial implications for this proposal.

### **Members' Interests**

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

<b>Recommendation:</b>		<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>	
That the Temporary Governing Body Arrangements for the Maesydderwen catchment review are approved as a basis for appointing shadow governing bodies for the four new primary schools.		To ensure that the temporary governing bodies are in place in good time to appoint staff and ensure efficient governance of the new schools.	
<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	Councillors K. Pathak, G Gwillim, J. Steadman, S. McNicholas and S. Davies		
<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	Douglas Wilson – Head of Schools		
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	July 15 <sup>th</sup> 2011		
<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Owen James	01597 826709		Owen.james@powys.gov.uk

**Background Papers used to prepare report:**

The New Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005



Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)

Governors to School Governing Bodies

15th July, 2011

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor	School	Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)
Mrs. M.A. Evans	Ysgol Bro Cynllaith	County Councillor A.W. Davies
County Councillor E.R. Davies	Ysgol Gynradd Carno	County Councillor E.R. Davies
Mr. J. Jones	Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmtwrch	County Councillor S.C. Davies
County Councillor V.E. Evans	Llanfair Caereinion C. in W. School	County Councillor V.E. Evans
County Councillor B. Vaughan	Llanerfyl C. in W. Foundation School	County Councillor B. Vaughan

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 15 July 2011

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Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)

Governors to School Governing Bodies

28th July, 2011

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor	School	Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)
Mrs. M. Wilson	Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	County Councillor R.J. White

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 28 July 2011

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## Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders

**Councillor K.M. Roberts-Jones**  
**Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance and Assets**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes**  
**Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

<b>Decision:</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
1. To declare the former school at Llanwddyn surplus to the Council's needs.	To enable the sale of the school to proceed.
2. To agree to the sale of the former school, with or without the associated heating system, subject to a suitable offer(s) being received.	To dispose of a surplus asset and relieve the council of the administrative burden and operational issues associated with the heating system.
3. To enter into discussions with Severn Trent Water to explore inclusion of the school and heating system within the sale of the Vyrnwy Estate (Lot 4) Residential & commercial portfolio and proceed with a joint sale if agreement can be reached.	To provide greater clarity and certainty for potential buyers and thereby improve the commercial position for the council. This option would also assist in removing some potential issues of detail regarding licences and the restrictive covenant.
4. To issue a press release in due course, giving advance notice of the sale.	To give notice to interested parties in advance of the sale, without the sales details themselves becoming stale while we await the outcome of the sale of the Vyrnwy Estate.

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**FOR DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS FOR LEARNING AND  
LEISURE & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ASSETS**

**Date**

**REPORT AUTHOR: Gareth Jones  
Senior Manager: Central Support Services (Schools)**

**SUBJECT: Llanwddyn Former School and Associated District  
Heating System**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**Summary**

The former Ysgol Efyrrwy Primary School in Llanwddyn closed in 2009 and apart from some occasional use by the local community has remained out of use. It is therefore proposed that the school is declared surplus and is offered for sale.

In addition it is proposed that the biomass heating system, which provides heating for the school along with the community centre and with some 30 residential properties on the adjacent Abertridwr Estate, is included in the sale.

**Proposal**

An options report for the Ysgol Efyrrwy Primary School and heating system was prepared between January and March 2011. The report sets out in some detail the various interests and issues related to the school and the heating system. These are summarised below:

**The former school**

The school closed in 2009 and the options report concluded that it should be declared surplus and sold. The school is directly connected to the community centre and together they are a listed building. A lease exists between PCC and the Trustees of the Community Centre which permits use of parts of the school by the local community. This includes use of the former dining room and kitchen, use of the library by the local playgroup and other occasional uses for example in connection with the Lake Vyrnwy half marathon. Discussions have commenced to rationalise these arrangements whilst providing for the needs of the local community.

A restrictive covenant exists which restricts the use of the land occupied by the school to educational purposes. Negotiations have been opened with Severn Trent Water to lift this covenant.

The fabric of the school and the grounds is deteriorating. Basic maintenance is being carried out but is considered to be an unnecessary use of Council funds.

### **The heating system**

The biomass heating system was installed at the school in 2005. This heating system provides heating for the former school, the community centre and some 30 residential properties on the adjacent Abertridwr Estate. This system is operated by Dulas Wood Energy Ltd (Dulas) on behalf of the Council but has suffered from a number of operational and billing difficulties. A number of failures of the system have occurred largely due to third party issues made worse by the remote location from maintenance personnel.

The options report concluded that the unit cost of heat from the system was significantly higher than comparable systems and a number of areas of inefficiency were identified. It was noted that some of these inefficiencies could be improved subject to further investment.

A number of problems have arisen in relation to billing users of the system. This has resulted in a number of unissued and unpaid bills and considerable officer time has been expended.

The biomass system was originally funded by WAG (now WG) under the annual Housing Renewal Area Support Grant. WG has previously heralded the system as a good example of collaboration in the provision of renewable heating. It was allegedly the first such system in Wales. Initial consultation with WG has been undertaken and only a limited, uncommitted response has been returned.

The provision of heating to residential property is not a function the council would normally provide and it is considered that District Heating System should be included in the sale of the former school.

### **The Vyrnwy Estate**

The former school is surrounded by the Vyrnwy Estate currently owned by Severn Trent Water. The whole estate is currently for sale as a number of lots. The sale period is lengthy and has been extended on a number of occasions. The latest information is that preferred bidders have been selected and a 3 month consultation period will now commence. The consultation is a statutory requirement connected to part of the estate which is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

The sale of the estate is significant because (1) a number of houses connected to the district heating system are included in the residential lot of the Vyrnwy Estate sale and (2) interest in the school has been expressed by some potential bidders subject to their success in the sale process.

## **Options for selling the school**

The options report considered a range of options including:

- Sale of the school with or without the heating system
- Closure of the Heating System
- Continuing with the current arrangements for the Heating System

The Community Council has also been consulted to consider the possibility that the school and/or the heating system is transferred to them to become a community run asset.

The Community Council advised they would not wish to take over the school or heating system as a community run asset. They indicated that if the preferred bidder for the Vyrnwy Estate residential lot is not interested in purchasing the school and heating system they may wish to reconsider their position. (Minutes of the relevant Community Council meeting are expected to be provided in due course)

It is therefore recommended that the school together with the heating system is offered for sale as soon as the Vyrnwy Estate preferred bidders are announced.

Commercial interest in the school and heating system is expected to be limited. An initial valuation for the school alone placed it at about £60k. This is based upon residential conversion which would be subject to removal of the restrictive covenant, which could cost a sizeable proportion of the sale amount.

The heating system is unlikely to enhance the property value. More likely the sale value would be reduced to help fund a purchaser's investment plans for the biomass system; however a number of avenues exist for a purchaser to explore whether any grant funding can be secured.

A possible option for selling the school and heating system would be to include it as part of a managed package within the residential lot of the Severn Trent Water sale of the Vyrnwy Estate. This option has been discussed favourably with Severn Trent Water and will need to be explored further before a firm conclusion could be reached.

### **Corporate Improvement Plan**

Sale of the school would relieve the Council of a surplus asset.

Inclusion of the heating system in a sale would release staff time to concentrate on the delivery of Council services.

### **Options Considered/Available**

If the sale is unsuccessful then other avenues as set out in the Options Report will need to be investigated further.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

Sale of the school would relieve the Council of a surplus asset and provide an opportunity for the building to be put to good use.

It is hoped that a purchaser would be able to support local jobs in providing fuel etc for the heating system, better manage the system and seek funding for improving its efficiency.

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

Sale of the school would provide an opportunity for the listed building to be fully maintained and put to good use.

The heating system burns sustainable wood chips which being a by-product of commercial forestry could be locally sourced and chipped.

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

The proposal will have no discernable impact.

### **Local Member(s)**

The local member, Cllr Simon Baynes supports the proposals.

### **Other Front Line Services**

The Schools Service supports the proposal to sell the school and considers that management of the heating system would best rest with the individual or organisation with responsibility for the premises.

No other front line services will be affected directly.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

Finance Officer: The Principal Accountant for Community Skills and Learning comments that the Authority is currently holding a significant level of debt with regard to the Heating system as both the Community Hall Committee and householders are disputing the charges raised against them. The capital receipt realised should the sale go ahead would be used to support the Authorities Capital programme, current policy provides 30% to the service area and 70% for corporate decision.

Legal Officer: Subject to (a) obtaining clarification from the Welsh Government as to whether the grant would have to be repaid in the event of a sale of the property and (b) ensuring that the sale would not be in breach of the restrictive covenant in favour of Severn Trent Water, there are no legal concerns with the proposal

PCC Mechanical Engineer: Responded with no comments.

It is not considered applicable to seek comments from HR, ICT and BPU.

**Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

The proposal has been discussed with the Community Council. Local organisations will be advised of the sale and will be able to participate if they so choose.

**Communications**

The local media will be interested in the sale and it is proposed that a press release will be prepared to publicise the planned sale.

**Statutory Officers**

The Monitoring Officer said the proposals need to follow the normal procedures for disposal of Council Assets and advice from Legal Services obtained as necessary.

The Section 151 Officer said the continued operation of the heating system by the County Council is an inefficient use of resources and is unlikely to be in the best interests of the residents. For these reasons, he is supportive of the recommendations.

The Director of Education said he is supportive of the sale of the school and for this to include the operation of the heating system if possible. He would be concerned to ensure that the community do not receive a reduced heating service.

**Members' Interests**

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

**Future Status of the Report**

**(This section must be completed if the report is a confidential/exempt report)**

Members are invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
1. Declare the former school at Llanwddyn surplus to the Council's needs.	To enable the sale of the school to proceed.
2. Agree to the sale of the former school, with or without the associated heating system, subject to a suitable offer(s) being received.	To dispose of a surplus asset and relieve the council of the administrative burden and operational issues associated with the heating system.

3. Enter into discussions with Severn Trent Water to explore inclusion of the school and heating system within the sale of the Vyrnwy Estate (Lot 4) Residential & commercial portfolio and proceed with a joint sale if agreement can be reached.	To provide greater clarity and certainty for potential buyers and thereby improve the commercial position for the council. This option would also assist in removing some potential issues of detail regarding licences and the restrictive covenant.
4. Issue a press release in due course, giving advance notice of the sale.	To give notice to interested parties in advance of the sale, without the sales details themselves becoming stale while we await the outcome of the sale of the Vyrnwy Estate.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>Cllr Simon Baynes</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Nigel Baldwin / Gareth Jones / David Williams</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2011</b>

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
David Williams	01597 826681	N/A	david.williams1@powys.gov.uk

**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Llanwddyn School Options Report - March 2011





**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**12th September, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mr. S. Davies	Bronllys C.P. School	County Councillor C.E. Powell
Rev. B.C. Reardon	Builth Wells C.P. School	County Councillor A. York
County Councillor D. Price	Builth Wells C.P. School	County Councillor A. York
County Councillor D.W. Meredith	Priory C. in W. School	County Councillor D.W. Meredith
Mr. T.C. Ingram	Llandysilio C. in W. School	County Councillor E.A. Jones
Mrs. O.P. Martin	Carreghofa C.P. School	County Councillor E.A. Jones

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 13 September 2011

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**20th September, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mrs. D.M. James	Brecon High	County Councillor D.G.Thomas, County Councillor P.J. Ashton, County Councillor T. Thomas, County Councillor A.M.C. Weale and County Councillor D.W. Meredith
Mr. J. Gibson-Watt	Ysgol Penmaes	County Councillor P.J. Ashton
County Councillor L.V. Corfield	Forden C. in W. School	County Councillor L.V. Corfield

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 20 September 2011

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**Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes**  
**Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 27 September 2011**

**Closure of the Residence at Brynllwarch Hall School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
<b>To grant approval for the publication of statutory notices in respect of the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.</b>	<b>No longer a need or demand for residential provision at the school.</b>

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET REPORT  
FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION**

**26<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR: John Mitson, School Effectiveness Officer, Working with Others**

**SUBJECT: Closure of the Residence at Brynllwarch Hall School**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to gain approval for the publication of statutory notices for the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.

In 2000, the residential provision at Brynllwarch Hall School, the Authority's Specialist School for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties, located in Kerry, near Newtown, included 36 residential places for both boys and girls.

In 2001, the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW) introduced new standards for the residential care of all pupils, attending schools, and this resulted in the girls' residential block, the former stables at the school, being no longer fit for purpose. This block was, therefore, closed as a residence, reducing the residence at the school to 25/26 pupils. This made the girls' residential building available for other purposes at the school, particularly teaching. The residence was, therefore, reduced, with effect from 2001, to the top floor in the main house and the two former teachers' houses on the school campus.

In 2009, following a critical Fire Officer Inspection Report, it was necessary to close the residential floor in the main house and, therefore, the residence was reduced to the two houses, a total of eight pupil bed spaces.

The provision of residential places at Brynllwarch Hall School was to permit the school to provide a county-wide provision. It is the only school of this nature within Powys and, therefore, in order to make the facility available to all of the county, residential provision was required. At the end of the summer term, 2010, the need for residential provision to enable pupils who attend the school because their homes were too distant for daily travelling, ended.

For a number of years, Brynllwarch Hall School has ceased to be a county-wide provision and has become a provision for pupils in north and mid Powys. Currently, nearly 50% of the pupils attending the school come from the Newtown High School catchment area and, therefore, residential provision is no longer required. In addition, pupils from the south of the county who previously would have attended Brynllwarch Hall School, no longer attend. The reasons for this are as follows:-

- parents and their children no longer wish to attend schools on a residential basis from Mondays to Fridays;

- some pupils who, previously, would have attended Brynlywarch Hall School, are now benefitting from the provision available at Ysgol Penmaes, Brecon, which can be reached, on a daily basis, from all parts of south Powys;
- the Authority is making greater provision for pupils, who previously would have attended Brynlywarch Hall School, in south Powys through support arrangements in mainstream and through the Authority's Complementary Education Service;
- the Authority's funding for outreach and the funding received through the Welsh Government's grant for 'Unlocking the Potential of Special Schools' which has also been used to support the Authority's outreach service, means that staff from Brynlywarch Hall School are able to provide advice and support to colleagues in mainstream schools, in all parts of the Authority, including south Powys, on meeting the needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and with emotional and behavioural difficulties who are attending mainstream schools.

During the 2010/2011 financial year, the Authority budgeted £125,000 to fund the residence. This met the cost of the provision itself as well as the staff costs incurred in supporting the pupils. This is, therefore, a very expensive residential provision and for the period from September, 2010, onwards, as there were no pupils requiring the provision because of the distance of their home from the school, pupils at the school have been permitted to spend one or two nights a week in the residence, as unofficial respite. To maintain the residence for this purpose when there are no pupils requiring access because of their geographical location, in respect of the school, would be an inefficient use of resources and a very expensive provision.

In the light of the above, the Council's Board considered a report seeking approval to start the statutory consultation process to close the residence at Brynlywarch Hall School at its meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2011, and members resolved that approval be given to the commencement of statutory procedures for the closure of the residence.

In addition, informal consultations were carried out with the following as the first step in the process:-

- Parents of pupils at the school;
- Headteachers of Powys schools;
- Powys Children's Services.

The informal consultation took place between 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011, and 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, and, during that period, only one objection to the closure of the residence was received.

During the 2010/2011 school year, both the Care Standards Inspectorate and the Fire Officer have confirmed that further expensive works need to be undertaken in relation to the two houses still used as residences in order to bring them up to an acceptable standard and this would require significant capital expenditure for the Authority in order to maintain the number of bed spaces currently available. In short, the residence is no longer fit for purpose and the Authority has not identified the capital required to carry out the necessary upgrades to the buildings. In the light of this situation, there will be no residential pupils at the school with effect from September, 2011. As indicated above, all the pupils at the school, including those who have been using the residence on an informal respite basis will be able to travel to and from school on a daily basis.

Statutory consultation was carried out during the period 7<sup>th</sup> July to 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2011, and commenced with consultation meetings held, with the following, on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2011:-

- Union Representatives;



- staff
- Governors of the school;
- parents/community members.

Interested parties were given until 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2011, inclusive, to submit their views and objections in relation to the proposed closure and only one objection has been received. This is from the parent of a pupil who lives approximately 15 miles from the school and is made on the basis that the pupil will no longer be able to spend an occasional night at the school, on a respite basis. This pupil does not meet the geographical criteria for use of the residence and, therefore, would not qualify to access the residence if pupils living more distant from the school required it. It is not part of the role of the School's Service to provide respite for pupils and the Authority receives no funding to enable this provision to be made. Provision of respite is a responsibility of Children's Services and, while there was no objection to the occasional bed space being taken by a pupil on a respite basis when there was a requirement for residential provision for pupils who lived too distant from the school to travel on a daily basis, it would not be appropriate to maintain the provision for this purpose now that the geographical requirement has disappeared.

### **Proposal**

In the light of the above, the Authority is proposing that statutory notices be published, in respect of the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School, on the basis that, if agreed, the residence would formally close with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011, or as soon as possible, thereafter. A statutory notice of closure will be published at the school, nearest library, and in the local press, inviting any formal written objections to be submitted within one month of publication. If there are objections, the matter will be referred to the Education Minister of the Welsh Government for determination. The Minister will consider the objections, the Authority's response to those objections, all the supporting evidence, and then decide to approve, reject or modify the proposal.

### **Corporate Improvement Plan**

This proposal is consistent with the Authority's plans to make local provision for pupils with additional learning needs and is consistent with the school modernisation process which, in addition to focussing on the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, also focuses on local provision for local pupils. The risk to the Council is that this would formally make Brynllwarch Hall School a school for north and mid Powys and require alternative arrangements in the south of the county. These arrangements are partly in place as a result of parental objections to residential provision, and plans are in place for further development, with effect from September 2012, through the completion of the school modernisation process in the Ystradgynlais area.

### **Options Considered/Available**

There are no alternatives to closure as the Care Standards Inspectorate requires certain facilities to be in place, in relation to residential pupils, however small a number. There is, therefore, no possibility of reducing the expenditure on the residence, no matter how small the number of pupils using it becomes.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

Closure of the residence for the reasons given above.

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

The proposal will remove what has become an unnecessary and expensive provision, freeing the resourcing and the buildings for alternative uses. The proposal will not impact on the Council's crime and disorder/Welsh language/other policies.

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

The impact of this proposal on Children and Young People will be negligible as only a small number of pupils have used the residence in recent years, on a respite basis, and they are all able to travel to and from the school on a daily basis.

## **Local Member(s)**

N/A

## **Other Front Line Services**

On occasions, Children's Services have requested that residential provision be made for pupils attending the school, who do not meet the geographical criteria, as short-term respite. The closure of the residence will mean that this is no longer available but this was only ever a very occasional arrangement and additional to the usual respite arrangements made by Children's Services. During the initial, informal consultation in respect of the proposal to close the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School, which included Children's Services, no objections were received from that agency.

## **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant for Communities, Skills and Learning confirms that, on the basis of 2011/2012 costings, a full year's saving of £125,000 would be achieved with the closure of the residence. Closure in December 2011 will achieve a £31,250 saving for the part year. There will be additional transport costs of approximately £1,600 in 2011/2012 to transport these pupils on a daily basis. These are, however, not significant as most of the pupils will access existing transport provision. There may also be redundancy/early retirement and compensatory payment costs associated with changes in staffing which are yet to be quantified, all of which will reduce the initial saving. The Governing Body of Brynllwarch Hall School will need to consider the change in provision and reduction in funding when planning their budget for 2012/2013.

Legal - There are no legal implications at this stage

## **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

N/A

## **Communications**

N/A

## **Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Finance and Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-

"I note the comments of the Principal Accountant. The proposal will deliver recurring savings; these will cover termination costs in a relatively short timeframe."

The views the Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) is that:

"Provided that the consultation process is followed through properly, there are no legal implications at this stage"

### **Members' Interests**

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

### **Future Status of the Report**

(This section must be completed if the report is a confidential/exempt report)

Members are invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

The view of the Strategic Director, Law & Governance is that:

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
Approval be granted for the publication of statutory notices in respect of the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.	No longer a need or demand for residential provision at the school.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	School Modernisation		
<b>Within Policy:</b>	Y	<b>Within Budget:</b>	Y

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	Councillor Mrs K M Roberts-Jones
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	School Effectiveness Officer
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2011

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
John Mitson	01597 826431	01597 826475	john.mitson@powys.gov.uk

### **Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**25<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mrs. M.A. Kilvert	Treowen C.P. School	County Councillor R.J. White
Mr. W. Toomey	Presteigne C.P. School	County Councillor G.R. Banks
Mrs. F. Williams	Abermule C.P. School	County Councillor W.T. Jones
Mr. J. Wakelam	Churchstoke C.P. School	County Councillor M.J. Jones
Mr. R.D. Sockett	Llanfyllin High School	County Councillor S.R.M. Baynes, County Councillor A.W. Davies, County Councillor T. Jones, County Councillor P.E. Lewis and County Councillor W.B. Thomas
County Councillor G.G. Hopkins	Gwernyfed High School	County Councillor G.G. Hopkins and County Councillor C.E. Powell

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 25.10.11

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**9<sup>th</sup> November, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
County Councillor G.P. Vaughan	Ysgol Bro Ddyfi	County Councillor J.M. Williams, County Councillor G.P. Vaughan and County Councillor R.W. Morgan
County Councillor F.H. Jump	Welshpool High School	County Councillor D. Bailey

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 9. 11. 11

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**14<sup>th</sup> November, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mrs. K. Griffiths	Crossgates C.P. School	County Councillor F. Barker
Mr. A. Harvey	Welshpool High School	County Councillor L.V. Corfield, County Councillor A. Holloway, County Councillor F.H. Jump, County Councillor D. Davies, County Councillor E.M. Jones, County Councillor D. Bailey and County Councillor D.R. Jones

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 15 November 2011

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mr. T. Ingram	Ysgol Maesydre	
Mr. D. Lush	Ysgol Maesydre	
Mrs. C. Thomas	Ysgol Maesydre	
Mr. V. Lloyd	Gladestry C. in W. School	County Councillor E.M. Jones
Mrs. E.M. Wilde	Llangedwyn C. in W. School	County Councillor A.W. Davies

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 23 November 2011

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**Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes  
Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 18 November 2011**

**Closure of Cwmdu Church in Wales (Aided) School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
To publish statutory notices for the closure of Cwmdu C in W Aided School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.	To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.

**Closure of Dolfor Community Primary School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
To publish statutory notices for the closure of Dolfor CP School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.	To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.

**Closure of Trefnanney Community Primary School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for Decision:</b>
To publish statutory notices for the closure of Trefnanney CP School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.	To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET REPORT  
FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION  
14th November 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Gareth Jones  
Senior Manager, Central Services

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Trefnanney Community Primary School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**Summary**

Following a review of small schools in Powys by the Council's Learning in the Community Programme Board earlier in the year, on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011 the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a consultation process to close Trefnanney CP School.

At the time of writing there are 12 pupils at the school and only one of these is of infant age.

The financial costings and potential savings from closure of the school are shown at Appendix A and are approximately £100,000 per annum.

A consultation meeting with staff, governors and the community was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September where the proposals were explained; this included a timetable explaining that the school could be formally closed by summer 2012. The Council must give one term's notice to a school proposed for closure as well as undertaking the formal statutory notice procedure.

The consultation period for comments to be received on the proposals ran from 19<sup>th</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> October. No comments were received during this period. Copies of the agreed minutes of the consultation meetings are available from the Schools Service. Following the closure of the consultation period and a request from the Schools Service, the comments of the pupils at the school were received and these are included at Appendix B.

**Statutory notices**

Statutory notices need to be published for one month and are subject to Welsh Government regulations. They must be displayed at all school entrances and published in at least one local newspaper as well as other prominent public places. They must be published not fewer than 15 school days before the end of the school term; the last possible publication date before the end of the current term would be 30<sup>th</sup> November. If one objection to a statutory notice is received, the decision falls to the Minister at the Welsh Government to determine. The Council must make its comments on the objections received and send them to the Welsh Government within two weeks of the end of the objection period.

**Proposal**

To publish statutory notices for the closure of Trefnanney CP School on or around 24<sup>th</sup> November with the closing date for objections being on or around 24<sup>th</sup> December with the receiving school being named as Meifod CP School. This timetable would allow, subject to

Ministerial approval, the school to be closed by 31st August 2012. Free transport to Meifod CP School will only be available for qualifying pupils.

### **Corporate Improvement Plan**

A priority of the Corporate Improvement Plan is to provide high quality educational opportunities for all and this priority has been encompassed within the Learning in the Community improvement priority of the Powys Change Programme. The proposals within this paper will also help to meet the efficiency priority targets within the Plan. Any recommendations to consult on the closure of schools will, if implemented, support the priorities for the Schools Service contained in the Plan.

### **Options Considered/Available**

The school could remain open but this would be a very inefficient use of resources and the number of pupils is at a level where it will become increasingly difficult for a reasonable standard of education to be provided.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

It is in the best interests of the pupils in the school that statutory notices for closure are published as soon as possible.

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

Where small schools are proposed for closure there will be some increase in travel and therefore carbon emissions.

The proposals are not anticipated to impact on any vulnerable or minority groups; an equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

School closure proposals will have an impact on the services available in rural communities but the savings generated will help to maintain and improve services for the whole of the community of Powys.

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

The best interests of young people in these small schools will be safeguarded at all times particularly during this uncertain period of review. In the case of small schools that will be closing, every effort will be made to ensure a smooth transition to new schools and safe and efficient transport to their new locations.

### **Local Member(s)**

The local member Councillor Eldredd Jones has commented as follows:

Following your invitation to local members to comment on the proposals to close small schools in the area, I confirm that I am supporting my community in this respect. Trefnanney CP School is an important focus of the community in the area. I am aware of the proposal to close the school and I am disappointed especially following the excellent Estyn report the school received recently. I wish to secure the best future for local children and I am opposing the closure of Trefnanney C.P. School and supporting those parents, governors and staff who are also opposing this proposal to close.

### **Other Front Line Services**

No implications identified.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant has been fully involved with the costings of the proposed closure of this school and confirms the savings identified are accurate based on the assumptions made in the report.



Legal - There are no legal implications flowing from the recommendations of this report.

**Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

No implications identified.

**Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) has commented:-  
The proposals need to follow the normal procedures for school closure and advice from Legal Services obtained as necessary.

The Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-  
I note that the Principal Accountant has agreed the financial data used in the report and would support the recommendation of the report.

**Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report.

**Future Status of the Report**

The portfolio holder is invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>To publish statutory notices for the closure of Trefnanney CP School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.</b>	<b>To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>Councillor Eldredd Jones</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Head of Schools</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> August 2012</b>

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Owen James	01597 826709		Owen.james@powys.gov.uk

**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Trefnanney Consultation Paper September/October 2011  
Trefnanney Community Impact Assessment September/October 2011

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## Appendix A - Detailed Costings re Small Schools - November 2011

### Trefnanney C P School

	Year 1	Year 2
2011-12 Pupil Numbers Funded	24	15
2011-12 Delegated & Devolved Budget	146,776	137,621
2011-12 Estimated Current Transport Costs	-	-
2011-12 Subsidy of School Meal Provision	8,000	8,000
<b>Total Direct Costs of School</b>	<b>154,776</b>	<b>145,621</b>
Annual Budget that Would Transfer with Pupils	43,615	24,715
<b>Gross Saving in Year</b>	<b>64,844</b>	<b>120,906</b>
<b>Less Estimated H to S Transport</b> 10 Pupils live in allocation area Sept 12, assumed 2 transport routes at £75 per day each	(19,000)	(28,500)
<b>Net Saving in Year on Direct Costs</b>	<b>45,844</b>	<b>92,406</b>
Saving of Central Costs at an Estimated £12,500 per school	7,292	12,500
<b>Total Net Savings before 1 off Costs</b>	<b>53,136</b>	<b>104,906</b>
<b>Estimated Early Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs (Max)</b>		
Current Policy	42,791	1,800
Local Government Pension Strain	6,350	
Statutory Provision	26,587	-
<b>Projected Savings/(Costs) Including Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs)</b>		
<b>Current Policy</b>	<b>10,345</b>	<b>103,106</b>
<b>Statutory Provision</b>	<b>26,549</b>	<b>104,906</b>
<b>Current Policy &amp; LGPS</b>	<b>3,995</b>	<b>103,106</b>

### Other Factors to Consider

None

### Current Budget Position (Estimated Balance).

At 31.3.2011	8,981
At 31.3.2012	(1,547)
At 31.3.2013	(21,819)

Does not account for changes recently agreed in teaching staff.

NB. The figures in Year 1 assume a school closure at the end of August and the savings and additional costs reflect a 7/12 impact for the first year (September to March).

Trefnanney C.P school  
Trefnanney  
Meifod  
Powys  
Sy22 6xx

Dear Mr James

I am David, one of the lovely children of Trefnanney. One of my family signed many of the petitions and now feel that it's been a complete waste of time. I know that the school is definately closing but we wish we could change it. I'm so upset about the place closing. A small school is just one big happy family and big schools maybe have rough children in them, I'm not saying they do but you never know, also this school has been open since 1875. Its such a shame to close it now. I don't get the point, I know we don't have many children but we're one big happy family and our teachers are so nice to us. They're always happy. I'm lucky because I've just made it through and I'm going straight into high school but I will still have to put up losing Trefnanney and I feel so sorry for (Bette, Hannah, Ben, Emma, and Tom ) they are the ones who have to leave wonderful Trefnanney school.

It's amazing how long the school has survived all these years and now its sad that its closing, we are so upset now and on the edge of crying.

Please think again.

Yours sincerely  
David Pryce. ☹

TREFNANNEY CP SCHOOL  
TREFNANNEY  
MEIFOD  
POWYS  
SY22 6XX

Dear Mr James,

I know we are definitely closing down but we don't want to go with out a fight. We are short of people but our school will always be remembered by all of the lucky children who had a good education here. I know we are too small but people will come back in the future and remember what this school was like and they will wish that their children could have had as good time and education as every child has had here since 1875.

We like this school just like it is and we are all sad that all of those good memories will go.

But we hope that the school will stay here so that we can come back and visit it just like all the other children who have left in the past do.

Please have a rethink and let us stay.

from  
Josh Goolden  
Year 6

Trefnanney C.P School  
Trefnanney  
Meifoc  
Powys  
SY22 6XX  
2<sup>nd</sup> November

Dear Mr James

My name is Ben and I go to Trefnanney School and I do not think you should close it. I have been to four different schools and Trefnanney is definitely the best. I have never been to a better school in all my life and I have been here for 4 years and I don't see why it should close now.

Trefnanney School has been open for 136 years which is another reason why I don't see why it should close now. When I first got into year six I knew when I went to high school I would miss Trefnanney, now I now everyone will miss it including people who aren't going to high school this year because it is closing. I know we are a small school but in small schools we are like one big family so really what you are doing if you close this school is breaking up one big family.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Correll,  
Year six pupil of Trefnanney

Trefnanney C.P School

Trefnanney

Meifod

Powys

Dy226xx

November 2<sup>nd</sup>

Dear Mr James,

I am Jack I am one of the children of Trefnanney school and I am ten. I am not very happy about the people who are closing the school. We have made a web site and made a petition and neither worked so I am not very happy. Yes, we are not one of the big schools of the county but we are a big family. You need little schools, because this school has been open for 136 years, so it has been through World War One and Two, so do you think it should close now? I know I don't, so you should think again about closing our school ☹. I feel sorry for the rest of the children that will have to move to another school. I know that I have been here the longest and we all are so happy here, I will be leaving in September but that does not mean I can't say what I think please send back.

Your sincerely Jack David Jones Francis.



**Trefnanney CP School  
Trefnanney  
Meifod  
Powys  
SY22 6XX  
2<sup>nd</sup> November**

**Dear Mr. James**

**I am seriously sad about you closing our school and I think you should not close us down although I know that the decision has almost been made. This School is in a lovely area with lovely children and teachers in it, it may be small but because of that we feel like a large family and every day after holidays is like a big reunion to me. I am sad that we are closing because it feels like the family is breaking up, we are trying to make this last year a year to remember. We are hoping that people will remember this school as happy, smiley and a fun place to be. I am a year 6 so it might not affect me but it will affect the year 5s and under who will have to find a new school, but even when they are settled in, it will not be the same as those lovely times in Trefnanney CP School.**

**Yours sincerely**

**Becky Phillips Year 6**

Trefnanney C.P School  
Trefnanney  
Meifod  
Powys  
SY22 6XX  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>

**D**ear Mr James

First of all I think it is awful that you are closing us down, we are a great school and we are all friends here including the Teachers. I know that we only have twelve people but we are like a family.

For a while there were rumours that the school was going to close, and that stopped people wanting to come to our school and that's not fair. We had to try to fight and fight for it to stay open and then it dropped back in our faces that it was going to close. Have you every felt like we have ? We are all devastated that it is going to close and so are the Teachers. The Year Threes will have just settled in to the juniors and then they have to move, how unfair is that?

This School has been open for around one hundred and thirty six years and now you decide to close it. I have so many good memories of this school all the Christmas concerts, the trips, all the adventures and they can't be enjoyed by anyone else. You see people in the papers that have been to our school and they are in the papers because they have done excellent work or left university and that shows how the education is very good here, and know where else will be as good as that.

This is the worst thing that has ever happened to me even though I am going to high school. I talk to people that I've never met before and they say 'What school do you go to?' and I answer 'Trefnanney,' and they will say that they've never heard of it so I tell them about our school and they think it would be a great school.

When we do the Christmas pantomime in Meifod there is this girl called Gwen and me and my friend Molly were telling her that the school might be closing, and she said that if she could she would bring her whole year to our school so it wouldn't close.

I hate to think what will happen to the school, like when I drive past in a year or two and see the school and think that I used to go there and now its not even a school. It is a horrible feeling.

Really if there was anything I can do to keep it open seriously I would do it. Mrs Thomas, Miss Roberts, Mrs Law and Sara they have all tried so hard to keep the school open and now its all gone to waste. We had a school

website and petition on the internet and people have signed that from when they came to this school and now they are a bit old. I have been in this school for seven years and this has been most of my childhood. I've only just thought about this but when its our last day it will be the schools last day as well I think that when the school closes I bet everyone will cry. Every time I get stuck on something Mrs Thomas or Miss Roberts will very kindly help us! Our school is in a lovely piece of countryside. I'll never forget Trefnanney School never in my life. And I want you to know that you aren't just hurting the pupils and the Teachers you will be hurting everyone all around the place. All the things that we have bought at least it will go to different school so they can enjoy them. All the Teachers are really nice and I bet they wont get a job as good as this! All the year six are going to high school but it won't change how I feel at all. I have learnt a lot in every subject.

Well I hope you realize what you are doing to us and are happy with yourselves. Trefnanney School is the best school ever and don't forget that please.

Yours sincerely,  
Laura Pearce  
Treasurer of school council  
Year 6

Trefnanney C.P School  
Trefnanney  
Meifod  
Powys  
SY22 6XX  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>

Dear Mr James

I can't believe you tried to close us, because now you may have got what you wanted but no one else has. Everybody in this school is devastated that you are closing their school. All the year threes haven't long joined the juniors and they are going to have to go to a new school. It's not fair on the teachers or the pupils of this school because this school is a very educational school. Everybody has learnt so much, I know I have and I know that everybody who has, gone to high school and college or university has done so much and learnt even more than they need to know. This school has been open for about one hundred and thirty six years and to make those years end well it's just a big shame.

Trefnanney might be a small area but that is most of the time a good thing because nearly everybody is a friend in this area. Me and my friend Laura do a Meifod pantomime and we both have this friend called Gwen and she said that, if she could she would bring her whole year to this school so it wouldn't close.

Our teachers Mrs Thomas, Miss Roberts, Mrs Law and Sara have gone through a lot to keep this school open and all their hard work has gone to pot. All the teachers have had a wonderful job and I don't think they will get a job as good as this one. Everybody is my best friend, and even the teachers. When the year threes and fours choose their new school they will say to their mums or dads, 'Where are we going?' and then their mums or dads will say school and they won't know which one they mean, they will be so confused about which school they're going to. Me and all the other year six will be going to high school but it doesn't mean that we want the school to close. People might think we do but we don't. I know a lot of people that want their children to come to this school but because it's closing they can't. This school is the best school I could ever choose, and I want the teachers to get a nice job

wherever they can. I will cry my eyes out when this school closes and I will miss all the teachers. I just wish this school wouldn't close.

**Yours Sincerely  
Molly Gittins  
Secretary of School Council  
Year six**

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET REPORT  
FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION  
14th November 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Gareth Jones  
Senior Manager, Central Services

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Cwmdu Church in Wales (Aided) School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**Summary**

Following a review of small schools in Powys by the Council's Learning in the Community Programme Board earlier in the year, on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011 the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a consultation process to close Cwmdu C in W (Aided) School.

At the time of writing there are 21 pupils at the school.

The financial costings and potential savings from closure of the school are shown at Appendix A and are approximately £100,000 per annum. The cost per pupil for 2011/12 is £5,852, 38% higher than the county average.

A consultation meeting with staff, governors and the community was held on 21st September where the proposals were explained; this included a timetable explaining that the school could be formally closed by summer 2012. The Council must give one term's notice to a school proposed for closure as well as undertaking the formal statutory notice procedure.

The consultation period for comments to be received on the proposals ran from 19<sup>th</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> October. A summary of the representations received by this deadline is shown in Appendix B. An officer response to the main themes from these representations is given below. A copy of all letters and emails received is available in the Schools Service as are the agreed minutes of all the consultation meetings.

Comments from respondents focus on the following themes and an officer response is given in the paragraphs that follow:

- Cultural identity and the school's role in village life

It is acknowledged that the school plays a large part in village life and if the school closed there would be a loss of a social focus for the community. There are however other points of focus for the community such as the church, the village hall, the pub and the cafe. This impact on community life has to be weighed against the small pupil numbers and the high cost per pupil at Cwmdu. Pupil numbers are not sustainable at their current level and there seems to be little prospect of these numbers rising.

- The school's Christian values and links to the church; alternative faith provision is not available

It is recognised that the school's Church in Wales (Aided) status needs to be considered as part of this review. Whilst the Council acknowledges that Llangattock C in W School is full, an additional classroom could be provided at reasonable cost. The distance to Llanbedr C in W (Aided) School (which has capacity) is disputed by some respondents but this school is six miles away from Cwmdu. The Council therefore believes that there is suitable alternative faith provision within reasonable distance. Notwithstanding this, the Council has named a non faith based school – Llangynidr CP School – as the receiving school in the proposed statutory notice as it is the nearest school to Cwmdu. Llangynidr CP School has the physical capacity to increase in size.

- SEN specialism

The results that the school achieves with children with special needs are recognised but it is not the only school that makes significant progress with children with significant SEN/ALN needs, the smaller class sizes in Cwmdu may be a factor that supports an increased level of small group work. If the school does close the authority recognises that the children currently in Cwmdu with significant needs will need an individual plan to ensure they are successfully integrated into their new schools.

- Good standards

The good standards at Cwmdu are not disputed by the Council but standards in alternative schools in the area are at least as good if not better.

- Loss of employment

Whilst any loss of jobs is regretted there will be other opportunities at the receiving schools. Staff have been advised about the Council's redundancy and redeployment policy and will be given support through what is a very difficult process.

- Leaking of small schools review and the impact on numbers

The leak of the information about the small schools review to the press in January 2011 was regrettable and the Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure has apologised personally to the community on behalf of the Council. Some respondents are also suggesting that Council officers were putting off potential Cwmdu parents both before and after January 2011. There has however been no deliberate policy of deterring parents from choosing Cwmdu C in W School. The numbers at the school have not shown a significant change from those identified of 23 in the original report to the Learning in the Community Programme Board in January 2011. At the meeting held with officers on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010 the governors confirmed that the numbers in the school were not projected to increase.

- Concern about Crickhowell CP School

Despite the high number of surplus places at Crickhowell CP School, it is still attended by over 200 pupils. The Council does not share the concern of people in Cwmdu about Crickhowell CP School and has received no specific complaints from parents about that school. Standards, as measured by Estyn, are technically slightly better in Crickhowell than in Cwmdu. At its last Estyn inspection in 2009 Cwmdu C in W School received 7 grade 2s; Crickhowell CP School (2008) received 6 grade 2s and 1 grade 1.



- Additional transport costs

The Council has factored in the £20-30,000 estimated annual cost of additional school transport if Cwmdu C in W Aided School was to close but the overall net savings would still be of the order of £100,000 per annum.

- School closure should have been considered as part of the area review process

The area review process allows all schools in a catchment to be considered strategically and in consultation with local stakeholders. However, because of the high cost of small schools, there is provision within the Policy for the Organisation of Primary Schools 2006 to review small schools individually when they reach a certain number of pupils. Cwmdu C in W Aided School falls in to this category.

Response C21 and C22 have had an individual response by letter. Contrary to the view of the respondent, the potential receiving schools were all notified of the closure proposals.

The Council does not believe that any of the issues raised during the consultation period should prevent it from proceeding to the publication of statutory notices for closure of the school.

#### Statutory notices

Statutory notices for closure of a school need to be published for one month and are subject to Welsh Government regulations. They must be displayed at all school entrances and published in at least one local newspaper as well as other prominent public places. They must be published not fewer than 15 school days before the end of a term; the last possible publication date before the end of the current term would be 30<sup>th</sup> November. If one objection to a statutory notice is received, the decision falls to the Minister at the Welsh Government to determine. The Council must make its comments on the objections received and send them to the Welsh Government within two weeks of the end of the objection period.

#### Proposal

To publish statutory notices for the closure of Cwmdu C in W Aided School on or around 24<sup>th</sup> November with the closing date for objections being on or around 24<sup>th</sup> December with the receiving school being named as Llangynidr CP School. This timetable would allow, subject to Ministerial approval, the school to be closed by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012. Free transport to the named receiving school will only be available for qualifying pupils.

#### Corporate Improvement Plan

A priority of the Corporate Improvement Plan is to provide high quality educational opportunities for all and this priority has been encompassed within the Learning in the Community improvement priority of the Powys Change Programme. The proposals within this paper will also help to meet the efficiency priority targets within the Plan. Any recommendations to consult on the closure of schools will, if implemented, support the priorities for the Schools Service contained in the Plan.

#### Options Considered/Available

The school could remain open but this would be a very inefficient use of resources and the number of pupils is at a level where it will become increasingly difficult for a reasonable standard of education to be provided.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

It is in the best interests of the pupils in the school that statutory notices for closure are published as soon as possible.

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

Where small schools are proposed for closure there will be some increase in travel and therefore carbon emissions.

The proposals are not anticipated to impact on any vulnerable or minority groups; an equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

School closure proposals will have an impact on the services available in rural communities but the savings generated will help to maintain and improve services for the whole of the community of Powys.

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

The best interests of young people in these small schools will be safeguarded at all times particularly during this uncertain period of review. In the case of small schools that will be closing, every effort will be made to ensure a smooth transition to new schools and safe and efficient transport to their new locations.

### **Local Member(s)**

The local member Councillor Kathryn Silk has commented as follows:

The impact of closure of this school cannot be underestimated. The attached submissions highlight the important role the school has played in the education of generations of children and particularly the significance of offering a mainstream education for many children with additional learning needs. The school plays a pivotal role in sustaining the cultural heritage of the wider community and makes a tremendous contribution to the Church, the Eisteddfod, the local Show as well as the lives of the local residents. The benefits to the wider society cannot be measured in crude financial terms, and the respondents claim that these have not been factored into the LEA's proposals.

### **Other Front Line Services**

No implications identified.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant has been fully involved with the costings of the proposed closure of this school and confirms the savings identified are accurate based on the assumptions made in the report.

Legal - There are no legal implications at this stage.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

No implications identified.

### **Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) has commented:-

The proposals need to follow the normal procedures for school closure and advice from Legal Services obtained as necessary.

The Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-

I note that the Principal Accountant has agreed the financial data used in the report and would support the recommendation of the report.

### **Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report.

### **Future Status of the Report**

The portfolio holder is invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>To publish statutory notices for the closure of Cwmdu C in W Aided School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.</b>	<b>To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>Councillor Kathryn Silk</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Head of Schools</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> August 2012</b>

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Owen James	01597 826709		Owen.james@powys.gov.uk

### **Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Cwmdu Consultation Paper September/October 2011

Cwmdu Community Impact Assessment September/October 2011

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## Appendix A - Detailed Costings re Small Schools - November 2011

### Cwmdu C in W (A) School

	Year 1	Year 2
2011-12 Pupil Numbers Funded	26	26
2011-12 Delegated & Devolved Budget	164,828	164,828
2011-12 Estimated Current Transport Costs	10,650	10,650
2011-12 Subsidy of School Meal Provision	8,000	8,000
<b>Total Direct Costs of School</b>	<b>183,478</b>	<b>183,478</b>
Annual Budget that Would Transfer with Pupils	56,880	56,880
<b>Gross Saving in Year</b>	<b>73,849</b>	<b>126,598</b>
<b>Less Estimated H to S Transport</b>		
9 Pupils live in allocation area, assumed 1 transport route at £125 per day and an extension to current route at £30 per day	(19,633)	(29,450)
<b>Net Saving in Year on Direct Costs</b>	<b>54,216</b>	<b>97,148</b>
Saving of Central Costs at an Estimated £12,500 per school	7,292	12,500
<b>Total Net Savings before 1 off Costs</b>	<b>61,508</b>	<b>109,648</b>
<b>Estimated Early Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs (Max)</b>		
Current Policy	52,216	641
Local Government Pension Strain	245	
Statutory Provision	38,571	-
<b>Projected Savings/(Costs) Including Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs)</b>		
<b>Current Policy</b>	<b>9,292</b>	<b>109,007</b>
<b>Statutory Provision</b>	<b>22,937</b>	<b>109,648</b>
<b>Current Policy &amp; LGPS</b>	<b>9,047</b>	<b>109,007</b>

### Other Factors to Consider

The preferred school of parents is expected to be Llangattock C in W School which is not the closest school and is currently at or above capacity in the majority of year groups, an extension to increase the capacity of the school would cost in the region of £250,000 and would cost £ 15,850 per annum to fund through prudential borrowing at 6.34%.

### Current Budget Position (Estimated Balance).

At 31.3.2011	9,702
At 31.3.2012	3,726
At 31.3.2013	(2,250)

NB. The figures in Year 1 assume a school closure at the end of August and the savings

and additional costs reflect a 7/12 impact for the first year (September to March).

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CWMDU C IN W SCHOOL

REF.	COMMENT
<b>C1</b>	<p>Cwmdu School provides cultural, spiritual and social input to its surrounding area. It promotes Welsh culture by holding annual Eisteddfod, the afternoon session of which is reliant on excellent competition provided by pupils of Cwmdu School. Would challenge the statement in the Community Impact Assessment that there would be no loss of Welsh medium provision in area, if the school closed. The closure of the school would result in loss of the only remaining Eisteddfod in that area of South Powys. Cwmdu Agricultural Show is also dependent on many entries from pupils of the school. The relationship between St Michaels Church and Cwmdu school is very strong. Parents have been attracted to the school because of its strong Christian values and ethos. The 2 nearest Church schools are Llangattock which is at maximum capacity and Llanbedr whose access roads are difficult.</p> <p>The school provides the village with many social events, which is particularly important in an area of scattered population.</p> <p>The school has received endorsements from SEN specialists, with many children benefiting from smaller environment.</p> <p>The school is the main source of local employment in the village.</p> <p>The school has received a favourable ESTYN report. Latest ESTYN report states that “Cwmdu is a good school where pupils achieve well; the school is very much at the heart of the local village community .....</p>
<b>C2</b>	<p>Cwmdu Church in Wales School has an extremely important role to play in the life of the community and is at the heart of community activities. The school, Village Hall, Eisteddfod and Cwmdu Show are all linked and the loss of any one would adversely affect the others. The Hall relies on the school for many bookings and the Eisteddfod is reliant on participation of Cwmdu School pupils. Many of the entries are performed in Welsh by non-Welsh speaking children. The village is proud of its ability to maintain this Welsh tradition. A valuable part of Welsh culture would be lost if the school closes. The proposed closure would have a disastrous effect on the local area as many of the local activities are based around the school, which are organised for the benefit of the community. Cwmdu School is a denominational school and plays a key part in the local Church. Cwmdu School has an extremely good reputation for catering for pupils with special needs in preparing them to go forward to the next stage of their education. Loss of Cwmdu School would have an adverse effect on Cwmdu and on the Community Council, which would not have a school in its area. Closure of the school would “leave a gap at the heart of the village”. Cwmdu School is the largest employer in the village. Loss of employment would be keenly felt.</p>
<b>C3</b>	<p>Cwmdu School provides a loving, secure environment where the children are nurtured. School provides caring, consideration and respect in a fun atmosphere. Older children help the younger children. Pupils are taught life skills and develop into “happy, rounded individuals”.</p> <p>Cwmdu School is at the heart of the local community, supporting local show, Eisteddfod etc. The Eisteddfod would finish if the school closed. The pupils play an important part in Church services and events. The School organises events which are open to the local community. Without the school, there would be no heart to the local rural community.</p> <p>The school has time for each child and any problems or learning difficulties are identified and dealt with, the child and parents being given support and guidance. The school has taken many children who have found mainstream, large schools difficult. These children have “blossomed into confident, happy, achieving children through care, kindness and hard work of the staff.</p> <p>No money will be made by selling the land and school building for development as they do not belong to PCC. There will be a cost to Authority</p>

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CWMDU C IN W SCHOOL

	<p>of having to transport pupils to alternative schools. Crickhowell CP School has surplus places but parents have expressed the view they would not send their children to Crickhowell CP School as an alternative school. Little money would be saved by closing Cwmdu School but closure would do damage to the rural community and children's lives and education.</p>
<b>C4</b>	<p>Impressed by ethos and atmosphere of Cwmdu school, the way and what they are taught, politeness of children and the way the pupils treat each other.</p> <p>The whole village has been involved with the school for many generations. The school is a very important heart of the village. The school has strong links with the Church, the Hall, the Eisteddfod and the Cwmdu Show. The Eisteddfod would be likely to discontinue if the school closed. No thought has been given to the quality of education offered at Cwmdu School; only the money saved by its closure. Parents would not be happy to send their children to the local school with the most surplus places and would be left with little choice as to alternative schools. Several pupils come to the school from outside the catchment as parents of these children prefer the school's methods and the size of the school.</p> <p>School is the largest employer in the village and is very important to those working there.</p> <p>Leak of information to the press was disastrous to the school. Expresses view that prospective parents were being "signposted" away from the school.</p> <p>School has nurtured several pupils with special needs who have all done "exceptionally well". Children find the small, welcoming school "less threatening" and relax and settle into school life.</p> <p>Cwmdu School is a small, happy, successful school.</p> <p>Closing Cwmdu School would not save much money as the building is not owned by PCC but closing the school would cause "much distress to the community"</p>
<b>C5</b>	<p>Cwmdu C in W School provides a high quality education with a strong Christian ethos. Parents are attracted to the school because it instils their beliefs and instils in the children a strong sense of belonging to a community. Alternative Faith education in area is limited; Llangattock C in W School is oversubscribed and Llanbedr C in W School which has limited availability but is not easily accessible. Disputes 6 miles distance between Cwmdu School and Llanbedr School quoted in the consultation paper. Church has strong links with the school and takes a weekly Assembly and provides a weekly After School Club. Children are involved in services in the Church, which are well supported by the local community. If the school was to close, Cwmdu Church would lose its connection with the children of the parish. The children would lose their sense of ownership and belonging to the community. Cwmdu is a small, rural community with the school as its main centre of community life and support for the Church.</p>
<b>C6</b>	<p>Children and staff from the school have played an important role in the early development of an orchard of rare and local apple trees. It had been expected that the current generation and future generations of school children would enjoy and appreciate it. Importance of Cwmdu</p>



## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CWMDU C IN W SCHOOL

	<p>school for continuity in the rural community; closure would adversely impact on the community as a whole.</p>
<b>C7</b>	<p>School is a vital part of the village community and is held in high regard. The school's closure would remove one of the key facets of life in a small village. It is one of the few institutions which brings the community together. The school and the community have been closely linked for generations. The schoolchildren play a major part in the annual village Eisteddfod and use the village hall for rehearsals and PE lessons. The closure of the school would make the village poorer in many respects.</p> <p>A decision to close a school with good educational standards will force children to relocate to other schools which may not be of a similar standard.</p>
<b>C8</b>	<p>Importance of role of the school in the culture and history of the community. The staff parents and pupils play a big part in community events: Eisteddfod, Village Show, social evenings, Church festivals, school's charitable coffee morning, sports day and school fetes etc. How can communities in Cwmdu area be sustained without a school?</p> <p>What establishment will come to the area to encourage, support, entertain, educate and interest communities in Cwmdu area? Villages should be encouraged to survive rather than to decline and stagnate.</p> <p>The Eisteddfod would not continue without Cwmdu school.</p> <p>Cwmdu School is a unique asset for the Crickhowell catchment and Powys. Cwmdu school enriches lives. School provides a secure happy environment and PCC should be proud of the school.</p> <p>Options offered in way of alternative schools are insufficient. Next local school to Cwmdu (Llangynidr) is full to capacity and school with most surplus places (Crickhowell CP) would not be considered by most parents because of its size.</p> <p>The way in which the community came to hear of the possible closure of Cwmdu school via the media was appalling and not proper conduct.</p> <p>"Cwmdu school delivers, has delivered and can continue to deliver."</p>
<b>C9</b>	<p>The prospect of sustainable communities will be greatly diminished if local schools are closed.</p>
<b>C10</b>	<p>Any proposed change would mean pupils would be transported on roads many miles with longer travel times. No gain to the child having to travel further and school transport would incur the county in more cost. Personal experience of school transport is that County uses lowest cost carriers with unreliable vehicles.</p> <p>Expresses the view that the leak to the press regarding consideration of closure of the school was deliberate and the decision on the school's closure is a foregone conclusion. Implies that insufficient has been done to track down who was responsible for the leak.</p> <p>Why offer Llangattock C in W as an alternative school when this school is already at capacity? A suggestion that an additional classroom is</p>

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CWMDU C IN W SCHOOL

	<p>created for an estimated £300K does not make sense in relation to achieving savings.</p> <p>Llanbedr school is another small village school and is likely to be the subject of future closure based on information re criteria for closure. Crickhowell CP has most surplus capacity; rather than assume closing school will fill space, it would be better to address the reason why parents do not want to send their children to Crickhowell CP. The road between Llangynidr and Crickhowell does not offer easy access particularly in bad weather.</p> <p>Why has Llangorse not been offered as an alternative school? The proposal reflects the minds of isolated planners rather than careful thought, consideration and the voice of parents and the community.</p> <p>The Community Impact Assessment does not reflect the importance of the village school and the significant contribution the school and its families make to life of Cwmdu. The document undersells the importance of the school and reflects poor research.</p> <p>The consultation document makes an assumption that everyone wants big schools, that big equals cost saving and better staff to children ratios, who are able to focus on pupils, rather than administration. Agrees that running the school should not detract from teachers' ability to teach but equally introducing "top heavy administrative functions to create this space is not proven to reduce cost, but rather increase unless commercial operational methods are applied. The county should consider moving away from Local Government approach to control and look at how major companies achieve efficiency savings through effective managements and administrative delivery.</p> <p>Powys CC has been instrumental in reducing the numbers at Cwmdu School through poor communication and staff have misrepresented the views of the County when enquiries have been made about Cwmdu School, meaning that for two years potential parents have not been given Cwmdu as a choice. Although pupil numbers at the school are low, no discussion or thought has been given that the school is worthy of keeping and developing. Decisions on the viability of the school should be based on real, hard proven facts and not based on the assumption that one size fits all.</p>
<p><b>C11</b></p>	<p>If Cwmdu School closes pupils will face a commute of at least 20 minutes each way to any of the alternative schools, more in the Winter if the weather is bad. It would not be satisfactory for a 3-year old to spend 40 minutes on a bus every day. Expresses concerns re health and safety of children on buses. Are special children's seats available on the bus? Will someone be there to ensure the children are properly strapped in? Will the bus pick up from the door or will the children need to wait for the bus in an isolated location? Concerns expressed that the detailed costing of transport to alternative schools has not been sufficiently thought through. Children have a right to stay in their community and this is vital if they are to learn community values. Children should not be shunted across vast distances to reach their place of learning. It makes it more difficult for parents to be involved with the school if they have to face a long drive each time they wish to attend parents' evening to volunteer to help at school events. What is important to us is not having lots of teachers for different subjects at primary school level or an array of play equipment, classrooms and resources – it is important for us for our children to be taught in a small group of children of all ages by a small number of teachers with whom they have a personal relationship. The quality of education is superior at Cwmdu School; we believe the</p>

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	<p>sort of family atmosphere is second to none in terms of passing on the values we want our children to learn at school. In large classes it is easy for one badly behaved child to go unnoticed to bully someone or to cause disruption. We like our children to learn alongside children of different ages.</p> <p>Once the school closes there will be no way of reopening and the infant population may increase in the future. Closure of the school would be another “nail in the coffin” of the rural way of life.</p> <p>The money saved by the closure of the school (£100,000) would be relatively small when compared to the total education budget. Cwmdu School represents excellent quality of education provided for the money, given the low ratio of teachers to pupils. If you disengage children from their community (by removing the local school) you are doing the community at large, as well as the children themselves a disservice.</p>
<p><b>C12</b></p>	<p>Cwmdu School makes a valuable contribution to the community, including the Church the Eisteddfod and the Show. The school’s performance, operating costs and standards were considered strengths in the last inspection report. The pastoral care provided and the behaviour of the children were also highly commended by the inspectors. Many parents choose Cwmdu School as it offers an ethos that supports their religious belief and reinforces the importance of community life. Faith provision in South East Powys is limited and if a possible local 200 hundred house development is taken into account there will be inadequate faith provision in the area. Llangatock C in W School is now at capacity.</p> <p>Concerns that the need to bus children to alternative schools is not in line with the “green agenda” and inappropriate to bus pupils from the age of the 3 to larger schools in an unfamiliar community extending their school day.</p> <p>20% of the pupil intake in the last ten years have been transfers from other local primary schools. Cwmdu School provides a valuable service within the local area by educating children in a mainstream environment who have not thrived in other local schools.</p> <p>The school has received many endorsements from specialists in the field of special education and has been recommended to parents of pupils who are finding school a difficult place to be. The school has been a refuge for school refusers and has also supported a number of children with significant physical disabilities. All these pupils have developed positive social skills and raised their educational attainment substantially with minimal cost to the ALN budget.</p> <p>There is no capital realisation through the closure of Cwmdu School as the site is owned by the Church in Wales. There are additional costs associated with releasing existing staff and redistribution of resources.</p> <p>Some children require stability and support which cannot adequately be met in a larger school. Far the from saving money, the implications of closing Cwmdu school would have costs which extend far beyond the LEA budget.</p>
<p><b>C13</b></p>	<p>Cwmdu School has been very successful. Respondent expresses the view that the Council should concentrate on improving other schools rather than shutting Cwmdu. The relatively small amount of money saved by closing Cwmdu School is not worth the upset to current pupils, future pupils as well as to the community. The village would hardly be able to survive without the school. The school plays an important part in</p>

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CWMDU C IN W SCHOOL

	community events such as the Eisteddfod and the village show. Without a school, the reasons that people would move to Cwmdu or stay in the village would no longer be there.
<b>C14</b>	The current pupil number has now fallen to 19 but one year ago it was around 28/29 pupils with the potential of being around 32 as there were families in the area who were interested in sending their children to Cwmdu. However this all changed when there was a leak in January 11 to the press that the school may close. Since the leak parents have been taking their children away from Cwmdu School as they are worried about its possible closure. Those who were thinking of sending their children to the school have been told that is unlikely the school will still be open after 2012. The leak has probably “wrecked” the school’s chances of staying open. If the governors had been “warned” that the school was being considered for closure they would have done more to advertise the school locally. If the school closes, many community events inspired by the school will close and the village will die. The school employs a lot of local staff and it may be uneconomic for these staff to be redeployed elsewhere for part-time work due to Powys being such a large County. If the school has to be considered for closure, it should be done as part of an area review process when all surrounding schools would be assessed and the future educational requirements for this part of Powys.
<b>C15</b>	<p>Whilst recognising that consultation on closure of the school is driven by pupil numbers, contends there are exceptional reasons why this small school should remain open.</p> <p>Cwmdu School plays a leading part in ensuring that the Welsh language and traditions are maintained in a much anglicised part of the County. The school provides the focus for the cultural life of the wider community and is the mainstay of the local Eisteddfod and the local Church. Maintaining a vibrant cultural heritage in our communities is the responsibility of the County Council and without the school the village and wider community would be significantly impoverished. The drive to standardise schools, to establish a uniformity of provision flies in the face of everything that our education system seeks to promote. Children are all individuals and parents need genuine choices of schools that cater for their child’s needs.</p> <p>There are examples of children who have failed to integrate in larger schools who have thrived at Cwmdu because it provides a caring, inclusive, mainstream environment with a strong Christian ethos. It is recognised that the cost per child is higher than in larger schools, but ensuring that by the age of eleven each child is equipped to face Secondary School does not equate to spending the same amount of money on each primary school pupil. Money spent on fragile children at this crucial stage in their lives can save costs that would fall later in life on other departments such as Social Services, the NHS and the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Concerns expressed that potential parents were signposted away from Cwmdu School.</p> <p>It would be irrational for the Cabinet to acknowledge the lack of alternative Church in Wales provision in respect of Llanfechain but not Cwmdu. There is no surplus capacity at either Llangattock Church in Wales School or at Llangynidr C P School and parents of existing pupils of Cwmdu</p>

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	<p>CP School do not consider Crickhowell CP School as an acceptable option.</p>
<b>C16</b>	<p>Cwmdu School provided his 3 children with a superb formative education and 2 have since gone on to achieve excellent results at University.</p> <p>Powys is a County of small rural communities. The County Council's School Closure Policy discourages the maintenance of vibrant all-age communities.</p> <p>Political decisions should not just be based on per capita costs. The values inculcated by Cwmdu School cannot be priced but they are none the less valuable. Cwmdu School provides enormous societal value which cannot be measured in monetary terms. The Minister will not want to take a decision, which is founded on a process that was flawed. "Powys County Council has behaved in a way which opens questions about abuse of process."</p> <p>What consideration has been given to keeping Cwmdu School open as a Welsh medium primary school? South East Breconshire has no such provision and a Welsh medium school in a village which has a proud history in Welsh medium education, would be a most successful development. The school's present headteacher is due to retire; a Welsh-speaking Head could be recruited and the school could move to being a Welsh medium school by year-group, beginning with new entrants in September, 2012.</p>
<b>C17</b>	<p>Has the proposed housing development at Cwrt y Gollen been factored in to the calculations? If this development is approved, the whole demographic of the schools in the Crickhowell area will change.</p> <p>The valuable work done at Cwmdu School for children with learning difficulties will be lost and will be more costly to provide elsewhere.</p> <p>Cwmdu is the only remain school in Cwmdu Community Council area following closure of Cathedine VP School at Bwlch over thirty years ago. Since the closure of the primary school in Bwlch the facilities in the village have slowly declined and the village population now includes a large percentage of elderly people because parents of young children are no longer attracted to the village. The same thing will happen to Cwmdu village if the school is closed. The impact assessment does not adequately reflect the "slow death" that will be inflicted on Cwmdu if the closure goes ahead.</p> <p>The project saving of £80,000 is very small.</p> <p>Concern expressed that officers of PCC have been discouraging new parents from sending their children to Cwmdu School by prematurely advising them that the school is to be closed and thus artificially reducing the number of pupils to make closure inevitable.</p>
<b>C18</b>	<p>Alleges that the process around the proposal to close Cwmdu School has been "badly handled" – reports leaked to the press and continued inaccuracies in the documentation relating to the process. Leaks to the press and officers allegedly informing prospective parents that the school was closing have ensured that the school numbers have reduced further, thus becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.</p>

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	<p>The proposal around Cwmdu C in W School should be considered as part of an area review process. A school should not be considered for closure without fully considering the impact on neighbouring schools.</p> <p>The fact that so many parents from outside the catchment area choose to send their children to Cwmdu School “speaks volumes”. By closing small schools, you are removing the rights of parents and pupils to choose the type of school. The correspondents do not agree that larger schools provide improved educational experiences for children as not all children are suited to large schools.</p> <p>The original alternative schools proposed were incorrect: Llangorse C in W, Llangattock C in W and Crickhowell CP. Langorse C in W School is in a different catchment. Llangattock C in W School does not have sufficient capacity. Crickhowell CP School has a large number of vacancies which correspondents suggest may be indicative of a “few issues”. Llangynidr CP School does not have vacancies in all classes. Llanbedr C in W School could be considered for closure as part of an area review process in future. Correspondents consider that the number of vacancies quoted in the documents relates to Crickhowell CP School and therefore parents do not have a choice of alternative schools.</p> <p>Disagrees with distances quoted for alternative schools from Cwmdu C in W School and claims that many of the routes would be via single track county lanes, many of which would not be accessible in inclement weather. The possibility of shared school transport with the high School was not mentioned until the consultation meeting with governors.</p> <p>Impact on working families in relation to disruption to childcare arrangements in the event of closure of Cwmdu C in W School needs to be acknowledged.</p> <p>Concerns expressed re delegated powers. Considers it is not democratic if one person has the final decision over whether the school should close.</p> <p>The closure of the schools would “decimate” the village as the school is a focal point for many community events.</p>
<p><b>C19</b></p>	<p>Concerns expressed that should Cwmdu School close, there needs to be continued provision of Church in Wales education which is easily accessible for its pupils. There are concerns regarding available capacity at Llangattock C in W School and there are concerns in relation to provision of transport to any alternative schools.</p> <p>The small size of Cwmdu C in W School enables supportive teaching of pupils who would be seen as having special learning needs. Whilst the special learning needs of these pupils might be dealt with effectively by a school such as Llangattock C in W School, transition is never easy particularly for pupils with particular or specialised needs.</p> <p>Concerns expressed in relation to the process – uncertainty around the possibility of school closure is causing problems and division in the community. Requests that communication process is kept as open, as broad and as clear as possible.</p> <p>Requests that the concerns of local people in Cwmdu, the parents and staff are taken into consideration very carefully.</p>

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<b>C20</b>	Mr Boggust expresses concern that PCC has not taken into account special needs consideration when calculating the cost per pupil at the schools. He believes that money has been saved by pupils with special needs being placed at Cwmdu C in W School who would have otherwise had to receive Complementary Education. Mr Boggust believes that the “vertical grouping” system at Cwmdu, which it is able to implement because of its size, is the main factor for the school’s success.
<b>C21</b>	Information presented in the most recent Community Impact Assessment contains errors. Most of the surplus places are in Crickhowell CP School, which is not the alternative school most parents of pupils at Cwmdu C in W School would wish to send their children. Alleges there has been misinformation on the part of PCC in relation to the closure process around Cwmdu School and that the Authority has treated pupils, staff in a “dismissive, arbitrary fashion”. Considers that it would have been fairer to consider Cwmdu School as part of an area review process.
<b>C22</b>	<p>Letter 1 – comments in relation to consultation proposal.</p> <p>Alleges that the Authority did not consult with alternative schools.</p> <p>Claims there is a lack of available places at Llangynidr and Llangattock Primary schools and a lack of choice in relation to alternative schools, if Cwmdu C in W School closes. Expresses concern that pupils have not been consulted. Expresses concerns regarding “negative impact on the children’s education” should Cwmdu School close and lack of choice over future schools and failure to include the children’s views in the process.</p> <p>Letter 2 – comments in relation to the community impact assessment</p> <p>Questions the research and statistics drawn upon to inform the Community Impact Assessment. Believes the Community Impact Assessment minimises the impact on the community if Cwmdu School closes. Points out an inaccuracy in relation to some information supplied in the Community Impact Assessment; the Eisteddfod already takes place in the village hall.</p>

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET REPORT  
FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION  
14th November 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Gareth Jones  
Senior Manager, Central Services

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Dolfor Community Primary School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**Summary**

Following a review of small schools in Powys by the Council's Learning in the Community Programme Board earlier in the year, on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011 the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a consultation process to close Dolfor CP School.

At the time of writing there are 17 pupils at the school of which 8 are in the top two year groups.

The financial costings and potential savings from closure of the school are shown at Appendix A and are approximately £100,000 per annum. The cost per pupil at the school is £5,886, 38% higher than the county average.

A consultation meeting with staff, governors and the community was held on 22nd September where the proposals were explained; this included a timetable explaining that the school could be formally closed by summer 2012. The Council must give one term's notice to a school proposed for closure as well as undertaking the formal statutory notice procedure.

The consultation period for comments to be received on the proposals ran from 19<sup>th</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> October. A summary of the representations received by this deadline is given in Appendix B and officer comments on the main themes of these representations are provided below. Copies of all letters and emails received are available in the Schools Service as are the agreed minutes of all the consultation meetings.

Comments from respondents focus on the following themes and an officer response is given in the paragraphs that follow:

- Impact on community/rural life and on friendships – only facility in the village.

The closure of a village school will undoubtedly have an impact on community life; this is acknowledged in the Community Impact Assessment which has been amended by the community. This does however have to be weighed against the very small number of pupils and the cost to the County Council which is significantly higher than the county average. If the school were to close there is no threat to the independent and adjacent community hall which could still act as a focus for the community in Dolfor. If children transfer to the same school they will still be able to maintain local friendships.

- Pupils would be transferring to an urban school

Whilst the nominated school is undoubtedly larger and in a more urban environment than Dolfor, it is still the nearest and is a rural school in the context of Wales. Existing pupils travel to it from the rural areas around Newtown as well as from the town itself. Pupils living more than two miles from the new school would qualify for free transport.

- Safety of route to Newtown

Most pupils from the village of Dolfor would qualify for free transport to the nominated school as it is more than two miles away. For those that live less than two miles away the route would be risk-assessed and if considered unsafe, free transport would be provided.

- Impact on community hall and its finances

The Council will look at the configuration of the hall and the school so that, if the school closes, the hall will not be disadvantaged in terms of loss of car parking or access. Whilst there will be a small annual loss of income to the community hall through loss of school use, the community hall is understood to have quite healthy financial reserves which could sustain it while alternative sources of income are found.

- Support for pupils with SEN

The work that the school does with pupils with special educational needs is acknowledged but it is not the only school that makes significant progress with children with significant SEN/ALN needs, the smaller class sizes in Dolfor may be a factor that supports an increased level of small group work. If the school does close the authority recognises that the children currently in Dolfor with significant needs will need an individual plan to ensure they are successfully integrated into their new schools.

- Good school buildings

It is acknowledged that the school buildings are in good condition and so the ongoing maintenance costs are at a reasonable level. This however is not reason in itself to keep the school open especially with such low pupil numbers.

- School is closing for purely financial reasons

The financial cost to the County Council of keeping open very small schools is significant and is a major factor in the review of small schools. However the quality of education that is possible for children in these small schools compared with the alternatives available is also a major consideration in this review. It is preferable and more beneficial for children to be taught in larger classes and narrower age bands than those that are possible in schools with such low pupil numbers.

- Concern over process followed by PCC particularly the leak

The leak of the information about the small schools review to the press in January 2011 was regrettable and the Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure has apologised personally to the community on behalf of the Council. The number on roll in January however was 24, so the school was already at a low level of pupils when the small schools review report was leaked.

- Only small school remaining in Newtown catchment

Whilst this will be the case following the closure of Aberhafesp CP School, there is no County Council policy which seeks to maintain a choice for parents of small schools and large schools. The Council's existing policy seeks to maintain fit for purpose schools located in the right place preferably with single form entry and optimum class sizes rather than maintaining very small schools which are more expensive and do not have the same educational benefits for children. The policy does allow for maintaining small schools in a geographical remote area, but as Dolfor is less than 5 miles from Newtown this policy would not apply.

D11 and D23 refer to no response being given by the Council to comments from the governing body. All points in the original governing body's response have now been addressed in a letter from the Strategic Director Communities Skills and Learning.

D21 is the governing body's response to the Community Impact Assessment. This will be sent to the Welsh Government if the Council proceeds to publication of a statutory notice.

The Council does not believe that any of the issues raised during the consultation period should prevent it from proceeding to the publication of statutory notices for closure of the school.

### Statutory notices

Statutory notices need to be published for one month and are subject to Welsh Government regulations. They must be displayed at all school entrances and published in at least one local newspaper as well as other prominent public places. They must be published not fewer than 15 school days before the end of a term; the last possible publication date before the end of the current term would be 30<sup>th</sup> November. If one objection to a statutory notice is received, the decision falls to the Minister at the Welsh Government to determine. The Council must make its comments on the objections received and send them to the Welsh Government within two weeks of the end of the objection period.

### Proposal

To publish statutory notices for the closure of Dolfor CP School on or around 24th November with the closing date for objections being on or around 24<sup>th</sup> December with the receiving schools being named as Ladywell Green Infant & Hafren CP Junior Schools. This timetable would allow, subject to Ministerial approval, the school to be closed by 31st August 2012. Free transport to the named receiving schools will only be available for qualifying pupils.

### Corporate Improvement Plan

A priority of the Corporate Improvement Plan is to provide high quality educational opportunities for all and this priority has been encompassed within the Learning in the

Community improvement priority of the Powys Change Programme. The proposals within this paper will also help to meet the efficiency priority targets within the Plan. Any recommendations to consult on the closure of schools will, if implemented, support the priorities for the Schools Service contained in the Plan.

### **Options Considered/Available**

The school could remain open but this would be a very inefficient use of resources and the number of pupils is at a level where it will become increasingly difficult for a reasonable standard of education to be provided.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

It is in the best interests of the pupils in the school that statutory notices for closure are published as soon as possible.

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

Where small schools are proposed for closure there will be some increase in travel and therefore carbon emissions.

The proposals are not anticipated to impact on any vulnerable or minority groups; an equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

School closure proposals will have an impact on the services available in rural communities but the savings generated will help to maintain and improve services for the whole of the community of Powys.

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

The best interests of young people in these small schools will be safeguarded at all times particularly during this uncertain period of review. In the case of small schools that will be closing, every effort will be made to ensure a smooth transition to new schools and safe and efficient transport to their new locations.

### **Local Member(s)**

The local member Councillor Kath Roberts-Jones has commented as follows:

Whilst my heart tells me that there is a need for the school to continue in the village, having experienced a closure of a primary school in the recent past, knowing just how painful it is for the whole community, my head tells me that, with so few numbers attending it is difficult to see how it can continue as we have a duty to ensure that the best possible education is available for our children.

### **Other Front Line Services**

No implications identified.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant has been fully involved with the costings of the proposed closure of this school and confirms the savings identified are accurate based on the assumptions made in the report

Legal - There are no legal implications at this stage.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

No implications identified.

### **Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) has commented:-  
The proposals need to follow the normal procedures for school closure and advice from Legal Services obtained as necessary.

The Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-  
I note that the Principal Accountant has agreed the financial data used in the report and would support the recommendation of the report.

**Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report.

**Future Status of the Report**

The portfolio holder is invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>To publish statutory notices for the closure of Dolfor CP School before the end of November 2011 with the closing date for objections being before the end of December.</b>	<b>To ensure efficient use of resources within the schools service and to provide the best possible standard of education for local children.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>Councillor Kath Roberts-Jones</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Head of Schools</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> August 2012</b>

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Owen James	01597 826709		Owen.james@powys.gov.uk

**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Dolfor Consultation Paper September/October 2011

Dolfor Community Impact Assessment September/October 2011

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## Appendix A - Detailed Costings re Small Schools - November 2011

### Dolfor C P School

	Year 1	Year 2
2011-12 Pupil Numbers Funded	24	24
2011-12 Delegated & Devolved Budget	156,316	153,451
2011-12 Estimated Current Transport Costs	4,000	4,000
2011-12 Subsidy of School Meal Provision	8,000	8,000
<b>Total Direct Costs of School</b>	<b>168,316</b>	<b>165,451</b>
Annual Budget that Would Transfer with Pupils	48,937	48,937
<b>Gross Saving in Year</b>	<b>69,638</b>	<b>116,514</b>
<b>Less Estimated H to S Transport</b> 20 Pupils live in allocation area, assumed 1 transport route at £160	(20,267)	(30,400)
<b>Net Saving in Year on Direct Costs</b>	<b>49,371</b>	<b>86,114</b>
Saving of Central Costs at an Estimated £12,500 per school	7,292	12,500
<b>Total Net Savings before 1 off Costs</b>	<b>56,663</b>	<b>98,614</b>
<b>Estimated Early Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs (Max)</b>		
Current Policy	65,289	-
Local Government Pension Strain	4,250	-
Statutory Provision	36,251	-
<b>Projected Savings/(Costs) Including Retirement &amp; Redundancy Costs)</b>		
<b>Current Policy</b>	<b>(8,626)</b>	<b>98,614</b>
<b>Statutory Provision</b>	<b>20,412</b>	<b>98,614</b>
<b>Current Policy &amp; LGPS</b>	<b>(12,876)</b>	<b>98,614</b>

### Other Factors to Consider

The preferred school of parents is expected to be St Michaels C in W (A) School which is not the closest school and is currently at or above capacity in some of the year groups, an extension to increase the capacity of the school would cost in the region of £250,000, but as the school is an aided school would be the responsibility of the Church Authority. If the Authority wished to fund the 15% element this would cost £2,400 per annum to fund through prudential borrowing at 6.34 %

### Current Budget Position (Estimated Balance).

At 31.3.2011	16,596
At 31.3.2012	(16,487)
At 31.3.2013	(49,485)

School will need to reduce the level of support staff top bring budget into balance which will result in a significant % of redundancy & pension strain figures being incurred

NB. The figures in Year 1 assume a school closure at the end of August and the savings and additional costs reflect a 7/12 impact for the first year (September to March).



## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE DOLFOR C.P. SCHOOL

REF.	COMMENT
<b>D1</b>	<p>Closure of the School would have a “devastating” impact on the community and rob the area of a good school and the last facility in the village. Children in the area are a “close knit” family and sending them to Newtown schools would break this up as they might only meet children from the village in school holidays. If they made friends in Newtown schools, it would be difficult for them to meet socially outside school hours. Closure of the school would have a detrimental impact on the future of the village and village life.</p>
<b>D2</b>	<p>Rural life in Wales is under threat. Closing the only remaining village school in the area would add to this threat. WAG and PCC should be trying to protect Welsh rural life as well as the Welsh language. Closing rural village schools seems to be against the ethos of what is being said by the Government.</p> <p>Children of the Dolfor area will be “disadvantaged by sending them to schools outside their area” as they would be unable to socialise with their peers outside school hours due to the distances involved.</p> <p>Dolfor School is a centre of family life in the area for young and old. If children are sent to schools in other areas’ families would not have occasion to meet and get to know other parents and grandparents, which would have a devastating impact on a community struggling to keep its identity.</p>
<b>D3</b>	<p>Community Council members are disappointed that closure of Dolfor School is apparently being considered before considering the future of neighbouring primary schools over the Radnorshire border.</p> <p>When a school closes and children are sent to different schools, it impacts on children’s friendships and that of their parent/grandparents, which is detrimental to the rural community and organisations it supports.</p> <p>Community Councillors are concerned that pupils are not being offered places at similar rural schools, but at schools in Newtown. The nearest rural school “Kerry” is currently full to capacity and in need of capital investment to provide adequate facilities and places for an increasing catchment area.</p> <p>Due to geographical position of Dolfor School, there are concerns about children travelling along narrow roads especially during the winter months.</p> <p>The road from Dolfor to Newtown is notorious for accidents and unsafe for children to be expected to walk any distance along this road.</p> <p>Community Councillors seek assurance that transport would be provided to all pupils.</p> <p>Dolfor Community Hall would suffer loss of income from the school use of the hall, and also, should the school site be sold, loss of car parking facility for the community hall.</p> <p>If Dolfor School closed, the Kerry ward would be reduced to one primary school in Kerry.</p> <p>Rural schools play an important part in their communities; taking children away from the village has a “knock on” effect, as children and parents no longer get involved in their community, which has a negative impact on village life.</p> <p>Dolfor School premises are in extremely good condition and have the advantage of being linked to the recently built community hall.</p> <p>Has the cost of providing school transport been taken into consideration, including the carbon footprint? Why at the same time as the Authority is encouraging home working and setting up rural businesses, is it considering transporting children further away for their education?</p>

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE DOLFOR C.P. SCHOOL

	<p>Dolfor CP School, unlike many, still has its own canteen, with an award winning cook.</p> <p>The benefits of a rural school should not be overlooked; pupils flourish in this environment and take pride in themselves and their school.</p>
<b>D4</b>	<p>Staff at Dolfor School have displayed commitment, perseverance and the ability to adapt and develop an environment and their own skills so that pupils with differing needs can thrive and develop in all aspects of learning and change their behaviour (in cases of pupils with behavioural difficulties). Dolfor School was highly praised for its commitment to inclusion in the Estyn 2010 report. The space and facilities at Dolfor School are conducive for inclusion of pupils with special needs. Consideration might be given to keeping Dolfor School open and using the school as a work base for primary- aged pupils who have been excluded from their present schools. Perhaps the school could be used as a resource to maintain other pupils in a main classroom environment rather than receiving individual tuition in hired community rooms, as presently there is no space provision for the primary aged pupils who are permanently excluded.</p>
<b>D5</b>	<p>If rural communities are to have any prospect of a future then there must be the facilities to sustain existing families and to attract new families into the area. Dolfor school has successfully educated generations of families. If the pupils of Dolfor are split to separate schools in the Newtown area this will leave them feeling isolated when they are at home and during school holidays. The closure of the school would have a devastating effect on the community and leave it in a position from which it might never recover and be instrumental in the further and continued decline of rural life in Wales.</p>
<b>D6</b>	<p>The members of the WI believe that the lack of an obvious plan for the development of Dolfor has resulted in the present situation. The village still has the framework to support growth that would hardly impinge on the countryside. The primary school is an excellent asset. When the Village Hall hosts events it uses car parking at the primary school. Powys CC have made no effort to reconfigure the school to make it more efficient financially or more attractive to families who send their children elsewhere. The village primary school helps to give a sense of community to farming families. Together with organisations like the YFC and WI, it helps to offset the sense of isolation that can be so devastating. Dolfor WI relies on its continued membership from a vibrant community committed to its school and developing the area.</p>
<b>D7</b>	<p>Closure of the school would not only have an adverse effect on the children but on the community as a whole. In a rural community spread over a large area the school is the only meeting place and is at the heart of the community. It is through the school, children meet and the community continues. There is no shop or pub in the village and, without the school, the community would just be a series of homes spread over a large area with no connection. If young families moved into the area how would their children meet anyone locally? The school gate is traditionally the place for newcomers to meet and be welcomed into the community.</p> <p>The Dolfor Community Fund holds events for the community and a great number of these are child orientated, which at present can be organised through the connection with the school. If there was no school it is unlikely that these events would continue.</p>
<b>D8</b>	<p>Saddened that the "future of the school is being decided by a financial balance sheet". Rural communities that have shaped Wales over the generations are now the target for what does appear to be "short term financial savings."</p> <p>Dolfor School is at the heart of the village and provides important educational choice for parents and families not only from Dolfor but from the</p>

## APPENDIX B - LOG OF RESPONSES TO FORMAL CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE DOLFOR C.P. SCHOOL

	<p>surrounding area. It is the last remaining rural school in the Newtown area. It is a central daily meeting point for community families. The school provides a great deal of pleasure to the entire community in organising community activities. It provides the foundations that ensure that the community will always benefit from past pupils. Closing the school may well bring short term financial gain, but the legacy that will be left by having no school in the Dolfor community will ultimately prove to be far more costly.</p>
<b>D9</b>	<p>The community hall was built with priority use for the school in mind. The community hall also provided the basis for developing pre-school provision in the locality. Since the hall's opening in October 2006, the most frequent user of the community hall has been Dolfor Play Group. The playgroup is highly valued by parents and provides an early link with the school. The impact on the playgroup, were the school to close, would be terminal. Rural isolation is a real problem in Dolfor. Many families in the area are not able to travel into town to access pre-school provision. Dolfor Playgroup not only provides for the children but gives support to parents. Some children need a small school environment. With the closure of Aberhafesp CP School, Dolfor is now the only option for these "vulnerable" children. Through joint working of the school and the playgroup, early friendships have been formed and teaching staff at the school have had an early opportunity to work with future pupils, to the great benefit of both parties.</p> <p>Dolfor School has use of two buildings (one new build and one in good condition) The school has excellent grounds and outdoor facilities. There is a huge opportunity to work together to enhance the pre-school provision, which would have a beneficial effect on the school in terms of pupil numbers and cut costs. The Community Hall provides a venue for the village but it is the school which is at the heart of the community.</p>
<b>D10</b>	<p>Closure of Dolfor School would have a devastating effect. In a small community the school is the main hub. The children would be split up and have to go to other areas. It would make a difference to the Sunday School. There are close links between the school and the Church.</p>
<b>D11</b>	<p>Concern expressed re lack of formal response to a document that was submitted by the school in May, 2011. "Report for PCC compiled on behalf of the Staff, Pupils, Governors, Parents and Community of Dolfor."</p> <p>It is clear to many in the community that the Council's intention has been to close the school for purely financial reasons "from day one".</p> <p>Lack of response to above document and respect for views of the community and parents suggests that the consultation process is a "sham". Suggestions made by the community and parents for keeping the school open have been ignored.</p>
<b>D12</b>	<p>Dolfor CP School is the heart of the village. The school plays a very active part in community events e.g. Dolfor Village Show, Dolfor Chapel harvest service, Christmas Nativity and Pantomime etc The village hall was built with Dolfor School in mind. The hall would lose out if the school was no longer there. Dolfor CP School is the only small rural school in the area. Has the impact on rural children of having to travel to school in a town environment been considered? What will happen to the school staff? There will be redundancy costs for the Authority and there are few re-employment opportunities in the area.</p>
<b>D13</b>	<p>Without the school the children of the village will miss being able to take part in many community activities as they will not have the same friendships if they are sent to schools outside Dolfor. The children would feel isolated if their school friends are in Newtown and not in Dolfor. The</p>

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	car parking facility at the school would be lost to the village hall.
<b>D14</b>	If Dolfor School were to close, the impact on the community would be devastating. The school is the centre of community life in Dolfor. The school offers a chance for children to learn and thrive in an environment familiar to them. Without the channels of communication the school provides, active village life will be unlikely to thrive long-term. Loss of the school would be a “nail in the coffin” for small rural communities. Powys County Council has a duty to consider the future of rural communities and to consider the impact that closing the local school would have on the locality. Dolfor area offers very few other services; the most important local service is the school.
<b>D15</b>	What about the impact of the school’s closure on the children who will be “farmed out” to any school that will take them? What about those children who will be overwhelmed by a bigger school? Have the costs of redundancy payments to staff been considered? What about the effect of school closure on the community? What about those Radnorshire children facing school closure who could come to Dolfor? Is the proposal to close the school just about saving money?
<b>D16</b>	Dolfor Primary School has been a keen supporter of the annual Kerry Eisteddfod over many years. The school is an important contributor to the success of the Eisteddfod. Should the pupils transfer to another school, where the staff have no interest in supporting Eisteddfodau, then these pupils will not be able to benefit from gaining in confidence through participating in the Eisteddfod. Closure of Dolfor CP School would be a detrimental step for the community of Dolfor and for the pupils of today and the future.
<b>D17</b>	The school and Church are vital to the life of the village community and both have an important link to each other. If the school was closed, the link between the Church and the children of Dolfor would be broken.  Dolfor School provides an educational environment which meets the needs of individual children in a caring and supportive way and also embraces rural life in Mid Wales. The school’s location is convenient for both parents and grandparents allowing them to be active in their children’s education including extra-curricular activities. If Dolfor School were to close it would break up the important relationship between school, family and community.
<b>D18</b>	The community hall benefits financially from the education payment received via the Dolfor School budget. If the school closed, the loss of this income would have a major impact on the finances of the Community Hall. The school playground is used for parking out of school hours when there is an event held at the community hall. There are many issues involved with the proposed closure of the school which would affect the community life and therefore would have a detrimental effect on the community hall.
<b>D19</b>	Concerns expressed re future Dolfor YFC membership numbers if the school closes. Many pupils from Dolfor School join Dolfor YFC at the age of 10. These pupils have the opportunity to meet new people and gain new skills through YFC. If the school closes, this would impact on community life and Dolfor YFC membership would decrease. Dolfor School is a central part of everyday life in Dolfor community. It provides a

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	<p>loving and caring environment where individual pupils are treated with respect. If the school was to close the village would “collapse” as the school is the “heart and soul” of the community.</p>
<b>D20</b>	<p>The school is at the centre of community life and the Dolfor Show and Sports Committee rely on Dolfor School pupils to enter many of the competitions at the annual show. Each year the school pupils design a suitable front cover for the show programme. The Committee works very closely with teachers and pupils with regards to the variety of competitions. The possible closure of the school would have a major impact on the success and the existence of future shows.</p>
<b>D21</b>	<p>Apart from the educational consideration, it is the very survival and future of community life in what is a very rural area, which is “at the heart of everyone’s concern”</p> <p>Pupils from the school play an active part in many of the village activities which bring the community together. Dolfor school has represented the community at the local Eisteddfod, and the school pupils take part in an annual Nativity and pantomime.</p> <p>Chapel and Church form an integral part of village life and the children attend Sunday school with their school friends. Closure of the school could result in a reduction in Sunday school attendance and Church congregations in both places of worship. The school pupils take part in the Christmas nativity and Harvest Festival service.</p> <p>The introduction to local Young Farmers Club would be made more difficult if the children came from different schools outside the area and without having any friends in the village. Dolfor YFC could suffer a decline in membership if the school was closed.</p> <p>The school children take part in Dolfor Show and the school sports day is a community event. Dolfor School pupils have joined the Urdd and will be taking part in many of the events.</p> <p>Should the school close the need for the Community Fund would be brought into question and associated community fundraising activities would not take place.</p> <p>Dolfor Playgroup is highly valued by parents and provides an early and beneficial link with the school. If the school was to close, the impact on the playgroup would be terminal. Many farming families are not able to travel to town to access s pre-school provision. The playgroup provides much-needed support to parents.</p> <p>The Village Hall is essential for many of the school’s activities. The hall is an important asset to the school but it works both ways. The school provides annual funding for its use of the hall, thereby benefitting the hall and the community.</p> <p>In rural life the “social” aspect cannot be overlooked. Children from Dolfor would find it difficult to establish friendships within their own community if they were fragmented to other schools in the Newtown area. Any friendships made in school would be difficult to nurture outside school hours due to the distances involved, leaving children in Dolfor feeling isolated from the town children.</p>

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	<p>Closure of Dolfor CP School would have a profound effect on the community now and in the future. The savings the Council is endeavouring to make in closing the school are immeasurable against the human cost to Dolfor community and its way of life.</p>
<p><b>D22</b></p>	<p>View expressed that at the initial consultation meeting officers gave the impression that the closure was a “done deal” and that the meeting and consultation were being held only to meet a legal requirement.</p> <p>Expressed concern that the information regarding possible closure of the school was “leaked” to the press before the headteacher and governors were informed. Suggests that the leak of information makes closure a “foregone conclusion” as parents withdrew their children from the school and prospective parents went elsewhere. Requests information as to results of investigation into the “leak” of information.</p> <p>The aspirations for education stated in the Authority’s Policy for Organisation of Primary Schools” are achieved at Dolfor CP School.</p> <p>If Dolfor School is closed, combined with the fact that the school at Aberhafesp has already closed, there will be no rural school within the Newtown High School catchment, which means parents are deprived of the option for their children to be educated in a rural school.</p> <p>What effect will the school’s closure have on the 46% of pupils in the school who have special educational needs and what efforts will be made to ensure that they are integrated into their new schools with minimal effect on them?</p> <p>A recent Estyn report grades the facilities at the school as only one grade below that of a new build school. Resources are excellent due to the contribution to equipment provided by a loyal and active Friends of School group.</p> <p>Respondent suggests that children benefit from small class sizes which help to reduce influences such as peer pressure and actively encourage learning.</p> <p>Respondent suggests that per pupil funding for Dolfor CP School is in the mid, rather than high range.</p> <p>Suggests that pupil numbers at Dolfor CP School fluctuate and there were some parents from Newtown who had expressed interest in their children being educated in a rural school but were told Powys would not provide school transport due to cost; however funds now seem to be available to provide additional transport for pupils of Dolfor CP School who would be displaced if the school closes.</p> <p>Disputes information in the consultation document that the proposed alternative schools are less than three miles form Dolfor School. The shortest distance over three miles requires the use of the Upper Dolfor Road which is a single track road with passing places. Neither of these options or the Middle Dolfor road, another single track road, is safe for the children to walk on as none of them have pavements.</p> <p>Parental choice is being removed by offering alternative places at Ladywell Green Infants or Hafren Junior school as parents’ school of choice is Dolfor CP School.</p>

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	<p>Has the psychological impact on the pupils of removing them from a small rural school to a much larger urban school been considered?</p> <p>Why can't consideration be given to amalgamating some of the Newtown primary schools with surplus capacity rather than closing Dolfor CP School?</p> <p>Recent Estyn inspection report classifies school as "adequate" which is first time Dolfor CP School received this grade. The Headteacher had had a long period of illness during the year the school was inspected and also the method of inspection had changed and is largely based on statistics.</p> <p>Respondents consider that the case for the closure of Dolfor School has not been proven other than satisfying the financial needs of the Authority.</p>
<p><b>D23</b></p>	<p>Objection to proposal to close Dolfor CP School on the following grounds:</p> <p>The impact on the community will be "considerable, long lasting and extremely damaging." Respondent expresses concern re absence of communication with local community groups in the preparation of the draft community impact assessment report.</p> <p>Expresses concerns in relation to the process of review including:</p> <p>Unofficial leak to press in January 2011 that Dolfor CP School was under review. No formal apology or explanation has been given to counter the detrimental effect the leak had on pupil numbers.</p> <p>Disappointment expressed re lack of information provided from PCC throughout the whole process. Considers there has been little or no engagement with the governors.</p> <p>There was little meaningful debate around the proposal to close the school at the Cabinet meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> July. Governors received the impression that there was no point in attempting to contest the decision.</p> <p>The proposed receiving schools are not a like for like alternatives. The proposed alternative schools are separate infant and junior schools rather than junior mixed infant and neither of the proposed alternative schools are "rural" schools. The nearest "like for like" rural school would be St. Michaels Kerry.</p> <p>Requests that Dolfor School is considered as part of a Newtown catchment area review rather than in isolation, particularly as neighbouring primary schools will be implicated in the John Beddoes modernisation review, which could mean that there is no primary school between Newtown and Knighton.</p> <p>With the closure of Aberhafesp CP School, there is now only one small school in the Newtown cluster i.e. Dolfor CP School. Respondent contends that a small school option must be maintained for both parents and children who feel that their educational and welfare needs are best met in a small school environment.</p>

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	<p>Dolfor school has a rural location which provides “added value” to the school and pupils. Dolfor School provides an unrivalled learning environment for pupils with all types of need including pupils with ALN and has an excellent record in the care and education of vulnerable children.</p> <p>The condition of Dolfor School and the facilities that are used on site (including the Village Hall alongside) are in outstanding condition with low maintenance costs.</p> <p>The school governors wish to work with the Authority to ensure the future of Dolfor School and as yet, there has been no discussion re possible ways forward e.g. federation and enhanced pre-school provision.</p>
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Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)

Governors to School Governing Bodies

5<sup>th</sup> December, 2011

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor	School	Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)
Ms. A. Moon	Crickhowell High School	County Councillor M.R. Harris
Mr. W. Lewis	Abermule C.P. School	County Councillor W.T. Jones

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 6.12.11

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**9<sup>th</sup> December, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mrs. E.M. Bufton	Hay-on-Wye C.P. School	County Councillor G.W. Ratcliffe
County Councillor P.J. Ashton	Mount Street C.P. Infants School	County Councillor P.J. Ashton
County Councillor P.J. Ashton	Mount Street C.P. Junior School	County Councillor P.J. Ashton
Mr. B. Davies	Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	County Councillor B. Mills

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 13. 12. 11

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**Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA)**

**Governors to School Governing Bodies**

**14<sup>th</sup> December, 2011**

In accordance with the Authority's policy regarding the appointment of Local Education Authority representative governors to school governing bodies which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the following persons have been recommended by the local member(s) for the ward(s) in which the school(s) lie for appointment to serve as L.E.A. Governors with immediate effect (see table below).

<b>Name of Recommended person to serve as LEA Governor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Recommended by (Local Member(s) for the Ward in which the school lies)</b>
Mr. R.T. Davey	Penygloddfa C.P. School	County Councillor P. Harris
Mrs. S.E. Jones	Penygloddfa C.P. School	County Councillor P. Harris
Mr. D. Morgan	Dolfor C.P. School	County Councillor K.M. Roberts-Jones
County Councillor S.C. Davies	Gurnos C.P. School	County Councillor S.C. Davies

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure)

Dated: 14.12.2011

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**Decisions taken by Individual Portfolio Holders**

**Councillor S.M. Hayes**  
**Portfolio Holder for Learning and Leisure**

**Decision Taken 23 December 2011**

**Closure of the Residence at Brynllwarch Hall School**

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Reason for decision:</b>
<b>That approval be granted for the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School with effect from 31 December, 2011.</b>	<b>No longer a need or demand for residential provision at the school.</b>

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**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION**

**20 DECEMBER, 2011**

**REPORT AUTHOR: John Mitson, School Effectiveness Officer, Working With Others**

**SUBJECT: Closure of the Residence at Brynllwarch Hall School**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to gain approval for the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.

In 2000, the residential provision at Brynllwarch Hall School, the Authority's Specialist School for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties, located in Kerry, near Newtown, included 36 residential places for both boys and girls.

In 2001, the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW) introduced new standards for the residential care of all pupils, attending schools, and this resulted in the girls' residential block, the former stables at the school, being no longer fit for purpose. This block was, therefore, closed as a residence, reducing the residence at the school to 25/26 pupils. This made the girls' residential building available for other purposes at the school, particularly teaching. The residence was, therefore, reduced, with effect from 2001, to the top floor in the main house and the two former teachers' houses on the school campus.

In 2009, following a critical Fire Officer Inspection Report, it was necessary to close the residential floor in the main house and, therefore, the residence was reduced to the two houses, a total of eight pupil bed spaces.

The provision of residential places at Brynllwarch Hall School was to permit the school to provide a county-wide provision. It is the only school of this nature within Powys and, therefore, in order to make the facility available to all of the county, residential provision was required. At the end of the summer term, 2010, the need for residential provision to enable pupils to attend the school because their homes were too distant for daily travelling, ended.

For a number of years, Brynllwarch Hall School has ceased to be a county-wide provision and has become a provision for pupils in north and mid Powys. Currently, nearly 50% of the pupils attending the school come from the Newtown High School catchment area and, therefore, residential provision is no longer required. In addition, pupils from the south of the county who previously would have attended Brynllwarch Hall School, no longer attend. The reasons for this are as follows:-

- parents and their children no longer wish to attend schools on a residential basis from Mondays to Fridays;

- some pupils who, previously, would have attended Brynllwarch Hall School, are now benefitting from the provision available at Ysgol Penmaes, Brecon, which can be reached, on a daily basis, from all parts of south Powys;
- the Authority is making greater provision for pupils, who previously would have attended Brynllwarch Hall School, in south Powys through support arrangements in mainstream and through the Authority's Complementary Education Service;
- the Authority's funding for outreach and the funding received through the Welsh Government's grant for 'Unlocking the Potential of Special Schools' which has also been used to support the Authority's outreach service, means that staff from Brynllwarch Hall School are able to provide advice and support to colleagues in mainstream schools, in all parts of the Authority, including south Powys, on meeting the needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and with emotional and behavioural difficulties who are attending mainstream schools.

During the 2010/2011 financial year, the Authority budgeted £125,000 to fund the residence. This met the cost of the provision itself as well as the staff costs incurred in supporting the pupils. This is, therefore, a very expensive residential provision and for the period from September, 2010, onwards, as there were no pupils requiring the provision because of the distance of their homes from the school, pupils at the school have been permitted to spend one or two nights a week in the residence, as unofficial respite. To maintain the residence for this purpose when there are no pupils requiring access because of their geographical location, in respect of the school, would be an inefficient use of resources and a very expensive provision.

In the light of the above, the Council's Board considered a report seeking approval to start the statutory consultation process to close the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School at its meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2011, and members resolved that approval be given to the commencement of statutory procedures for the closure of the residence.

In addition, informal consultations were carried out with the following as the first step in the process:-

- Parents of pupils at the school;
- Headteachers of Powys schools;
- Powys Children's Services.

The informal consultation took place between 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011, and 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, and, during that period, only one objection to the closure of the residence was received.

During the 2010/2011 school year, both the Care Standards Inspectorate and the Fire Officer confirmed that further expensive works needed to be undertaken in relation to the two houses still used as residences in order to bring them up to an acceptable standard and this would require significant capital expenditure by the Authority in order to maintain the number of bed spaces available. In short, the residence is no longer fit for purpose and the Authority has not identified the capital required to carry out the necessary upgrades to the buildings. In the light of this situation, there have been no residential pupils at the school with effect from September, 2011. As indicated above, all the pupils at the school, including those who have been using the residence on an informal respite basis are able to travel to and from school on a daily basis.

Statutory consultation was carried out during the period 7<sup>th</sup> July to 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2011, and commenced with consultation meetings held, with the following, on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2011:-

- Union Representatives;

- staff
- Governors of the school;
- parents/community members.

Interested parties were given until 19 August, 2011, inclusive, to submit their views and objections in relation to the proposed closure, and only one objection was received. This was from the parent of a pupil who lived approximately 15 miles from the school and was made on the basis that the pupil would no longer be able to spend an occasional night at the school, on a respite basis. This pupil did not meet the geographical criteria for use of the residence and, therefore, would not qualify for access to the residence if pupils living more distant from the school required it. It is not part of the role of the Schools Service to provide respite for pupils and the Authority receives no funding to enable this provision to be made. Provision of respite is a responsibility of Children's Services and, while there was no objection to the occasional bed space being taken by a pupil on a respite basis when there was a requirement for residential pupils who live too distant from the school to travel on a daily basis, it would not be appropriate to maintain the provision for this purpose now that the geographical requirement has disappeared.

A report was submitted to the Portfolio Holder in September, 2011, proposing that statutory notices be published, in respect of the closure of the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School. The Portfolio Holder gave his agreement to the publication of statutory notices and they were published at the school, in all the Authority's libraries and in the local press on 21 October, 2011, inviting any person to object to the proposals.

The proposal to close the residence required the approval of the Welsh Ministers if:-

- a) within two months of a copy of them being sent to the Welsh Government it gave notice that they required such approval; or
- b) objections had been made within the objection period and had not been withdrawn during that period.

Where the proposals do not require such approval, the Council will decide whether to implement the proposal to discontinue the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.

A response has been received from the Welsh Government indicating that they would not be calling in the proposals for consideration by the Welsh Minister. In addition, no objections were received during the period 21 October, 2011, to 21 November, 2011, and, therefore, the Council is able to decide whether or not to implement the proposals to discontinue the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School.

## **Proposal**

In the light of the above, and, in particular, the lack of any objections to the published statutory notice of closure in respect of the residence and confirmation that there are no objections from the Welsh Government, it is proposed that the Portfolio Holder implements the closure with effect from 31 December, 2011.

## **Corporate Improvement Plan**

This proposal is consistent with the Authority's plans to make local provision for pupils with additional learning needs and is consistent with the school modernisation process which, in addition to focussing on the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, also focuses on local provision for local pupils. The risk to the Council is that this would formally make Brynllwarch Hall School a school for normal and mild lowys and require alternative

arrangements in the south of the county. These arrangements are partly in place as a result of parental objections to residential provision, and plans are in place for further development, with effect from September 2012, through the completion of the school modernisation process in the Ystradgynlais area.

### **Options Considered/Available**

There are no alternatives to closure as the Care Standards Inspectorate requires certain facilities to be in place, in relation to residential pupils, however small a number. There is, therefore, no possibility of reducing the expenditure on the residence, no matter how small the number of pupils using it becomes.

### **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

Closure of the residence for the reasons given above.

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

The proposal will remove what has become an unnecessary and expensive provision, freeing the resourcing and the buildings for alternative uses. The proposal will not impact on the Council's crime and disorder/Welsh language/other policies.

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

The impact of this proposal on Children and Young People will be negligible as only a small number of pupils have used the residence in recent years, on a respite basis, and they are all able to travel to and from the school on a daily basis.

### **Local Member(s)**

N/A

### **Other Front Line Services**

On occasions, Children's Services have requested that residential provision be made for pupils attending the school, who do not meet the geographical criteria, as short-term respite. The closure of the residence will mean that this is no longer available but this was only ever a very occasional arrangement and additional to the usual respite arrangements made by Children's Services. During the initial, informal consultation in respect of the proposal to close the residence at Brynllwarch Hall School, which included Children's Services, no objections were received from that agency.

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)**

The Principal Accountant for Communities, Skills and Learning confirms that, on the basis of 2011/2012 costings, a full year's saving of £125,000 would be achieved with the closure of the residence. Closure in December, 2011 will achieve a £31,250 saving for the part year. There will be additional transport costs of approximately £1,600 in 2011/2012 to transport these pupils on a daily basis. These are, however, not significant as most of the pupils will access existing transport provision. There may also be redundancy/early retirement and compensatory payment costs associated with changes in staffing which are yet to be quantified, all of which will reduce the saving. The Governing Body of

Brynlywarch Hall School will need to consider the change in provision and reduction in funding when planning their budget for 2012/2013.

Legal – there are no legal implications at this stage.

### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

N/A

### **Communications**

N/A

### **Statutory Officers**

The Strategic Director, Finance and Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) has commented:-  
“I note the comments of the Principal Accountant. The proposal will deliver recurring savings; these will cover termination costs in a relatively short timeframe.”

The views of the Strategic Director, Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) are that:

“Provided that the consultation process is followed through properly, there are no legal implications at this stage”.

### **Members’ Interests**

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

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
Approval be granted for the closure of the residence at Brynlywarch Hall School with effect from 31 December, 2011.	No longer a need or demand for residential provision at the school.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	School Modernisation		
<b>Within Policy:</b>	Y	<b>Within Budget:</b>	Y

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	Councillor Mrs K M Roberts-Jones
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	School Effectiveness Officer
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2011

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
John Mitson	01597 826431	01597 826475	john.mitson@powys.gov.uk

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