

Cabinet

Meeting Venue
By Teams

Meeting date
Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Meeting time
10.00 am

For further information please contact
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County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
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03-02-2021

Mae croeso i chi siarad yn Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg yn y cyfarfod.
Rhowch wybod pa iaith rydych am ei defnyddio erbyn hanner dydd, ddau ddiwrnod gwaith cyn y cyfarfod.
You are welcome to speak Welsh or English in the meeting.
Please inform us of which language you wish to use by noon, two working days before the meeting.

AGENDA

1.	APOLOGIES
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To receive apologies for absence.

2.	MINUTES
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To authorise the Chair to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 January 2021 as a correct record.

(Pages 3 - 8)

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

4.	CASTLE CAEREINION SCHOOL PROPOSAL
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To consider a report by County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for Education and Property.

(Pages 9 - 106)

5.	CHURCHSTOKE CP SCHOOL PROPOSAL
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To consider a report by County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for Education and Property.

(Pages 107 - 188)

6.	LLANBEDR SCHOOL PROPOSAL
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To consider a report by County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for Education and Property.

(Pages 189 - 282)

7.	LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON SCHOOL PROPOSAL
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To consider a report by County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for Education and Property.

(Pages 283 - 368)

8.	AUDIT WALES REPORT - TRANSFORMATION AT POWYS COUNTY
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To consider a report by the Leader County Councillor Rosemarie Harris.

(Pages 369 - 384)

9.	AUDIT WALES ANNUAL SUMMARY
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To consider a report by County Councillor Graham Breeze, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Engagement and Regulatory Services.

(Pages 385 - 394)

10.	DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING
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To note the delegated decisions taken since the last meeting.

(Pages 395 - 398)

11.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
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To consider the Cabinet forward work programme.

(Pages 399 - 400)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD BY TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2021

PRESENT

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, G Breeze, A W Davies, P Davies, H Hulme,
R Powell and I McIntosh

In attendance: County Councillor Liz Rijnenberg

1.	APOLOGIES
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There were no apologies for absence.

2.	MINUTES
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 12th January 2021 as a correct record.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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County Councillor Phyl Davies declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in item 5 Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon Proposal as a governor of the school and in item 8 Bus Emergency Scheme as a bus contractor.

County Councillor Iain McIntosh declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in item 6 Mount Street Infant School, Mount Street Junior School and Cradoc CP School – Proposal Paper as a governor of Cradoc CP School. He would be speaking in the debate as a local member not as a Cabinet member and would not be voting.

4.	DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021-2026 AND DRAFT 2021-22 BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2021-2031
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Cabinet considered the draft Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2021-26, which included a Financial Resource Model for 2021-26, a draft revenue budget for 2021-22 and a draft capital programme for 2021-22 to 2030-31.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the Coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing measures imposed continued to have an unprecedented detrimental financial impact on the Council and that this was likely to continue through 2021-22 and into future years. The additional financial support provided by Welsh Government during 2020-21 had been instrumental in sustaining the Council's financial position with £9.2 million of support for additional costs incurred and £2 million for lost income. Further support was expected to be available into 2021-22 but at what level and for how long was yet to be confirmed so significant risk remained.

The Cabinet and Executive Management Team (EMT) had reviewed and updated the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and ensured it was aligned to the Vision 2025 Plan. The draft MTFS included the:

- principles that will govern the strategy and a five-year Financial Resource Model (FRM), comprising detailed proposals for 2021-22 and outline proposals for 2022-23 to 2025-26.
- Capital Financing Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy; and
- Capital Programme for 2021-22 to 2030-31.

The draft MTFS provided a set of clear principles which would drive the Council's budget and spending decisions over 2021-26 and which Members and others can examine and judge the Council's financial performance against. The budget was supported by the Capital and Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix F of the report).

The draft budget proposed included some £19.5m additional funding to meet inescapable budget pressures but would also require services to meet £11.828 million of cost reduction proposals, the detail of which was provided at Appendix C to the report, with Impact Assessments on each of the proposals also attached. The Senior Leadership Team had provided assurance to Cabinet that they could deliver the cost reductions within the required timescales, whilst also reflecting on any risks.

The 2021-22 provisional settlement gave Powys Council a cash increase of £7.343 million (4%) on 2020-21 which was 8th highest in Wales and a significant improvement on previous years. Income from fees and charges made a significant contribution (£60 million+ per annum) to the Council's budget and the budget proposed for 2021-22 included increasing of fees and charges in line with inflation, where permitted, and where appropriate, the principle of full cost recovery had been applied. The balancing of the budget was dependent upon a 3.9% increase in the Council Tax in 2021-22, generating £3.33 million and £285,000 delivered through changes to the tax base. This would amount to an increase of £53 per annum on a Band D Property. In proposing this increase, consideration had been given to the impact of the pandemic and affordability for Powys residents together with the ongoing need to meet increasing demand and inescapable cost pressures on vital local services.

The Section 151 Officer gave her opinion that the estimates used in the budget proposal for 2021-22 were adequately robust but significant risk remains. Based on the assessment of reserves the overall level was adequate but remained at the lower end of acceptability given the scale of savings required, the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the financial uncertainty facing the Council over the medium term.

RECOMMENDED to Council to approve the:	Reason for Recommendation:
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1. MTFS for 2021-2026 as set out in Appendix A to the report be agreed in principle.	To aid business planning and development of the budget over a three-year period
2. Draft Revenue Budget for 2021-22 with the inclusion of a 3.9% increase in Council Tax shown in the Financial Resource Model in Appendix B and Table 4 of this report.	Statutory Requirement
3. Fees and Charges Register in Appendices D and E.	To comply with Powys County Council Income Policy
4. Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2021-31 shown in Appendix F.	Statutory Requirement
5. Minimum Revenue Provision Statement as set out on Appendix F.	Statutory Requirement
6. Treasury Management Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy in Appendix F.	Statutory Requirement
7. Authorised borrowing limit for 2021-22 as required under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 at £492 million as set out in section 3.7 of this report.	Statutory Requirement
8. Prudential Indicators for 2021-22 as set out in section 3.66 to 3.73 of the report and Appendix F.	Statutory Requirement

5.	YSGOL DYFFRYN TRANNON - PROPOSAL PAPER
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County Councillor Phyl Davies declared an interest in this item as a governor of the school and left the meeting while it was being considered.

Cabinet considered a request to commence the statutory process to make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from bilingual (dual-stream) to Welsh-medium. This would be introduced on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022. Cabinet noted the very low number of English-medium pupils at the school was a challenge to the school in providing appropriate provision for these learners.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal in order to move Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon along the language continuum:

- To make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from bilingual (dual-stream) to Welsh-medium
- This would be introduced on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.

County Councillor Phyl Davies returned to the meeting.

6.	MOUNT STREET INFANT SCHOOL, MOUNT STREET JUNIOR SCHOOL AND CRADOC CP SCHOOL
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Cabinet was advised that since its decision on 23rd December 2020 to proceed to consultation on a proposal to amalgamate Mount Street Infants School, Mount Street Junior School and Cradoc C.P. School to create a new primary school that would operate from the current three sites, additional information had been obtained from the three schools concerned. A Community Impact Assessment had been prepared based on this additional information. Cabinet was asked to re-consider whether or not to proceed with the recommendation approved on 23rd December in light of the additional information contained in the Community Impact Assessment.

County Councillor Liz Rijnenberg speaking as local Member for Mount Street Infants School and Mount Street Junior School raised a number of points on the Community Impact Assessment concerning equality of access for pupils who lived further away and the impact on the town and local shops if the school moved to a new site. She also asked if pupils would be more likely to move to a closer school rather than the new school. She asked for more information on the suitability of the site and for firm plans on how the issues raised in the Community Impact Assessment could be addressed.

County Councillor Iain McIntosh speaking as local member for Cradoc CP School challenged a number of the findings in the Community Impact Assessment. He also highlighted the number of community events held at the school and he asked about what would happen to the Cradoc site. Cabinet was advised that the Community Impact Assessment combined information for all three schools and did not relate to just one so that would affect the rating. The information could be split for the three schools. Officers explained that the issues raised by the local members would be addressed with others raised in the consultation when officers came back to Cabinet with recommendations. If the sites became surplus there would be discussions with the communities over their future.

Cabinet was advised that the Pupil Referral Unit was not part of this proposal and that the timescale for the PRU was 4 to 5 years.

Having considered the Community Impact Assessment, Cabinet did not consider that there was anything in it which should change the decision of 23 December.

RESOLVED to proceed with the recommendation approved on the 23rd December in light of the Community Impact Assessment as follows:

‘That Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal

Phase 1

- **To amalgamate Mount Street Infants School, Mount Street Junior School and Cradoc C.P. School to create a new primary school that would operate from the current three sites**
- **The target date for establishing the new primary school is September 2022.**

Phase 2

- **To make a regulated alteration to transfer the school to a new school building on a new site in Brecon’**

7.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) BILL. - CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE
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Cabinet considered a report on the new performance and governance duties that will be introduced under Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill that had received Royal Assent the previous week.

RESOLVED

- 1. that Cabinet note the new Performance and Governance duties being introduced by Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Bill and approve the advice around strengthening current arrangements to implement the duties, rather than introducing new processes.**
- 2. that Cabinet consider and approve the draft consultation response at Appendix A, for submission to Welsh Government by the deadline of 3rd February.**

8.	BUS EMERGENCY SCHEME
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County Councillor Phyl Davies declared an interest in this item and left the meeting whilst it was being considered.

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to join the Welsh Government’s Bus Emergency scheme to provide ongoing support for bus operators during the Coronavirus pandemic. The support was welcomed by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transport.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Council signs up to the BES 2 agreement (Appendix 2 to the report) as regional lead authority to secure (conditional) financial support for the bus sector and to ensure that the ongoing emergency funding meets the authorities' priorities and is delivered on their behalf.**
- 2. To call for a further report on bus reform proposals relating to the future management of bus services in Wales.**

County Councillor Phyl Davies returned to the meeting.

9.	TRANSFER OF NEUADD MALDWYN
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Cabinet considered a proposal that Neuadd Maldwyn in Welshpool is transferred by way of the Council's capital contribution to the development of extra care housing in Welshpool by the Council's preferred development partner, Clwyd Alyn Housing Group (Clwyd Alyn).

Cabinet welcomed this much needed development in Welshpool and the decision of the Planning, Taxi Licensing and Rights of Way Committee to grant planning permission at its meeting on 22nd January.

RESOLVED for Property Services and Legal Services to work with Clwyd Alyn to transfer the property from the ownership of Powys County Council to Clwyd Alyn Housing Association as soon as possible following Planning Permission is given.

County Councillor Rachel Powell abstained from voting having lost internet connection for part of the debate.

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

9th February 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: Castle Caereinion C. in W. School – Proposal Paper

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper requests Cabinet approval to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:
- To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
- 1.2. The report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix A – Options Appraisal
 - Appendix B – Draft Community Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C – Draft Integrated Impact Assessment
 - Appendix D – Pre-consultation response from the Diocese of St Asaph
 - Appendix E – Council response to the issues raised in Appendix D

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1. On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2. The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020.
- 2.3. The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, which is as follows:

‘All children and young people in Powys will experience a high quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled,

economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.'

2.3 The Strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

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

2.4. The new Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims and Objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of these Aims is to '*improve learner entitlement and experience*' and includes an objective to '*rationalise primary provision*'.

3. The Case for Change

3.1 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CASTLE CAEREINION

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Castle Caereinion C. in W. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹ at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Caereinion C. in W. School	4	3	5	4	4	3	0	23

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this, and are projected to remain below 30 for the foreseeable future.

The school's low pupil numbers have also resulted in a high number of surplus places at the school. Based on current pupil numbers, there is currently 68.9% surplus capacity at the school.

ii) High budget per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £6,919. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Castle Caereinion is ranked the 5th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil.²

iii) Issues with the building

Whilst the school building was assessed to be in good condition by the Welsh Government's condition survey carried out in 2009, it is an old fashioned building, and there are concerns regarding its suitability to deliver education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum, and which meets the Council's vision statement, as outlined in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

The Council recently commissioned an updated condition survey of the school building. This was carried out in the autumn term 2020. The survey assessed the condition of all three blocks at the school as condition C.

iv) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

¹ Teacher Centre – 4th November 2020

² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

v) Leadership

Following a long period of instability during which leadership arrangements for the school were by other schools in the local area, the school now has its own standalone headteacher. However, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

4. Information about Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

The following is a summary of key data relating to Castle Caereinion C. in W. School:

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

Current pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	4	3	5	4	4	3	0	23

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁴

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	42	47	44	40	31	30	24

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁵

³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁴ PLASC 2020

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates

	Jan. 2021⁶	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	20	21	19	19	19

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	23	24	22	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

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

	Current Capacity⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	74	23 (31.1%)	51 (68.9%)

ii) Building condition⁹

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Castle Caereinion C. in W.	B Good	B Good	Yes – Community Centre

⁶ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁷ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school – November 2020

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁹ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

School			
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Further to this, the Council recently commissioned an updated condition survey of the school building. This was carried out in the autumn term 2020. The survey assessed the condition of all three blocks at the school as condition C.

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School
Date of Inspection	November 2016
Standards	Adequate, needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate, needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate, needs improvement
Follow up activity	School to draw up action plan, Estyn to review progress. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in June 2018.

ii) School Categorisation¹⁰

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	N/A	C	Amber

Financial information

¹⁰ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

i) **Cost per pupil¹¹ (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)**

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	£173,000	£6,919	£9,000	£0
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

5. Statutory Process for School Organisation Proposals

5.1 The process for school organisation proposals is set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2018). The process is summarised below:

i) Consultation

Consultation would be carried out with stakeholders as required by the Code. This includes consultation with the pupils at both schools, to ensure that their views are taken into account, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Feedback from the consultation would be collated and summarised, and a report would be presented to the Cabinet. Cabinet will consider the report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal.

If Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

ii) Statutory Notice

If Cabinet decides to proceed, a Statutory Notice would be published, which would give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

¹¹ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

If there were objections, the authority would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them. A further report would be presented to the Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

iii) Implementation

If Cabinet approves the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the Statutory Notice or any subsequently modified date.

6. Presumption against closure of Rural Schools

The School Organisation Code (2018) includes special arrangements in regard to schools identified in Appendix F of the Code as rural schools, which require proposers to follow a more detailed set of procedures and requirements in formulating a rural school closure proposal and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

As indicated in the Code:

'This does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federation.'

The School Organisation Code includes a number of steps required to be taken when formulating a rural school proposal which relate to the following headings:

- Formulating the proposal
- Identifying reasonable alternatives
- Preparing a proposal paper for the decision maker

As the School Organisation Code identifies Castle Caereinion C. in W. School as a rural school, the additional requirements for rural schools have been addressed when developing the proposal paper.

7. Process of identifying preferred option

7.1 Officers have carried out an options appraisal on identified reasonable options for Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including the possibility of federation. This is attached to this report as Appendix A.

7.2 The options appraisal includes the following:

- Consideration of key data relating to the school
- Identification of reasonable options

- SWOT analysis of each option
- Assessment of each option against a number of critical success factors
- Identification of an emerging preferred option
- Further consideration of the emerging preferred option against factors listed in the School Organisation Code (2018) as factors to be taken into account when developing school organisation proposals.

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

Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools.

7.4 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with more suitable accommodation
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

7.5 A draft Community Impact Assessment has been carried out on the preferred option, which considers the impact on the community. This has been developed with input from the school. This is attached as Appendix B.

7.6 The draft Community Impact Assessment includes the following conclusion:

'It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Should the proposal be implemented, then the school would close with pupils moving to their nearest alternative school. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Castle Caereinion. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive

community use of the Castle Caereinion building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Castle Caereinion is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.'

- 7.7 As Castle Caereinion C. in W. School has a religious character, the School Organisation Code includes the following requirements:

'In the case of proposals to reorganise schools for which land and/or buildings are held on trust or which have a designated religious character, the proposer **must** conduct consultation with the trustees and/or appropriate religious body before the consultation document is published. The proposer **must** allow 28 days for the receipt of comments and **must** have due regard to those comments before any decision is made to proceed to general consultation.'

- 7.8 Consultation has been carried with the Diocese of St Asaph, the response received is provided in Appendix D. The Council's response to the issues raised is provide in Appendix E.

8. **Advice**

- 8.1 It is therefore advised that Cabinet approves a recommendation to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

- 8.2 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with more suitable accommodation

- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

- 8.3 Should the recommendation to commence the statutory process be approved, it is anticipated that consultation would commence in February / March 2021.
- 8.4 It must also be noted that implementation of this proposal does not preclude that school from being a part of future reorganisation proposals.

9. Resource Implications

- 9.1 The amount of funding provided to schools is driven by the funding formula. Any change to the formula funding provided will impact on the Council's revenue budget. Based on the current formula, it is estimated that implementation of the proposal would deliver annual revenue savings to the Council of around **£58,100**. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £90,400 offset by estimated additional transport costs of £32,300.
- 9.2 The school had a cumulative surplus balance of £64,593 as at the 31st March 2020. The budget proposed for the current year shows this reducing to £36,800 by 31st March 2021.
- 9.3 The Scheme for Financing Schools also states the following in section 3.7.2:

'In order to ensure effective stewardship of the resources available to schools, the Authority may impose additional restrictions on a school scheduled to close, including but not limited to:

- Restriction of expenditure to agreed plans
- Removal of powers of virement'

The Council will consider the use of these powers of intervention where appropriate.

- 9.4 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, Finance, HR and ICT. These service areas will be kept informed of the development of the proposal throughout the statutory process.
- 9.5 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1 Legal : The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view

- 10.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”.

11. Comment from local member(s)

- 11.1 Comments to be provided at the meeting.

12. Integrated Impact Assessment (draft)

- 12.1 An initial impact assessment in respect of the recommendation is attached as Appendix C. The impact assessment considers the proposal’s impact on the Welsh Government’s well-being goals, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

- 12.2 The summary of the impact assessment is as follows:

‘The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Castle Caereinion due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.’

- 12.3 Should Cabinet approve the commencement of the statutory process in respect of the recommendation, the impact assessment would be updated throughout the process, to take account of feedback received.

13. Recommendation

- 13.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

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Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Castle Caereinion Church in Wales School

Version Control:

Version	Date	Brief Summary of Change	Author
0.1	12/06/20	Initial draft	RW
0.2	30/06/20	Draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.3	09/07/20	Updated following WS1 meeting for consideration by Programme Board	SA
0.4	01/12/20	Updated draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.5	04/01/20	Version for Cabinet consideration	SA
0.6	29/01/20	Updated to reflect pre-consultation response	SA

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

The purpose of this paper is to identify a preferred option for the future of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

Current pupil numbers¹ at the school are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	4	3	5	4	4	3	0	23

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

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

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

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

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives, which include an objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision' in order to improve overall learner entitlement and experience in Powys.

To take forward this objective, the Council is reviewing the smallest schools in Powys, with the aim of identifying solutions for these schools which will meet the objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', in order to ensure that education in Powys is delivered through an affordable, resilient infrastructure which provides the best possible opportunities to learners, now and in the future.

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

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

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

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

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

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

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

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

iii) High number of surplus places

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

iv) Building condition

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

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,276 to £11,912 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the

last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

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

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

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

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

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

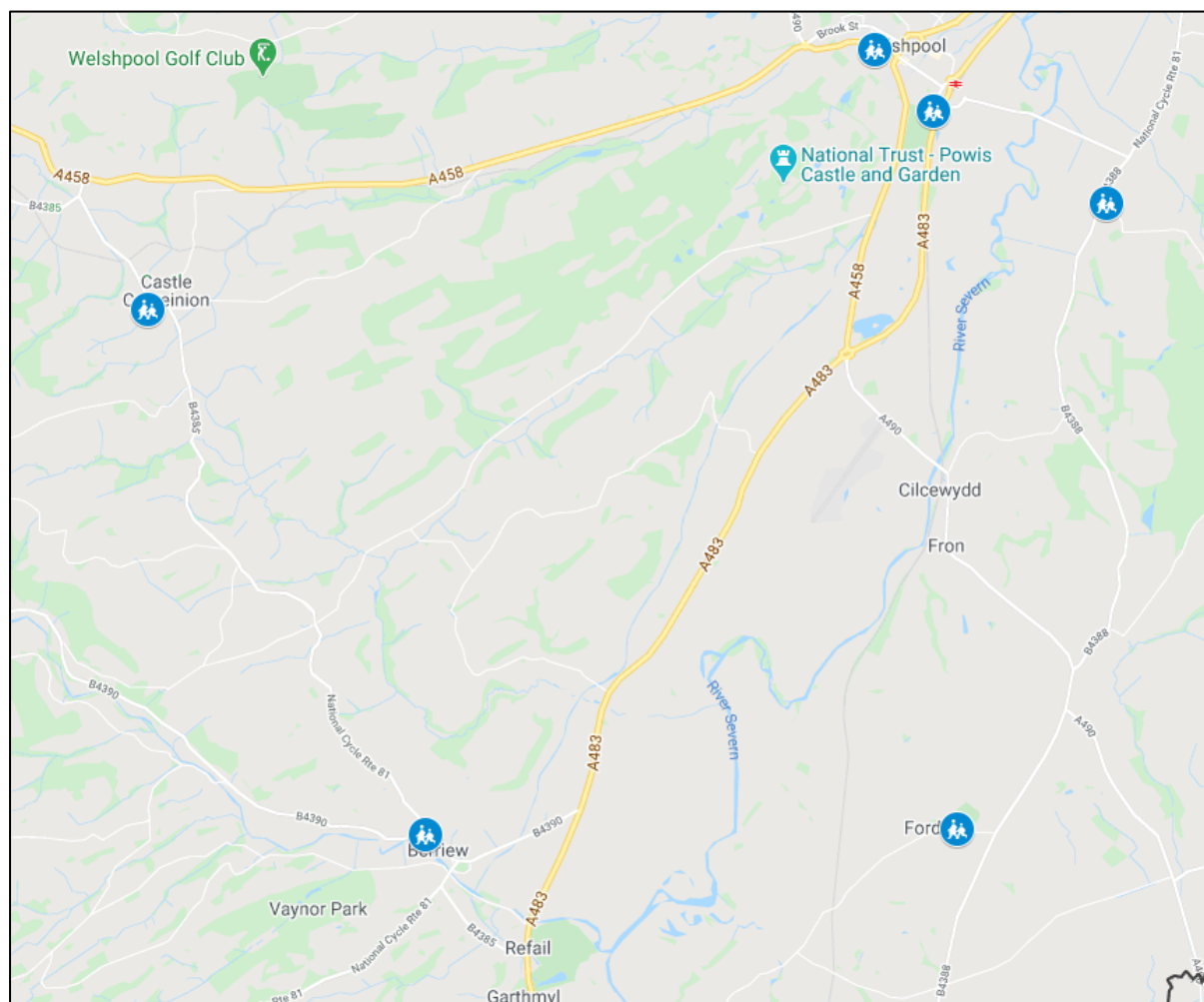
Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CASTLE CAEREINION

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Castle Caereinion is a Church in Wales primary school located in the village of Castle Caereinion in North Powys.

The following map shows the location of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and nearby schools:



Blue – Powys Schools

The following primary schools are located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School²:

School	Distance from Castle Caereinion C. in W. School by road (miles)
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² School Distances by Road - Council's Business Intelligence Team

Berriew C.P. School	3.614 miles
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	4.507 miles
Welshpool Church in Wales	4.562 miles
Ysgol Gymraeg y Trallwng	4.759 miles
Leighton C.P. School	6.115 miles
Guilsfield C.P. School	6.428 miles
Ysgol Pontrobert	7.024 miles
Ysgol Meifod	7.121 miles
Ysgol Rhiw Bechan	7.766 miles

The following is a summary of key data relating to Castle Caereinion C. in W. School:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School?³
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	Voluntary Controlled Primary Church in Wales School building owned by the Diocese of St Asaph	English-medium	8	Yes

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers⁴

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	4	3	5	4	4	3	0	23

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁵

³ Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>) includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

⁴ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁵ PLASC

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Castle Caereion C. in W. School	42	47	44	40	31	30	24

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁶

	Jan. 2021 ⁷	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Castle Caereion C. in W. School	20	21	19	19	19

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁸

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Castle Caereion C. in W. School	23	24	22	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

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

	Current Capacity⁹	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Castle Caereion C. in W. School	74	23 (31.1%)	51 (68.9%)

ii) Building condition¹⁰

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

⁶ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

⁷ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁸ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school – November 2020

⁹ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁰ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	B Good	B Good	Yes – Community Centre

Further to this, the Council recently commissioned an updated condition survey of the school building. This was carried out in the autumn term 2020. The survey assessed the condition of all three blocks at the school as condition C.

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School
Date of Inspection	November 2016
Standards	Adequate, needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate, needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate, needs improvement
Follow up activity	School to draw up action plan, Estyn to review progress. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in June 2018.

ii) School Categorisation¹¹

¹¹ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	N/A	C	Amber

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil¹² (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	£173,000	£6,919	£9,000	£0
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

Home to school travel

i) Closest school

An analysis of pupil travel patterns has been carried out, based on the 24 pupils that were attending Castle Caereinion in January 2020. The closest provider for all of these pupils is as follows:

	Pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School
Castle Caereinion C. in W. Primary School	75%
Guilsfield C.P. School	8.3%
Welshpool C. in W. School	8.3%
Berriew C.P. School	4.2%
Llanidloes C.P. School	4.2%

¹² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

Based on this information, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is the closest school for 18 (75%) of pupils attending in January 2020.

If there was no school in Castle Caereinion, the closest school for all of the pupils attending in January 2020 would be as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Castle Caereinion
Berriew C.P. School	70.8%
Welshpool C. in W. School	12.5%
Guilsfield C.P. School	8.3%
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	4.2%
Llanidloes C.P. School	4.2%

ii) Average travel distance

The current average travel distance for all pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 is 0.5 miles.

If there was no school in Castle Caereinion, the average travel distance for all pupils attending the school in January 2020 to attend alternative provision would be 2.8 miles.

iii) Furthest travel distance

Of the pupils that attended Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020, the furthest travel distance to the school for those pupils for whom Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is the closest provider is 2.5 miles.

If there was no school in Castle Caereinion, the furthest distance to the nearest alternative provision would be 3.8 miles.

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals¹³

¹³ PLASC 2020

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	0.0%

ii) Pupils in care¹⁴

	Number of pupils in care
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	0.0%

iii) SEN/ALN¹⁵

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	16.7%	12.5%	0.0%

Early Years

No early years / pre-school provision on the school site.

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CASTLE CAEREINION

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Castle Caereinion C. in W. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹⁶ at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Caereinion C. in W. School	4	3	5	4	4	3	0	23

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this, and are projected to remain below 30 for the foreseeable future.

¹⁴ PLASC 2020

¹⁵ PLASC 2020

¹⁶ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

The school's low pupil numbers have also resulted in a high number of surplus places at the school. Based on current pupil numbers, there is currently 68.9% surplus capacity at the school.

ii) High budget per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £6,919. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Castle Caereinion is ranked the 5th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil.¹⁷

iii) Issues with the building

Whilst the school building was assessed to be in good condition by the Welsh Government's condition survey carried out in 2009, it is an old fashioned building, and there are concerns regarding its suitability to deliver education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum, and which meets the Council's vision statement, as outlined in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

The Council recently commissioned an updated condition survey of the school building. This was carried out in the autumn term 2020. The survey assessed the condition of all three blocks at the school as condition C.

iv) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

v) Leadership

Following a long period of instability during which leadership arrangements for the school were by other schools in the local area, the school now has its own standalone headteacher. However, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

¹⁷ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

PART B – OPTIONS FOR CASTLE CAEREINION C. IN W. SCHOOL

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution.

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school
2	Federation with Welshpool Church in Wales School
3	Merge with Welshpool Church in Wales School to establish a new school on two sites
4	Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Welshpool C. in W. School
5	Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites
6	Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Berriew C.P. School
7	Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Berriew site.
8	Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Castle site.
9	Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the four options are provided below.

Option 1: Status quo – continue as a standalone school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - There would be no additional transport costs - Would continue to provide access to Church in Wales provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion would continue to be low - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Castle Caereinion building

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No requirement for a reorganisation process - No change for staff - No impact on pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum

Option 2: Federation with Welshpool Church in Wales School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - Would continue to provide access to Church in Wales provision - There would be no additional transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Castle Caereinion pupils would continue to attend school in the same location - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion would continue to be low - Castle Caereinion pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still be required to maintain the Castle Caereinion building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Would not address the high budget per pupil - Significant difference in the size of the two schools
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Castle Caereinion site - Threat to Welshpool C. in W. School, who have been operating over 3 sites over several years pending the move to their new building

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Option 3: Merge with Welshpool Church in Wales School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - Would continue to provide access to Church in Wales provision - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Castle Caereinion - Castle Caereinion pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Castle Caereinion building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would impact on staff at Welshpool C. in W. School, who have already been through a reorganisation process in the last few years. - Significant difference in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Welshpool C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Castle Caereinion site - Threat to Welshpool C. in W. School, who have been operating over 3 sites over several years pending the move to their new building

Option 4: Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Welshpool C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - Would continue to provide access to Church in Wales provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Castle Caereinion - Castle Caereinion pupils would still be taught separately

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Minimal impact on staff at Welshpool C. in W. School - Welshpool C. in W. School would retain its identity - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would still need to maintain the Castle Caereinion building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Castle Caereinion school would lose its identity
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Threat to Welshpool C. in W. School, who have been operating over 3 sites over several years pending the move to their new building

Option 5: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - More opportunities could be provided to pupils - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Opportunity for all staff to secure positions in the new school - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at the Castle Caereinion site - Castle Caereinion pupils would still be taught separately - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Would also impact on the staff of Berriew C.P. School - Both schools would lose their current identities
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new

	<p>curriculum on the Castle Caereinion site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between Church in Wales provision and C.P. status - May not be acceptable to the Berriew community due to previous shared headteacher arrangements.
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Option 6: Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Berriew C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Castle Caereinion - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Berriew C.P. School would retain its identity - Potentially would not impact on staff at Berriew C.P. School - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at the Castle Caereinion site - Castle Caereinion pupils would still be taught separately - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion school building - Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would lose its identity - Would be no access to C. in W. School provision locally
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum - May not be acceptable to the Berriew community due to previous shared headteacher arrangements.

Option 7: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Berriew site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is currently the closest school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location - Would address the issues with the Castle Caereinion school building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Castle Caereinion - Impact on the Castle Caereinion community - Would impact on Berriew staff as well as Castle Caereinion staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Current capacity of Berriew school may not be able to accommodate all pupils - Both schools would lose their identities - There would be no access to C. in W. School provision locally should the new school be a C.P. School
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would need to review the capacity of the current Berriew C.P. School – additional capacity may be required - Possible tension between C.P. and C. in W. provision

Option 8: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Castle Caereinion site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Berriew C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Berriew School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient location for the majority of pupils - Current Berriew pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Berriew - Impact on the Berriew community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not address issues with the Castle Caereinion building - Would impact on Berriew staff as well as Castle Caereinion staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Castle Caereinion School is too small to accommodate the merged school - Significant investment would be needed in the Castle Caereinion site to accommodate Berriew pupils.
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in Castle Caereinion to accommodate Berriew pupils - Unlikely that the Castle Caereinion site would be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required - Possible tension between C.P. and C. in W. provision

Option 9: Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities - Pupils would attend schools with more suitable accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is currently the closest school - Pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Castle Caereinion - Impact on the current staff of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School - Impact on the Castle Caereinion community - Reduction in C. in W. provision

Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely to be the least popular option locally - Possibility of referral of the decision to WG by the Diocese

6. IMPACT OF EACH OPTION

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Castle Caereinion.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.
Option 2: Federation with Welshpool C. in W. School	<p>The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would continue to operate as a stand alone school, however the school would be federated with Welshpool C. in W. school, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.</p> <p>Establishment of the federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>However, one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p>	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

	positive impact on quality and standards.		
Option 3: Merge with Welshpool C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites	<p>Welshpool C. in W. School was established in 2017 following the amalgamation of 4 nursery and infant schools in Welshpool. The school is currently operating across three sites, pending a move to a new building in 2021.</p> <p>Merging Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and Welshpool C. in W. School would mean that Welshpool C. in W. School would need to undergo a further management of change process, having already undergone numerous changes over the last few years. The Council's view is that this would threaten the quality of provision at Welshpool C. in W. School.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Welshpool site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Castle Caereinion site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 4: Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Welshpool C. in W. School	<p>Welshpool C. in W. School was established in 2017 following the amalgamation of 4 nursery and infant schools in Welshpool. The school is currently operating across three sites, pending a move to a new building in 2021.</p>	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Welshpool C. in W. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

	<p>Retaining the Castle Caereinion site as part of Welshpool C. in W. School would lead to further change for the Welshpool C. in W. School community, which has already undergone numerous changes over the last few years. The Council's view is that this would threaten the quality of provision at Welshpool C. in W. School.</p>	<p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Welshpool site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Castle Caereinion site.</p>	
<p>Option 5: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites</p>	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and Berriew C.P. School are both in the amber support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore it is not anticipated that the impact</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Berriew site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Castle Caereinion site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

	on quality and standards would be negative.		
Option 6: Close Castle Caereinion, but retain the site as part of Berriew C.P. School	<p>Implementation of this option would result in closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, however provision would continue on the current site. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and Berriew C.P. School are both in the amber support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore it is not anticipated that the impact on quality and standards would be negative.</p> <p>The school would be a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Castle Caereinion. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Berriew C.P. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Berriew site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Castle Caereinion site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

<p>Option 7: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Berriew site</p>	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p> <p>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and Berriew C.P. School are both in the amber support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore it is not anticipated that the impact on quality and standards would be negative.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>However, merging with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Castle Caereinion community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, would aid community involvement in the new school.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 8: Merge with Berriew C.P. School to establish a new school on the Castle Caereinion site</p>	<p>In general, it is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff. All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Castle Caereinion community as this option would retain provision in Castle Caereinion and would lead to an increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Berriew C.P. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement</p>

	<p>improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p> <p>However, it is unlikely that the Castle Caereinion site would be able to accommodate all pupils, therefore there would be a negative impact on the quality of provision should all pupils be taught in the current Castle Caereinion building.</p>	<p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Berriew community as there would no longer be provision in Berriew. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Berriew community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Berriew is the larger village with a larger school, it is likely that the Berriew community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 9: Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, the closest alternative schools would be Berriew C.P. School. The nearest alternative Church in Wales provision would be Welshpool C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend Llanfair Caereinion C.P.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>As a Church in Wales School, The Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	<p>School or Guilsfield C.P. School as other nearby schools.</p> <p>The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, Berriew C.P. School and Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School were categorised as Amber in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, whilst Welshpool C. in W. School was categorised as Yellow. Guilsfield C.P. School was classified as a Green school.</p>		
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7. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be achievable within current legislation The option must be operationally achievable The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

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

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

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6	Option 7	Option 8	Option 9
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	x	✓
4 – Potential affordability	x	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	✓
Total ✓	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	4
Total x	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	2	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Possible option	Discount	Preferred option

8. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred option for Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is:

Option 9: Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with more suitable accommodation
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

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

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools, on the factors outlined in the Code.

9. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils would choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, Berriew C.P. School and Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School were categorised as Amber in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, whilst Welshpool C. in W. School was categorised as Yellow. Guilsfield C.P. School was classified as a Green school.

This would also apply in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs. Based on PLASC 2020 information, there are no pupils eligible for Free School Meals, Looked after Children or pupils for whom English is an Additional Language at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. There are a number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs, however the number of pupils belonging to this group is small. It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to larger schools, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and

resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

9.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils' wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Castle Caereinion C. in W. School to alternative schools. It is possible that pupils could choose to transfer to different schools, which could have a further impact on their wellbeing. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period, to minimise any negative impact on them.

For some pupils, implementation of the preferred option could result in additional travel, which could have an impact on pupil well-being. However, alternative primary provision would be available at a number of other schools located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. It is not considered that the additional travel time required to alternative provision would be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to larger schools with larger cohorts of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities.

9.3 Teaching and learning experiences

9.3.1 Quality of teaching

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils would choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

9.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils would

choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils, and that the alternative schools would be better placed to develop provision which meets the requirements of the new curriculum.

Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school, which impacts on some aspects of the curriculum. Alternative Church in Wales provision is available at Welshpool C. in W. School, ensuring that denominational provision would continue to be available to those pupils who wished to access it.

9.3.3 The provision of skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils would choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at these schools, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

9.4 Care, support and guidance

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils would choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support,

personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. In respect of Berriew C. P. School, whilst an issue in respect of car parking arrangements at the school was identified previously, this has been addressed. In respect of Welshpool C. in W. School, the school moved into a new building in January 2021. Safeguarding is a key consideration when designing new schools, therefore the expectation is that the safeguarding arrangements here would be improved compared with the current arrangements at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

9.5 Leadership and Management

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. However it is possible that pupils would choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School, as other nearby schools.

Permanent leadership arrangements are in place at Berriew C.P. School, Welshpool C. in W. School and Guilsfield C.P. School, therefore the Council's view is that leadership and management at the alternative schools would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Castle Caereinion, whilst there are currently temporary leadership arrangements in place at Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School.

The alternative schools which pupils may transfer to are all larger than Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, therefore the headteachers of these schools would have more time available to focus on leadership and management.

9.5.2 Professional learning

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities. Staff currently employed at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would be subject to a management of change process.

9.5.3 Use of Resources

Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is projecting to be in a surplus budget position over the coming years. Whilst there are no concerns about the use of resources within the school, there are concerns about use of resources overall within the Powys schools infrastructure. As indicated on page 5 above, one of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the high proportion of small schools in the county. Castle Caereinion C. in W. school is

among the smallest schools in the county, and the budget share per pupil at the school is higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys, and would enable the Council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented pupils would transfer to larger schools, ensuring more effective use of the Council's resources.

In addition, larger schools often have more resources available in terms of number of staff and educational resources, therefore pupils would benefit from the opportunity to access these resources.

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

Implementation of the preferred option would result in the closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on any pupils belonging to vulnerable groups currently attending the school, including any pupils with SEN, and that in the short term, these pupils would need to transfer to alternative schools.

Based on January 2020 PLASC information, 5 pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School were on School Action, and 3 pupils were on School Action Plus. There were no statemented pupils.

Whilst the preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to alternative schools, there is no reason to believe that the schools to which they might transfer would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with SEN, and their families.

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

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to alternative schools, therefore Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

Should Castle Caereinion school close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. This would lead to an increase in pupil numbers at the schools to which the pupils wish to transfer. However current pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion school are small, and therefore the number of pupils likely to transfer to each year group is low, therefore the impact on alternative schools is not likely to have a significant impact on their ability to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and in each key stage of education.

In some schools, it is possible that an increase in pupil numbers would improve their ability to deliver the curriculum, however depending on the class structure and current breakdown of pupils, it's likely that some schools would need to make adjustments to their class structure in the short term to accommodate any additional pupils.

10 NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The following table shows the number of spaces available and the building condition of schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School:

School	Capacity ¹⁸	Current pupil numbers ¹⁹	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Berriew C.P. School	106	85	21	19.8%	B	B
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	195	161	34	17.4%	B/C	B
Welshpool C. in W. School	360 ²⁰	254	106	29.4%	A	A
Leighton C.P. School	91	71	20	22.0%	B/C	B
Guilsfield C.P. School	157	137	20	12.7%	B	B

¹⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

²⁰ This capacity and condition refers to the new Salop Road site of Welshpool C. in W. School

Ysgol Meifod	77	81	-4	-5.2%	B	C
Ysgol Rhiw Bechan	146	135	11	7.5%	B	A

This suggests that there are sufficient places available within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils at the school.

The condition of the nearest school, Berriew C.P. School is equivalent to the condition of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. In addition, Welshpool C. in W. School has recently moved to a brand new building, which provides access to a condition A building.

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

As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there is sufficient English-medium capacity within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School to accommodate the school's current and projected pupil numbers.

Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school. As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are places available at Welshpool C. in W. School, would enable pupils to access a school of the same religious character, should they wish to continue to attend a Church in Wales school.

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

As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are alternative primary places available at other schools within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Should Castle Caereinion C. in W. School close, it is not considered that the length and nature of journeys for pupils to alternative provision would be excessive. This includes journeys for SEN pupils. One-way journeys to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes.

11 RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would lead to an overall reduction in surplus places in the area.

11.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

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

The recurrent costs of this proposal would be the increased transport costs which are currently estimated to be an additional £32,300 per annum as detailed in 11.4. This has been included in the delegated revenue costing and is funded through savings in other areas of the formula in relation to this proposal.

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

It is estimated there would be additional transport costs of £32,300 per annum, this is based on pupil's current location and assuming the pupils would go to the next nearest school.

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

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 10.1 above, there are sufficient places at schools located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

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

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £58,100. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £90,400 offset by estimated additional transport costs of £32,300

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

Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is not currently forecasting a deficit budget.

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

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

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

Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is not owned by the Council, therefore the Council would not receive any capital receipts following any sale of the site.

12 OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC figures from January 2020, no pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School were eligible for FSM, therefore it is likely that the proportion of children from economically deprived backgrounds is minimal.

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

Initial consideration of equalities information recorded through PLASC suggests that there are no significant equality issues in respect of pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality

impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

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

The school is not subject to any trust of charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals.

13. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

13.1 Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option

A range of options have been considered in respect of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, these are outlined in section 4 of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are very low, and are not projected to increase above 30 over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

13.2 Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

Federation of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School with Welshpool C. in W. School is one of the options considered in section 4 of this document. As assessment of this option has been carried out, which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with this option.

Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are very low, and are not projected to increase above 30 over the coming years. Becoming part of a federation with another school would not address this issue.

13.3 Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

13.4 The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that there would no longer be provision in Castle Caereinion. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Castle Caereinion community, including the loss of primary provision from the village of Castle Caereinion, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, a community impact assessment would be carried out, which would include input from the affected schools to identify the potential impact on the community. This would be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received, and would be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

13.5 How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include provision for effective transition to the receiving school by new headteacher and class teachers.

14. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

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

Option 9: Close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum

- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with more suitable accommodation
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

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Proposal to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

Draft Community Impact Assessment

January 2021

Draft Community Impact Assessment – Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Berriew C.P. School	4.2%
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	75.0%
Guldsfield C.P. School	8.3%
Llanidloes C.P. School	4.2%
Welshpool C. in W. School	8.3%

This suggests that 75% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 25% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides the following after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Craft Club
- Coding Club
- Sports Club
- Science Club
- Breakfast Club

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

The school works closely with Castle Caereinion Bright Sparks playgroup. The children from the playgroup benefit from the use of the school building as well as the Community Centre. This helps the children

familiarise themselves with the school in readiness for their transition. It also enables a sharing of equipment and resources between the school and the playgroup. This close working relationship allows for the youngest members of the community to attend a playgroup that is linked to their feeder primary school. The playgroup is able to take place in the hall as the school covers the hiring fee for the time that the hall is being used by Bright Sparks.

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- Various activities such as school plays and Summer and Winter fetes, which are very popular with members of the community.

v) Other links between the school and the community

- The school are regular attendees at the Church for Services, with children doing readings and singing at Services.
- Links with the Castle Caereinion Recreation Association.
- Members of the community are invited to all school events, which they enjoy being able to attend.
- The school have organised for a Dragon Bags clothes recycling bank to be sited in the school carpark to allow members of the community to have clothes recycling facilities in their immediate area.
- The Community Hall benefits from using the school's refuse facilities, thus saving them additional costs.
- The school contributes to the community's quarterly newsletter, Castle News.
- Community Remembrance Day activities, to include collecting money and attending a prayer service with local members of the community.
- Harvest – the school collects donations of food items to create hampers which are then donated to members of the local community who are most in need, which are delivered by the children.
- The school is the main financial contributor to the Community Centre.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school, and Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close.

As a Church in Wales School, The Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

It is acknowledged that there would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion were the school to close. There would be a potential loss of community facilities and services provided by the school.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing Castle Caereinion C.in W. pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school. There would therefore be impact on distance and travelling times of pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Berriew C.P. School, Welshpool C. in W. School, Guilsfield C.P. School, Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Llanidloes C.P. School.

An analysis of pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to their new school for pupils for whom Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is currently the closest school would be 3.8 miles.

Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is also acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include

provision for effective transition to the receiving school by the headteacher and class teachers.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

The school's grounds are used by members of the community and local children outside of school hours. Children, young people and their families sit in the gardens of the school grounds having picnics and using the frames to play on. If the school was closed, this facility may no longer be available, and there would be an impact on community safety as this forms a safe place for families and children to be when the school is closed, without requiring children to cross the road to the local playground.

Should the school close, although the Local Authority would provide transport for pupils, if a parent needed to attend the new school they would struggle to get there in a timely manner with the current public transport options.

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that the school provides a number of facilities which could be attractive to families, and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families.

Should there be no school in Castle Caereinion, it is possible that families would leave the village in order to live in the community of any alternative school, and that young families would be discouraged from moving to the village.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. As a Church in Wales School, the school building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that are extensive links between the school and the community, and that the school and the

support and join each other's events. The school's outdoor space is available for use by the members of the community, and functions being held in the hall also use the school's outdoor areas for some of their activities, and events held by the school are attended by the whole community. There are also extensive links with the local church.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. As a Church in Wales School, the school building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school could impact on the local economy. In particular, there would be a reduction in employment opportunities in the village, and an impact on local businesses in Castle Caereinion and the surrounding area. It is also noted that the school is an important funding source for the community centre, and therefore in the longer term, it is possible that closure of the school could impact on the viability of the community centre.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include provision for effective transition to the receiving school by headteacher and class teachers.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities/events.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)**

The information received from the school indicates that there are extensive links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Castle Caereinion would have a significant effect on the local community.

As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

xi) Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Should the proposal be implemented, then the school would close with pupils moving to their nearest alternative school. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Castle Caereinion. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Castle Caereinion building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the

Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Castle Caereinion is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

DRAFT

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit, incorporates a range of legislative requirements that support effective decision making and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. **Draft versions of the assessment should be watermarked as "Draft" and retained for completeness. However, only the final version will be made publicly available. Draft versions may be provided to regulators if appropriate. In line with Council policy IAs should be retained for 7 years.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Lynette Lovell / Emma Palmer	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
Proposal	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School Proposal				
Outline Summary / Description of Proposal					
In April 2020, the Leader approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years. One of the objectives is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.					
A review of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School has been carried out, and Cabinet approval is now requested to commence the statutory process on the following proposal in respect of the school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools 					

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Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Sarah Astley	Strategic Programme Manager – Schools Transformation	January 2021
2	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£33,891.67	£24,208.33	£	£58,100

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	If approved by Cabinet, it is anticipated that consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code will commence in the Spring of 2021.

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4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?)
PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY

Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing and Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ☐ No ☒

Not currently, however should the Council proceed with statutory processes, this would involve processing the personal details of individuals

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A currently

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

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4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Builth and Llanwrtyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfair Caereinion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in Castle Caereinion as there would no longer be a school in the village. It is also possible that would be an impact on local businesses in Castle Caereinion and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area.	Poor		Poor
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.

Learning and skills
We will strengthen learning and skills

The proposal would result in closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils may also choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School as other nearby schools.

The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, Berriew C.P. School and Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School were categorised as Amber in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, whilst Welshpool C. in W. School was categorised as Yellow. Guilsfield C.P. School was classified as a Green school.

The alternative schools which pupils may attend are larger schools, and it is anticipated that they would provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.

Welshpool C. in W. School moved to a new build in January 2021, which has further improved the educational experience provided to learners, ensuring that the school can provide education which fully meets the requirements of the new curriculum in 21st century facilities. Any current pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School transferring to Welshpool

Good

Choose an item.

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
	C. in W. School would also benefit from these improved facilities.			
<div>Page 79</div> Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in the village of Castle Caereinion, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Very Poor	As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.	Very Poor
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to their nearest alternative school. However, the number of pupils requiring additional transport would be relatively small, and it is possible that they could be accommodated on transport which is already operating.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017: Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.	Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.	Poor	Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.	Neutral

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in the village of Castle Caereinion, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Very Poor	As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion	Very Poor

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being. Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>If approved by Cabinet, the Council will carry out consultation on the proposal, which would include consultation with all pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation. <i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i>				
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium schools, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium schools, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.	Good		Choose an item.
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances). <i>Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).</i>				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, regardless of their religion or belief. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is a church school, however alternative church provision is available at Welshpool C. in W. School for pupils wishing to continue to access denominational provision.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including any eligible for Free School Meals, however based on PLASC 2020 information, no pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School were eligible for Free School Meals.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. This would mean that pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

PLASC

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are low and are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		Choose an item.
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	Should the Cabinet agree to proceed, full consultation would be carried out, which would enable all interested parties to give their views. This would include an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	<p>Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be required in accordance with the School Organisation Code in order to achieve this. This would that all interested parties would have an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise would be reported to Cabinet and would be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed. This impact assessment will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received.</p> <p>All stakeholders would have the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this would include any unpaid carers in the area.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?	Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School as there would no longer be a school in Castle Caereinion, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process. Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process would be supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). This would include consultation with staff, which would ensure that they had an opportunity to give their views.	Poor		Poor
Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?	Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. All staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are female.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Welsh Language impact on staff	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff	Neutral		Choose an item.
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

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Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
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Castle Caereinion	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in the village of Castle Caereinion, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Major	As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion	Major	
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Description of risks			
Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
N/A			

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:	
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The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Castle Caereinion due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Full consultation would be required to implement this proposal, and this would enable the impact assessment to be further developed.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

The impact assessment will be reviewed at all stages of the development.

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley	Sarah Astley	5 th January 2021
Head of Service:	Lynette Lovell		
Portfolio Holder:	CLlr Phyl Davies		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Date required
Cabinet	9 th February 2021

FORM ENDS

DRAFT



Lynette Lovell
Interim Chief Education Officer
Powys County Council

12th January 2021

Dear Lynette

Transforming Education in Powys – Pre-Consultation Response to Options for Castle Caereinion Church in Wales Primary School

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the initial options appraisal in respect of Castle Caereinion Primary School. Can I say at the outset that the Diocese of St Asaph fully appreciates the need to review the pattern of schooling provision in Powys and the opportunity that the 21st Century Schools Programme presents to enable all children to access high quality provision.

We therefore want to work with you through this process to ensure that the final proposals are in the best interests of children and sustainable in the longer term. We have therefore discussed in some detail with the Headteacher and Governing Body the options document which you have shared with us and they are aware of the content of this letter.

In making this response, we have taken as our starting point the School Organisation Code 2018 which states that “amongst the overarching principles and policies which should be taken into account by relevant bodies in developing school organisation proposals, is “Faith in education”. It goes on to stress that “with reference to the nature of schools subject to proposals, whether the alternative school-based provision is sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same.....designated religious character”. It further stresses that “where school provision is being reduced or removed, alternative school provision of the same nature (language category or, if relevant, religious character), wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local area”.

Finally, the Code highlights, inter alia, that where the proposal concerns a school with a designated religious character, the following information **must** be included in the consultation document:

- The impact on availability and access to places at a school with the same designated religious character.

It is very disappointing therefore that in presenting the options, including an emerging preferred option, there is no reference to alternative Church in Wales places. We are of the view that this is a fundamental flaw and needs to be revisited. Castle Caereinion is the only English medium Church in Wales provision in the cluster.



The Council has identified a range of options. Having considered these options, in some detail, it is our view that it would be premature to close this school at this stage. We would ask that the following issues are considered carefully before proceeding further

i) Low pupil numbers

Whilst there are only 24 pupils currently in the school, and this falls within the Welsh Government definition of a 'small school', it is also listed as a 'Rural School' by Welsh Government in Annex F of the School Organisation Code. In such circumstances, "the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer". Small numbers on their own are not necessarily sufficient to justify closure.

The school has just received a grant from the Small Rural Schools Welsh Government Grant Scheme to develop the school's website. This is part of the school's vision to increase pupil numbers at the school. The website will not be live until the end of January / beginning of February 2021.

The Pre-Consultation document states that no increase in pupil numbers is likely. However, there were 22 pupils at the start of the academic year, which has increased to 24 as of January this year. We are aware that a family moving to the village with four children are due to join the school on February 21, thus increasing numbers further to 28 pupils. New affordable housing developments (31 housing commitment units in the LDP) currently taking place in Castle Caereinion, will also draw in young families who will be looking for a local school.

ii) High budget per pupil

Inevitably, smaller schools do generate a greater per pupil share of the budget because of the fixed costs they are unable to control (staffing, premises etc). The additional cost above the Powys average for 23 pupils is £57.5k (although there are actually 24 pupils currently in the school). Whilst funding for schools must be spent judiciously, this is not a huge amount of money given that additional transport costs need to be factored into the final solution which have not been included at this stage. If numbers do increase as we have suggested, the per pupil allocation will reduce.

iii) Issues with the building

We were surprised to read the comments in relation to the building. It has been assessed as 'good' in terms of both its condition and suitability, and whilst it is not a modern building, its ability to meet the needs of the new curriculum are not a concern for us. The supposed issues with the school building have been identified as a weakness in options 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8.

Castle Caereinion Church in Wales School benefits from large outdoor areas with a pond, forest school area, and two outdoor learning environments for each classroom. The school is a two-minute walk from the local church, enabling pupils to have a hands-on learning experience about their Faith and the importance of both the church and the school in this village. Within the building itself, the pupils benefit from large classrooms that are ideal for collaborative learning. There are interactive whiteboards in each classroom, enabling collaboration and virtual learning experiences. The school has its own computer suite, enabling each pupil access to a computer for their work. There are also sufficient iPads in school to allow pupils to carry out tasks with the use of this technology too. This provision is, in our opinion, significantly better than other schools in Powys.

iv) Leadership arrangements

It is not correct to say that the current Headteacher arrangements are temporary. This changed in September 2019 when a substantive permanent Headteacher was appointed and with the full support of Powys County Council. Since that time, the Headteacher has been working hard to implement the changes that needed to be made and recent review reports from the school's challenge adviser have confirmed that the school is making good progress. The challenge adviser has also confirmed their confidence in the Headteacher's ability to focus on the leadership of the school, by recommending that the Headteacher becomes the chairperson for the cluster ALNCO collaboration group.

The Options Appraisal document states that the Headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on the leadership of the school. The Headteacher currently has a 0.6 teaching commitment which is less than the teaching Heads in at least two of the other schools in Section 3.1, where Headteachers are running their schools with a 0.8 teaching commitment. If this forms part of the rationale, are other schools being considered for closure on this basis, as they have even less time to focus on the management of their school?

v) Need to improve quality of provision

The Estyn inspection referred to in the Option Appraisal document took place in 2016 when the previous shared headship model was in place. Subsequent to this, Estyn conducted a review in 2018 but there is no mention of this. At this time, Estyn rated the school as 'good'. The previous amber school categorisation support capacity rating was applied because the school had an Acting Headteacher in place. Having supported the change to permanent leadership arrangements just 18 months ago, we do not feel that the Council has given the school a reasonable timescale to demonstrate improvement and grow pupil numbers, particularly with the disruption caused by Covid over the last year.

The document states that the Headteacher has identified a need to improve pupils' basic literacy, numeracy and digital skills as well as a need to raise both pupil and staff expectations. This need was identified on the SDP over 12 months ago. The digital skills across the school were and continue to be strong. The standards in the school have improved, as have expectations. Learners are thriving and progress is being made. The historic school standards and expectations were a consequence of the previous shared leadership model. This model is no longer in place and since the recruitment of the current Headteacher, the stable leadership model has proved effective with a consistent approach. This is evidenced in the data and monitoring activities that are now embedded in the school.

The Headteacher has built up strong collaborative networks with other schools within the Llanfair, Welshpool and Newtown clusters. The new model of leadership needs longer to demonstrate the improvements it has made.

vi) Safeguarding issues

The issue as described in the document is not correct. The community centre has its own separate access point away from the school and is not used by members of the public during school time when the school has sole use. In any event, we believe that the use of a padlock on both gates would resolve the issue.

Additional Points

- When exploring Headteacher options 18 months ago, the school was advised that it was not possible to move cluster due to transport. However, the current proposals

indicate that pupils would be accommodated at the nearest school (Berriew in the Welshpool Cluster).

- There is no consideration in the options to educating children staying within the cluster – this is particularly relevant if children already have siblings who are attending the high school.
- A number of the options are not feasible because Castle Caereinion is a Church in Wales school and Berriew is a County Primary.
- The options document does not reference or account for the fact the school is in the Llanfair Cluster (as both Berriew and Welshpool are in the Welshpool cluster) and the subsequent implication this would have on transport requirements. There are currently former Castle pupils who attend Welshpool High School who do not receive transportation as it is not a feeder school, and conversely, there are former pupils attending Llanfair High School who do receive transport. There clearly will be implications for future (and potentially current) transport arrangements in both directions.

The Options Appraisal document contains a number of inaccuracies which have a significant impact on the arguments made by the LA. In particular, the “lack of suitable accommodation for the new curriculum” and the “temporary leadership arrangements”. As detailed above, we have evidenced how the school is able to deliver education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum and we have confirmed the fact that the Headteacher is a permanent, substantive position which has more leadership commitment than other schools in Powys and is already showing improvements.

We appreciate that there will be further opportunities to comment on whatever proposals the Cabinet determine should be put forward for the next stage of the consultation. Our request to Cabinet is that any proposals in respect of Castle Caereinion are deferred until Wave 2, when a more realistic assessment of the school’s position can be made.

Our firm view is that the LA should allow the school sufficient time to embed the changes that have already been implemented and are showing success, notwithstanding Covid. A review in the next wave would allow:

- the school time to demonstrate the impact of the new leadership structure that is in place
- sufficient time to demonstrate the impact of the Welsh Government Small Rural Schools Grant, which was provided to the school to raise its profile through the development of its website.
- a reasonable amount of time to enable our closest alternative Church in Wales school to embrace their new school building and to settle in before adding in the additional element of new pupils, who will undoubtedly find the change from their small rural primary school to a large town school difficult at this time.

I would like to thank you again for consulting with the Diocese at this early stage. Through this ongoing and constructive dialogue, I hope we can reach a way forward that may nevertheless involve compromises on both parts in the best interests of children. We do believe that children have an entitlement to a faith education where this is desired by parents, and the loss of such places needs to be balanced carefully with proposals for other schools in the area.

Yours sincerely

Heather

Heather Loveridge
Interim Director of Education

St Asaph Diocese
Diocesan Office
High Street
St Asaph
LL17 0RD

Telephone: 01745 582245

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Response to the Pre-Consultation response received by the Diocese of St. Asaph in respect of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

Comment	Response
<p>In making this response, we have taken as our starting point the School Organisation Code 2018 which states that “amongst the overarching principles and policies which should be taken into account by relevant bodies in developing school organisation proposals, is “Faith in education”. It goes on to stress that “with reference to the nature of schools subject to proposals, whether the alternative school-based provision is sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same.....designated religious character”. It further stresses that “where school provision is being reduced or removed, alternative school provision of the same nature (language category or, if relevant, religious character), wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local area”.</p> <p>Finally, the Code highlights, inter alia, that where the proposal concerns a school with a designated religious character, the following information must be included in the consultation document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on availability and access to places at a school with the same designated religious character. <p>It is very disappointing therefore that in presenting the options, including an emerging preferred option, there is no reference to alternative Church in Wales places. We are of the view that this is a fundamental flaw and needs to be revisited. Castle Caereinion is the only English medium Church in Wales provision in the cluster.</p>	<p>The need to ensure continued access to church places is fully acknowledged.</p> <p>Reference is made to the provision of church places in the SWOT assessments included in the pre-consultation version of the Options Appraisal, and the document considers options which involve Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest church school, to ensure the continued provision of church places.</p> <p>The full options appraisal to be considered by Cabinet considers the impact on demand for schools of a designated religious character in section 10.2:</p> <p><i>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school. As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are places available at Welshpool C. in W. School, would enable pupils to access a school of the same religious character, should they wish to continue to attend a Church in Wales school.</i></p> <p>In addition, Welsh-medium C. in W. provision is available within the Caereinion catchment at Ysgol Cwm Banwy.</p>
<p>i) Low pupil numbers</p> <p>Whilst there are only 24 pupils currently in the school, and this falls within the Welsh Government definition of a ‘small school’, it is also listed as a ‘Rural School’ by Welsh Government in Annex F of the School Organisation Code. In such circumstances, “the</p>	<p>These comments are noted. Even with the addition of a new family, pupil numbers at the school would remain very low.</p>

<p>case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer". Small numbers on their own are not necessarily sufficient to justify closure.</p> <p>The school has just received a grant from the Small Rural Schools Welsh Government Grant Scheme to develop the school's website. This is part of the school's vision to increase pupil numbers at the school. The website will not be live until the end of January / beginning of February 2021.</p> <p>The Pre-Consultation document states that no increase in pupil numbers is likely. However, there were 22 pupils at the start of the academic year, which has increased to 24 as of January this year. We are aware that a family moving to the village with four children are due to join the school on February 21, thus increasing numbers further to 28 pupils. New affordable housing developments (31 housing commitment units in the LDP) currently taking place in Castle Caereinion, will also draw in young families who will be looking for a local school.</p>	<p>The comments regarding the possible housing developments which could be seen in Castle Caereinion in the coming years are also noted, however there is no guarantee that 31 new houses would result in a significant number of additional pupils.</p>
<p>ii) High budget per pupil</p> <p>Inevitably, smaller schools do generate a greater per pupil share of the budget because of the fixed costs they are unable to control (staffing, premises etc). The additional cost above the Powys average for 23 pupils is £57.5k (although there are actually 24 pupils currently in the school). Whilst funding for schools must be spent judiciously, this is not a huge amount of money given that additional transport costs need to be factored into the final solution which have not been included at this stage. If numbers do increase as we have suggested, the per pupil allocation will reduce.</p>	<p>Comment noted – it is reasonable to assume that the cost per pupil would reduce should there be an increase in pupil numbers at the school. However, there is no evidence that pupil numbers at the school will increase significantly over the coming years.</p>
<p>iii) Issues with the building</p> <p>We were surprised to read the comments in relation to the building. It has been assessed as 'good' in terms of both its condition and suitability, and whilst it is not a modern building, its ability to meet the needs of the new curriculum are not a concern for us. The supposed issues with the school building have been identified as a weakness in options 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8.</p>	<p>Comment noted. It is true that the school building was assessed as condition B by the Welsh Government's condition survey which was carried out in 2009, and the positive aspects of the building which are listed are noted.</p>

<p>Castle Caereinion Church in Wales School benefits from large outdoor areas with a pond, forest school area, and two outdoor learning environments for each classroom. The school is a two-minute walk from the local church, enabling pupils to have a hands-on learning experience about their Faith and the importance of both the church and the school in this village. Within the building itself, the pupils benefit from large classrooms that are ideal for collaborative learning. There are interactive whiteboards in each classroom, enabling collaboration and virtual learning experiences. The school has its own computer suite, enabling each pupil access to a computer for their work. There are also sufficient iPads in school to allow pupils to carry out tasks with the use of this technology too. This provision is, in our opinion, significantly better than other schools in Powys.</p>	<p>The Council recently commissioned an updated condition survey of the school building. This was carried out in the autumn term 2020. The survey assessed the condition of all three blocks at the school as condition C.</p>
<p>iv) Leadership arrangements</p> <p>It is not correct to say that the current Headteacher arrangements are temporary. This changed in September 2019 when a substantive permanent Headteacher was appointed and with the full support of Powys County Council. Since that time, the Headteacher has been working hard to implement the changes that needed to be made and recent review reports from the school's challenge adviser have confirmed that the school is making good progress. The challenge adviser has also confirmed their confidence in the Headteacher's ability to focus on the leadership of the school, by recommending that the Headteacher becomes the chairperson for the cluster ALNCO collaboration group.</p> <p>The Options Appraisal document states that the Headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on the leadership of the school. The Headteacher currently has a 0.6 teaching commitment which is less than the teaching Heads in at least two of the other schools in Section 3.1, where Headteachers are running their schools with a 0.8 teaching commitment. If this forms part of the rationale, are other schools being considered for closure on this basis, as they have even less time to focus on the management of their school?</p>	<p>Comment noted. This was a mistake on the Council's part. The options appraisal document will be amended to reflect the correct position.</p>
<p>v) Need to improve quality of provision</p> <p>The Estyn inspection referred to in the Option Appraisal document took place in 2016 when the previous shared headship model was in place. Subsequent to this, Estyn</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

<p>conducted a review in 2018 but there is no mention of this. At this time, Estyn rated the school as 'good'. The previous amber school categorisation support capacity rating was applied because the school had an Acting Headteacher in place. Having supported the change to permanent leadership arrangements just 18 months ago, we do not feel that the Council has given the school a reasonable timescale to demonstrate improvement and grow pupil numbers, particularly with the disruption caused by Covid over the last year.</p> <p>The document states that the Headteacher has identified a need to improve pupils' basic literacy, numeracy and digital skills as well as a need to raise both pupil and staff expectations. This need was identified on the SDP over 12 months ago. The digital skills across the school were and continue to be strong. The standards in the school have improved, as have expectations. Learners are thriving and progress is being made. The historic school standards and expectations were a consequence of the previous shared leadership model. This model is no longer in place and since the recruitment of the current Headteacher, the stable leadership model has proved effective with a consistent approach. This is evidenced in the data and monitoring activities that are now embedded in the school.</p> <p>The Headteacher has built up strong collaborative networks with other schools within the Llanfair, Welshpool and Newtown clusters. The new model of leadership needs longer to demonstrate the improvements it has made.</p>	
<p>vi) Safeguarding issues</p> <p>The issue as described in the document is not correct. The community centre has its own separate access point away from the school and is not used by members of the public during school time when the school has sole use. In any event, we believe that the use of a padlock on both gates would resolve the issue.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The options appraisal will be updated to reflect this.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When exploring Headteacher options 18 months ago, the school was advised that it was not possible to move cluster due to transport. However, the current proposals indicate that pupils would be accommodated at the nearest school (Berriew in the Welshpool Cluster). 	<p>The options considered in the options appraisal relate to the school's geographical location. The options appraisal lists a number of schools which are located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, however the closest school to Castle Caereinion is</p>

	<p>Berriew C.P. School, which is located in the Welshpool cluster.</p> <p>Should the school close, eligible pupils would receive home to school transport to their nearest alternative school. For a number of pupils, it is likely that this would mean that they would be eligible for transport to Berriew C.P. School as their closest school.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no consideration in the options to educating children staying within the cluster – this is particularly relevant if children already have siblings who are attending the high school. 	<p>The options considered in the options appraisal relate to the school's geographical location. The options appraisal lists a number of schools which are located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, however the options in the document consider the closest school – Berriew C.P. School and the closest Church in Wales school – Welshpool C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst it is true that both of these schools are considered to be in the Welshpool catchment, the emerging preferred option – closure of the school with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative school – would provide the option for pupils to attend an alternative school of their choice. If pupils wished to transfer to alternative schools in the Caereinion catchment, they would be able to apply for a place via the Admissions process.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of the options are not feasible because Castle Caereinion is a Church in Wales school and Berriew is a County Primary. 	<p>It is not true that options involving a mix of C. in W. provision and C.P. provision are not feasible – the Council and Diocese of St Asaph have recently established Ysgol Cwm Banwy, a Church in Wales school established following a merger of Banw C.P. School and Llanerfyl C. in W. School.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The options document does not reference or account for the fact the school is in the Llanfair Cluster (as both Berriew and Welshpool are in the Welshpool cluster) and the subsequent implication this would have on transport requirements. There are currently former Castle pupils who attend Welshpool High School who do not receive transportation as it is not a feeder school, and conversely, there are former pupils attending Llanfair High School who do receive transport. There clearly will be implications for future (and potentially current) transport arrangements in both directions. 	<p>The options considered in the options appraisal relate to the school's geographical location. The options appraisal lists a number of schools which are located within 10 miles of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, however the options in the document consider the closest school – Berriew C.P. School and the closest Church in Wales school – Welshpool C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst it is true that both of these schools are considered to be in the Welshpool catchment, the emerging preferred option – closure of the school with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative school – would provide the option for pupils to attend an alternative school of their choice. If pupils wished to transfer to alternative schools in the Caereinion catchment, they would be able to apply for a place via the Admissions process.</p>
<p>The Options Appraisal document contains a number of inaccuracies which have a significant impact on the arguments made by the LA. In particular, the “lack of suitable accommodation for the new curriculum” and the “temporary leadership arrangements”. As detailed above, we have evidenced how the school is able to deliver education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum and we have confirmed the fact that the Headteacher is a permanent, substantive position which has more leadership commitment than other schools in Powys and is already showing improvements.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The options appraisal will be amended to reflect the comments received.</p>
<p>We appreciate that there will be further opportunities to comment on whatever proposals the Cabinet determine should be put forward for the next stage of the consultation. Our request to Cabinet is that any proposals in respect of Castle Caereinion are deferred until Wave 2, when a more realistic assessment of the school's position can be made.</p>	<p>Comments noted. However, there is currently no evidence to suggest that pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School will increase significantly over the coming years.</p>

Our firm view is that the LA should allow the school sufficient time to embed the changes that have already been implemented and are showing success, notwithstanding Covid. A review in the next wave would allow:

- the school time to demonstrate the impact of the new leadership structure that is in place
- sufficient time to demonstrate the impact of the Welsh Government Small Rural Schools Grant, which was provided to the school to raise its profile through the development of its website.
- a reasonable amount of time to enable our closest alternative Church in Wales school to embrace their new school building and to settle in before adding in the additional element of new pupils, who will undoubtedly find the change from their small rural primary school to a large town school difficult at this time.

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CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

9th February 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: Churchstoke C.P. School – Proposal Paper

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper requests Cabinet approval to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:
- To close Churchstoke C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys
- 1.2. The report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix A – Options Appraisal
 - Appendix B – Draft Community Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C – Draft Integrated Impact Assessment

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1. On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2. The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020.
- 2.3. The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, which is as follows:

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

2.3 The Strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

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

2.4. The new Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims and Objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of these Aims is to 'improve learner entitlement and experience' and includes an objective to 'rationalise primary provision'.

3. The Case for Change

3.1 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CHURCHSTOKE

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Churchstoke C.P. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹ at Churchstoke C.P. School are as follows:

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Churchstoke C.P. School	8	4	5	3	10	2	4	36

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers at Churchstoke C.P. School are lower than this. They are not expected to increase significantly for the foreseeable future.

The school's low pupil numbers have also resulted in a high number of surplus places at the school. Based on current pupil numbers, there is currently 50% surplus capacity at the school.

ii) High budget per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £7,475. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Churchstoke is ranked the 2nd highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil².

iii) Building condition and suitability

The Welsh Government's survey of school buildings carried out in 2009 identified issues with the building condition and suitability of Churchstoke C.P. School. The building condition was assessed to be condition C – Poor, whilst its suitability was assessed to be condition B/C – Good/Poor.

iv) Leadership

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Churchstoke C.P. School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

v) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

4. Information about Churchstoke C.P School

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

² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Churchstoke C.P. School	8	4	5	3	10	2	4	36

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁴

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Churchstoke C.P. School	64	54	53	41	39	28	25

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁵

	Jan. 2021 ⁶	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Churchstoke C.P. School	22	21	21	17	16

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Churchstoke C.P. School	36	39	44	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

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

³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁴ PLASC

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates

⁶ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁷ Powys Finance Projections – February 2021

	Current Capacity⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Churchstoke C.P. School	72	36 (50.0%)	36 (50.0%)

ii) **Building condition⁹**

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Churchstoke C.P. School	C Poor	B/C Good to bad	Yes

Standards of Education

i) **Estyn**

	Churchstoke C.P. School
Date of Inspection	April 2015
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Adequate
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Adequate
Improving quality	Adequate
Partnership working	Good

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁹ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

Resource management	Adequate
Follow Up	School to draw up action plan. Estyn to monitor progress. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in November 2016.

ii) **School Categorisation¹⁰**

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Churchstoke C.P. School	N/A	B	Yellow

Financial information

i) **Cost per pupil¹¹ (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)**

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Churchstoke C.P. School	£202,000	£7,475	£16,000	£7,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

5. Statutory Process for School Organisation Proposals

5.1 The process for school organisation proposals is set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2018). The process is summarised below:

i) **Consultation**

Consultation would be carried out with stakeholders as required by the Code. This includes consultation with the pupils at both schools, to ensure that their views are taken into account, in

¹⁰ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

¹¹ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Feedback from the consultation would be collated and summarised, and a report would be presented to the Cabinet. Cabinet will consider the report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal.

If Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

ii) Statutory Notice

If Cabinet decides to proceed, a Statutory Notice would be published, which would give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there were objections, the authority would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them. A further report would be presented to the Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

iii) Implementation

If Cabinet approves the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the Statutory Notice or any subsequently modified date.

6. Presumption against closure of Rural Schools

The School Organisation Code (2018) includes special arrangements in regard to schools identified in Appendix F of the Code as rural schools, which require proposers to follow a more detailed set of procedures and requirements in formulating a rural school closure proposal and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

As indicated in the Code:

'This does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federation.'

The School Organisation Code includes a number of steps required to be taken when formulating a rural school proposal which relate to the following headings:

- Formulating the proposal
- Identifying reasonable alternatives
- Preparing a proposal paper for the decision maker

As the School Organisation Code identifies Churchstoke C.P. School as a rural school, the additional requirements for rural schools have been addressed when developing the proposal paper.

7. Process of identifying preferred option

7.1 Officers have carried out an options appraisal on identified reasonable options for Churchstoke C.P. including the possibility of federation. School. This is attached to this report as Appendix A.

7.2 The options appraisal includes the following:

- Consideration of key data
- Identification of reasonable options
- SWOT analysis of each option
- Assessment of each option against a number of critical success factors
- Identification of an emerging preferred option
- Further consideration of the emerging preferred option against factors listed in the School Organisation Code (2018) as factors to be taken into account when developing school organisation proposals.

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

Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys.

7.4 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation
- Minimal impact on any other schools
- Would enable pupils to continue to access provision in Powys
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

- 7.5 A draft Community Impact Assessment has been carried out on the preferred option, which considers the impact on the community. This has been developed with input from the school. This is attached as Appendix B.

- 7.6 The draft Community Impact Assessment includes the following conclusion:

‘It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School. Should there be no school in Churchstoke, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

The information received by the school also suggests that that there are extensive links between the school and the local community, and that many community activities are arranged in the school which are accessed by the community. It is therefore acknowledged that closure of the school could have an impact on the community in terms of the services and activities available, and in particular on the availability of early years provision in Churchstoke.

Should there be no school in Churchstoke, any school facilities used by the community would no longer be available. There is a Community Hall in Churchstoke which would continue to be available, therefore community events and activities could take place here. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could also impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

Closure of Churchstoke C.P. School would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Churchstoke is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy, it is also acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils’ ability to access after school activities, and this could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc. This would also mean that pupils who are currently able to walk to school would be unable to do so.’

8. Advice

- 8.1 It is advised that Cabinet approves a recommendation to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Churchstoke C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys

8.2 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation
- Minimal impact on any other schools
- Would enable pupils to continue to access provision in Powys
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

8.3 Should the recommendation to commence the statutory process be approved, it is anticipated that consultation would commence in February / March 2021.

8.4 It must also be noted that implementation of this proposal does not preclude that school from being a part of future reorganisation proposals.

9. **Resource Implications**

9.1 The amount of funding provided to schools is driven by the funding formula. Any change to the formula funding provided will impact on the Council's revenue budget. Based on the current formula, it is estimated that implementation of the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around **£50,000**. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £61,000, estimated additional transport costs of £19,000 and savings on catering costs of around £7,500.

9.2 The School held a cumulative surplus balance of £4,266 as at the 31st March 2020, and have submitted a budget that utilises this balance.

9.3 The Scheme for Financing Schools also states the following in section 3.7.2:

'In order to ensure effective stewardship of the resources available to schools, the Authority may impose additional restrictions on a school scheduled to close, including but not limited to:

- Restriction of expenditure to agreed plans
- Removal of powers of virement'

The Council will consider the use of these powers of intervention where appropriate.

- 9.4 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, Finance, HR and ICT. These service areas will be kept informed of the development of the proposal throughout the statutory process.
- 9.5 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view
- 10.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”.

11. Comment from local member(s)

- 11.1 Cllr Michael John Jones:

‘This document has been overtaken by events. Projected nos in paragraph 3(iii) of Appendix A are out of date. At present there are 38 children on role due to an influx (14) from a recently completed housing development of 28 dwellings (within walking distance of the school) built by Mid Wales Housing Association. A further 9 social houses and 30+ 2, 3 and 4 bedroom family dwellings are in the process of been built on an adjacent site. Hopefully this may result in 20 pupils. There are also extant planning permissions for approx 50 houses including 40 on a County Farms site which is currently being marketed. There have been suggestions that part of the site could be used for Council houses. A growing school will also attract pupils who may be considering alternative schools including from out of catchment. There are currently 19 children in the Little Explorers pre-school group of whom 7 will be joining the school in September. Some receive 3+ funded hours of foundation education. Incidentally the pre-school group is based in the school, producing an income for CCP. If the school closes so does the pre-school. Alternative sites in the village are difficult and pre-school provision in neighbouring communities are full. Alternative schools are some distance away and will cause particular problems for less well off households. Parents will not be able to attend school events or allow their children to take part in extra-curricular activities due to a lack of access to transport. Children who opt for English schools will lose the opportunity to learn Welsh. The preferred option, Montgomery, has 29 available spaces, Churchstoke has 38 pupils and rising!? The school buildings may be classed as poor but they are adequate. It would not take much money to make a big

difference especially when compared to the huge ever increasing cost of new schools in Welshpool! The turnover of staff is low even though some are part time. Many people prefer part time work due to personal and/or family reasons. With a rising school role there will be opportunities for more full time staff. Thirty three (33) objectives have been analysed in the Impact Assessment (Appendix B) of which only 4 are Good impacts while 6 are Poor; 3 Very Poor; 1 CATASTROPHIC and 1 Medium. The remaining 18 are Neutral. I take issue with some of the Good and Neutral conclusions.

Section 1 Vision2025.Learning and Skills-Should be Neutral or Poor as less well off pupils will be unable to access some activities.

Section 6 Welsh Government goals-as above

Section 7 Councils Key Guidelines.Long term-Should be Neutral as pupil numbers are rising as per previous comments.

Involvement-Should be Poor.At this time of medical emergency involving lockdowns etc it will be very difficult to fully engage with the consultation due to poor; or sometimes non existent;broadband and/or mobile phone connectivity.Indeed I experienced three breaks in a Teams meeting only last week. As we all know public meetings etc are not possible.Furthermore staff are under huge pressure having to teach in class children of key workers and vulnerable pupils (approx 40% of role) and the rest online. To deal with the consultation process as well is too much. Their jobs are on the line afterall.

Payroll-Should be Very Poor. People are going to loose their jobs.

I agree whole heartedly with the Catastrophic,Very Poor and Poor impact assessments. Closing the school will immediately cause the closure of the pre-school group and put the village hall at serious risk with all the attendant consequences. The full effects can be found in Appendix C (Churchstoke Community Impact Assessment)

Budget - With an increasing role the cost/pupil will decrease drastically.38 pupils are being taught with roughly the same budget as 28 last year.

After reading the report and appendicies, in my humble opinion, because the village and school are growing there is no need to take the matter of closure further at this point. The future of the school should be looked at when the North Powys review of the 21st Century Schools Investment Program takes place.'

12. Integrated Impact Assessment (draft)

- 12.1 An initial integrated impact assessment in respect of the recommendation is attached as Appendix C. The impact assessment

considers the proposal's impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

12.2 The summary of the impact assessment is as follows:

'The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools' estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Churchstoke due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils. In addition, whilst the proposal is that pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys, it is possible that some pupils would transfer to provision in Shropshire, which would mean that they would no longer access a Welsh curriculum, and could impact on the Welsh identity of the village of Churchstoke.'

12.3 Should Cabinet approve the commencement of the statutory process in respect of the recommendation, the impact assessment would be updated throughout the process, to take account of feedback received.

13. Recommendation

13.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Churchstoke C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys

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Head of Service:	Emma Palmer – Head of Transformation & Communications Lynette Lovell – Interim Chief Education Officer
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Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Churchstoke C.P. School

Version Control:

Version	Date	Brief Summary of Change	Author
0.1	12/06/20	Initial draft	SA
0.2	30/06/20	Draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.3	09/07/20	Updated following WS1 meeting for consideration by Programme Board	SA
0.4	02/12/20	Updated draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.5	04/01/21	Version for consideration by Cabinet	SA
0.6	31/01/21	Final checking	ME

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

The purpose of this paper is to identify a preferred option for the future of Churchstoke C.P. School.

Current pupil numbers¹ at the school are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Churchstoke C.P. School	8	4	5	3	10	2	4	36

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

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

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

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

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives, which include an objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision' in order to improve overall learner entitlement and experience in Powys.

To take forward this objective, the Council is reviewing the smallest schools in Powys, with the aim of identifying solutions for these schools which will meet the objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', in order to ensure that education in Powys is delivered through an affordable, resilient infrastructure which provides the best possible opportunities to learners, now and in the future.

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

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

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

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

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

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

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

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

iii) High number of surplus places

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

iv) Building condition

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

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,276 to £11,912 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the

last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

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

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

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

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

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

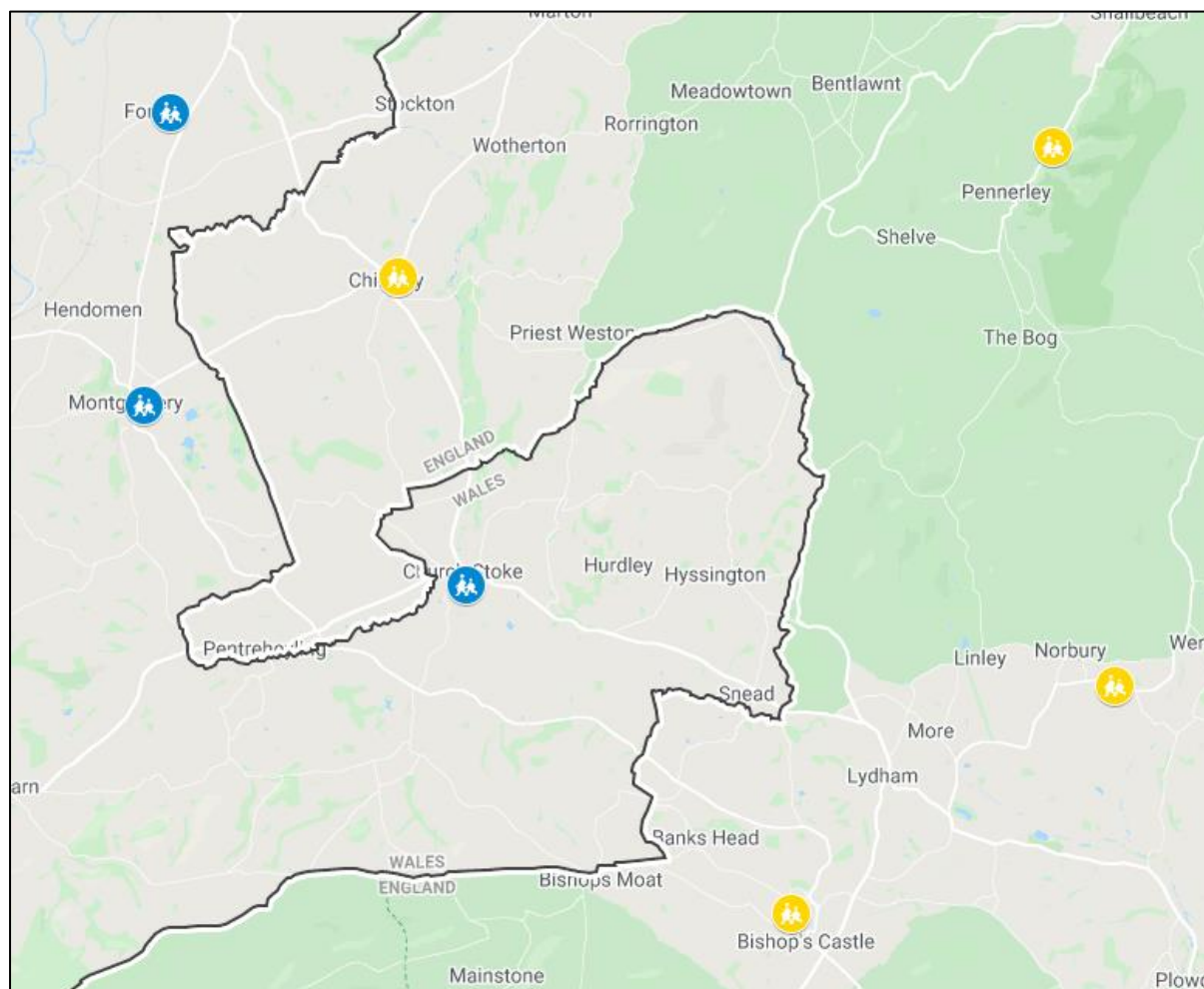
Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CHURCHSTOKE

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Churchstoke C.P. School is a primary school located in the village of Churchstoke in North Powys, which is located near to the border between Wales and England.

The following map shows the location of Churchstoke C.P. School and nearby schools:



Blue – Powys Schools, Yellow – Shropshire Schools

The following primary schools are located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School²:

School	Distance from Churchstoke C.P. School by road (miles)
Chirbury CofE Primary School	3.274 miles

² School Distances by Road - Council's Business Intelligence Team

(Shropshire)	
Montgomery C. in W. School	4.651 miles
Bishops Castle Primary School (Shropshire)	5.94 miles
Forden C. in W. School	7.028 miles
Abermule C.P. School	8.759 miles
Leighton C.P. School	8.929 miles
Berriew C.P. School	8.965 miles
St. Michael's C. in W. VA School	9.11 miles

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

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School?³
Churchstoke C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by Powys County Council	English-medium	12	Yes

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers⁴

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Churchstoke C.P. School	8	4	5	3	10	2	4	36

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁵

³ Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018)
(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)
includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

⁴ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁵ PLASC

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Churchstoke C.P. School	64	54	53	41	39	28	25

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁶**

	Jan. 2021 ⁷	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Churchstoke C.P. School	22	21	21	17	16

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁸**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Churchstoke C.P. School	36	39	44	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

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

	Current Capacity ⁹	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Churchstoke C.P. School	72	36 (50.0%)	36 (50.0%)

ii) **Building condition¹⁰**

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
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⁶ Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates

⁷ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁸ Powys Finance Projections – February 2021

⁹ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁰ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

Churchstoke C.P. School	C Poor	B/C Good to bad	Yes
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Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Churchstoke C.P. School
Date of Inspection	April 2015
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Adequate
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Adequate
Improving quality	Adequate
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Follow Up	School to draw up action plan. Estyn to monitor progress. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in November 2016.

ii) School Categorisation¹¹

¹¹ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Churchstoke C.P. School	N/A	B	Yellow

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil¹² (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Churchstoke C.P. School	£202,000	£7,475	£16,000	£7,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£3,978	N/A	N/A

Home to school travel

i) Closest school

An analysis of pupil travel patterns has been carried out, based on the 25 pupils that were attending Churchstoke in January 2020. The closest provider for all of these pupils is as follows:

	Pupils attending Churchstoke C.P. School
Churchstoke C.P. School	80%
Bishops Castle Primary School (Shropshire)	8%
Long Mountain CofE Primary School (Shropshire)	4%
Montgomery C. in W. School	4%
Penygloddfa C.P. School	4%

¹² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

Based on this information, Churchstoke C.P. School is the closest school for 80% of the pupils.

If there was no school in Churchstoke, the closest school for the pupils attending the school in January 2020 would be as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Churchstoke
Chirbury CofE Primary School (Shropshire)	72%
Montgomery C. in W. School	12%
Bishop's Castle Primary School (Shropshire)	8%
Long Mountain CofE Primary School (Shropshire)	4%
Penygloddfa C.P. School	4%

ii) Average travel distance

The average travel distance for pupils attending Churchstoke C.P. School, based on the January 2020 PLASC numbers, was 0.9 miles.

If there was no school in Churchstoke, the average travel distance for these pupils to attend alternative provision would be 1.8 miles.

iii) Furthest travel distance

Of the pupils attending Churchstoke C.P. School in January 2020, the furthest travel distance to the school for pupils for whom Churchstoke C.P. School was the closest provider was 4.6 miles.

If there was no school in Churchstoke, the furthest distance to the nearest alternative provision would be 11.9 miles.

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals¹³

¹³ PLASC 2020

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Churchstoke C.P. School	8.0%

ii) Pupils in care¹⁴

	Number of pupils in care
Churchstoke C.P. School	0.0%

iii) SEN/ALN¹⁵

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Churchstoke C.P. School	16.0%	4.0%	0.0%

Early Years

Non-maintained setting on the school site.

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN CHURCHSTOKE

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Churchstoke C.P. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹⁶ at Churchstoke C.P. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Churchstoke C.P. School	8	4	5	3	10	2	4	36

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this. They are not expected to increase significantly for the foreseeable future.

The school's low pupil numbers have also resulted in a high number of surplus places at the school. Based on current pupil numbers, there is currently 50% surplus capacity at the school.

¹⁴ PLASC 2020

¹⁵ PLASC 2020

¹⁶ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

ii) High budget per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £7,475. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Churchstoke is ranked the 2nd highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil.¹⁷

iii) Building condition and suitability

The Welsh Government's survey of school buildings carried out in 2009 identified issues with the building condition and suitability of Churchstoke C.P. School. The building condition was assessed to be condition C – Poor, whilst its suitability was assessed to be condition B/C – Good/Poor.

iv) Leadership

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Churchstoke C.P. School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

v) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

¹⁷ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

PART B – OPTIONS FOR CHURCHSTOKE C.P. SCHOOL

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution.

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school
2	Federation with another school This is not a viable option as there are no other C.P. schools in the vicinity which Churchstoke C.P. School could federate with, therefore this option is DISCOUNTED
3	Merge with Montgomery C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites
4	Close Churchstoke C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Montgomery C. in W. School
5	Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys
6	Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the four options are provided below.

Option 1: Status quo – continue as a standalone school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would retain provision in Churchstoke- There would be no additional transport costs- Would continue to provide access to a community primary school- No requirement for a reorganisation process- No change for staff- No impact on pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pupil numbers at Churchstoke would continue to be low, based on the projections- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision- Would still need to maintain the Churchstoke building- Would not reduce surplus places- Would not lead to a financial saving- Would not address issues with the Churchstoke CP School building

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not able to secure retention of staff due to small number of pupils

Option 2: Federation with another school

This is not a viable option as there are no other C.P. Schools in the vicinity which Churchstoke C.P. School could federate with, therefore this option is **DISCOUNTED**.

Option 3: Merge with Montgomery C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Churchstoke - Pupils would continue to attend school on their current site - More opportunities could be provided to pupils from being part of a larger school - There would be no additional transport costs - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Opportunity for all staff to secure positions in the new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Churchstoke would continue to be low, based on the projections - Churchstoke pupils would still be taught separately - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Churchstoke building - Would also impact on the staff of Montgomery C. in W. School - Different in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Montgomery C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between Church in Wales status and C.P. status

Option 4: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Montgomery C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Churchstoke - Pupils would continue to attend school on their current site - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - There would be no additional transport costs - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Montgomery C. in W. School would retain its identity - Minimal impact on staff at Montgomery C. in W. School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Churchstoke would continue to be low, based on the projections - Churchstoke pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Churchstoke building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not address issues with the Churchstoke building - Churchstoke C.P. School would lose its identity - Possible reduction in staffing requirements - There would be no access to C.P. provision locally
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between Church in Wales status and C.P. status

Option 5: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities - Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages - Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Churchstoke C.P. School is currently the closest school - Pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Churchstoke - Impact on the current staff of Churchstoke C.P. School - Impact on the Churchstoke community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal impact on any other schools - Would enable pupils to continue to access provision in Powys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some pupils may choose to transfer to alternative provision in England
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of pupils to England

Option 6: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities - Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages - Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation - Minimal impact on any other schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Churchstoke C.P. School is currently the closest school - Pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Churchstoke - Impact on the current staff of Churchstoke C.P. School - Impact on the Churchstoke community - Some pupils may transfer to alternative provision in England
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely to be the least popular option locally - Loss of pupils to England

6. IMPACT OF EACH OPTION

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Churchstoke.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Churchstoke.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Churchstoke C.P. School.
Option 2: Federation with another school	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A
Option 3: Merge with Montgomery C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Churchstoke.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Churchstoke C.P. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

		on the Montgomery site as more pupils attend this site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Churchstoke site.	
Option 4: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Montgomery C. in W. School	<p>Implementation of this option would result in closure of Churchstoke C.P. School, however provision would continue on the current site. Churchstoke C.P. School are both in the yellow support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore it is not anticipated that the impact on quality and standards would be negative.</p> <p>The school would be a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Churchstoke. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Montgomery C. in W. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Montgomery site as more pupils attend this site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Churchstoke site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Churchstoke C.P. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

<p>Option 5: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys school would be Montgomery C. in W. School.</p> <p>Based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, both Churchstoke C.P. School and Montgomery C. in W. School are categorised as Yellow schools. The Council's view is that quality and standards at Montgomery C. in W. School would be at least as good as the provision at Churchstoke.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Churchstoke as there would be no provision in Churchstoke.</p> <p>Should the school close, the Council would need to determine the future use of the building. Should the Council declare the building to be surplus to requirements and seek to sell the building, this would mean that the school's facilities would no longer be available to the community in Churchstoke.</p> <p>Non-maintained early years provision is currently provided on the school site, closure of the school could also mean that this provision would no longer be available to the community.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Churchstoke School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 6: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative schools would be Chirbury C. of E. School which is located in Shropshire.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Churchstoke as there would be no provision in Churchstoke.</p> <p>Should the school close, the Council would need to determine the future use of the building. Should the Council declare the</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Churchstoke School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also</p>

	<p>Chirbury C. of E. School was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2019, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be Good. It is likely therefore that the quality and standards at the school would be comparable to that available in Churchstoke C.P. School.</p>	<p>building to be surplus to requirements and seek to sell the building, this would mean that the school's facilities would no longer be available to the community in Churchstoke.</p> <p>Non-maintained early years provision is currently provided on the school site, closure of the school could also mean that this provision would no longer be available to the community.</p>	<p>be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
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7. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be achievable within current legislation The option must be operationally achievable The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

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

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

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	X	x	x	✓	?
2 – Value for money	x	X	x	x	✓	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
5 – Potential affordability	x	X	x	x	✓	✓
Total ✓	1	0	1	1	4	3
Total x	3	4	3	3	0	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Preferred option	Possible option

8. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the SWOT analyses carried out and the financial estimates received so far, the emerging preferred option for Churchstoke CP School is:

Option 5: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation
- Minimal impact on any other schools
- Would enable pupils to continue to access provision in Powys
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

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

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys, on the factors outlined in the Code.

9. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

The Council's view is that Montgomery C. in W. School would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall.

Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the schools overall effectiveness and quality of education to be Good, therefore it is likely that the provision is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School.

This also applies in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs. Based on PLASC 2020 information, approximately 10% of pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School are eligible for Free School Meals, and there are a small number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs. However, it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to larger schools, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

9.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Churchstoke C.P. School to alternative schools. It is possible that pupils could choose to transfer to different schools, which could have a further impact on their wellbeing. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period, to minimise any negative impact on them.

For some pupils, implementation of the preferred option could result in additional travel, which could have an impact on pupil well-being. However, alternative primary provision would be available at a number of other schools located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School, including schools located in Powys and schools located in Shropshire. It is not considered that the additional travel time required to alternative provision would be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to larger schools with larger cohorts of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities.

9.3 Teaching and learning experiences

9.3.1 Quality of teaching

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

The Council has no concerns about the quality of teaching at Montgomery C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School.

Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the schools overall effectiveness and quality of education to be Good, therefore it is likely that the quality of teaching is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School.

9.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative

schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

The Council's view is that Montgomery C. in W. School would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Churchstoke C.P. School. Pupils would transfer to a larger school, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils, and that the alternative school would be better placed to develop provision which meets the requirements of the new curriculum.

Montgomery C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school, whilst Churchstoke C.P. School is a community primary school. This would impact on some aspects of the curriculum should pupils transfer to Montgomery C. in W. School. However, alternative C.P. provision is available within 10 miles of Churchstoke, ensuring that non-Church in Wales provision would continue to be available to those pupils who wished to access it.

Should pupils transfer to Chirbury CofE School, they would access education in England, therefore would receive a different curriculum to that provided in Wales. One significant difference is that Welsh would no longer be a part of their curriculum. Whilst the Council is committed to providing continued access to education in Wales to pupils living in Churchstoke, it is acknowledged that some pupils may choose to transfer to alternative schools, which would impact on the curriculum they receive.

9.3.3 The provision of skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at Montgomery C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School.

Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the schools overall effectiveness and quality of education to be Good, therefore it is likely that the provision of skills would be of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School.

9.4 Care, support and guidance

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

In general, it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School. In respect of pupils transferring to Montgomery C. in W. School, it is anticipated that the arrangements would be at least equivalent to the current arrangements at Churchstoke.

For pupils choosing to transfer to schools in Shropshire, it is acknowledged that there could be a greater impact in the short term as it is likely that there would be different systems in place for tracking and monitoring pupils, and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding. However, once the pupils have transferred, there is no reason that the arrangements would not be at least equivalent to the arrangements at Churchstoke. Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the schools overall effectiveness and personal development to be Good, therefore it is likely that the arrangements would be at least equivalent to the current arrangements at Churchstoke C.P. School.

9.5 Leadership and Management

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.

Both Churchstoke C.P. School and Montgomery C. in W. School have permanent leadership arrangements, and both were categorised in the Yellow support category with an improvement capacity of B in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore the Council's view is that leadership and management at the alternative school would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Churchstoke. Montgomery C. in W.

School is larger than Churchstoke C.P. School, therefore it is expected that the headteacher would have more time available to focus on leadership and management.

Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the school's overall effectiveness and leadership and management to be Good, therefore it is likely that these aspects would be at least equivalent to the current arrangements at Churchstoke C.P. School.

9.5.2 Professional learning

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities. Staff currently employed at Churchstoke C.P. School would be subject to a management of change process.

9.5.3 Use of Resources

Whilst Churchstoke C.P. School is projecting a very small deficit budget in 2020/21, this is expected to be reversed the following year and the school is projecting a surplus budget for the following years.

Whilst there are no significant concerns about the use of resources within the school, there are concerns about use of resources overall within the Powys schools infrastructure. As indicated on page 5 above, one of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the high proportion of small schools in the county. Churchstoke C.P. School is among the smallest schools in the county, and the budget share per pupil at the school is higher than the Powys average for primary schools. The school also currently has 61% surplus capacity, which is inefficient use of the Council's resources.

Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys, and would enable the Council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, pupils would transfer to larger schools, ensuring more effective use of the Council's resources. In addition, larger schools often have more resources available in terms of number of staff and educational resources, therefore pupils would benefit from the opportunity to access these resources.

We also need to be mindful that pupil numbers feed into the distribution formula used by Welsh Government to distribute funding to the Council via the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Should Churchstoke C.P. School close, there

is potential for pupils to opt to go to schools outside of Powys, which may in turn result in a reduction in the RSG to the Council from Welsh Government.

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

Implementation of the emerging preferred option would result in the closure of Churchstoke C.P. School. It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on any pupils belonging to vulnerable groups currently attending the school, including any pupils with SEN, and that in the short term, these pupils would need to transfer to alternative schools.

Based on January 2020 PLASC information, 5 pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School were on School Action, and 1 pupil was on School Action Plus. There were no statemented pupils.

Whilst the preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to alternative schools, there is no reason to believe that the schools to which they might transfer would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Churchstoke C.P. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with SEN, and their families. This would include working with schools located in Shropshire for any pupils choosing to transfer to schools located in Shropshire.

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

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Churchstoke C. P. School would close and pupils would transfer to alternative schools, therefore Churchstoke C.P. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

Should Churchstoke school close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. This would lead to an increase in pupil numbers at the schools to which the pupils wish to transfer. However current pupil numbers at Churchstoke School are small, and therefore the number of pupils likely to transfer to each year group is low, the impact on alternative schools is not likely to have a significant impact on their ability to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and in each key stage of education.

In some schools, it is possible that an increase in pupil numbers would improve their ability to deliver the curriculum, however depending on the class

structure and current breakdown of pupils, it's likely that some schools would need to make adjustments to their class structure in the short term to accommodate any additional pupils.

10 NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The following table shows the number of spaces available and the building condition of Powys schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School:

School	Capacity ¹⁸	Current pupil numbers ¹⁹	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Montgomery C. in W. School	119	90	29	24.4%	C	B/C
Forden C. in W. School	102	68	34	33.3%	B/C	B
Abermule C.P. School	92	64	28	30.4%	B	C
Leighton C.P. School	91	71	20	22.0%	B/C	B
Berriew C.P. School	106	85	21	19.8%	B	B
St. Michael's C. in W. VA School	140	91	49	35.0%	B	B/C

This suggests that there is sufficient space in Powys schools located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School to accommodate all pupils currently attending the school. The building condition of all the schools in the above table has been assessed as either condition B or condition C. The condition of Churchstoke C.P. School has been assessed as condition C, therefore it is likely that the quality of accommodation at the alternative schools would be at least equivalent to the quality of accommodation at Churchstoke C.P. School.

¹⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

In addition the Powys schools listed above, Chirbury C of E Primary School and Bishops Castle Primary School are located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School. Whilst the Council is committed to continuing to provide access to Churchstoke pupils in Powys schools, it is possible that some pupils will choose to attend provision in Shropshire. The following table shows the number of spaces available of Shropshire schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School:

School	Capacity ²⁰	Current pupil numbers ²¹	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Chirbury C of E Primary School	84	72	12	14.2%	N/A	N/A
Bishops Castle Primary School	175	144	31	17.7%	N/A	N/A
Long Mountain C of E Primary School	100	129	-29	-29%	N/A	N/A

This suggests that there are some spaces available at Chirbury C of E Primary School and Bishops Castle Primary School.

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

As indicated in section 11.1 above, there is sufficient English-medium capacity within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School to accommodate the school's current and projected pupil numbers.

Churchstoke C.P. School is a community primary school. Whilst the school's neighbouring schools are mainly Church in Wales schools, alternative community primary provision is available within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School at Abermule C.P. School, Forden C.P. School and Berriew C.P. School, as well as at Bishops Castle Primary School in Shropshire, therefore community primary provision is available in the local area for any pupils not wanting to attend a Church in Wales school.

²⁰ Get information about schools via GOV.UK - <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

²¹ Get information about schools via GOV.UK - <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

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

As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are alternative primary places available at several other schools located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. school. Should Churchstoke C.P. School close, it is not considered that the length and nature of journeys for pupils to alternative provision would be excessive. This includes journeys for SEN pupils. One-way journeys to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes.

11 RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

Churchstoke C.P. School currently has 50% surplus places. Implementation of the preferred option would result in closure of Churchstoke C.P. School, and would therefore lead to a reduction in surplus places in the area, and in the Council's overall surplus places in primary schools.

11.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Churchstoke C.P. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Churchstoke C.P. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

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

The recurrent costs of this proposal would be the increased transport costs which are currently estimated to be an additional £19,000 per annum as detailed in 11.4. This has been included in the delegated revenue costing and is funded through savings in other areas of the formula in relation to this proposal.

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

It is estimated there will be additional transport costs of £19,000 per annum, this is based on pupil's current location and assuming the pupils will go to the next nearest school.

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

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 10.1 above, there are sufficient places at schools located within 10 miles of Churchstoke C.P. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

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

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £50,000. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £61,000, estimated additional transport costs of £19,000 and savings on catering costs of around £7,500.

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

Churchstoke C.P. School is projecting a very small deficit budget during 2020/21, however this is expected to be addressed in the following years. The school is not projecting a deficit budget from 2021/22 onwards.

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

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

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

Any capital receipts received from sale of the Churchstoke C.P. School site would be reinvested into the Schools Transformation programme in order to improve the educational provision across Powys.

12 OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC figures from January 2020, approximately 10% of pupils attending Churchstoke C.P. School were eligible for Free School Meals, therefore it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on some pupils from economically deprived backgrounds. However, whilst there would be an impact on these pupils in the short term as they would need to transfer to alternative schools, it is likely that they would transfer to larger schools, would be able to provide more opportunities to the pupils, therefore having an overall positive impact.

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

Initial consideration of equalities information recorded through PLASC suggests that there are no significant equality issues in respect of pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

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

Churchstoke C.P. School is not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals.

13. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

13.1 Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option

A range of options have been considered in respect of Churchstoke C.P. School, these are outlined in section 4 of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Churchstoke C.P. School are very low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

13.2 Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

Federation of Churchstoke C.P. School with another school was considered, however as the closest schools to Churchstoke are Church in Wales schools, there was no obvious school for the school to federate with.

Pupil numbers at Churchstoke C.P. School are low, and the school has a high level of surplus places. Pupil numbers are projected to remain low over the coming years, and the level of surplus places is expected to remain high. Becoming part of a federation with another school would not address this issue.

13.3 Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Churchstoke C.P. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

13.4 The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that there would no longer be provision in Churchstoke. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Churchstoke community, including the loss of primary provision from the village of Churchstoke, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

A draft community impact assessment has been carried out, with input from the school. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, this draft community impact assessment would be published as part of the consultation documentation. This would be updated

throughout the process to reflect any feedback received, and would be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

13.5 How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include meetings with new headteacher and class teachers to ease transition into the new schools for pupils.

14. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

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

Option 5: Close Churchstoke C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools in Powys

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupil would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Pupils would attend schools with better quality accommodation
- Minimal impact on any other schools
- Would enable pupils to continue to access provision in Powys
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to close Churchstoke C.P. School, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys.

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Proposal to close Churchstoke C.P. School

Draft Community Impact Assessment

January 2021

Draft Community Impact Assessment – Churchstoke C.P. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Churchstoke C.P. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Bishop's Castle Primary School	8.0%
Churchstoke C.P. School	80.0%
Long Mountain CofE Primary School	4.0%
Montgomery C. in W. School	4.0%
Penygloddfa C.P. School	4.0%

This suggests that 80% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 20% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides a range of after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Cooking, coding, film club and Criw Cymraeg, guitar lessons, a series of enterprise activities
- Joint activities with the local Tennis Club and Churchstoke Bowling Club.
- Breakfast Club.
- After School Club which supports both the school and pre-school setting.
- Village Youth Club.
- Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, currently the only youth provision in the village outside school and pre-school.
- Charity fund raising is undertaken on an extracurricular basis, both for local and national appeals.
- The school have been involved in local history and environmental projects.

Due to the school's location within the geographical landscape, it has been the only Powys/Welsh representation in Buzz in the Borders via The John Muir Trust and The Stiperstones and Corndon Living Landscape project. Without this participation there would be dramatically reduced opportunities for local community participation in cross border initiatives such as this.

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

- The local playgroup, Churchstoke Little Explorers, and Churchstoke Parent and Toddler Group, which also use both an outdoor area and the school field/forest school area. They have just received a £10,000 grant from Powys County Council Small Grants Scheme to develop the outdoor area and work is due to start during February half term.
- The school library which is also used by voluntary groups (e.g. Rainbows, Brownies and Guides)
- The school is a key holder for the Community Hall, which is on the school site.
- Heart defibrillator which belongs to the school but is available to all in the local area.

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- The school grounds are used as access to the Community Hall for all those using the hall.
- The school grounds are used by Churchstoke Football Club to access changing rooms.
- The school grounds are used by Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. It is also expected that a Scout Group will use the school grounds once the COVID-19 restrictions are over.
- The school field and forest school area is used for forest school activities for playgroup, toddlers and voluntary groups.
- The school grounds have been used for church and nursing home fetes, and for overflow parking for large funerals.

v) Other links between the school and the community

- With the neighbouring residential and nursing home, St Nicholas House. This has included visits from the children to perform for the residents and is very important for the health and well-being of both the residents and the children.
- St Nicholas' Church, including joint fund raising and social activities, plus support for Sunday School. Church leaders, WI and Mother's Union provide input into school assemblies, lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- With the local Co-op and Churchstoke Shopping Centre, with children visiting to perform for the public and to gain first-hand experience of the world of work.
- A Clothing Bank for the recycling of unwanted clothes.
- The school lends equipment to Playgroup, Toddlers, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and other voluntary bodies, and the school gymnastics equipment is available to the public.
- The school supports youth participation in the local tennis club lessons and at the local Bowling Club.
- School and Friends of School events are community gatherings, open to the whole community. Many residents of St Nicholas' House, other older residents, vulnerable members of the community and those with pre-school families rely on these events for social interaction. Little else brings the community together, younger with older, including secondary age ex-pupils.
- The school is the repository for local history after closure of the local history group several years ago. A regular part of school work is to ensure that both written and verbal local history is kept alive, including photographic records of changes within the community.
- Due to school location within the geographical landscape, the school provides the only Powys/Welsh representation in Buzz in the Borders via The John Muir Trust and The Stiperstones and Corndon Living Landscape project. Without this both projects would lack any Welsh perspective.
- Close links to education and training on both sides of the border, particularly with feeder secondary schools, crucially The Community College, Bishop's Castle (which is the closest secondary school and therefore the main feeder secondary), ensuring continuity of learning, wellbeing and safeguarding on transfer.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing Churchstoke pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school, and Churchstoke C.P. School would close. It is acknowledged that this would mean that there would be no school in Churchstoke, meaning that any community facilities provided by the school would no longer be available.

However, there is a Community Centre in Churchstoke, which would continue to be available to the community, and which could be used for community events. It is possible that closure of the school could impact on the Community Centre, due to the loss of any financial contributions by the school, however it is also possible that there would be increased use of the Community Centre should there be no school in the village.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing Churchstoke pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Montgomery C. in W. School, Forden C. in W. School, Abermule C.P. School, Leighton C.P. School, Berriew C.P. School and St Michael's C. in W. VA School.

An analysis of pupils attending Churchstoke School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to their nearest alternative school in Powys for pupils for whom Churchstoke School is currently the closest school would be 8.8 miles. The furthest distance to their nearest school regardless of location would be 4.6 miles.

Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is also acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

- Concern about the impact on the local pre-school and toddler groups would not be viable if there was no school in the village – a number of families do not have transport to access the nearest alternatives and there is little public transport.
- Local knowledge is important in order to safeguard families.

- Monitoring of local safeguarding issues, including specific identification and preventative teaching work on local community issues (the danger spots on the main road play areas, areas where children congregate, the community field etc.) would be more difficult if the school was closed.
- On-going development of 60+ social and affordable houses within the village.
- Many of the pupils currently walk to school – this would not be possible if there was no school in Churchstoke.
- Impact on the Welsh language and Welsh identity in the village, particularly as a high proportion of families would be likely to choose alternative provision in Shropshire.
- Concern about community division due to pupils attending provision in a number of different locations.
- Flooding from the Camlad and Caebitra Rivers which occurs on an annual basis can prevent travel out of the village and would mean that pupils would not be able to access school outside the village

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Churchstoke School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below.

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that a range of services and activities are provided by the school which could be attractive to families and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families, such as the pre-school and toddler groups which are held on the site.

Should there be no school in Churchstoke, it is likely that there would be an impact on facilities associated with the school, which could have an impact on families with school-age children, and which could encourage these families to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services are provided in the school, and that the playgroup and the parents and toddler group would be particularly vulnerable should there be no school in Churchstoke.

Whilst there is a Community Hall in Churchstoke which would continue to be available should there be no school in the village, therefore community activities, events and other services could be provided here. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could also impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of events and activities take place in the school, and that there are many links between the school and the community. School events and Friends of the School events are whole community events, which bring the whole community together. There is a Community Hall in Churchstoke which would continue to be available should there be no school in the village, therefore community activities, events and other services could be provided here. However, it is acknowledged that without the school, it is possible that there would be a reduction in the number of events and activities available.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school, and potentially families would have a negative impact on recruitment for lower paid key worker jobs in the area, and on the ability of other employers to recruit to roles, including residential and care staff, shop staff and agricultural work.

In addition, should closure of the school lead to fewer young families moving to the village, this could also impact on businesses in the village and surrounding communities, such as the three pubs, the shops at Churchstoke Shopping Centre, local tradesmen etc.

Concern has also been expressed that the absence of a school in the village would lead to a reduction in house prices.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils,**

(particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include provision for effective transition to the receiving school by headteacher and class teachers.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities/events.

- The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

The information received from the school indicates that the school currently plays an important role in the community, and that there are extensive links between the school and the community. Concern has been expressed that closure of the school would lead to social problems and isolation, and would impact on the Welsh identity of Churchstoke as it is possible that families would look to schools in Shropshire for alternative provision rather than schools in Powys.

Whilst there is a Community Centre in Churchstoke, As stated above, the closure of the school would mean that the Community Centre was not viable. The loss of the Community Centre would be catastrophic for community groups, with the loss of activities for children and young people, the elderly and families.

xi) Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School. Should there be no school in Churchstoke, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

The information received by the school also suggests that there are extensive links between the school and the local community, and that many community activities are arranged in the school which are accessed by the community. It is therefore acknowledged that closure of the school could have an impact on the

community in terms of the services and activities available, and in particular on the availability of early years provision in Churchstoke.

Should there be no school in Churchstoke, any school facilities used by the community would no longer be available. There is a Community Hall in Churchstoke which would continue to be available, therefore community events and activities could take place here. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could also impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

Closure of Churchstoke C.P. School would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Churchstoke is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is also acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and this could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc. This would also mean that pupils who are currently able to walk to school would be unable to do so.

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Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit, incorporates a range of legislative requirements that support effective decision making and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. **Draft versions of the assessment should be watermarked as "Draft" and retained for completeness. However, only the final version will be made publicly available. Draft versions may be provided to regulators if appropriate. In line with Council policy IAs should be retained for 7 years.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Lynette Lovell / Emma Palmer	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
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Proposal	Churchstoke C.P School Proposal
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Outline Summary / Description of Proposal

In April 2020, the Leader approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years. One of the objectives is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

A review of Churchstoke C.P School has been carried out, and Cabinet approval is now requested to commence the statutory process on the following proposal in respect of the school:

- To close Churchstoke C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys.

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1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Huw Rowlands	Transforming Education Programme Officer	January 2021
2	Marianne Evans	Service Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£29,166.67	£20,833.33	£	£50,000

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	If approved by Cabinet, it is anticipated that consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code will commence in the Spring of 2021.

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4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?)
PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY

Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing and Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ☐ No ☒

Not currently, however should the Council proceed with statutory processes, this would involve processing the personal details of individuals

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ☒

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Builth and Llanwrtyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfair Caereinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welshpool and Montgomery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Implementation of the proposal would have a potential impact on employment opportunities in Churchstoke as there would no longer be a school in the village. It is also possible that the loss of the school, and potentially loss of families from the area would have a negative impact on recruitment for lower paid key worker jobs in the area, and the ability of other employers in the area to recruit to roles. There could also be an impact on local businesses in the village and the surrounding communities. Concern has also been raised that the absence of a school in the village could lead to a reduction in house prices.	Poor		Poor
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills	<p>Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Churchstoke C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school in Powys would be Montgomery C. in W. School. Some pupils may also choose to attend schools in Shropshire, in particular Chirbury CofE School.</p> <p>The Council's view is that Montgomery C. in W. School would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils.</p> <p>Whilst the Council does not have direct experience of the provision at Chirbury CofE School, the school's last Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December 2019 judged the schools overall effectiveness and quality of education to be Good, therefore it is likely that the provision is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Churchstoke C.P. School.</p> <p>The alternative schools which pupils may attend are larger schools, and it is anticipated that they would provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.</p>	Good		Choose an item.

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Churchstoke, as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Whilst the proposal is that pupils transfer to alternative Powys schools, it is possible that some pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Shropshire, and therefore would access education in England. This could impact on the Welsh identity of Churchstoke.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Very Poor	<p>Home to school transport to be provided for pupils living in Churchstoke to their nearest school in Powys to ensure that they continue to access a Welsh education.</p> <p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p>	Very Poor
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

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6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to alternative schools.	Poor		Poor
A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017: Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.	Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Churchstoke C.P School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.	Poor	Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.	Neutral

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Churchstoke as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Whilst the proposal is that pupils transfer to alternative Powys schools, it is possible that some pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Shropshire, and therefore would access education in England. This could impact on the Welsh identity of Churchstoke.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>Home to school transport to be provided for pupils living in Churchstoke to their nearest school in Powys to ensure that they continue to access a Welsh education.</p> <p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> <p>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</p> <p>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.</p>	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>If approved by Cabinet, the Council will carry out consultation on the proposal, which would include consultation with all pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p> <p><i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i></p>				

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	<p>Churchstoke C.P School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language should pupils transfer to alternative schools in Powys.</p> <p>However, it is possible that some pupils could choose to attend alternative provision in Shropshire. This would mean that they would no longer access a Welsh curriculum, and Welsh would no longer be a part of the curriculum. This would mean that they would no longer have an opportunity to learn Welsh, and to use the Welsh language.</p>	Poor	Home to school transport to be provided for pupils living in Churchstoke to their nearest school in Powys to ensure that they continue to access a Welsh education.	Neutral
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	<p>Churchstoke C.P School is an English-medium school, however as it is located on the Powys / Shropshire border. Should pupils transfer to alternative schools in Powys, they would continue to be exposed to the Welsh language.</p> <p>However, it is possible that some pupils could choose to attend alternative provision in Shropshire. This would mean that they would no longer access a Welsh curriculum, and Welsh would no longer be a part of the curriculum. This could also impact on the Welsh identity of Churchstoke and opportunities to promote the Welsh language in Churchstoke.</p>	Poor	Home to school transport to be provided for pupils living in Churchstoke to their nearest school in Powys to ensure that they continue to access a Welsh education.	Neutral

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Churchstoke C.P School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools.</p> <p>It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances). Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Churchstoke C.P School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School, regardless of their religion or belief.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Churchstoke .P. School, regardless of their sex.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School, including any eligible for Free School Meals. PLASC 2020 information shows that some 10% of pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School were eligible for Free School Meals, and these pupils would continue to receive free school meals at any alternative school that they would transfer to.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Churchstoke. This would mean that pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

PLASC

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	Pupil numbers at Churchstoke C.P. School are low and are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		Choose an item.
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	Should the Cabinet agree to proceed, full consultation would be carried out, which would enable all interested parties to give their views. This would include an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	<p>Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be required in accordance with the School Organisation Code in order to achieve this. This would that all interested parties would have an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise would be reported to Cabinet and would be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed. This impact assessment will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received.</p> <p>All stakeholders would have the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this would include any unpaid carers in the area.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools' estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?	Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Churchstoke C.P School as there would no longer be a school in Churchstoke, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process. Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process would be supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). This would include consultation with staff, which would ensure that they had an opportunity to give their views.	Poor		Poor
Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?	Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Churchstoke C.P. School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Welsh Language impact on staff	Churchstoke C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff	Neutral		Choose an item.
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement

Churchstoke	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Churchstoke as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Churchstoke C.P School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Whilst the proposal is that pupils transfer to alternative Powys schools, it is possible that some pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Shropshire, and therefore would access education in England. This could impact on the Welsh identity of Churchstoke.</p> <p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Major	<p>Home to school transport to be provided for pupils living in Churchstoke to their nearest school in Powys to ensure that they continue to access a Welsh education.</p> <p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p>	Major	
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Description of risks

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Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
Insufficient capacity at nearest Powys school to accommodate all pupils at Churchstoke C.P. School.	Medium	There is sufficient capacity at other Powys schools in the local area to accommodate all pupils, and capacity at schools in Shropshire which pupils may choose to transfer to should Churchstoke C.P. School close.	Medium

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools' estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Churchstoke due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils. In addition, whilst the proposal is that pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys, it is possible that some pupils would transfer to provision in Shropshire, which would mean that they would no longer access a Welsh curriculum, and could impact on the Welsh identity of the village of Churchstoke.	

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
Full consultation would be required to implement this proposal, and this would enable the impact assessment to be further developed.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
The impact assessment will be reviewed at all stages of the development.

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley	Sarah Astley	5 th January 2021
Head of Service:	Lynette Lovell		

Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Phyl Davies		
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14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Cabinet	Date required	9 th February 2021
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FORM ENDS

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CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

9th February 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: Llanbedr C. in W. School – Proposal Paper

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper requests Cabinet approval to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:
- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
- 1.2. The report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix A – Options Appraisal
 - Appendix B – Draft Community Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C – Draft Integrated Impact Assessment
 - Appendix D – Pre-consultation response from the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
 - Appendix E – Council response to the issues raised in Appendix D

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1. On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2. The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020.
- 2.3. The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, which is as follows:

‘All children and young people in Powys will experience a high quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled,

economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.'

2.3 The Strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

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

2.4. The new Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims and Objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of these Aims is to '*improve learner entitlement and experience*' and includes an objective to '*rationalise primary provision*'.

3. The Case for Change

3.1 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANBEDR

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹ at Llanbedr C. in W. School are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

The Welsh Government defines a ‘small school’ as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are lower than this, and the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

ii) **High budget share per pupil**

Based on the Council’s Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school’s budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £5,948. This is higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Llanbedr C. in W. School is ranked the 16th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil².

iii) **Combined age classes**

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

iv) **Leadership**

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

4. **Information about Llanbedr C. in W. School**

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

The following is a summary of key data relating to Llanbedr C. in W. School:

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁴

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanbedr C. in W. School	39	41	40	39	43	42	46

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁵

		Jan. 2021 ⁶	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	42	42	39	38	36
	R – Yr 6	37	37	34	33	31

³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁴ PLASC (R – Yr6)

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates

⁶ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School (R – Yr6)	40	39	36	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

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

		Current Capacity⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	57	45 (78.9%)	12 (21.1%)
	R – Yr 6		40 (70.2%)	17 (29.8%)

ii) Building condition⁹

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

⁷ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school – February 2021 (R – Yr6)

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁹ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanbedr C. in W. School	B Good	B/C	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Llanbedr C. in W. School
Date of Inspection	April 2014
Standards	Adequate
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Adequate
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Follow up activity	School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor progress. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in July 2015.

ii) School Categorisation¹⁰

¹⁰ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N/A	A	Green

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil¹¹ (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanbedr C. in W. School	£232,000	£5,948	£14,000	£3,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

5. Statutory Process for School Organisation Proposals

5.1 The process for school organisation proposals is set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2018). The process is summarised below:

i) Consultation

Consultation would be carried out with stakeholders as required by the Code. This includes consultation with the pupils at both schools, to ensure that their views are taken into account, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Feedback from the consultation would be collated and summarised, and a report would be presented to the Cabinet. Cabinet will consider the report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal.

¹¹ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

If Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

ii) Statutory Notice

If Cabinet decides to proceed, a Statutory Notice would be published, which would give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there were objections, the authority would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them. A further report would be presented to the Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

iii) Implementation

If Cabinet approves the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the Statutory Notice or any subsequently modified date.

6. Presumption against closure of Rural Schools

The School Organisation Code (2018) includes special arrangements in regard to schools identified in Appendix F of the Code as rural schools, which require proposers to follow a more detailed set of procedures and requirements in formulating a rural school closure proposal and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

As indicated in the Code:

'This does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federation.'

The School Organisation Code includes a number of steps required to be taken when formulating a rural school proposal which relate to the following headings:

- Formulating the proposal
- Identifying reasonable alternatives
- Preparing a proposal paper for the decision maker

As the School Organisation Code identifies Llanbedr C. in W. School as a rural school, the additional requirements for rural schools have been addressed when developing the proposal paper.

7. Process of identifying preferred option

7.1 Officers have carried out an options appraisal on identified reasonable options for Llanbedr C. in W. School, including the possibility of federation. This is attached to this report as Appendix A.

7.2 The options appraisal includes the following:

- Consideration of key data
- Identification of reasonable options
- SWOT analysis of each option
- Assessment of each option against a number of critical success factors
- Identification of an emerging preferred option
- Further consideration of the emerging preferred option against factors listed in the School Organisation Code (2018) as factors to be taken into account when developing school organisation proposals.

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

Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

7.4 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

7.5 A draft Community Impact Assessment has been carried out on the preferred option, which considers the impact on the community. This has been developed with input from the school. This is attached as Appendix B.

7.6 The draft Community Impact Assessment includes the following conclusion:

'It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would

transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Llanbedr. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.'

- 7.7 As Llanbedr C. in W. School has a religious character, the School Organisation Code includes the following requirements:

'In the case of proposals to reorganise schools for which land and/or buildings are held on trust or which have a designated religious character, the proposer **must** conduct consultation with the trustees and/or appropriate religious body before the consultation document is published. The proposer **must** allow 28 days for the receipt of comments and **must** have due regard to those comments before any decision is made to proceed to general consultation.'

- 7.8 Consultation has been carried with the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, the response received is provided in Appendix D. The Council's response to the issues raised is provide in Appendix E.

8. Advice

- 8.1 It is advised that Cabinet approves a recommendation to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

- 8.2 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

- 8.3 Should the recommendation to commence the statutory process be approved, it is anticipated that consultation would commence in February / March 2021.
- 8.4 It must also be noted that implementation of this proposal does not preclude that school from being a part of future reorganisation proposals.

9. Resource Implications

- 9.1 The amount of funding provided to schools is driven by the funding formula. Any change to the formula funding provided will impact on the Council's revenue budget. Based on the current formula, it is estimated that implementation of the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around **£101,100**. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.
- 9.2 The school has a cumulative surplus balance of £5,673 and has submitted a budget plan that shows this reducing to £3,800 by the 31st March 2021.
- 9.3 The Scheme for Financing Schools also states the following in section 3.7.2:

'In order to ensure effective stewardship of the resources available to schools, the Authority may impose additional restrictions on a school scheduled to close, including but not limited to:

- Restriction of expenditure to agreed plans
- Removal of powers of virement'

The Council will consider the use of these powers of intervention where appropriate.

- 9.4 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, Finance, HR and ICT. These service areas will be kept informed of the development of the proposal throughout the statutory process.
- 9.5 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1 Legal : The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view
- 10.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”.

11. Comment from local member(s)

11.1 Cllr John Morris:

‘I am sure this excellent school will put forward a strong defence if you decide to proceed with this process.

However I wish to point out that in my opinion the decision to proceed at this stage is flawed.

- 1 This process is being carried out when we are in lockdown and will likely to be so for some considerable months. This does not allow public meetings in an area that has poor internet connectivity. This puts the school and community at a serious disadvantage when compared with previous school closure processes. There is no proposal in this report that allows for Covid restrictions and puts the council at risk of legal action.
- 2 The report does not provide adequate explanation or spaces for pupils who wish to attend church schools in the area. The response to the Diocese states that spaces are available at Llangattock CoW school however the school is almost full and could not accommodate the numbers from Llanbedr. This response is incorrect.
- 3 The schools transformation programme for the Crickhowell catchment area is not only not available but not even on the horizon at present. By proceeding with this process the council are prejudging the outcome of any future decisions on the catchment area. There is no whole cluster plan.
- 4 When the decision was taken to review catchment areas across Powys some years ago it was accepted at the time that if a school

became very small, around 20, then even if it was outside the clusters being considered it could be reviewed. Llanbedr School does not fit with this process as it has over 40 pupils and therefore it is premature to review the school at this time.

I therefore request that in light of the issues raised above the cabinet defer the decision to move the statutory process for Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School at this time.'

12. Integrated Impact Assessment (draft)

12.1 An initial impact assessment in respect of the recommendation is attached as Appendix C. The impact assessment considers the proposal's impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

12.2 The summary of the impact assessment is as follows:

'The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Llanbedr due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.'

12.3 Should Cabinet approve the commencement of the statutory process in respect of the recommendation, the impact assessment would be updated throughout the process, to take account of feedback received.

13. Recommendation

13.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

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Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Llanbedr C. in W. School

Version Control:

Version	Date	Brief Summary of Change	Author
0.1	16/07/20	Document created	RW
0.2	29/09/20	Draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.3	02/10/20	Version for consideration by Programme Board	SA
0.4	01/12/20	Updated version for consideration by WS1	SA
0.5	04/01/20	Version for Cabinet consideration	SA
0.6	01/02/20	Final check	ME

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

The purpose of this paper is to identify a preferred option for the future of Llanbedr C in W. Primary School. Current pupil numbers¹ at the school are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. Primary School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

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

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

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

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives, which include an objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision' in order to improve overall learner entitlement and experience in Powys.

To take forward this objective, the Council is reviewing the smallest schools in Powys, with the aim of identifying solutions for these schools which will meet the objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', in order to ensure that education in Powys is delivered through an affordable, resilient infrastructure which provides the best possible opportunities to learners, now and in the future.

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

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

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

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

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

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

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

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

iii) High number of surplus places

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

iv) Building condition

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

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,726 to £11,912 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the

last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

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

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

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

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

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

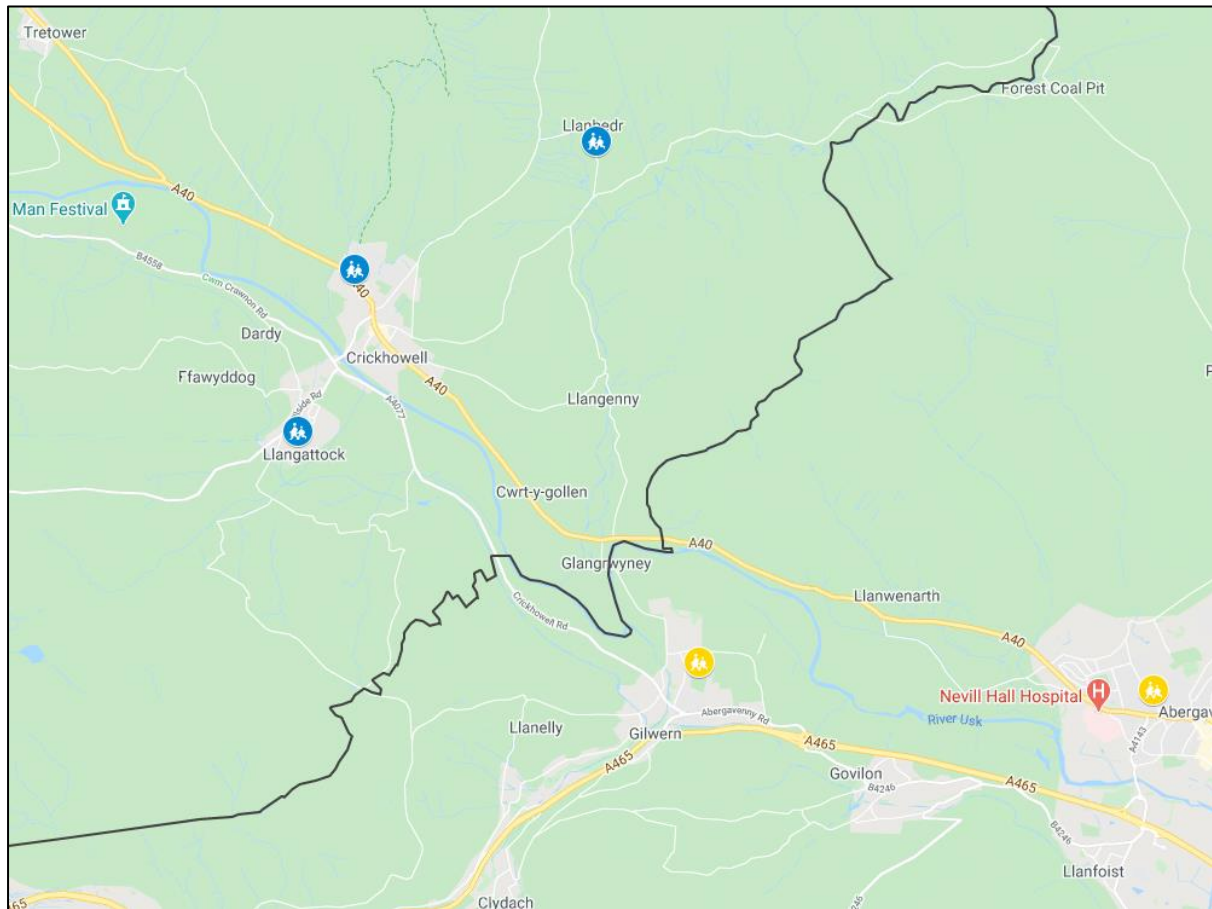
Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANBEDR

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales primary school located in the village of Llanbedr in the Crickhowell catchment area in South Powys.

The following map shows the location of Llanbedr C. in W. School and nearby schools:



Blue – Powys Schools, Yellow – Monmouthshire Schools

The following primary schools are located within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School²:

² School Distances by Road - Council's Business Intelligence Team

School	Distance from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School by road (miles)
Crickhowell C.P. School	2.062 miles
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	2.916 miles
Gilwern Primary School (Out of County)	3.795 miles
Cantref Primary (Out of County)	6.321 miles
Llangynidr C.P. School	6.41 miles
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School (Out of County)	7.412 miles
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni (Out of County)	7.453 miles
St Marys RC Primary School (Out of County)	8.533 miles

The following is a summary of key data relating to Llanbedr C. in W. School:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School? ³
Llanbedr C. in W. School	Voluntary Aided Church in Wales School building owned by the Diocese	English-medium	5	Yes

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers⁴

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

³ Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>) includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

⁴ Finane NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁵

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanbedr C. in W. School	39	41	40	39	43	42	46

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁶

		Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	42	42	39	38	36
	R – Yr 6	37	37	34	33	31

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School	40	39	36	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

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

⁵ PLASC

⁶ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

⁷ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school

		Current Capacity⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	57	45 (78.9%)	12 (21.1%)
	R – Yr 6		40 (70.2%)	17 (29.8%)

ii) Building condition⁹

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanbedr C. in W. School	B Good	B/C	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Llanbedr C. in W. School
Date of Inspection	April 2014
Standards	Adequate
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Adequate
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Good

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁹ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Follow up activity	<p>School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor progress.</p> <p>The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in July 2015.</p>

ii) School Categorisation¹⁰

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N/A	A	Green

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanbedr C. in W. School	£232,000	£5,948	£14,000	£3,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

Home to school travel

i) Closest school

¹⁰ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

An analysis of pupil travel patterns has been carried out, based on the 41 pupils that were attending Llanbedr according to the PLASC 2020 information – please note this data does not include nursery pupils. The closest provider for these pupils is as follows:

	Pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
Llanbedr C. in W. School	48.8%
Crickhowell C.P. School	24.4%
Llangynidr C.P. School	14.6%
Deri View Primary School (Out of County)	7.3%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	4.9%

Based on this information, Llanbedr C. in W. School is the closest school for 48.8% of the school's pupils on roll in January 2020.

If there was no school in Llanbedr, the closest school for all of the pupils on roll in January 2020 would be as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Llanbedr
Crickhowell C.P. School	68.3%
Llangynidr C.P. School	14.6%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	4.9%
Deri View Primary School (Out of County)	12.2%

ii) Average travel distance

The average travel distance for all pupils on roll in January 2020 at Llanbedr C. in W. School is 3.4 miles.

If there was no school in Llanbedr, the average travel distance for all pupils attending the school in January 2020 to attend alternative provision would be 2.5 miles.

iii) Furthest travel distance

Of the pupils that attended Llanbedr C. in W. School in January 2020, the furthest travel distance to the school for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. School is the closest provider is 3.8 miles.

If there was no school in Llanbedr, the furthest distance to the nearest alternative provision would be 9.2 miles.

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals¹¹

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Llanbedr C. in W. School	6.5%

ii) Pupils in care¹²

	Number of pupils in care
Llanbedr C. in W. School	0

iii) SEN/ALN¹³

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Llanbedr C. in W. School	6.5%	2.2%	2.2%

Early Years Provision

Non-maintained provision on the school site.

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANBEDR

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School:

i) Low pupil numbers

¹¹ PLASC 2020

¹² PLASC 2020

¹³ PLASC 2020

Current pupil numbers¹⁴ at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. Primary School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this, and the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

ii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £5,948. This is higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is ranked the 16th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil.¹⁵

iii) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

iv) Leadership

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

¹⁴ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

¹⁵ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

PART B – OPTIONS FOR LLANBEDR C. IN W. PRIMARY SCHOOL

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution.

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school
2	Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School This is not a viable option as it is not possible to federate a C. in W. school with a C.P. school, therefore this option is DISCOUNTED
3	Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School
4	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites
5	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites
6	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School
7	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School
8	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site
9	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site
10	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site
11	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site
12	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the four options are provided below.

Option 1: Status Quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would retain provision in Llanbedr- There would be no additional transport costs- No requirement for a reorganisation process- No change for staff- No impact on pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would continue to be low- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision- Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building- Would not reduce surplus places- Would not lead to a financial saving- Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils	

Option 2: Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School

This is not a viable option as it is not possible to federate a C. in W. school with a C.P. school, therefore this option is **DISCOUNTED**

Option 3: Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would retain provision in Llanbedr- There would be no additional transport costs- More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff- Llanbedr pupils would continue to attend school in the same location- Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pupil numbers at Llanbedr would continue to be low- Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision- Would still be required to maintain the Llanbedr building- Would not reduce surplus places- Would not lead to a financial saving- Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice 	
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Option 4: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Crickhowell C.P. School - Crickhowell is currently a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 5: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would also impact on staff at Llangattock C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	

Option 6: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Minimal impact on staff at Crickhowell C.P. School - Crickhowell C.P. School would retain its identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity - May not be attractive to Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 7: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Minimal impact on staff at Llangattock C. in W. School - Llangattock C. in W. School would retain its identity - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Llanbedr site

Option 8: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Crickhowell C.P. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is currently a C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in staffing requirements at the new school - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 9: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Crickhowell C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Crickhowell C.P. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Crickhowell - Impact on the Crickhowell community - Would impact on Crickhowell staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Would not be acceptable to Crickhowell C.P. School - Both schools would lose their identities - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Crickhowell pupils - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W School

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Crickhowell site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Crickhowell pupils - Unlikely that the Llanbedr site would not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 10: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location - Both schools are currently C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Llangattock C. in W. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in staffing requirements at the new school - Llangattock C. in W. School has recently been remodelled. It may be difficult to extend again should this be needed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible loss of roles for staff at Llanbedr at the new school
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Option 11: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llangattock C. in W. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Llangattock C. in W. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Llangattock - Impact on the Llangattock community - Would impact on Llangattock staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Llangattock pupils
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Llangattock pupils - The Llanbedr site may not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required.

Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities - Alternative Church in Wales provision is available in the catchment at Llangattock C. in W. School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional travel costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the current staff of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Loss of C. in W. provision from Llanbedr
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some pupils may transfer to provision outside Powys County Council

6. IMPACT OF EACH OPTION

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Llanbedr C. in W. School.
Option 2: Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A
Option 3: Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School	The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Llanbedr C. in W. School would continue to operate as a standalone school, however the school would be federated with Llangattock C. in W. School, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.	The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.	Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School. However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.

	Establishment of a federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a positive impact on quality and standards.		
Option 4: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 5: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that	The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools</p>

	<p>merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>in order to access activities and events.</p>
<p>Option 6: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Crickhowell C.P. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

Option 7: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. school are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Llangattock C. in W. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 8: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the same location, which would result in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, merging with Crickhowell CP School to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbedr community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, which would aid community involvement in the new school.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.		
Option 9: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Crickhowell community as there would no longer be provision in Crickhowell. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Crickhowell community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Crickhowell is a town with a significantly larger school, it is likely that the Crickhowell community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School. As pupil numbers at Crickhowell C.P. School are significantly larger than those at Llanbedr C. in W. School, this is likely to impact on a significant number of pupils.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
Option 10: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green	There would be a significant impact on the community of	Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

<p>establish a new school on the Llangattock site</p>	<p>schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the same location, which would result in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.</p>	<p>Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, merging with Llangattock C. in W. school to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbedr community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, which would aid community involvement in the new school.</p>	<p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 11: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and could lead to an increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Llangattock community as there would no longer be provision in Llangattock. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llangattock community to be involved in the process of</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	Llangattock C. in W. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.	establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Llangattock is a larger school, it is likely that the Llangattock community would consider this option to be disproportionate.	
Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School. All of these schools are currently classified as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p> <p>A number of pupils that live in Monmouthshire currently attend Llanbedr C. in W. School. For these pupils, the closest alternative provision would be Deri View</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>As a Church in Wales School, The Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	Primary School which is located in Monmouthshire. This school was categorised as Amber in the latest categorisations carried out in 2019.		
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7. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be achievable within current legislation The option must be operationally achievable The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

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

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

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6	Option 7	Option 8	Option 9	Option 10	Option 11	Option 12
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	?	x	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	x	✓	x	✓
4 – Potential affordability	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓
Total ✓	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	3	1	4
Total x	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	0	3	0	3	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Possible	Discount	Possible	Discount	Preferred

8. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred option for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is:

Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum

- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

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

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools, on the factors outlined in the Code.

9. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall.

This would also apply in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs. Based on PLASC 2020 information, there are no Looked after Children or pupils for whom English is an Additional Language at Llanbedr C. in W. School. There are a number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals and a number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs, however the number of pupils belonging to these groups are small. It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to larger schools, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

9.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Llanbedr C. in W. School to alternative schools. It is possible that pupils could choose to transfer to different schools, which could have a further impact on their wellbeing. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period, to minimise any negative impact on them.

For some pupils, implementation of the preferred option could result in additional travel, which could have an impact on pupil well-being. However, alternative primary provision would be available at other schools located within a few miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. It is not considered that the additional travel time required to alternative provision would be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to larger schools with larger cohorts of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities.

9.3 Teaching and learning experiences

9.3.1 Quality of teaching

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council has no concerns about the quality of teaching at any of the schools located in Powys, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

9.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number

of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils within single year groups or dual year group class.

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school, which impacts on some aspects of the curriculum. Alternative Church in Wales provision is available at Llangattock C. in W. School, ensuring that denominational provision would continue to be available to those pupils who wished to access it.

9.3.3 The provision of skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at the three schools located in Powys, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

9.4 Care, support and guidance

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the

proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

9.5 Leadership and Management

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

There are permanent leadership arrangements in place at Llanbedr C. in W. School, Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Llangynidr C.P. School, therefore the Council's view is that leadership and management at the alternative schools would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Llanbedr.

The alternative schools to which pupils might transfer are all larger than Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore the headteachers of these schools would have more time available to focus on leadership and management.

9.5.2 Professional learning

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities. Staff currently employed at Llanbedr C. in W. School would be subject to a management of change process.

9.5.3 Use of Resources

Llanbedr C. in W. School is projecting to be in a surplus budget position over the coming years. Whilst there are no concerns about the use of resources within the school, there are concerns about the use of resources overall within the Powys schools infrastructure. As indicated on page 5 above, one of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the high proportion of small schools in the county. Llanbedr C. in W. School is among the smallest

schools in the county, and the budget share per pupil at the school is higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys, and would enable the Council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

Should the preferred option be implemented pupils would transfer to larger schools, ensuring more effective use of the Council's resources.

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

Implementation of the emerging preferred option would impact on any vulnerable pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, including any pupils with SEN.

Based on January 2020 PLASC information, 3 pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School were on School Action, 3 pupils were on School Action Plus, and there was one statemented pupil.

Whilst the emerging preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to alternative schools, there is no reason to believe that the schools to which they might transfer would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Llanbedr C. in W. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with SEN, and their families.

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

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to alternative schools, therefore Llanbedr C. in W. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

Should Llanbedr school close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. This would lead to an increase in pupil numbers at the schools to which the pupils wish to transfer. However current pupil numbers at Llanbedr School are small, and therefore the number of pupils likely to transfer to each year group is low, therefore the impact on alternative schools is not likely to have a

significant impact on their ability to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and in each key stage of education.

In some schools, it is possible that an increase in pupil numbers would improve their ability to deliver the curriculum, however depending on the class structure and current breakdown of pupils, it's likely that some schools would need to make adjustments to their class structure in the short term to accommodate any additional pupils.

10 NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The following table shows the number of spaces available and the building condition of Powys schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School:

School	Capacity ¹⁶	Current pupil numbers ¹⁷	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Crickhowell C.P. School	230	184	46	20.0%	C	B/C
Llangattock C. in W. School	144	101	43	29.9%	B	A/B
Llangyndir C.P. School	147	102	45	30.6%	B	B/C

This suggests that there is sufficient places at Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School. There are also places available at Llangyndir C.P. School.

In addition, there are a number of schools within the county of Monmouthshire which are within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. The following table provides information about the number of places available in these schools:

¹⁶ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁷ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

School	Capacity ¹⁸	Current pupil numbers ¹⁹	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Gilwern Primary School	210	220	-10	-4.7%	N/A	N/A
Cantref Primary School	210	240	-30	-14.2%	N/A	N/A
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	77	69	8	10.3%	N/A	N/A
St Mary's RC Primary School	210	153	57	27.1%	N/A	N/A

This suggests that there are limited places available at the nearby schools located in Monmouthshire.

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

As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there is sufficient English-medium capacity within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School to accommodate the school's current and projected pupil numbers.

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school. Alternative C. in W. provision is available at Llangattock C. in W. School, which would enable pupils to access a school of the same religious character, should they wish to continue to attend a Church in Wales school.

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

As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are alternative primary places available at other schools within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. Should Llanbedr C. in W. School close, it is not considered that the length and nature of journeys for pupils to alternative provision would be excessive. This includes journeys for SEN pupils. One-way journeys to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes.

11 RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

¹⁸ Monmouthshire County Council – Admissions Policy 2021/22

¹⁹ PLASC 2020

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

Implementation of the preferred option would lead to an overall reduction in surplus places in the area.

11.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Llanbedr C. in W. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Llanbedr C. in W. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

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

The recurrent costs of this proposal would be the increased transport costs which are currently estimated to be an additional £43,700 per annum as detailed in 11.4. This has been included in the delegated revenue costing and is funded through savings in other areas of the formula in relation to this proposal.

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

It is estimated there would be additional transport costs of £43,700 per annum, this is based on pupil's current location and assuming the pupils will go to the next nearest school.

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

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are sufficient places at schools located within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

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

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.

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

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not currently forecasting a deficit budget.

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

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

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

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not owned by the Council, therefore the Council would not receive any capital receipts following any sale of the site.

12 OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC figures from January 2020, 3 pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School were eligible for FSM, therefore it is likely that the proportion of children from economically deprived backgrounds is small.

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

Initial consideration of equalities information recorded through PLASC suggests that there are no significant equality issues in respect of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

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

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not subject to any trust which may be affected in relation to the use or disposal of land.

13. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

13.1 Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option

A range of options have been considered in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School, these are outlined in section 4 of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

13.2 Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

Federation of Llanbedr C. in W. School with Llangattock C. in W. School is one of the options considered in section 4 of this document. An assessment of this option has been carried out, which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with this option.

Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School are very low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Becoming part of a federation with another school would not address this issue.

13.3 Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

13.4 The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that there would no longer be provision in Llanbedr. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Llanbedr community, including the loss of primary provision from the village of Llanbedr, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

A draft community impact assessment, with input from the school, has been carried out. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, this draft community impact assessment would be published as part of the consultation documentation. This would be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received, and would be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

13.5 How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support will depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include effective transition arrangements with the receiving school to ensure pupils transition is positive.

14. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

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

Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.



Proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School

Draft Community Impact Assessment

January 2021

Draft Community Impact Assessment – Llanbedr C. in W. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Crickhowell C.P. School	24.4%
Llanbedr C. in W. School	48.8%
Llangattock C. in W. School	4.9%
Llangynidr C.P. School	14.6%
Deri View Primary School (Out of County)	7.3%

This suggests that 48.8% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 51.2% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides the following after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Puppet Club
- Welsh Club
- Art and Craft Club
- IT and Technology Club
- Gardening Club
- Cookery Club
- Dragon Sports Club
- Storytelling
- STEM Club
- Charity Club
- Show Ground Categories Club
- Recorder and Music Club
- Drama Club
- House Teams Challenges
- Mandarin

- School Council
- Eco Club
- Criw Cymraeg

Whilst some of these clubs are run by staff and governors, some are assisted by older pupils from Crickhowell High School. Many of the clubs are shared with the community. The gardens, ponds and vegetable plots are attended by community members in evening, holidays and during the school week.

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

- Tots and Tiddlers Support Group
- Friends of the School and Community Group
- Raven Drama
- Puppet Soup Company
- Faith in Family
- Messy Church
- Family Film Club
- Breakfast Club
- A new library was opened in the school in 2018

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- Fell running
- Puppetry and Theatre Crafts Club
- Community Environmental projects
- Charity Bingo and Beetle Drive events
- Auction events
- Pond and garden development
- Vegetable plots and community engagement events

The school also acts a meeting hub for the three parishes of Llanbedr, Patricio and Llangenny which includes Lent lunches, Harvest festival and Easter which are prepared and served by the pupils.

v) Other links between the school and the community

- Community Annual Eisteddfod

- Community Harvest Festival
- Community Scarecrow Festival
- Christmas Fayre
- Easter Parade
- Summer Fayre
- Lantern Parade
- Christingle

The opportunities offered by the school for children in the community benefit the whole community. The school also has a highly effective Friends of the School group who work raising funds for the school, charity and community projects.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools and there would no longer be a school in Llanbedr.

It is acknowledged that there would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr, as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore a potential loss of community facilities associated with the school.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain available to the community in Llanbedr.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School.

An analysis of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to the new school for pupils for whom

Llanbedr C. in W. School is currently the closest school would be 9.2 miles.

Home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport which is in operation at that time. Whilst free transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

- At present, public transport is not a requirement for pupils to attend school, as although some may live further than walking distance by road, there are many cross country and short cycle stretches that families use.
- Many families who attend the school are able to travel safely across the country routes within their journey from home to school. The school has an access gate from the yard to an adjoining field which avoids the roads and is better for the environment.
- If the school was to close, pupils would need transport to attend their alternative schools which would therefore not promote walking to school as there are no safe walking or safe cycle routes.

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Llanbedr C. in W. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services and activities are provided by the school, including some facilities which

could be attractive to families and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families. It is also suggested that recent housing developments actively targeted this group due to the proximity with the school.

Should there be no school in Llanbedr, it is likely that there would be an impact on the other associated facilities available in the village, which could have an impact on families with school-age children, and which could encourage these families to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services are provided in the school, and it is regularly used as a village meeting place. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of events take place in the community events and activities take place in the school, as indicated in sections (iii), (iv) and (v) above.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

In addition, as a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school, and subsequently the loss of families from Llanbedr could have some impact on local business in Llanbedr and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area. Information received from the school suggests that the possible loss of the school would also have an impact on the rural lifestyle, traditions and culture which are central to the area. Implementation of the proposal could eventually lead to a reduction in employment opportunities in the village of Llanbedr.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

As indicated in section (viii) above, should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)**

The information received from the school indicates that there is currently extensive use of the Llanbedr building, and significant links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Llanbedr would have a significant effect on the local community.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

xi) Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar

range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Llanbedr. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit, incorporates a range of legislative requirements that support effective decision making and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. **Draft versions of the assessment should be watermarked as "Draft" and retained for completeness. However, only the final version will be made publicly available. Draft versions may be provided to regulators if appropriate. In line with Council policy IAs should be retained for 7 years.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Lynette Lovell / Emma Palmer	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
Proposal	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School Proposal				
Outline Summary / Description of Proposal					
In April 2020, the Leader approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years. One of the objectives is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.					
A review of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School has been carried out, and Cabinet approval is now requested to commence the statutory process on the following proposal in respect of the school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools 					

Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Richard Williams	Transforming Education Programme Officer	January 2021
2	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£58,975	£42,125	£	£101,100

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	If approved by Cabinet, it is anticipated that consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code will commence in the Spring of 2021.

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4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?)
PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY

Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing and Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ☐ No ☒

Not currently, however should the Council proceed with statutory processes, this would involve processing the personal details of individuals

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A currently

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

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4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Builth and Llanwrtyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfair Caereinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in Llanbedr as there would no longer be a school in the village. It is also possible that closure of the school and possible loss of families from Llanbedr could impact on local businesses in Llanbedr and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area.	Poor		Poor
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>Learning and skills</p> <p>We will strengthen learning and skills</p>	<p>The proposal would result in closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School.</p> <p>The Council's view is that these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils.</p> <p>A number of pupils that live in Monmouthshire attend Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. For these pupils the closest alternative provision would be Deri View Primary School which is located in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>The alternative schools which pupils may attend are larger schools, and it is anticipated that they would provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.</p>	Good		Choose an item.

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Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>Residents and Communities</p> <p>We will support our residents and communities</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr, as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would be continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to their nearest alternative school.	Poor		Choose an item.
A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017: Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.	Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.	Poor	Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.	Neutral

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr, as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Very Poor	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would be continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>	Very Poor

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being. Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>If approved by Cabinet, the Council will carry out consultation on the proposal, which would include consultation with all pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation. <i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i>				
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.	Good		Choose an item.
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances). <i>Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).</i>				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Llanbedr C.P School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, regardless of their religion or belief. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is a church school, however alternative church provision is available at Llangattock C. in W. School for pupils wishing to continue to access denominational provision.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p><i>Socio-economic duty</i></p>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including any eligible for Free School Meals. PLASC 2020 information shows that 3 pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School were eligible for Free School Meals, and these pupils would continue to receive free school meals at any alternative school that they would transfer to.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Llanbedr. This would mean that pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

PLASC

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are low and are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		Choose an item.
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	Should the Cabinet agree to proceed, full consultation would be carried out, which would enable all interested parties to give their views. This would include an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	<p>Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be required in accordance with the School Organisation Code in order to achieve this. This would that all interested parties would have an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise would be reported to Cabinet and would be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed. This impact assessment will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received.</p> <p>All stakeholders would have the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this would include any unpaid carers in the area.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?	Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School as there would no longer be a school in Llanbedr, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process. Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process would be supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). This would include consultation with staff, which would ensure that they had an opportunity to give their views.	Poor		Poor
Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?	Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Welsh Language impact on staff	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff	Neutral		Choose an item.
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

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Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
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Llanbedr	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Catastrophic	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would be continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>	Catastrophic	
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Description of risks			
Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
N/A			

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:	
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The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Llanbedr due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Full consultation would be required to implement this proposal, and this would enable the impact assessment to be further developed.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

The impact assessment will be reviewed at all stages of the development.

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley	Sarah Astley	5 th January 2021
Head of Service:	Lynette Lovell		
Portfolio Holder:	CLlr Phyl Davies		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Date required
Cabinet	9 th February 2021

FORM ENDS

DRAFT

Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School - Diocese Response to Options Appraisal – December 2020

After reviewing the documentation sent to the diocese, please find the initial response.

Concerns over Timing of the Proposal

The timing of the consultation over the Christmas period and in the midst of a global pandemic has been challenging. Upon reflection, the pre-consultation documentation could have been distributed at a more appropriate time.

Concerns of how Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School fit into Powys Strategy.

The Powys Strategy for Transforming Education clearly indicates ambitious new plans for schools in Powys, that will provide high quality teaching and learning environments and the commitment to deliver an improved learner offer for the children and young people in Powys, which the diocese fully supports. The emphasis for the diocese is to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future and we believe that Llanbedr Church in Wales School is delivering this. Considerable progress has been made since the last Estyn and Section 50 Inspection, with the strategic leadership of the Headteacher providing firm direction for the current and future high standards within the school. This is reflected in visits from the Challenge Advisor and the Diocesan Director of Education.

Reflecting upon one of the strategic objectives to develop a network of all-age schools based around the current secondary locations, it is difficult to see how this objective relates to Llanbedr Church in Wales School. After reviewing the five reports already published on proposals in other areas, in line with the Powys Strategy, there are currently no plans proposed for the Crickhowell area. Are the children who attend Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School therefore, not part of this objective? One proposal could be the building of an all-age Church in Wales School in Crickhowell, as discussion are taking place between the diocese and Crickhowell High School to become a Church in Wales School.

Christian Ethos

Llanbedr Church in Wales School is a VA, voluntary aided, school, with a very distinctive and strong Christian ethos running throughout the heart at what it does, providing the best possible opportunities for all the pupils, staff, and local community. Emphasis is placed upon enhancing and growing the existing links with the church and local community by the schools, with a high regard for wellbeing. This is in the line with the diocese education vision on wellbeing, using the Biblical quote of John 10:10, “I came so that everyone would have life, and have it fully”. This is being achieved at Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School, with regular monitoring visits from the Diocesan Director of Education, who works in partnership with the school. Church Schools are at the heart of the Church in Wales’s mission, who faithfully serve children and parents of all faiths and of none, providing a high-quality education of the whole child and enriching their communities. This is being achieved at Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School.

With this overarching focus, the school is distinctly different from community schools in the area, and upon reading the documentation, the Christian ethos and rural school community links have not been fully considered and do not feature in the preferred option given.

Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School is distinctive from other schools in the cluster:

- The Christian ethos runs through the heart of the school and is the main reason many families join the school from other areas especially where families live in remote/rural areas;
- A number of pupils have been admitted into the Christian ethos of the school after having previous difficulties in other schools, one following discussions with ALN officers. The preferred option means that if the school were to close before 2024/25 these pupils would return to the schools where they were experiencing difficulties;
- Llanbedr Church in Wales School plays a vital role in the promotion of community cohesion both within the school and in working with the parishes to reach out to the wider community that it serves.

Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School - Diocese Response to Options Appraisal – December 2020

- Llanbedr Church in Wales School has a strong commitment to the development of the spiritual dimension both in the formal and the hidden curriculum. A Sunday School was started at the school in 2018 and last year Messy Church and an after-school club, which organises community events for children and their families.
- Church events involving the school are well attended by the local community and the three parishes. The Christmas Services, Harvest Festivals, Easter Services, Lent lunches, and Remembrance Services are popular events with high attendance. The last event at the Church the school had brought all the chairs from the school and there were still many that had to stand. For community members who live in remote areas these Christian events led by the school are their community links.
- Rev. Chris Bowler was due to start confirmation classes with the pupils, but in the present climate this did not begin, although families are still interested. This is the next stage in the pupils' religious and spiritual journey.
- There is a strong welsh dimension in the school and the school also holds an annual Eisteddfod which receives over one hundred entrants from the community for the different categories, linking to the traditions of Welsh Christianity.

The preferred emerging option as set out in the Options Appraisal would result in only 2 pupils attending a Church in Wales School. Nearly all pupils will lose the strong Christian school ethos along with the sense of rural community cohesion that this school brings.

Number on roll

Within the documentation provided the number on roll from Powys calculations differ from what Llanbedr Church in Wales School actually have on roll at the present time. Currently, Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School has on roll: Nursery: 5; and Reception to Year 6: 44.

Housing Development in the school's catchment area

Upon reviewing the current and proposed housing stock in the catchment area, there is an opportunity for the school grow:

- There is already planning in place and passed for over 130 houses. A large number of these dwellings will be affordable housing which will more than likely add to the number of children requiring school places.
- The first development of 70 house is due to start building at any time and it is more than likely that this site will be added to with more housing in phase 2. This housing is in the Vale of Grwyney Community Council area which covers Llanbedr School. In fact, Llanbedr School is the only primary school in the Vale of Grwyney.
- With other development of 60 houses is in Crickhowell and a large development going through planning in Llangattock, this will again increase the need for school places in the Crickhowell area.

Response to the Pre-Consultation response received by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School

Comment	Response
<p><u>Concerns over Timing of the Proposal</u></p> <p>The timing of the consultation over the Christmas period and in the midst of a global pandemic has been challenging. Upon reflection, the pre-consultation documentation could have been distributed at a more appropriate time.</p>	<p>These concerns are noted. The School Organisation Code states the following:</p> <p>‘In the case of proposals to reorganise schools for which land and/or buildings are held on trust or which have a designated religious character, the proposer must conduct consultation with the trustees and/or appropriate religious body before the consultation document is published. The proposed must allow 28 days for the receipt of comments and must have due regard to those comments before any decision is made to proceed to general consultation.’</p> <p>The Council started consultation with the Diocese on the 1st December 2020, and this ended on the 14th January 2021. As a recognition of the fact that the consultation was taking place of the Christmas period and the pandemic, the period allowed to provide a consultation response was in excess of the 28 days which is required.</p>
<p><u>Concerns of how Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School fit into Powys Strategy.</u></p> <p>The Powys Strategy for Transforming Education clearly indicates ambitious new plans for schools in Powys, that will provide high quality teaching and learning environments and the commitment to deliver an improved learner offer for the children and young people in Powys, which the diocese fully supports. The emphasis for the diocese is to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future and we believe that Llanbedr Church in Wales School is delivering this. Considerable progress has been made since the last Estyn and Section 50 Inspection, with the strategic leadership of the Headteacher providing firm direction for the current and future high standards within the</p>	<p>Comment noted. Llanbedr C. in W. School has been categorised as a green school in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, and fully acknowledges the quality of provision offered at the school.</p> <p>As outlined in the options appraisal in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School, the challenges in respect of the school relate mainly to pupil numbers and budget share per pupil.</p>

<p>school. This is reflected in visits from the Challenge Advisor and the Diocesan Director of Education.</p>	
<p>Reflecting upon one of the strategic objectives to develop a network of all-age schools based around the current secondary locations, it is difficult to see how this objective relates to Llanbedr Church in Wales School. After reviewing the five reports already published on proposals in other areas, in line with the Powys Strategy, there are currently no plans proposed for the Crickhowell area. Are the children who attend Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School therefore, not part of this objective? One proposal could be the building of an all-age Church in Wales School in Crickhowell, as discussion are taking place between the diocese and Crickhowell High School to become a Church in Wales School.</p>	<p>Whilst the new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes an objective to ‘Develop a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations’, this is a long term strategy, and it is not possible to take forward this objective in all areas at once.</p> <p>As well as this objective, the Strategy also includes an objective to ‘Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision’. In order to implement this objective, the Council has been reviewing its smallest schools, of which Llanbedr C. in W. School is one.</p>
<p><u>Christian Ethos</u></p> <p>Llanbedr Church in Wales School is a VA, voluntary aided, school, with a very distinctive and strong Christian ethos running throughout the heart at what it does, providing the best possible opportunities for all the pupils, staff, and local community. Emphasis is placed upon enhancing and growing the existing links with the church and local community by the schools, with a high regard for wellbeing. This is in the line with the diocese education vision on wellbeing, using the Biblical quote of John 10:10, “I came so that everyone would have life, and have it fully”. This is being achieved at Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School, with regular monitoring visits from the Diocesan Director of Education, who works in partnership with the school. Church Schools are at the heart of the Church in Wales’s mission, who faithfully serve children and parents of all faiths and of none, providing a high-quality education of the whole child and enriching their communities. This is being achieved at Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School.</p> <p>With this overarching focus, the school is distinctly different from community schools in the area, and upon reading the documentation, the Christian ethos and rural school community links have not been fully considered and do not feature in the preferred option given.</p>	<p>The Council notes the voluntary aided Church in Wales status of Llanbedr C. in W. School. The need to ensure continued access to church places is fully acknowledged.</p> <p>Reference is made to the provision of church places in the SWOT assessments included in the pre-consultation version of the Options Appraisal, and the document considers options which involve Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest church school, to ensure the continued provision of church places.</p> <p>The full options appraisal to be considered by Cabinet considers the impact on demand for schools of a designated religious character in section 10.2:</p> <p><i>Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school. Alternative C. in W. provision is available at Llangattock C. in W. School, which would enable pupils to access a school of the same religious character, should they wish to continue to attend a Church in Wales school.</i></p>

<p>Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School is distinctive from other schools in the cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian ethos runs through the heart of the school and is the main reason many families join the school from other areas especially where families live in remote/rural areas; • A number of pupils have been admitted into the Christian ethos of the school after having previous difficulties in other schools, one following discussions with ALN officers. The preferred option means that if the school were to close before 2024/25 these pupils would return to the schools where they were experiencing difficulties; • Llanbedr Church in Wales School plays a vital role in the promotion of community cohesion both within the school and in working with the parishes to reach out to the wider community that it serves. • Llanbedr Church in Wales School has a strong commitment to the development of the spiritual dimension both in the formal and the hidden curriculum. A Sunday School was started at the school in 2018 and last year Messy Church and an after-school club, which organises community events for children and their families. • Church events involving the school are well attended by the local community and the three parishes. The Christmas Services, Harvest Festivals, Easter Services, Lent lunches, and Remembrance Services are popular events with high attendance. The last event at the Church the school had brought all the chairs from the school and there were still many that had to stand. For community members who live in remote areas these Christian events led by the school are their community links. • Rev. Chris Bowler was due to start confirmation classes with the pupils, but in the present climate this did not begin, although families are still interested. This is the next stage in the pupils' religious and spiritual journey. • There is a strong welsh dimension in the school and the school also holds an annual Eisteddfod which receives over one hundred entrants from the community for the different categories, linking to the traditions of Welsh Christianity. 	<p>These comments about the provision at Llanbedr C. in W. School are noted.</p>

<p>The preferred emerging option as set out in the Options Appraisal would result in only 2 pupils attending a Church in Wales School. Nearly all pupils will lose the strong Christian school ethos along with the sense of rural community cohesion that this school brings.</p>	<p>As indicated above, the Council notes the Church in Wales status of Llanbedr C. in W. School. Alternative Church in Wales provision is available at Llangattock C. in W School, which is located less than 3 miles away from Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>The need to ensure continued access to church places is fully acknowledged.</p>
<p><u>Number on roll</u></p> <p>Within the documentation provided the number on roll from Powys calculations differ from what Llanbedr Church in Wales School actually have on roll at the present time. Currently, Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School has on roll: Nursery: 5; and Reception to Year 6: 44.</p>	<p>The pupil numbers in the documentation are the pupil numbers that were attending the school on the Finance pupil count date in November 2020. It is acknowledged that pupil numbers change frequently at all schools, however even with the additional pupils, the school remains small.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are provided for pupils from Reception to Year 6 as these are the pupils funded by the Council. However as a VA School, it is acknowledged that Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements, and that the school admits nursery aged pupils.</p>
<p><u>Housing Development in the school's catchment area</u></p> <p>Upon reviewing the current and proposed housing stock in the catchment area, there is an opportunity for the school grow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is already planning in place and passed for over 130 houses. A large number of these dwellings will be affordable housing which will more than likely add to the number of children requiring school places. • The first development of 70 house is due to start building at any time and it is more than likely that this site will be added to with more housing in phase 2. This housing is in the Vale of Grwyney Community Council area 	<p>These comments regarding possible and planned housing developments in the area are noted, however there is no guarantee that any new developments in the area would result in a significant number of additional pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p>

which covers Llanbedr School. In fact, Llanbedr School is the only primary school in the Vale of Grwyney.

- With other development of 60 houses is in Crickhowell and a large development going through planning in Llangattock, this will again increase the need for school places in the Crickhowell area.

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CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

9th February 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School – Proposal Paper

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper requests Cabinet approval to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:
- To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
- 1.2. The report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix A – Options Appraisal
 - Appendix B – Draft Community Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C – Draft Integrated Impact Assessment

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1. On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2. The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020.
- 2.3. The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, which is as follows:

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

2.3 The Strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

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

2.4. The new Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims and Objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of these Aims is to 'improve learner entitlement and experience' and includes an objective to 'rationalise primary provision'.

3. The Case for Change

3.1 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN DOLAU

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹ at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are as follows:

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	7	10	2	8	5	0	5	37

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this. Whilst a small increase is projected over the next couple of years based on information received by the Council's Finance Team, they are expected to remain low for the foreseeable future.

ii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £6,304. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Llanfihangel Rhydithon is ranked the 8th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil².

iii) Temporary leadership arrangements

Leadership at the school is provided by the headteacher of Llanelwedd C. in W. School, as part of a long term temporary arrangement. This is a part time arrangement, with a teacher in charge responsible for the school whilst the acting headteacher is not on the site. This limits the time available to focus on leadership of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

iv) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

4. Information about Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School

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

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	7	10	2	8	5	0	5	37

ii) **Historical pupil numbers⁴**

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	38	29	31	35	35	29	33

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

	Jan. 2021 ⁶	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	34	32	36	34	33

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	37	38	44	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

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

⁴ PLASC 2020

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates

⁶ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁷ Powys Finance Projections – February 2021

	Current Capacity⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	36	37 (102.7%)	-1 (2.7%)

ii) Building condition⁹

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	B Good	B Good	Yes – community hall

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
Date of Inspection	March 2019
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Follow up activity	School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations.

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁹ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

ii) **School Categorisation¹⁰**

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	N/A	B	Green

Financial information

i) **Cost per pupil¹¹ (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)**

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	£208,000	£6,304	£7,000	£0
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

5. Statutory Process for School Organisation Proposals

5.1 The process for school organisation proposals is set out by the Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code (2018). The process is summarised below:

i) **Consultation**

Consultation would be carried out with stakeholders as required by the Code. This includes consultation with the pupils at both schools, to ensure that their views are taken into account, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Feedback from the consultation would be collated and summarised, and a report would be presented to the Cabinet. Cabinet will consider the report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to

¹⁰ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

¹¹ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal or to not proceed with the proposal.

If Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

ii) Statutory Notice

If Cabinet decides to proceed, a Statutory Notice would be published, which would give a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there were objections, the authority would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the authority's response to them. A further report would be presented to the Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

iii) Implementation

If Cabinet approves the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the Statutory Notice or any subsequently modified date.

6. Presumption against closure of Rural Schools

The School Organisation Code (2018) includes special arrangements in regard to schools identified in Appendix F of the Code as rural schools, which require proposers to follow a more detailed set of procedures and requirements in formulating a rural school closure proposal and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

As indicated in the Code:

'This does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federation.'

The School Organisation Code includes a number of steps required to be taken when formulating a rural school proposal which relate to the following headings:

- Formulating the proposal
- Identifying reasonable alternatives
- Preparing a proposal paper for the decision maker

As the School Organisation Code identifies Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School as a rural school, the additional requirements for rural schools have been addressed when developing the proposal paper.

7. Process of identifying preferred option

7.1 Officers have carried out an options appraisal on identified reasonable options for these schools, including the possibility of federation. This is attached to this report as Appendix A.

7.2 The options appraisal includes the following:

- Consideration of key data
- Identification of reasonable options
- SWOT analysis of each option
- Assessment of each option against a number of critical success factors
- Identification of an emerging preferred option
- Further consideration of the emerging preferred option against factors listed in the School Organisation Code (2018) as factors to be taken into account when developing school organisation proposals.

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

Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

7.4 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements
- Meets all of the critical success factors

7.5 A draft Community Impact Assessment has been carried out on the preferred option, which considers the impact on the community. This has been developed with input from the school. This is attached as Appendix B.

7.6 The draft Community Impact Assessment includes the following conclusion:

‘It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should there be no school in Dolau, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school, additional travel would be required to enable pupils to access their closest school. This could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

The information received by the school suggests that there are extensive links between the school and the local community, and that many community activities are arranged in the school which are accessed by the community. It is therefore acknowledged that closure of the school could have an impact on the community in terms of the services and activities available.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it is anticipated that facilities and services would be provided in the community hall should there be no school in Dolau. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Dolau is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils’ ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

8. **Advice**

8.1 It is advised that Cabinet approves a recommendation to commence the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

8.2 The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
- Would reduce the Council’s overall surplus capacity in primary schools

- Revenue saving to the Council
 - Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
 - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
 - Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements
 - Meets all of the critical success factors
- 8.3 Should the recommendation to commence the statutory process be approved, it is anticipated that consultation would commence in February / March 2021.
- 8.4 It must also be noted that implementation of this proposal does not preclude that school from being a part of future reorganisation proposals.

9. Resource Implications

- 9.1 The amount of funding provided to schools is driven by the funding formula. Any change to the formula funding provided will impact on the Council's revenue budget. Based on the current formula, it is estimated that implementation of the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around **£59,000** per annum. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on schools' delegated funding of over £52,000 and savings on catering costs of around £6,600. It is anticipated that any additional transport requirements would be managed within the current arrangements.
- 9.2 The school held a cumulative deficit balance of £970 as at 31st March 2020 and the budget plan submitted for the current year projects a surplus of £6,700.
- 9.3 The Scheme for Financing Schools also states the following in section 3.7.2:

'In order to ensure effective stewardship of the resources available to schools, the Authority may impose additional restrictions on a school scheduled to close, including but not limited to:

- Restriction of expenditure to agreed plans
- Removal of powers of virement'

The Council will consider the use of these powers of intervention where appropriate.

- 9.4 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, Finance, HR and ICT. These service areas will be kept informed of the development of the proposal throughout the statutory process.

9.5 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation.

10. Legal implications

10.1 Legal : The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view

10.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “ I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”.

11. Comment from local member(s)

11.1 Comments will be provided at the meeting.

12. Integrated Impact Assessment (draft)

12.1 An initial impact assessment in respect of the recommendation is attached as Appendix C. The impact assessment considers the proposal's impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

12.2 The summary of the impact assessment is as follows:

‘The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Dolau due to loss of educational provision from the area, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.’

12.3 Should Cabinet approve the commencement of the statutory process in respect of the recommendation, the impact assessment would be updated throughout the process, to take account of feedback received.

13. Recommendation

13.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves commencing the statutory process on the following proposal:

- To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

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CABINET REPORT TEMPLATE VERSION X

Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Version Control:

Version	Date	Brief Summary of Change	Author
0.1	16/07/20	Document created	RW
0.2	29/09/20	Draft for consideration by WS1	SA
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0.4	02/12/20	Updated draft for consideration by WS1	SA
0.5	04/01/20	Version for Cabinet consideration	SA
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

The purpose of this paper is to identify a preferred option for the future of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

Current pupil numbers¹ at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	7	10	2	8	5	0	5	37

¹ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

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

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

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

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives, which include an objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision' in order to improve overall learner entitlement and experience in Powys.

To take forward this objective, the Council is reviewing the smallest schools in Powys, with the aim of identifying solutions for these schools which will meet the objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', in order to ensure that education in Powys is delivered through an affordable, resilient infrastructure which provides the best possible opportunities to learners, now and in the future.

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

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

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

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

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

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

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

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

iii) High number of surplus places

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

iv) Building condition

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

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,726 to £11,912 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the

last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

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

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

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

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

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

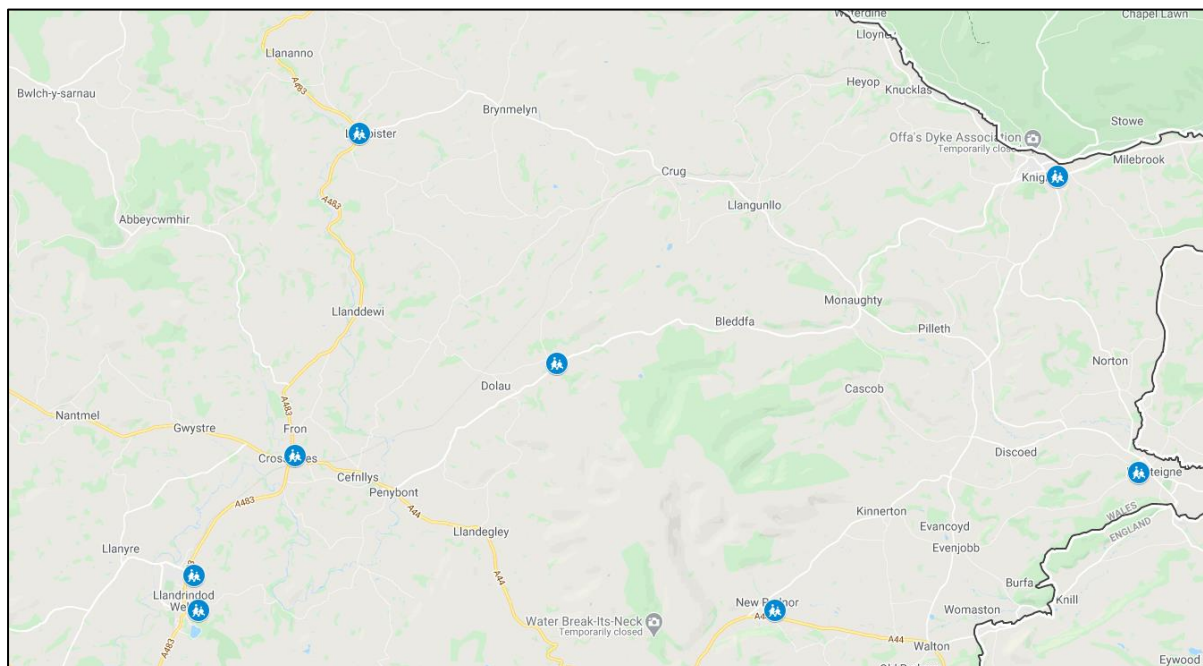
Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN DOLAU

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a community primary school located in the village of Dolau in Mid Powys.

The following map shows the location of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and nearby schools:



Blue – Powys Schools

The following primary schools are located within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School²:

School	Distance from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School by road (miles)
Crossgates C.P. School	5.211 miles
Llanbister C.P. School	7.217 miles
Ysgol Trefonnen C. in W. Community School	7.930 miles

² School Distances by Road - Council's Business Intelligence Team

Llandrindod Wells C.P. School	8.668 miles
Franksbridge C.P. School	9.916 miles

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

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School?³
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by Powys County Council	English medium	5	Yes

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers⁴

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	7	10	2	8	5	0	5	37

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁵

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	38	29	31	35	35	29	33

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁶

³ Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>) includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

⁴ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁵ PLASC 2020

⁶ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

	Jan. 2021 ⁷	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	34	32	36	34	33

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁸**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	37	38	44	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

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

	Current Capacity ⁹	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	36	37 (102.7%)	-1 (2.7%)

ii) **Building condition¹⁰**

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

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	B Good	B Good	Yes – community hall

Quality of Education

⁷ These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

⁸ Powys Finance Projections – February 2021

⁹ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁰ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

i) Estyn

	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
Date of Inspection	March 2019
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Follow up activity	School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations.

ii) School Categorisation¹¹

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	N/A	B	Green

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	£208,000	£6,304	£7,000	£0

¹¹ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A
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Home to school travel

i) Closest school

An analysis of pupil travel patterns has been carried out, based on the 33 pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020. The closest provider for all of these pupils is as follows:

	Pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	48.5%
Crossgates C.P. School	36.4%
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School	9.1%
Knighton C. in W. School	6.1%

Based on this information, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was the closest school for 48.5% of the pupils on roll in January 2020.

If there was no school in Dolau, the closest school for the pupils on roll in January 2020 would be as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Dolau
Crossgates C.P. School	75.8%
Llanbister C.P. School	9.1%
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School	9.1%
Knighton C. in W. School	6.1%

ii) Average travel distance

The average travel distance for all pupils on roll in January 2020 attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is 3.8 miles.

If there was no school in Dolau, the average travel distance for all pupils on roll in January 2020 attending the school to attend their closest alternative provision would be 3.6 miles.

iii) Furthest travel distance

Of the pupils that were on roll in January 2020 attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, the furthest travel distance to the school for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is the closest provider is 5.01 miles.

If there was no school in Dolau, the furthest travel distance to the nearest alternative provision would be 6.4 miles.

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals¹²

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	0.0%

ii) Pupils in care¹³

	Number of pupils in care
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	0.0%

iii) SEN/ALN¹⁴

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%

Early Years Provision

There is no maintained early years / pre-school provision on the school site, however a Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi meets on site.

¹² PLASC 2020

¹³ PLASC 2020

¹⁴ PLASC 2020

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN DOLAU

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹⁵ at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	7	10	2	8	5	0	5	37

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this. Whilst a small increase is projected over the next couple of years based on information received by the Council's Finance Team, they are expected to remain low for the foreseeable future.

ii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school's budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £6,304. This is significantly higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Llanfihangel Rhydithon is ranked the 8th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil¹⁶.

iii) Temporary leadership arrangements

Leadership at the school is provided by the headteacher of Llanelwedd C. in W. School, as part of a long term temporary arrangement. This is a part time arrangement, with a teacher in charge responsible for the school whilst the acting headteacher is not on the site. This limits the time available to focus on leadership of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

iv) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

¹⁵ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

¹⁶ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

PART B – OPTIONS FOR LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON C.P. SCHOOL

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution.

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school
2	Federation with Crossgates C.P. School
3	Federation with Llanbister C.P. School
4	Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites
5	Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites
6	Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of Crossgates C.P. School
7	Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of Llanbister C.P. School
8	Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crossgates site
9	Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site
10	Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbister site
11	Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site
12	Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the four options are provided below.

Option 1: Status quo – continue as a standalone school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional transport costs - No requirement for a reorganisation process - No change for staff - No impact on pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil - Would not provide permanent leadership arrangements
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Ability to recruit/secure new headteacher in small school

Option 2: Federation with Crossgates C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would continue to attend school in the same location - Would provide permanent leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still be required to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant difference in the size of the two schools
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice - Opportunity to secure permanent leadership through shared leadership across the federation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Dolau site - May not be attractive to Crossgates C.P. School

Option 3: Federation with Llanbister C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would continue to attend school in the same location - Would provide permanent leadership at Llanfihangel Rhydithon - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still be required to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice - Opportunity to secure permanent leadership through shared leadership across the federation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Dolau site

Option 4: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would provide permanent leadership arrangements on the Dolau site - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanfihangel Rhydithon - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Crossgates C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Crossgates C.P. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Llanfihangel Rhydithon site

Option 5: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would provide permanent leadership arrangements on the Dolau site - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Llanbister C.P. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new

- More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff	curriculum on the Llanfihangel Rhydithon site
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Option 6: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of Crossgates C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would provide permanent leadership arrangements on the Dolau site - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Minimal impact on staff at Crossgates C.P. School - Crossgates C.P. School would retain its identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building - Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would lose its identity - Significant difference in the size of the two schools
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Llanfihangel Rhydithon site

Option 7: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of Llanbister C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Dolau - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would provide permanent leadership arrangements on the Dolau site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to be low, according to projections - Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Minimal impact on staff at Llanbister C.P. School - Llanbister C.P. School would retain its identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would lose its identity
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Llanfihangel Rhydithon site

Option 8: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crossgates site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Dolau - Impact on the Dolau community - Would impact on Crossgates staff as well as Llanfihangel Rhydithon staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Dolau site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in staffing requirements at the new school

Option 9: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Crossgates C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Crossgates C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Crossgates pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Crossgates - Impact on the Crossgates community - Would impact on Crossgates staff as well as Llanfihangel Rhydithon staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Would not be acceptable to Crossgates school - Both schools would lose their identities - Dolau school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Significant investment would be needed in the Dolau site to accommodate Crossgates pupils
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Crossgates site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in the Dolau site to accommodate Crossgates pupils - Unlikely that the Dolau site would be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required

Option 10: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbister site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Dolau - Impact on the Dolau community - Would impact on Llanbister staff as well as Llanfihangel Rhydithon staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Investment would be needed in the Llanbister site in order to accommodate Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Dolau site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment would be needed to the Llanbister site to accommodate Llanfihangel Rhydithon pupils. - The Llanbister site may not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required

Option 11: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbister C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Llanbister pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Llanbister - Impact on the Llanbister community - Would impact on Llanbister staff as well as Llanfihangel Rhydithon staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Would not be acceptable to Llanbister school - Both schools would lose their identities - Investment would be needed in the Dolau site to accommodate Llanbister pupils
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Llanbister site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment would be needed to the Llanfihangel Rhydithon site to accommodate Llanbister pupils. - The Llanfihangel Rhydithon site may not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required.

Option 12: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities - Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional travel costs - Pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Dolau - Impact on the current staff of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School - Impact on the Dolau community
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Dolau site 	

6. IMPACT OF EACH OPTION

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Dolau.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Dolau.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend school in Dolau.
Option 2: Federation with Crossgates C.P. School	<p>The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to operate as a stand alone school, however the school would be federated with Crossgates C.P. School, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.</p> <p>Establishment of the federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a positive impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Dolau.</p> <p>However, one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint activities would take place on the Crossgates site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Dolau site.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend school in Dolau.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

Option 3: Federation with Llanbister C.P. School	<p>The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would continue to operate as a stand alone school, however the school would be federated with Llanbister C.P. School, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.</p> <p>Establishment of the federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a positive impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Dolau.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Dolau site.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 4: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Dolau.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Dolau site.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

	provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.	<p>school, depending on the make up of the governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crossgates site as more pupils attend this site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Dolau site.</p>	
Option 5: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Dolau.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the governing body.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Dolau site.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 6: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of Crossgates C.P. School	Implementation of this option would result in closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, however provision would continue on the current site.	Provision would continue to be available in Dolau. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Crossgates C.P. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Dolau site.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School is currently in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Crossgates C.P. School is in the yellow support category. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Crossgates C.P. School, and the Council's view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision.</p> <p>In addition, the school would be a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff. Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crossgates site as more pupils attend this site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Dolau site.</p>	
Option 7: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, retain the site as part of	Implementation of this option would result in closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, however provision would continue on the current site.	Provision would continue to be available in Dolau. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Llanbister C.P. School, therefore	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Dolau site.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools</p>

Llanbister C.P. School	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School is currently in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Llanbister C.P. School is in the yellow support category. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Llanbister C.P. School, and the Council's view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision.</p> <p>In addition, the school would be a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff. Whilst pupils would continue to attend separate sites, therefore would not benefit from all being taught together, this option would provide additional opportunities for staff expertise and resources to be shared across both sites.</p>	<p>there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llanbister, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Dolau site.</p>	<p>in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 8: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new	<p>It is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school,</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no provision in the village.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.</p>

<p>school on the Crossgates site</p>	<p>with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p> <p>All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p>	<p>However, merging with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Dolau community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, and would aid community involvement in the new school.</p> <p>Should the school close, the Council would need to determine the future use of the building. Should the Council declare the building to be surplus to requirements and seek to sell the building, this would mean that the school's facilities would no longer be available to the community.</p> <p>The school is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p>	<p>School for whom this is currently the closest school.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
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Option 9: Merge with Crossgates C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site	<p>In general, it is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff. All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p> <p>However, it is unlikely that the Dolau site would be able to accommodate all pupils, therefore there would be a negative impact on the quality of provision should all pupils be taught in the current Dolau building.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Dolau community as this option would retain provision in Dolau and would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Crossgates community as there would no longer be provision in Crossgates. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Crossgates community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Crossgates is the larger village with a significantly larger school, it is likely that the Crossgates community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Crossgates C.P. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
Option 10: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbister site	<p>In general, it is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no provision in the village.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for whom this is currently the closest school.</p>

	<p>All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p> <p>However, it is unlikely that the Llanbister site would be able to accommodate all pupils, therefore there would be a negative impact on the quality of provision should all pupils be taught in the current Llanbister building.</p>	<p>However, merging with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Dolau community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, and would aid community involvement in the new school.</p> <p>Should the school close, the Council would need to determine the future use of the building. Should the Council declare the building to be surplus to requirements and seek to sell the building, this would mean that the school's facilities would no longer be available to the community.</p> <p>The school is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p>	<p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
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<p>Option 11: Merge with Llanbister C.P. School to establish a new school on the Dolau site</p>	<p>In general, it is anticipated that this option would have a positive impact on quality and standards through the establishment of one larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff. All pupils would attend one site, which would provide further benefits to pupils from being part of larger cohorts of pupils, and improved opportunities to share staff expertise.</p> <p>However, it is unlikely that the Dolau site would be able to accommodate all pupils, therefore there would be a negative impact on the quality of provision should all pupils be taught in the current Dolau building.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Dolau community as this option would retain provision in Dolau and would lead to an increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Llanbister community as there would no longer be provision in Llanbister. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbister community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Llanbister School is larger, it is likely that the Llanbister community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbister C.P. School. As the school already serves a very large, rural catchment area, it is likely that this would result in very long journeys to school for pupils.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 12: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no primary provision in Dolau.</p> <p>Should the school close, the Council would need to determine</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C. in W. School for whom it is currently the closest school. However, the analysis of pupil travel distances carried out suggests that</p>

	<p>C.P. School, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School is currently in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Crossgates C.P. School is in the yellow support category. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Crossgates C.P. School, and the Council's view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision.</p> <p>In addition, Crossgates C.P. School is a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff.</p> <p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School. These schools are all in</p>	<p>the future use of the building. Should the Council declare the building to be surplus to requirements and seek to sell the building, this would mean that the school's facilities would no longer be available to the community.</p> <p>The school is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p>	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is the closest school for only 57% of current pupils.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events. This would impact on pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school.</p>
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	<p>the yellow support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore there are no concerns about the provision pupils would receive should they transfer to these schools.</p>		
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7. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be achievable within current legislation The option must be operationally achievable The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

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

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

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6	Option 7	Option 8	Option 9	Option 10	Option 11	Option 12
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	✓	✓	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓
4 – Potential affordability	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓
Total ✓	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	4
Total x	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	3	2	2	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Possible	Discount	Discount	Discount	Preferred

8. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred option for Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is:

Option 12: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements

- Meets all of the critical success factors

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

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, on the factors outlined in the Code.

9. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Crossgates C.P. School is in the yellow support category. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Crossgates C.P. School, and it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall.

Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School. These schools are all in the yellow support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore there are no concerns about the provision pupils would receive should they transfer to these schools.

This would also apply in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs. Based on PLASC 2020 information, there are no pupils eligible for Free School Meals, Looked after Children or pupils for whom English is an Additional Language at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. There are a number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs, however the number of pupils belonging to this group is small. It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to larger schools, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and

resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

9.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils' wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to alternative schools. It is possible that pupils could choose to transfer to different schools, which could have a further impact on their wellbeing. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period, to minimise any negative impact on them.

For some pupils, implementation of the preferred option could result in additional travel, which could have an impact on pupil well-being. However, alternative primary provision would be available at a number of other schools located within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It is not considered that the additional travel time required to alternative provision would be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to larger schools with larger cohorts of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities.

9.3 Teaching and learning experiences

9.3.1 Quality of teaching

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School, however a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School.

The Council has no concerns about the quality of teaching at Crossgates C.P. School or the other schools named above, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

9.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school

would be Crossgates C.P. School, however a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School.

The Council's view is that Crossgates C.P. School and the other schools named above would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Crossgates and the other schools are larger schools, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils, and that the alternative schools would be better placed to develop provision which meets the requirements of the new curriculum.

9.3.3 The provision of skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School, however a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School.

The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at Crossgates C.P. School or the other schools named above, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

9.4 Care, support and guidance

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School, however a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It is anticipated that the arrangements at Crossgates C.P. School and the other schools named above would be at least equivalent to the arrangements at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

9.5 Leadership and Management

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School, however a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School.

Crossgates C.P. School has a permanent headteacher, whilst Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. has a long term shared temporary headteacher arrangement. Whilst Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was categorised as Green in the latest categorisations carried out in 2019 and Crossgates C.P. School was categorised as Yellow, both have been categorised as having an improvement capacity of B. In addition, Crossgates C.P. School is larger than Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, therefore it is expected that the headteacher would have more time available to focus on leadership and management.

The Council's view is that should the preferred option be implemented, leadership and management at the alternative school would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

This would also be the case for any pupils transferring to the other schools named above, all of which were categorised as Yellow in the latest categorisations carried out in 2019.

9.5.2 Professional learning

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities. Staff currently employed at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would be subject to a management of change process.

9.5.3 Use of Resources

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is projecting to be in a surplus budget position over the coming years. Whilst there are no concerns about the use of resources within the school, there are concerns about use of resources overall within the Powys schools infrastructure. As indicated on page 5 above, one of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the high proportion of small schools in the county. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is among the smallest schools in the county, and the budget share per pupil at the school is higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys, and would enable the Council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented pupils would transfer to larger schools, ensuring more effective use of the Council's resources.

In addition, larger schools often have more resources available in terms of number of staff and educational resources, therefore pupils would benefit from the opportunity to access these resources.

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

Implementation of the preferred option would result in the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on any pupils belonging to vulnerable groups currently attending the school, including any pupils with SEN, and that in the short term, these pupils would need to transfer to alternative schools.

Based on January 2020 PLASC information, 1 pupil at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School was on School Action, and 6 pupils were on School Action Plus. There were no statemented pupils.

Whilst the preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to alternative schools, there is no reason to believe that the schools to which they might transfer would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with SEN, and their families.

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

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close and pupils would transfer to alternative schools, therefore Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. This would lead to an increase in pupil numbers at the schools to which the pupils wish to transfer. However current pupil numbers at

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are small, and therefore the number of pupils likely to transfer to each year group is low, therefore the impact on alternative schools is not likely to have a significant impact on their ability to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and in each key stage of education.

In some schools, it is possible that an increase in pupil numbers would improve their ability to deliver the curriculum, however depending on the class structure and current breakdown of pupils, it's likely that some schools would need to make adjustments to their class structure in the short term to accommodate any additional pupils.

10 NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The following table shows the number of spaces available and the building condition of schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School:

School	Capacity ¹⁷	Current pupil numbers ¹⁸	Available spaces	Filled capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Crossgates C.P. School	210	131	79	62.4%	B	A
Llanbister C.P. School	45	61	-16	135.5%	C	B
Ysgol Trefonnen C. in W. Community School	189	208	-19	110.1%	A	A
Ysgol Cefnlllys	258	218	40	84.5%	B	B
Franksbridge C.P. School	44	42	2	95.5%	B	B

¹⁷ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁸ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

This suggests that there are sufficient places at Crossgates C.P. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School although a number of the other nearby schools are at or over capacity.

The condition of the Crossgates building is assessed as condition B. This is the same as the condition of the Llanfihangel Rhydithon building, therefore pupils would be able to continue to access accommodation which is of at least equivalent quality as the current accommodation at Llanfihangel Rhydithon.

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

As indicated in the table in section 10.1 above, there is sufficient English-medium capacity within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to accommodate the school's current and projected pupil numbers.

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is a community primary. As indicated in the table in section 10.1 above, the majority of the other schools in the area are also community primary schools, ensuring that pupils could continue to access community primary provision should there be no school in Dolau.

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

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is the closest school for only 48.5% of current pupil. As indicated in the table in section 10.1 above, there are alternative primary places available at other schools within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, it is not considered that the length and nature of journeys for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school to alternative provision would be excessive. This includes journeys for SEN pupils. One-way journeys to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes.

Should there be no school in Dolau, there would be a reduction in travel time / distance for pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for whom this isn't currently the closest school should they transfer to their closest school.

11 RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would lead to an overall reduction in surplus places in the area.

11.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

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

There are no recurrent costs associated with this proposal.

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

It is not anticipated that additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of the change, it is assumed that the current bus would be used at no additional cost to the Authority.

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

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 11.1 above, there are sufficient places at schools located within 10 miles of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

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

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £59,000 per annum. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on schools' delegated funding of over £52,000 and savings on catering costs of around £6,600.

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

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not currently forecasting a deficit budget.

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

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

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

Any capital receipts received from sale of the Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School site would be reinvested into the Schools Transformation programme in order to improve the educational provision across Powys.

12 OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC figures from January 2020, no pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School were eligible for FSM, therefore it is likely that the proportion of children from economically deprived backgrounds is minimal.

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

Initial consideration of equalities information recorded through PLASC suggests that there are no significant equality issues in respect of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should the Council

proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality impact assessments would be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

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

Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals.

13. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

13.1 Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option

A range of options have been considered in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, these are outlined in section 4 of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

13.2 Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

Federation of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School with Crossgates C.P. School and Llanbister C.P. School are two of the options considered in section 4 of this document. As assessment of these option has been carried out, which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with this option.

Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Becoming part of a federation with another school would not address this issue.

13.3 Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

13.4 The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that there would no longer be provision in Dolau. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Dolau community, including the loss of primary provision from the village of Dolau, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

A draft community impact assessment, with input from the school, has been carried out. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, this draft community impact assessment would be published as part of the consultation documentation. This would be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received, and would be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

13.5 How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include meetings with new headteacher and receiving schools to ease transition into their new school.

14. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

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

Option 12: Close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements
- Meets all of the critical success factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.



**Proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.
School**

Draft Community Impact Assessment

January 2021

Draft Community Impact Assessment – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Crossgates C.P. School	36.4%
Knighton C. in W. School	6.1%
Ysgol Cefnlllys	9.1%
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	48.5%

This suggests that 48.5% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 51.5% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides the following after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Weekly Key Stage 2 club featuring ICT, Art and Cooking
- Weekly Welsh club
- Weekly Sports club
- Football Club
- Choir
- Weekly drop in sessions for reading and educational development
- Clwb Cymraeg
- Eco Club
- School Council
- Criw Cymraeg
- Music lessons

Whilst some of these clubs are run by staff and governors, some are run by community volunteers / parents and outside organisations.

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

- Daily Breakfast Club
- Dolau Ti a Fi Club held on the site
- Cylch Meithrin which is held on the site and has good links with the Foundation Phase
- Community Library Bus
- Young Sports Ambassador Scheme
- Youth Club relies on pupils from the school

The school also provides a rural play space as the village has no communal play space other than the school.

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- Local YFC use the school grounds and community hall
- Community hall use the school grounds and car park
- Youth Club use the school grounds
- The community hall uses the school as a 'green room' for local shows and entertainment
- The school's conservation area is used by all user groups and members of the community. The local WI and YFC hold meetings and the Youth Club, Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi use the grounds to learn about wildlife and the environment

v) Other links between the school and the community

- Harvest festival is held every September in the community hall. This involves the local vicar, members of the community and the pupils and staff of the school
- Christmas Carols around the Christmas Tree is held every year in the school playground
- Dolau Christmas Fayre is held annually in the community hall. The pupils make items to sell at the event and pupils record songs and poems to sell
- Annual Christmas Concert is held by the school in the community hall. It is a very popular and well attended event
- Dolau Summer Fayre
- Annual Sport Day which is held in a local farm field. This is well attended by the community, parents and governors
- The school participates in DRA events throughout the year e.g. games evenings quizzes, cinema
- The school has close links to local businesses such as horse riding
- Links with the local church magazine
- Links with the local vicar who leads collective worship at the school

- Liaisons with Dyfed Powys Police through the School Community Police Officer
- Liaisons with Mid & West Wales Fire Service through visits from local firefighters
- Links with the local Eisteddfod in Llandrindod Wells
- Friends of Dolau School which work tirelessly to raise funds for the school to support buying resources to enable a full 21st Century curriculum
- Links with local concerts, singing, poetry, instrumental etc.
- Links with local History Group and arts projects
- Dolau YFC & Dolau Youth club rely heavily on Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School for the vast majority of their new members, the majority of who go on to take up senior roles in the club, Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary etc
- Llandrindod Junior Silver Band consists of 14 members, a majority of those band members have been taught in Dolau School. The band attend and support lots of local events held within Llandrindod, Rhayader and Builth Wells.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close and pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools and there would no longer be a school in Dolau. It is acknowledged that this would mean that there would be no school in Dolau, meaning that any community facilities provided by the school would no longer be available.

There is a community hall in Dolau which is located next to school, and which provides facilities and services, which are complemented by the school. Should there be no school in Dolau, the community hall would continue to be available for community events and activities. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crossgates C.P. School, Llanbister C.P. School, Ysgol Cefnlllys and Knighton C. in W. School.

An analysis of pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to an alternative school for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is their closest school would be 6.4 miles.

Home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport which is in operation at that time. Whilst free transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

- Concern about extended journeys for pupils to their closest alternative school, which would contribute to the environment and have a significant impact on daily traffic
- Concern that young pupils would be unsupervised on journeys to school
- Concern that the length of the journey to school would be too long and have a detrimental effect to their learning focus whilst at school
- There would be an impact on local employment as most staff at the school are local people
- School car park is used by local residents to park safely in the evenings limiting cars parked in the country lanes.
- A significant number of young families have moved back to the area and are preparing to make the area their home and have strong ties with the school & community. Many children from these young families that have returned to the area are 2nd & 3rd generations attending the school
- Being in a rural setting is safer for the children and staff. 1 in 3 of the schools in Powys not to be subjected to the COVID-19 virus.
- The hall committee and Community Council have installed a defibrillator on the outside wall of the community hall. If the community hall loses its users groups, social events not supported well, funding will not be available to maintain the defibrillator.

Therefore, the community would lose the valuable lifesaving equipment.

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services and activities are provided by the school, including some facilities which could be attractive to families and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families. Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi settings meet on the school site.

Should there be no school in Dolau, it is likely that there would be an impact on the other associated facilities available in the village, which could have an impact on families with school-age children, and which could encourage these families to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services are provided in the school, and it is regularly used as a village meeting and performance place.

There is a community hall in Dolau which would continue to be available should there be no school in the village, therefore community activities, events and other services could be provided here. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could have a significant impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of events take place in the community events and activities take place in the school, as indicated in sections (iii), (iv) and (v) above. It is anticipated that that these events and activities would take place in the community hall should there be no school in Dolau. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could have a significant impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school, and potentially the loss of families from Dolau could have some impact on local business in Dolau and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area. Information received from the school suggests that the possible loss of the school would also have an impact on the rural lifestyle of the area. Implementation of the proposal could eventually lead to a reduction in employment opportunities in the village of Dolau.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

As indicated in section (viii) above, should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)**

The information received from the school indicates that there is currently extensive use of the Dolau building, and significant links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Dolau would have a significant effect on the local community.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it is anticipated that these services would be provided in the community hall should there be no school in Dolau. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall could have a significant impact on the ability

for the hall to continue to run. Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it would endeavour to work with the community in Dolau to identify a suitable alternative.

4.2 Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should there be no school in Dolau, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently the closest school, additional travel would be required to enable pupils to access their closest school. This could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

The information received by the school suggests that there are extensive links between the school and the local community, and that many community activities are arranged in the school which are accessed by the community. It is therefore acknowledged that closure of the school could have an impact on the community in terms of the services and activities available.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it is anticipated that facilities and services would be provided in the community hall should there be no school in Dolau. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Dolau is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Please read the accompanying guidance before completing the form.

This **Impact Assessment (IA)** toolkit, incorporates a range of legislative requirements that support effective decision making and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. **Draft versions of the assessment should be watermarked as "Draft" and retained for completeness. However, only the final version will be made publicly available. Draft versions may be provided to regulators if appropriate. In line with Council policy IAs should be retained for 7 years.**

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Lynette Lovell / Emma Palmer	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
Proposal		Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School Proposal			
Outline Summary / Description of Proposal					
<p>In April 2020, the Leader approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years. One of the objectives is to ‘Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision’.</p>					
<p>A review of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School has been carried out, and Cabinet approval is now requested to commence the statutory process on the following proposal in respect of the school:</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools					

Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Job Title	Date
1	Richard Williams	Transforming Education Programme Officer	January 2021
2	Marianne Evans	Senior Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£34,416.67	£24,583.33	£	£59,000

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	If approved by Cabinet, it is anticipated that consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code will commence in the Spring of 2021.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?)
PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY

Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing and Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ☐ No ☒

Not currently, however should the Council proceed with statutory processes, this would involve processing the personal details of individuals

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A currently

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Builth and Llanwrtyd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfair Caereinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in the village of Dolau as there would no longer be a school in the area. It is also possible that there would be an impact on local businesses in Dolau and the surrounding area, should there be less people in the area.	Poor		Poor
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.

<p>Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, the closest alternative schools for the vast majority of pupils would be Crossgates C.P. School.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School is currently in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Crossgates C.P. School is in the yellow support category. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Crossgates C.P. School, and the Council's view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils.</p> <p>In addition, Crossgates C.P. School is a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff.</p> <p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School. These schools are all in the yellow support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore there are no concerns about the provision pupils would receive should they transfer to these schools.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the communities of Dolau and Llanfihangel Rhydithon as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>

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The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>			
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to their nearest alternative school. However, the number of pupils requiring additional transport would be relatively small, and it is possible that they could be accommodated on transport which is already operating.	Neutral		Choose an item.
A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood. Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017: Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.	Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.	Poor	Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.	Neutral

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanfihangel Rhydithon as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Very Poor	Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.	Very Poor

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> <p>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</p> <p>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.</p>	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>If approved by Cabinet, the Council will carry out consultation on the proposal, which would include consultation with all pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p> <p><i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i></p>				
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</p>	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</p>	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.	Good		Choose an item.
A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances). <i>Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).</i>				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon School, regardless of their religion or belief.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, including any eligible for Free School Meals, however based on PLASC 2020 information, no pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School were eligible for Free School Meals.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Llanfihangel Rhydithon. This would mean that pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

PLASC

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)				
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are low and are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		Choose an item.
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	Should the Cabinet agree to proceed, full consultation would be carried out, which would enable all interested parties to give their views. This would include an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council

Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	<p>Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be required in accordance with the School Organisation Code in order to achieve this. This would that all interested parties would have an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise would be reported to Cabinet and would be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed. This impact assessment will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received.</p> <p>All stakeholders would have the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this would include any unpaid carers in the area.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

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Impact Assessment (IA)

The integrated approach to support effective decision making



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Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	IMPACT Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?	Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School as there would no longer be a school in Llanfihangel Rhydithon, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process. Should Cabinet decide to proceed, full consultation would be carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process would be supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). This would include consultation with staff, which would ensure that they had an opportunity to give their views.	Poor		Poor
Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?	Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
Welsh Language impact on staff	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff	Neutral		Choose an item.
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements				

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

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Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
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<p>Dolau</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the communities of Dolau as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>	<p>Major</p>	<p>Community hall to continue to be available to the community for community activities.</p>	<p>Major</p>	
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Description of risks			
Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
N/A			

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Dolau due to loss of educational provision from the area, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils.	

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?
Full consultation would be required to implement this proposal, and this would enable the impact assessment to be further developed.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?
The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.
Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.
The impact assessment will be reviewed at all stages of the development.

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley	Sarah Astley	5 th January 2021
Head of Service:	Lynette Lovell		
Portfolio Holder:	CLlr Phyl Davies		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by

Cabinet

Date required

9th February 2021

FORM ENDS

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**CABINET EXECUTIVE****9 February 2021**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rosemarie Harris
Leader of the Council

REPORT TITLE: Wales Audit Report – Transformation at Powys County Council

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

1.1 This report sets out to advise Cabinet that Audit Wales have found that, overall, the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme.

2. Background

2.1 During 2018-19, Audit Wales looked at Powys County Council's (the Council) transformation work: 'Vision 2025'. Their 2018-19 work on the Council's transformation concluded that: 'The Council is making transformation a higher priority, but it needs to better define and communicate its vision and programme for transformation and ensure that planned actions are of sufficient scale and pace.' Since 2018, the Council has further developed its transformation work to help drive change at pace.

2.2 The Audit work during 2019-20 included a follow-up audit where Audit Wales asked; is the Council well placed to deliver its transformation programme with sufficient pace? The full Audit Wales report is available at appendix one.

3 Advice

3.1 The 2019-20 audit considered:

- Has the Council identified what it is trying to achieve through its transformation programme?
- Has the Council put in place proper arrangements to deliver its transformation programme?
- Does the Council review if its transformation programme is delivering the intended benefits?

3.2 Audit Wales completed a health check as well as a number of interviews with Cabinet and Officers and found that, overall, the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme, however COVID-19 presents new challenges and risks to the programme.

3.3 This conclusion was reached because:

- The Council has comprehensive project plans and clearly identifies the aims of its transformation programme
- The Council has put in place arrangements to deliver its transformation programme, however some arrangements are stronger than others
- COVID-19 has had an impact on the pace of some transformation projects and this will be an ongoing risk for the delivery of the overall transformation programme.

3.4 The audit also identified 3 proposals for improvement;

- a) The Council should build on and develop its ongoing engagement with stakeholders. Key stakeholders include Powys residents, partners, schools, businesses, Council staff and County Councillors. This is to help ensure people are aware of developments within the transformation programme, particularly in light of challenges and changes coming from the pandemic.
- b) For the Council to aim to evaluate all projects and consider ways to demonstrate the impact the projects are having on local residents and communities in Powys. This includes for example; identify who has benefitted from the work; are projects having the impact that was planned; and/or is there data which helps to describe the impact of transformation work.
- c) The Council should build on any learning from the COVID-19 pandemic. This is to help ensure the Council takes stock of its transformation progress so far and incorporates learning into future delivery.

Action Plan in place to address the above proposals for improvement:

Area for Improvement:	Action to be taken:	By Whom:	When By:
a) Above	A comprehensive Comms & Engagement plan for the programme will be put in place to ensure there is robust ongoing engagement with stakeholders	Nicola Williams / John Evans	February 2021
b) Above	Data will be gathered, and analysis will be undertaken within the Business Analytics team to evaluate the impact of the projects are having on local residents and communities	Nicola Williams / Catherine James	June 2021
c) Above	Review the objectives in the CIP to ensure that they are realistic and relevant to reflect that learning has been taken from the pandemic and that we respond to the challenges and opportunities.	Nicola Williams / Rhian Jones	February 2021 and thereafter annually

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The Council has a £2m budget identified to support transformation projects across the Council. Services bid from this fund on an annual basis. Many other sources of funding are also supporting transformational activity through specific grant or service budgets.
- 4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) comments will be reported at the meeting.

6. Comment from local member(s)

- 6.1 N/A

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not required as this paper is referring to an audit conducted by regulators and not a policy decision.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended the Cabinet accept the findings of this report and agree to focus and commit the resources necessary to complete actions set out in section 3 of this report.

Contact Officer: Emma Palmer, Head of Transformation and Communications
Tel: 01597 826768
Email: emma.palmer@powys.gov.uk

Head of Service: Emma Palmer, Head of Transformation and Communications

Corporate Director/CEO: Dr Caroline Turner, Chief Executive Officer

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Transformation at Powys County Council

Audit year: 2019-20

Date issued: December 2020

Document reference: 2192A2020-21

This document has been prepared for the internal use of Powys County Council as part of work performed/to be performed in accordance with Section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004, section 18 of the Local Government Wales Measure 2009 and Section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Summary

What we looked at?

- We looked at Powys County Council's **transformation** programme 'Vision 2025'
- We asked: **Is the Council well placed to deliver its transformation programme with sufficient pace?**

How we did this work

- We **changed our approach** and timing because of the Covid-19 pandemic
- We did the work through **document reviews, interviews** and **observations**

What we found?

- Overall, **the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme** however **COVID-19 presents new challenges and risks to the programme**

To find out more, please read our full report

Contents

Background

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The Council has comprehensive project plans and clearly identifies the aims of its transformation programme	8
The Council has put in place arrangements to deliver its transformation programme, however some arrangements are stronger than others	9
COVID-19 has had an impact on the pace of some transformation projects and this will be an ongoing risk for the delivery of the overall transformation programme	9

Background

What we looked at?

- 1 During 2018-19, Audit Wales looked at Powys County Council's (the Council) transformation work: 'Vision 2025'. Our 2018-19 work on the Council's transformation concluded that: 'The Council is making transformation a higher priority, but it needs to better define and communicate its vision and programme for transformation and ensure that planned actions are of sufficient scale and pace.' Since 2018, the Council has further developed its transformation work to help drive change at pace.
- 2 Our audit work during 2019-20 at Powys included a follow-up project of the Council's transformation programme. For this work, we asked: **Is the Council well placed to deliver its transformation programme with sufficient pace? As part of this work we considered:**
 - a. Has the Council identified what it is trying to achieve through its transformation programme?
 - b. Has the Council has put in place proper arrangements to deliver its transformation programme? and
 - c. Does the Council review if its transformation programme is delivering the intended benefits?
- 3 Our work on this project looked at all aspects of Vision 2025. We did a 'health-check' across all nine transformation projects. The nine projects are listed in **Exhibit 1** below.

Exhibit 1: Powys County Council's Transformation 'Vision 2025' (as at March 2020) included the following projects:

- Schools Transformation
- Affordable housing
- Brecon Place Based Strategy
- Extra Care
- Growing Mid Wales
- North Powys Well-being
- Integrated Business Planning
- Digital Powys
- Workforce Futures

How we did the work?

- 4 We originally planned to complete the work in Spring 2020, including holding on-site interviews and focus groups. Because of COVID-19, we changed our approach and the timescales for the review and approached the work as follows:
- a. first stage (February – March 2020): accumulated audit knowledge based on recent audit on workforce planning, previous transformation work and financial sustainability work;
 - b. second stage (March 2020): discussions about a ‘health check’ approach across all nine projects and some pre-lockdown observations of transformation boards;
 - c. third stage (April – May 2020): remote desktop review of open source papers about the nine projects;
 - d. fourth stage (August – September 2020): access and review the Council’s transformation papers on Powys County Council SharePoint;
 - e. fifth stage (September – October 2020): online interviews with Senior Responsible Officers and Cabinet Members covering each of the nine transformation projects; and
 - f. sixth stage (October – December 2020): report writing, clearance and issue report.

What we found?

- 5 We found that, overall, **the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme, however COVID-19 presents new challenges and risks to the programme.** We reached this conclusion because:
- The Council has comprehensive project plans and clearly identifies the aims of its transformation programme
 - The Council has put in place arrangements to deliver its transformation programme, however some arrangements are stronger than others
 - COVID-19 has had an impact on the pace of some transformation projects and this will be an ongoing risk for the delivery of the overall transformation programme

Proposals for improvement

Exhibit 2: The table below sets out the proposals for improvement that we have identified following this review.

Proposals for improvement	
P1	The Council should build on and develop its ongoing engagement with stakeholders. Key stakeholders include Powys residents, partners, schools, businesses, Council staff and County Councillors. This is to help ensure people are aware of developments within the transformation programme, particularly in light of challenges and changes coming from the pandemic.
P2	<p>For the Council to aim to evaluate all projects and consider ways to demonstrate the impact the projects are having on local residents and communities in Powys. This includes for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify who has benefitted from the work;• are projects having the impact that was planned; and/or• is there data which helps to describe the impact of transformation work.
P3	The Council should build on any learning from the COVID-19 pandemic. This is to help ensure the Council takes stock of its transformation progress so far and incorporates learning into future delivery.

Detailed report

Overall, the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme, however COVID-19 presents new challenges and risks to the programme

The Council has comprehensive project plans and clearly identifies the aims of its transformation programme

6 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- the Council has developed clear project planning documents setting out key information for how it will undertake its transformation work. The project planning documents set out aims, objectives and targets. They also include timescales and milestones, as well as risks and mitigating actions. It is also clear in project planning documents how projects are intended to contribute to the Council's overall strategic objectives and priorities.
- the Council has engaged with key stakeholders at an early stage as part of the transformation work. Most projects include engagement with service users and/or other stakeholders during the project planning process, including council staff for internal projects, such as Workforce Futures. We found notable practice within the Transforming Education work, including extensive engagement at any early stage with teachers, schools, governors and other key stakeholders.
- financial information including budgets, grants and other funding sources are included for most of the projects, but it is not clear how all aspects of some projects will be funded. Some projects are still awaiting formal agreements for funding, including the Growing Mid Wales project.
- the benefits to the service user, to local communities or to the Council are clearly set out for each project at a project planning stage. For example, the work around the North Powys Wellbeing Hub emphasised the health benefits for residents in the medium and longer term. Project documents also highlighting wider benefits to the economic, social, environmental and the wellbeing benefits to the wider community as part of the wellbeing hub.
- there is strong oversight and project governance through the transformation project boards. Project boards oversee project planning and include input from a range of key officers and relevant cabinet members. Some boards also include relevant external partners. Senior Leadership Team have oversight over the strategic direction of transformation work through the Transformation Delivery Board. This allows the leadership team to gain regular insights and receive updates on progress.

The Council has put in place arrangements to deliver its transformation programme, however some arrangements are stronger than others

7 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- most of the transformation projects have clear governance structures in place to oversee delivery through project boards and workstream delivery teams that focus on specific aspects of project delivery.
- the Council has shown through many of their projects effective and strong collaboration with strong arrangements to support collaboration. For example, work with businesses, Ceredigion County Council and the UK/Welsh Governments as part of the Growing Mid Wales project.
- some projects have strong arrangements to ensure they have the appropriate officer capacity to deliver them. For example, the Transforming Education project has well-developed arrangements for planning resources, skills and input from delivery teams and specialists. For other projects there remains a challenge to ensure that projects and workstreams are properly resourced, including the North Powys Well-being Hub. These challenges have been exacerbated by the pandemic with a number of staff being redeployed.
- for internal projects such as Digital, Integrated Business Planning and Workforce Futures there is an emphasis on ensuring internal council staff are skilled and trained to help deliver their respective projects, as well as enabling delivery of the other projects. There is evidence of upskilling and training staff around these three projects. However, there was some variation in take-up amongst staff and services across these three internal projects.
- arrangements for evaluating projects are variable. Evaluations of some projects that are at a more advanced stage have taken place, although these evaluations have not focused on the extent to which the projects are delivering their intended impact in local communities. This is an area the Council could strengthen in the future. .

COVID-19 has had an impact on the pace of some transformation projects and this will be an ongoing risk for the delivery of the overall transformation programme

8 In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- since March 2020 the Council has implemented its Business Continuity Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, some projects were paused, although some work was restarted either early on in Spring 2020 or October 2020. Despite some delays from the pandemic against milestones and timelines, many aspects of projects and workstreams are seen to be 'on

track'. Key aspects of projects such as Transforming Education and Affordable Housing have shown progress.

- some projects have faced more challenges and delays than others. For example, the Brecon Placed project is currently on hold and there are plans to remove this project from the transformation programme. Others such as the North Powys Well-being Hub was suspended for several months and experienced delays. From the new experiences and insights gained from COVID-19, including new ways of working and stronger partnership working, the Council has an opportunity to take stock of its transformation work and incorporate learning into future delivery.
- for some projects there has been an increase in cost as a result of COVID-19. For example, in Affordable Housing, COVID-19 has increased the cost to operate on sites as well as some costs incurred from delays. Nevertheless, some aspects of the work have been able to progress for example at the site in Brecon. Nevertheless, some delays and increased costs from the pandemic will likely post additional risks and challenges for planned delivery of the work.
- since March, the Council has faced loss of income and increased costs because of the pandemic. This will have an impact on the overall financial position and context for transformation at the Council. Some delays in project delivery will also have an impact on grant funding from the Welsh Government and the timeframes for grant delivery. Therefore, as part of the next budget setting process, the Council will face challenges in setting out its financial position including delivery of its transformation programme.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**CABINET EXECUTIVE
9 February 2021**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Breeze
Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Engagement
and Regulatory Services

REPORT TITLE: Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary 2020

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

1.1 This report sets out to inform Cabinet of the Audit Wales audit summary for the Council. The summary contains information about the work completed since the last Annual Improvement Report, which was issued in January 2020.

2. Background

2.1 As part of the Auditor General for Wales' duties the Auditor is required to complete the following duties:

- Audit of Accounts Each year the Auditor General audits the Council's financial statements to make sure that public money is being properly accounted for.
- Value for money The Council has to put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and the Auditor General has to be satisfied that it has done this.
- Continuous improvement The Council also has to put in place arrangements to make continuous improvements, including related plans and reports, and the Auditor General has to assess whether the Council is likely to (or has) met these requirements.
- Sustainable development principle Public bodies need to comply with the sustainable development principle when setting and taking steps to meet their well-being objectives. The Auditor General must assess the extent to which they are doing this.

3. Advice

3.1 It is advised that Cabinet note the contents of the report set out in appendix one.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the Annual Audit letter. The findings in relation to the Audit of the Councils 2019/20 were included in the Audit of Accounts (ISA 260) Report issued by the auditor general and considered by the Audit Committee as they approved the Statement of Accounts in September. Any action arising from the report is being addressed in this year's closing of accounts process.
- 4.2 The findings from the Financial Sustainability Report have been presented to various forums across the Council. Improvements are being made to strengthen our financial resilience, through member development, the Integrated Business Planning Transformation Project and Finance Transformation work. Our work will be supported by the further work being undertaken by Audit Wales over the coming months.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal : The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: " I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

6. Comment from local member(s)

6.1 N/A

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

7.1 N/A

8. Recommendation

8.1 That Cabinet considers and notes the contents of the Audit Wales audit summary in Appendix one and the findings of Audits conducted in Powys during 2020.

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Head of Service: Emma Palmer, Head of Transformation and Communications

Corporate Director/CEO: Dr Caroline Turner, Chief Executive Officer

Powys County Council

Annual audit summary 2020

This is our audit summary for Powys County Council. It shows the work completed since the last Annual Improvement Report, which was issued in January 2020. Our audit summary forms part of the Auditor General for Wales' duties.

More information about these duties can be found on our [website](#).



About the Council

Some of the Services the Council provides



Key facts

The Council is made up of 73 councillors who represent the following political parties:

- Independent Group: 24
- Welsh Conservatives: 17
- Welsh Liberal Democrats / Greens group: 15
- Welsh Labour Group: 8
- Action for Powys: 4
- Plaid Cymru: 2
- Members not aligned to groups within the Council: 3

The Council spent £276.2 million on providing services during 2019-20, the tenth highest spend of the 22 unitary councils in Wales.

As at 31 March 2020 the Council had £28.6 million of usable financial reserves. This is equivalent to 10% of the Council's annual spend on services, joint sixth lowest percentage of the 22 unitary councils in Wales.

Key facts

Powys County Council has 1 of its 79 areas deemed of the most deprived 10% of areas in Wales, this is the second lowest of the 22 unitary councils in Wales.¹

The population of Powys is projected to increase by 0.9% between 2020 and 2040 from 132,421 to 133,602, including a 7.6% decrease in the number of children, a 9.6% decrease in the number of working age population and a 27.2% increase in the number of people aged 65 and over.²

The Auditor General's duties

We complete work each year to meet the following duties

- **Audit of Accounts**

Each year the Auditor General audits the Council's financial statements to make sure that public money is being properly accounted for.

- **Value for money**

The Council has to put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and the Auditor General has to be satisfied that it has done this.

- **Continuous improvement**

The Council also has to put in place arrangements to make continuous improvements, including related plans and reports, and the Auditor General has to assess whether the Council is likely to (or has) met these requirements.

- **Sustainable development principle**

Public bodies need to comply with the sustainable development principle when setting and taking steps to meet their well-being objectives. The Auditor General must assess the extent to which they are doing this.

¹ An area in this context is defined as a 'Lower Super Output Area'. Source: Stats Wales

² Source: Stats Wales



Since the Spring of 2020, the ongoing pandemic has affected our audit work. We recognise the huge strain on public services and have reshaped our work programme, and found new ways of working to reduce its impact on public bodies' response to COVID-19, while still meeting our statutory duties.



To meet the Auditor General's duties we complete specific projects, but we also rely on other audit work, and the work of regulators such as Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn (the education inspectorate). We take the findings of our audit work into account when assessing whether the council has put in place arrangements to secure value for money. Our findings and conclusions are summarised below.

What we found

Audit of Powys County Council's 2019-20 Accounts

Each year we audit the Council's financial statements.

For 2019-20:

- the Auditor General gave an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council's financial statements on 30 September 2020, which was prior to the extended 30 November deadline approved by the Welsh Government.
- whilst our opinion was unqualified it included an Emphasis of Matter paragraph in relation to the uncertainty of valuations relating to Operational properties, Council Dwellings & Investment Properties. It also contained an Emphasis of Matter paragraph regarding the material uncertainty relating to the valuation of Pension Fund Property assets.
- the Council's Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report were prepared in line with the CIPFA Code and relevant guidance. They were also consistent with the financial statements prepared by the Council and with our knowledge of the Council.
- despite the challenges faced by the Council as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council presented its draft statements of accounts for audit on 15 June which was a significant achievement.
- a number of changes were made to the Council's financial statements arising from our audit work, which were reported to the Audit Committee in our Audit of Financial Statements Report in September 2020. Our Audit of Financial Statements Report highlighted that the number of errors identified during the course of the audit was higher than in previous years.
- in addition to the Auditor General's responsibilities for auditing the Council's financial statements, he also has responsibility for the certification of a number of grant claims

and returns. Our audit work on grant claims is ongoing, and should we identify any significant issues arising from our work we will inform the Council in due course.

- The Auditor General issued the certificate confirming that the audit of accounts for 2019-20 has been completed.
- Key facts and figures from the 2019-20 financial statements can be accessed [here](#).

Well-being of Future Generations Examination – An examination of the Design of the North Powys Well-being Programme (January 2020)

The examination that we undertook in 2019-20 considered the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when designing the North Powys Well-being Programme. We concluded that the Council and the Health Board have applied the sustainable development principle and its associated five ways of working in designing the step. However, there are opportunities to further embed the five ways of working into the next phases of the North Powys Wellbeing Programme. This report can be viewed [here](#).

Continuous Improvement (August 2020)

The Auditor General certified that the Council has met its legal duties for improvement planning and reporting, and believes that it is likely to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 during 2020-21.

Financial Sustainability (June 2020)

During 2019-20 we examined the financial sustainability of each Council in Wales. We concluded that due to the considerable challenges the Council has faced over recent years, its financial performance has not been sustainable, however the Council understands the significant financial challenges it faces over the medium term and is working to strengthen its overall financial resilience. This report can be viewed [here](#).

National Fraud Initiative (November 2020)

In October 2020, the Auditor General published his report on the findings of the latest National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data-matching exercise in Wales. The exercise helped public bodies in Wales, including the 22 unitary authorities, identify fraud and overpayments amounting to £8m. The report can be accessed on our website [here](#). NFI continues to be developed and in the forthcoming NFI exercise (NFI 2020-22), local authorities will have access to matches designed to help identify potential fraudulent applications for Covid-19 business support grants.

Environmental Health Services (February 2020)

We examined the Council's environmental health services during 2018-19. We concluded that overall, the Council has been able to reduce expenditure on environmental health services whilst maintaining its performance. To achieve likely further savings, the Council will need to be innovative in transforming environmental health services at pace to maximise their resilience over the medium term. This report can be viewed [here](#).

Workforce Planning (July 2020)

During 2018-19 we reviewed workforce planning at Powys. We concluded that stronger workforce planning means the Council is better placed to support its transformation objectives. This report can be viewed [here](#).

Transformation (December 2020)

We reviewed transformation at Powys County Council during 2019-20. We concluded that overall, the Council is well placed to deliver its transformation programme, however COVID-19 presents new challenges and risks to the programme. This report can be viewed [here](#).

COVID-19 response and recovery

Since March 2020, we have examined and reviewed arrangements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at each of the Councils in Wales. We previously issued in July 2020 a summary note on digital democracy at the Council. We have further engaged with the Council throughout the year around this work.

Other Inspectorates

We also considered the reports of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Estyn as well as any subsequent actions taken by the Council in response.

An Improvement and Assurance Board for Social Care was previously set up in 2018 to provide challenge and support following CIW's reports relating to [Children's services](#) and [Adult services](#). A further Improvement and Assurance Board for Education was formed in October 2019 in response to [Estyn's Inspection of Local Government Education Services](#).

Following an Independent Review of progress made on organisational improvement and following the Minister for Housing and Local Government's approval, the Improvement and Assurance Board formally met for the last time at the end of September 2020. Alternative arrangements are now in place at the Council to replace the Improvement and Assurance Board and for the Council to manage its own improvement.

In [October 2020 CIW issued a letter summarising the findings of their performance evaluation inspection that took place in September 2020](#). CIW have identified that the local authority has made significant progress since their last inspections and that enhanced monitoring arrangements at Powys County Council social services are no longer required.

In November 2020 Estyn held a virtual post-inspection progress conference with Powys County Council. During the conference, the Local Authority demonstrated that it has begun to make sound progress since the inspection. It is showing a clear commitment to addressing the issues that were raised as well as evaluating its progress against its plans. Importantly, it is building leadership capacity which has the potential to secure sustainable improvements. Overall, the Local Authority has identified sufficient resources to implement its plans as well as considering the barriers to progress and associated risks appropriately.

In January 2021, Estyn released a report on '[Local authority and regional consortia support for schools and PRUs in response to COVID-19](#)'. The report covers the ways councils across Wales have adapted their work to respond to the challenges from COVID-19. Although the report is a national report, it does reference Powys County Council's work during the pandemic. For example the report includes reference to the Council's work around support and learning for post-16 learners. This includes work to support pupils through the Powys Learning Pathways website, bridging units for pupils about to start post-16 courses and the streaming of online learning to pupils accessing classes from teachers based outside their main school campuses.

Local Government Studies

As well as local work at each council, each year we also carry out studies across the local government sector to make recommendations for improving value for money. Since the last annual improvement report we have published the following reports:

The effectiveness of local Planning authorities (June 2019)

We reviewed progress of local planning authorities in delivering their new responsibilities. We conclude that Planning Authorities are not resilient enough to deliver long-term improvements because of their limited capacity and the challenge of managing a complex system. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

The 'Front Door' to Social Care (September 2019)

We considered the effectiveness of the new 'front door' to social care, looking specifically at services for adults. We found that whilst councils are preventing social-care demand, information, advice and assistance are not consistently effective. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Review of Public Services Boards (October 2019)

We inspected how Public Service Boards are operating; looking at their membership, terms of reference, frequency and focus of meetings, alignment with other partnerships, resources and scrutiny arrangements. We concluded that Public Services Boards are unlikely to realise their potential unless they are given freedom to work more flexibly and think and act differently. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Progress in implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (November 2019)

We examined how the new duties and responsibilities of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act are being rolled out and delivered. We found that victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence are often let down by an inconsistent, complex and fragmented system. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Rough Sleeping in Wales – Everyone's Problem; No One's Responsibility (July 2020)

We looked at how well public services are responding to the issue of rough sleeping. Overall, we found that responding to COVID-19 is an opportunity for public bodies to start addressing long standing weaknesses in partnership working which has stopped them from tackling rough sleeping in the past. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Better Law Making (September 2020)

This report draws on five reports published between 2019 and today looking at how local authorities are responding to the challenge of implementing new legislation. Implementation is a complex task which needs to be fully thought through by the Welsh Government and the Senedd whenever they bring forward and make any new legislation. The paper highlights the difficulties faced by local authorities and their public sector partners in implementing their new responsibilities. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Commercialisation in Local Government (October 2020)

Councils have conducted commercial activity for a long time, and many councils are exploring additional commercial opportunities to mitigate against the financial pressures they face. Our report is specifically targeted at helping elected members and senior officers to examine and judge the potential impact on their organisations when considering whether to undertake commercialisation. It will also help councils to demonstrate how well they are discharging their value for money responsibilities. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

Planned work for 2020-21

We also looked at the key challenges and opportunities facing the Council. These risks could have an effect on the council's ability to meet its legal obligations in relation to the sustainable development principle, the use of its resources and continuous improvement.

The most significant risk and issue facing councils and the wider public sector during 2020-21 is the COVID-19 pandemic. We have shaped our work to provide assurance and challenge in a way which helps to support the Council through this period. Our work for 2020-21 includes:

- **Recovery planning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;**
- **Covid-learning project – helping to identify and share learning from the way in which public bodies have responded to the pandemic;**
- **Assurance and risk assessment;**
- **A review of the Council's financial sustainability;**
- **A follow-up review of Transformation;**
- **A follow-up review of Scrutiny; and**
- **A review of Safeguarding.**

The Auditor General is independent of government, and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. The Auditor General undertakes his work using staff and other resources provided by the Wales Audit Office, which is a statutory board established for that purpose and to monitor and advise the Auditor General. The Wales Audit Office is held to account by the Senedd.

The Auditor General audits local government bodies in Wales, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. He also conducts local government value for money studies and assesses compliance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

Beyond local government, the Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Senedd Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales.

Audit Wales is the non-statutory collective name for the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office, which are separate legal entities with their own legal functions, as described above. Audit Wales is not a legal entity.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

This document is also available in Welsh.

24 November	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the appointment of school governors.
30 November	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Agreed the official name of the new school to replace Hafren CP Junior School and Ladywell Green Infants School will be Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.
9 December	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing	Endorsed the Regional Technical Statement Second Review (2020).
9 December	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the appointment of school governors.
14 December	Portfolio Holder for Environment	Approved the initiation of Traffic Regulation Order consultation procedures in respect of A4811 Llanidloes Road, Newtown - Partial Speed Limit Reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph and if no substantive objections are received for the proposal be implemented.
15 December	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing	Approved the purchase of three serviced building plots at Maes Maldwyn, Llanddew, Brecon for the development of three Council-owned homes.
16 December	Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture	Approved a change to Radnorshire Museum opening hours from 5 to 4 days a week.
24 December	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Granted delegated authority to the Head of Property, Planning and Public Protection to accept the best offer received for the former Hay area offices, following an appropriate period of marketing and negotiation, where that offer is at, or in excess of, the marketing guide price.
8 January	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing	Approved the purchase of a property in Guilsfield through the HRA with provision for a further sum to be invested in the property to make it ready to let.

8 January	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the appointment of school governors.
11 January	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the Instruments of Government for Ysgol Cwm Banwy Ysgol yr Eglwys yng Nghymru and Ysgol Llanfyllin.
14 January	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Welsh Language	<p>Gave approval for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For day services and day centres to remain closed for a further 6 months. 2. For social workers to work with individuals and their carers to support them to utilise different methods of achieving what matters to them while the day centres/services remain closed. 3. For Adult Services to undertake an evaluation of the implications of maintaining closed day centres/services in the longer term (recognising that physical distancing will be required for some time), including a potential consultation with staff on alternative roles that promote day opportunities. 4. To continue to work alongside providers of externally commissioned services to provide home based support on a long-term basis, whilst supporting residents to engage in day opportunities. 5. To return to Health and Care Scrutiny Committee/ Cabinet with the findings to enable informed decision making about the future of day services across the county.
18 January	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing	Approved the purchase of a property in Knighton.

25 January	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the appointment of school governors.
27 January	Portfolio Holder for Environment	B4602 Cerrigcochion Road, and Hoggan Park, Brecon – 20mph Speed Zone Gave approval for the Traffic Regulation Order consultation procedure to be initiated in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and if no substantive objections are received for the proposal be implemented.
28 January	Portfolio Holder for Environment	Melin y Ddol and Berriew – Speed limit modifications Gave approval for the Traffic Regulation Order consultation procedure to be initiated in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and if no substantive objections are received for the proposal be implemented.

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Cabinet / De Title	Portfolio Holder	Lead	Decision Maker
10/02/21 Moelfre City	Councillor Heulwen Hulme	Alastair Knox	Portfolio Holder
16/02/21 Quarter 3 Performance Report	Councillor Graham Breeze	Emma Palmer	Cabinet
16/02/21 Quarter 3 Strategic Risk Register Report	Councillor Aled Davies	Bets Ingram	Cabinet
16/02/21 CIP Annual Update	Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Emma Palmer	Cabinet
16/02/21 Early Help Strategy	Councillor Rachel Powell	Jo Williams	Cabinet
16/02/21 Mid Wales Energy Strategy	Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Tom Yeo	Cabinet
16/02/21 Rent Setting Report	Councillor Iain McIntosh	Andy Thompson	Cabinet
Llanfair Caereinion CP School and Caereinion High School -			
16/02/21 Response to Scrutiny	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
16/02/21 Financial update as at Quarter 3	Councillor Aled Davies	Jane Thomas	Cabinet
16/02/21 Treasury Management Quarter 3 Report	Councillor Aled Davies	James Chappelle	Cabinet
02/03/21 Llangedwyn/Llanfechain Church in Wales Schools Proposals	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
02/03/21 Ysgol Calon Cymru	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
02/03/21 Final Settlement and Budget update	Councillor Aled Davies	Jane Thomas	Cabinet
02/03/21 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2022	Councillor Iain McIntosh	Nina Davies	Cabinet
02/03/21 Benefits from Building Council Homes in Powys	Councillor Iain McIntosh	Nina Davies	Cabinet
02/03/21 Special Schools proposal	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
09/03/21 Mid Wales Regional Economic Framework	Councillor Iain McIntosh		Cabinet
23/03/21 Ysgol Bro Hyddgen Language Proposal – Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
13/04/21 Biodiversity & Resilience of Eco Systems	Councillor Iain McIntosh	Sian Barnes	Cabinet
13/04/21 February Financial position Rev / Cap	Councillor Aled Davies	Jane Thomas	Cabinet
13/04/21 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment	Councillor Iain McIntosh	Kimberly Caruana	Cabinet
Options for improvement of the broadband infrastructure in			
13/04/21 Powys	Councillor Graham Breeze	Diane Reynolds	Cabinet
13/04/21 Use of Robotics in Administration	Councillor Graham Breeze	Diane Reynolds	Cabinet
18/05/21 Post 16 Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
25/05/21 Quarter 4/End of Year Performance Report	Councillor Graham Breeze	Emma Palmer	Cabinet
25/05/21 Quarter 4/ End of Year Strategic Risk Register Report	Councillor Aled Davies	Jane Thomas	Cabinet
25/05/21 Mount Street / Cradoc Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon Language Category Consultation			
25/05/21 Report	Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
15/06/21 Castle Caereinion Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
15/06/21 Llanbedr Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
15/06/21 Churchstoke Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
15/06/21 4.Llanfihangel Rhydithon Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
06/07/21 CIP Annual Report	Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Emma Palmer	Cabinet
06/07/21 Ysgol Calon Cymru Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
06/07/21 3.Special Schools Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
06/07/21 Llangedwyn/Llanfechain Consultation Report	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
06/07/21 Draft WESP	Councillor Phyl Davies	Marianne Evans	Cabinet
27/07/21 Quarter 2 Performance Report	Councillor Graham Breeze	Emma Palmer	Cabinet
27/07/21 Quarter 2 Strategic Risk Register	Councillor Aled Davies	Jane Thomas	Cabinet