

## Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee

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Meeting Venue  
**By Zoom**

Meeting Date  
**Wednesday, 29 June 2022**

Meeting Time  
**2.00 pm**

For further information please contact

**Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager and  
Head of Democratic Services**  
wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk



County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 5LG  
22-06-2022

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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.

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

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### AGENDA

<b>1.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR</b>
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To elect a Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

<b>2.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>
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To receive apologies for absence.

<b>3.</b>	<b>DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST</b>
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To receive any disclosures of interest by Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

<b>4.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP</b>
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To receive disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member has been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

(NB: Members are reminded that under Section 78 Members having been given a prohibited party whip cannot vote on a matter before the Committee.)

<b>5.</b>	<b>CURRICULUM FOR WALES AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b>
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To receive and consider the report of the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys.  
(Pages 5 - 12)

<b>6.</b>	<b>LLANFIHANGEL RHYDITHON SCHOOL</b>
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To receive and consider the report of the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys.  
(Pages 13 - 18)

<b>7.</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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To note the Committee's forward work programme.  
(Pages 19 - 20)

<b>8.</b>	<b>LLANBEDR CHURCH IN WALES SCHOOL</b>
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**8.1. Report**

To receive and consider the report of the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys.  
(Pages 21 - 26)

**8.2. Exempt Item**

To consider passing the following Resolution:

RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under categories 2 and 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

The Monitoring Officer has determined that categories 2 and 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules applies to the following item. His view on the public interest test (having taken account of the provisions of Rule 14.8 of the Council's Access to Information Rules) was that to make this information public would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

These factors in his view outweigh the public interest in disclosing this information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.

**8.3. Confidential Appendix**

(To Follow)

**Briefing**

The Committee is asked to note that following the close of the meeting there will be a briefing for Members.

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## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

## Learning &amp; Skills Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Sally Llewellyn  
Service Manager for Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** County Councillor Pete Roberts  
Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

**REPORT TITLE:** Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning  
(including Thematic review on curriculum)

**REPORT FOR:** Information

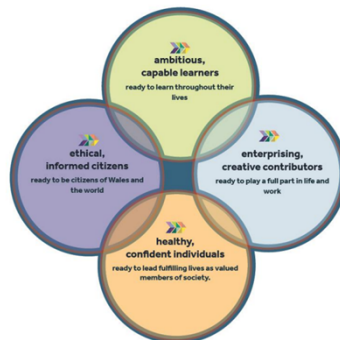
## 1. Purpose

This report sets out to advise the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Panel on the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales to schools and settings across Wales in September 2022.

## 2. National Position

2.1 For primary schools, roll-out will commence in September 2022. Secondary schools who wish to roll out the curriculum to Year 7 are encouraged to do so, but this will not be mandatory until 2023, with roll-out to Years 7 and 8 together.

2.2 Improving education is our national mission. Nothing is so essential as universal access to, and acquisition of, the experiences, knowledge and skills that our young people need for employment, lifelong learning and active citizenship. The Curriculum for Wales guidance is a clear statement of what is important in delivering a broad and balanced education. The four purposes (see diagram below) are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person. In fulfilling these purposes, we set high expectations for all, promote individual and national well-being, tackle ignorance and misinformation, and encourage critical and civic engagement.



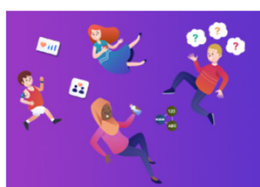
2.3 A school's curriculum is everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it. Curriculum development should be at the heart of practitioner, school and national efforts which seek to raise standards for all, tackle the attainment gap, and ensure an education system that is a source of national pride and enjoys public confidence.

2.4 The Curriculum for Wales guidance forms part of the Curriculum for Wales Framework. The Framework is determined nationally and includes both the curriculum requirements set out in legislation, and a range of supporting guidance. The Curriculum for Wales guidance is the result of co-construction. It has been developed in Wales, by practitioners for practitioners, bringing together educational expertise and wider research and evidence. The Curriculum for Wales guidance published on Hwb, helps schools to design their own curriculum. It contains information on legal requirements, guidance on how to develop a school curriculum, and an explanation of the purposes and principles of assessment.

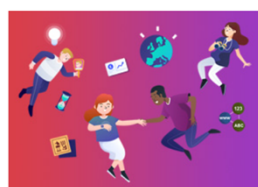
2.5 The Curriculum for Wales Framework helps practitioners develop a more integrated approach to learning. The six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) are Expressive Arts, Health and Well-Being, Humanities, Languages, Literacy and Communication, Maths and Numeracy and Science and Technology (see image below) bring together familiar disciplines and encourage strong and meaningful links across them. Those individual disciplines still play an important role, especially as learners progress and begin to specialise. The Curriculum for Wales guidance promotes collaboration and cross-disciplinary planning, learning and teaching, both within and across Areas. This will enable learners to build connections across their learning and combine different experiences, knowledge and skills.



Expressive Arts



Health and Well-being



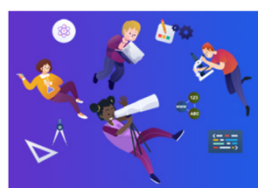
Humanities



Languages, Literacy and Communication



Mathematics and Numeracy



Science and Technology

2.6 There are 27 mandatory statements of what matters in this Framework. These ensure a level of consistency in curriculum design across settings and schools, as learners must develop an understanding of all statements. The process of exploring and revisiting these statements enables learners to develop ever deeper knowledge over the learning continuum and to progress to a more sophisticated understanding of the key knowledge, ideas and principles in each Area. This more sophisticated understanding allows learners to value how their learning contributes to these ideas and why it is important, rather than simply being able to recall isolated facts without understanding the context. This progression

should be supported by a variety of assessment approaches which enable the learner and the practitioner to understand where a learner is and what they need to do next. The Framework does not require settings and schools to develop a timetable explicitly structured along the lines of the Areas or to organise the setting or school or staffing on that basis.

2.7 A defining feature of the Framework is that it requires schools to design their own curriculum and assessment arrangements. It is acknowledged that this is a challenge for many schools and an even greater challenge given the circumstances schools have found themselves in over the last two years. An added element to consider for small schools is their capacity to manage the considerable workload of engaging with the wide range of professional learning required by Curriculum for Wales. This is in addition to the professional learning required by the wider reform agenda e.g. Additional Learning Needs transformation. Schools are required to work in collaboration to realise the curriculum and focus on:

- the role of leadership in enabling high-quality learning and teaching. Establishing a high-performing education system through high-quality learning and teaching depends on building its professional capacity, developing local leadership, responsibility and decision-making
- within the national framework, schools and practitioners are best placed to make decisions about the needs of their specific learners, including choosing topics and activities which will best support their learning
- the importance of meaningful learning. A content-focused curriculum does not guarantee meaningful learning, only that certain topics are covered to varying extents; instead, the Curriculum for Wales guidance articulates what concepts and essence of learning should underpin a range of different topics, learning activities and acquisition of knowledge
- the need for innovation and creativity. Practitioners select content, enabling them to use their professional skills to drive improved learning and outcomes for their learners
- the scope for practitioners to make greater links between Areas and disciplines. Practitioners have the licence to use topics and activities to combine meaningful learning from different Areas, disciplines and concepts

### **3. Powys Readiness**

3.1 Most schools in Powys are engagingly positively with Curriculum for Wales. Feedback from schools informs us that they consider the professional learning on offer in Powys is of a high quality and easily accessible but allocating adequate time for school staff to effectively engage with professional learning resources has been challenging given the recent circumstances schools find themselves in. The Professional Learning Team in Powys and The School Improvement Advisory Team meet regularly to discuss the readiness of all schools for curriculum rollout. This allows us to triage need and provide a bespoke menu of support for each school. It is vital that the professional learning experiences provided for schools are having maximum impact. School visits in the spring and summer terms of 2022 have been carried out jointly by the Professional Learning and School Improvement Advisory teams. These officers are in the process of triangulating the impact of the professional learning to ascertain where schools are in relation to their preparedness, which is mixed, which is the case for all schools in Wales.

The Powys Professional Learning team has 6 members. All staff work collectively to support schools with Curriculum for Wales, but each team member has specific responsibility for a particular aspect of curriculum development. The Powys Professional Learning Team’s roles and responsibilities are summarised in the table below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Sally Llewellyn	Service Manager for Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning
Sarah Perdue	Lead for Professional Pathways
Huw Griffiths	Lead for 14+
Rob Walters	Lead for Digital
Christopher Davies and Mary Strong	Leads for Well-Being and Equalities

3.2 Schools in Powys have access to an extensive range of professional learning and support from the Powys Professional Learning Team working in collaboration with School Improvement Advisors. Schools across Wales are at various places along a learning continuum with regards to realising the Curriculum. This continuum is certainly reflected in Powys schools and has been impacted by the pandemic and the capacity of some of our schools to engage with this demanding workload. The Minister for Education acknowledges that September is not the end, but the beginning of the next ‘leg of the journey’ to Curriculum for Wales. These demands on schools involve a full engagement with Curriculum for Wales, developing a whole school vision, deepening their understanding of a purpose led curriculum and exploring the Statements of What Matters upon which the curriculum is based. As well as embracing the importance of the cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence, as these skills remain a significant focus-for delivering the new curriculum.

3.3 Since September, when the professional Learning team was established, practitioners in Powys have been able to access a comprehensive Professional Learning Offer of training and support which includes synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) professional learning opportunities. Sitting behind the Powys Sharepoint button on Hwb are 2 Google Sites: (1) The Powys Professional Learning Offer (2) The Powys Professional Learning Resource Repository. The Powys Sharepoint provides a one-stop shop for all education stakeholders in Powys to access professional learning that is most relevant to their needs.

3.4 Powys’ Professional Learning Offer is comprised of a wide range of professional learning workshops and training opportunities. These workshops are provided by members of the Powys Professional Learning Team as well as other middle tier organisations such as the Education Workforce Council, the National Leadership Academy, Higher Education Institutions and a Wide Range of Welsh Government Projects such as the National Pedagogy Project. At the click of a button, practitioners can join a huge range of professional learning opportunities best suited to the needs of their schools.

3.5 To support practitioners in selecting professional learning most appropriate to their needs, the Powys Professional Learning Offer is arranged into 10 sub-headings that cover the key areas listed below:



- Curriculum for Wales
- Professional Pathways
- Secondary Support
- Equity and Well-Being
- Additional Learning Needs
- Digital Learning
- Early Years and Foundation Phase
- Induction
- Governors
- Finance and Schools Service

3.6 There are hundreds of professional learning opportunities available to practitioners and each session clearly states what will be covered in the workshop and the intended audience to ensure that the professional learning is appropriate to the needs of the practitioners. It is recognised that accessing this wide range of professional learning can be difficult especially for teachers and headteachers with a significant teaching commitment. Workshops are offered at a variety of times to allow practitioners to access training at a time best suited to them. A designated Curriculum for Wales workshop is offered weekly at 3.45-4.45pm every Wednesday which has proved popular with many schools who have used the workshops as part of their weekly staff training offer. The Professional Learning Team and School Improvement Advisors provide bespoke support for schools in relation to Curriculum for Wales, signposting practitioners to the appropriate professional learning according to their school's priorities.

3.7 To further support practitioners who are unable to attend 'live' professional learning workshops, the Professional Learning Team have developed a second Google Site called the Powys Resource Repository. This site houses recordings and resources delivered during the 'live' sessions as part of the Powys Professional Learning Offer. The resource repository can be accessed by all practitioners as well as wider stakeholders including governors. School leaders are able to use these shared recordings and resources to provide training opportunities in their schools in line with their own professional learning calendar. The Professional Learning team are able to provide bespoke support for schools where required. The resources are aimed at reducing the variation between schools in the quality of professional learning undertaken however, we acknowledge the lack of capacity for some schools to engage with this professional learning or share the workload across a small number of practitioners.

3.8 Support from LA Officers for Curriculum for Wales rollout is complimented by the work of 19 Pedagogy Leads drawn from a wide range of schools across Powys. The Pedagogy Leads represent a cross section of school types including primary, secondary, all-age and special settings. Pedagogy Leads are drawn from English medium, Welsh medium and Dual Language settings. There are 3 Pedagogy Leads for each of the six Areas of Learning and Experience of the Curriculum for Wales.

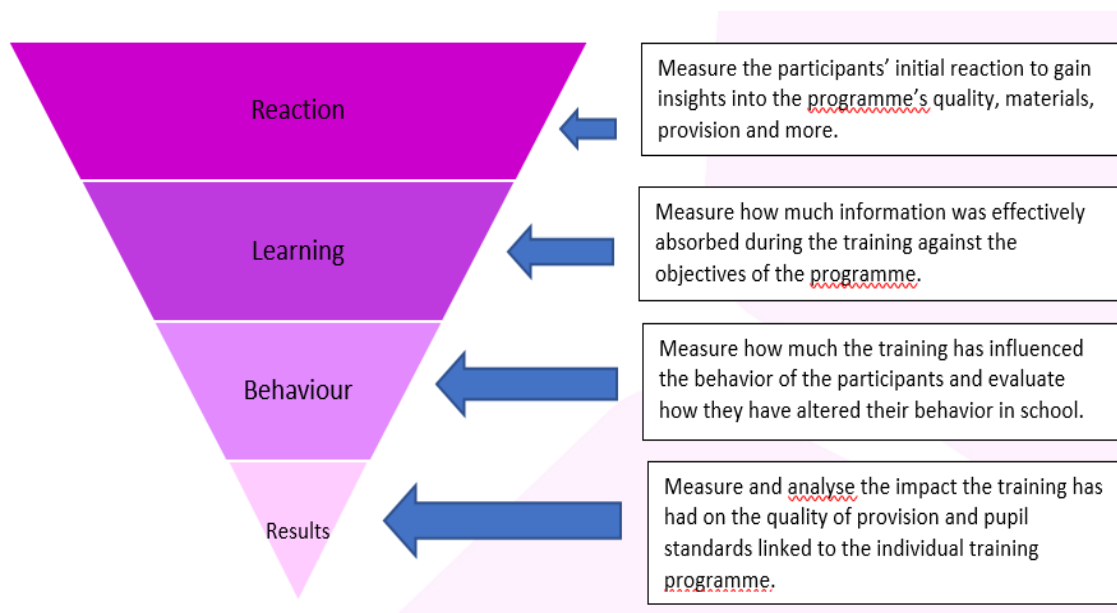
3.9 The Pedagogy Leads are following a professional learning programme of support covering all aspects of curriculum transformation and their learning is being disseminated across the county in 2 ways: (1) Cluster meetings (2) AoLE networks. These schools are also engaged in the work of the National Pedagogy Project, the National Professional Enquiry Project and the National Networks. The Mid Wales Partnership of Powys and Ceredigion

have developed a toolkit for leaders based on the Journey to Curriculum Rollout guidance and linked to the professional learning programme designed for Powys' Pedagogy Leads.

## 4. Impact

4.1 Powys have invested in professional learning and provided their practitioners with a high-quality entitlement that is easily accessible. Analytics of the Powys Professional Learning Offer Google Site record that the total number of page views between October 2021 to June 2022 is 18,661. The Curriculum for Wales page of the site has received the highest number of views at 3,127 suggesting the level of practitioner interest in this area. User friendly short recordings have been produced to explain how the site can be accessed and navigated. These recordings have been shared with a wide range of stakeholders from headteachers to governors. Professional Learning opportunities are also advertised through the weekly Education Newsletter and through the Powys PL Team Twitter account which has 178 followers. However, the Professional Learning team are focussed on ensuring that all practitioners are accessing professional learning as their entitlement. Ensuring teachers have the time for professional learning is a challenge and can increase workload significantly for teachers with one or more Areas of Learning and Experience to lead.

4.2 Evaluation surveys using the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation (see diagram below) are completed after each training event to ensure that the workshops are appropriate to the practitioner's needs and are having the desired impact. The professional learning team analyse these evaluations and provide reports that explore 4 stages of impact. These 4 stages include reaction to the training, learning from the training, behaviour changes following on from the training and results of the training on learning and teaching.



4.3 On the Powys-wide INSET day that took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the professional learning team provided 17 different online workshops from 9am-3pm covering a wide range of training relating to the new curriculum. The team received nearly 700 applications for training that day and the impact of all 17 sessions was evaluated. The team received 250 responses to the evaluation requests. The quantitative data generated by these surveys is summarised below. The questions that generated qualitative responses have been

analysed by the team and summative reports written to plan for next steps in professional learning:

**94%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning improved their knowledge of the subject.

**93%** of participants agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the professional learning to others

**92%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning provided content relevant to my role.

**91%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the content was appropriate to my needs and my skill level.

The average number of stars awarded was **4.2** from a maximum of 5 agreeing that the learning from the training would have a positive impact on practice.

4.4 Following the success of the January INSET day a further the Powys-wide INSET day took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022, the professional learning team provided 10 different online workshops from 9am-3pm covering a wide range of training relating to the new curriculum. The team received nearly 500 applications for training that day and the impact of all 10 sessions was evaluated. The team received 230 responses to the evaluation requests. The quantitative data generated by these surveys is summarised below. The questions that generated qualitative responses have been analysed by the team and summative reports written to plan for next steps in professional learning:

**86%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning improved their knowledge of the subject.

**88%** of participants agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the professional learning to others

**92%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning provided content relevant to my role.

**97%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the content was appropriate to my needs and my skill level.

The average number of stars awarded was **4.1** from a maximum of 5 agreeing that the learning from the training would have a positive impact on practice.

4.5 The views of the 19 Pedagogy Leads have also been sought to explore the effectiveness of the Pedagogy Leads programme to date. The programme commenced in September 2021 and data was collected through a survey in December 2021 to evaluate the impact of the programme at the end of the first term of rollout. Recommendations made by participants in response to the survey have led to changes in the way the programme will run from February to July e.g. Pedagogy Leads workshops increased from 1 hour to 1.5 hours to allow for deeper discussion and were held fortnightly rather than weekly. The main quantitative findings were as follows:

**100%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning improved their knowledge of the subject.

**95%** of participants agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the professional learning to others

**100%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the professional learning provided content relevant to my role.

**100%** of participants agree or strongly agree that the content was appropriate to my needs and my skill level.

The average number of stars awarded was **4.5** from a maximum of 5 agreeing that the learning from the training would have a positive impact on practice.

## **5. Next Steps**

5.1 A much deeper understanding of the impact of our work of the professional learning team will be gleaned through spring and summer visits to schools with school improvement advisor partners. This will provide us with the opportunity to speak in person with practitioners and learners, experience the school's culture and explore the learning that is taking place in classrooms resulting in bespoke support and intervention for those schools who will need the provision ready for September 2022.

5.2 An additional cluster INSET day is due to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to allow clusters of schools to come together to discuss their journey to curriculum rollout and to begin to plan their curriculum across the 3-16 continuum. Clusters will be supported by LA Schools Service Staff and Pedagogy Leads

5.3 Staggered cluster INSET days in the autumn term will provide opportunities for the Powys Professional Learning Team to support each cluster face to face with the next stage of curriculum design work which includes deepening an understanding of assessment and progression.

5.4 The Powys Professional Learning Offer for 2022-2023 has been published for schools in advance of September to ensure schools are able to plan effectively to incorporate the support on offer into their identified professional learning needs.

Contact Officer: Sally Llewellyn, Service Manager for Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning  
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Head of Service: Georgie Bevan, Head of Schools Service  
Director: Lynette Lovell

## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

## CABINET EXECUTIVE

5 July 2022

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

**REPORT TITLE:** Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The aim of this paper to seek Cabinet approval to delay implementation of the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, Cabinet considered an Objection Report in respect of a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.

- 2.2 Having considered the Objection Report, Cabinet approved the following recommendation:

*'To approve the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.'*

- 2.3 However, the new Cabinet has raised concerns about the possible impact the implementation of the proposal would have on the community, as outlined in the community impact assessment carried out as part of the process.
- 2.4 It is therefore recommended that implementation of the proposal is delayed by a year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 to further consider the impact on the community and to identify steps that the Council could take to mitigate the impact of closure of the school on the community. This could potentially include the transfer of the school building to the community to be utilised for community use. It would also provide an opportunity to explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school in Dolau.

**3. Advice**

- 3.1 The School Organisation Code (2018) states the following in respect of implementation of proposals:

'Where a proposal has been determined by the local authority under section 53 of the 2013 Act the local authority itself may determine to delay, bring forward or abandon the proposal.'

- 3.2 It is therefore advised that the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is delayed by a period of 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- 3.3 The delay in implementation of the proposal will provide an opportunity to identify steps the Council could take to mitigate the impact of closure of the school on the community, which could include the transfer of the school building to the community to be utilised for community use. It will also provide an opportunity to explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school in Dolau.
- 3.4 Delaying implementation would also provide additional time to make arrangements to ensure effective transition to alternative schools for pupils currently attending the school.
- 3.5 If agreed by Cabinet, stakeholders will be notified of this change in the implementation date in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.
- 3.6 The Council is also considering possible transformation of Ysgol Calon Cymru. Following Cabinet approval last year, informal engagement on these future plans, which aim to address issues with Ysgol Calon Cymru's current operating model, took place earlier this year. As outlined in the paper considered by Cabinet in June 2021, this is Phase 1 of the Ysgol Calon Cymru catchment transformation programme.
- 3.7 Phase 2 of the Ysgol Calon Cymru catchment transformation programme will focus on reviewing primary and early years provision in the area. However, this will not commence until there is a clear direction for Phase 1.

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

- 4.1 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. When the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP school was first considered, it was estimated that the Council's revenue budget would benefit from a saving of around £59,000 per annum (£52,000 from formula funding plus £6,600 from catering cost savings). Changes in pupil numbers across all schools affected and the phasing in of a new funding formula mean that these savings estimates will have changed.
- 4.2 Due to the decision to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP school the individual school budget share allocated was for the period 1 April to 31

August 2022 only. The saving generated from the closure was retained within the overall Schools Delegated budget to be reinvested across all schools as part of the formula allocation. Delaying the closure of the school to 31 August 2023 means that further funding will need to be provided to the school for the additional year. Additional funding of **£76,800** will be required in the current financial year for the seven months to the 31 March 2023 (£73,000 for the delegated schools budget and £3,800 for catering). With a further **£32,300** estimated to be required in the 2023-24 financial year for the five months to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

- 4.3 There is funding available this year for the £76,800 on a non-recurrent basis within the delegated school contingency budget, which is held centrally for unforeseen issues that arise during the year (including helping schools to manage the net costs of maternity cover, any required recalculations of formula funding and so on). Any balance at the end of the financial year is distributed across all schools. The £32,300 for the five months in 2023-24 will be factored into the formula for next financial year and funded from of the overall schools delegated budget. **The primary phase formula changes and school closures were expected to redistribute funding from small schools to larger primaries and to secondary phase schools. This proposal will limit the ability to move funding as originally planned.**
- 4.4 There may also be additional costs to ensure that the school building can remain operational for a further 12 months. The existing subterranean boiler room has on-going asbestos management remedial works and will require further works to maintain a safe environment to servicing and maintaining the boiler. The estimated cost of this work is £6,000. If there is further deterioration of the asbestos where it becomes unsafe, then consideration may have to be given to providing a new boiler and enclosure at ground level, estimated costs £40,000. These works would have to be funded from the Schools Major Improvements Programme 2023/24.
- 4.5 In addition, delaying implementation of the proposal would mean that there would be a delay in declaring the property surplus, and therefore a delay in realising any capital receipt following any sale of the property.
- 4.6 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the resource implications set out above of the recommendation to delay the closure implementation by 12 months. The use of the contingency budget to reinstate funding to Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School will limit the ability of the schools service to manage unforeseen issues that arise during the year and carries an element of risk. The allocation required for 2023-24 will be drawn from the delegated formula budget, which will affect funding for all other schools. The Schools Major Improvement Programme is already under significant pressure, redirecting these funds if required will limit the other projects that can be delivered.

- 4.5 If agreed by Cabinet, Human Resources colleagues will work closely with the School Governors, management and staff to ensure that the appropriate employment processes are followed and that the staffing levels are retained at the most suitable level.

**5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 Legal: the recommendations can be accepted 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. Data Protection**

- 6.1 N/A

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

- 7.1 Cllr Deb Edwards (Llangunllo with Norton):

'Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School is the beating heart of the wonderful Community more widely known as Dolau, the community have literally climb mountains in their efforts to keep their School. I think it's imperative that we have long term education at this facility, to ensure that future generations are able to learn with in this Community, and take in to account the effect it will have on the community, I therefore wholehearted support any action which means the continuation of education with in this community.'

**8. Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 Impact assessments were considered by Cabinet at each stage of the process. These were updated at each stage to reflect the issues raised.

**9. Recommendation**

- To delay implementation of the proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School for 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- To identify the steps that the Council could take to mitigate the impact of the closure on the community.
- To explore the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium primary school at Llanfihangel Rhydithon.



- A virement from delegated school contingency budget for £76,800 is approved to balance the budgets in this financial year. Noting in 2023-24 that the additional £32,300 requirement will be contained within the overall schools delegated budget.

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Head of Service:	Emma Palmer – Head of Transformation & Communications Georgie Bevan – Head of Education
Corporate Director:	Lynette Lovell – Director of Education

CABINET REPORT NEW TEMPLATE VERSION 3

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# 7

## Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2022 – 2027

**2022**

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Type and Detail</b>
13-07-22 14.00 – 16.00	Work Programming
18-07-22 ?? 14.00 – 16.00	Pre-Meeting
20-07-22 14.00 – 16.00 (To be changed)	Committee - Public  Q1 Performance and Risk All Heads of Service  Secondary School Strategy  Corporate Assessment?
16-09-22 14.00 – 16.00	Pre-Meeting
21-09-22 14.00 – 16.00	Committee - Public
24-10-22 14.00 – 16.00	Pre-Meeting
26-10-22 14.00 – 16.00	Committee - Public  Q2 Performance and Risk All Heads of Service
09-12-22 14.00 – 16.00	Pre-Meeting
14-12-22 14.00 – 16.00	Committee - Public

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# 8.1

## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

### CABINET EXECUTIVE

5 July 2022

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

**REPORT TITLE:** Llanbedr C. in W. School

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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#### 1. Purpose

1.1 The aim of this paper to seek Cabinet approval to delay implementation of the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023, and to commence an area review of the Crickhowell catchment.

1.2 This paper is supported by the following appendix:

- **Appendix A** – Additional information – Llanbedr C. in W. School (To follow)

#### 2. Background

2.1 On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, Cabinet considered an Objection Report in respect of a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School.

2.2 Having considered the Objection Report, Cabinet approved the following recommendation:

*'To approve the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.'*

2.3 As Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided school, the School Organisation Code includes provision for the decision to close the school to be referred to Welsh Ministers for review within 28 days of the decision.

2.4 As it was expected that the decision would be referred to the Welsh Ministers, and that implementation would need to be delayed whilst the review took place, no action was taken to commence implementation of the decision immediately following Cabinet's decision. However, the decision was not referred to the Welsh Ministers within 28 days.

- 2.5 Because of this, the necessary processes which would need to be undertaken to implement the proposal from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 have not been carried out.
- 2.6 It is therefore recommended that closure of the school is delayed for a period of 12 months.
- 2.7 It is also recommended that an area review of the Crickhowell catchment is undertaken, to identify a preferred way forward for the whole catchment.

### **3. Advice**

- 3.1 The School Organisation Code (2018) states the following in respect of implementation of proposals:

'Where a proposal has been determined by the local authority under section 53 of the 2013 Act the local authority itself may determine to delay, bring forward or abandon the proposal.'

- 3.2 It is therefore advised that the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School is delayed by a period of 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- 3.3 If agreed by Cabinet, stakeholders will be notified of this change in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.
- 3.4 The Council will also commence an area review of the Crickhowell catchment to identify a preferred way forward for the whole catchment. A further paper outlining the proposed way forward for the Crickhowell catchment will be brought back to a future Cabinet meeting.

### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1 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. When the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. school was first considered, it was estimated that the Council's revenue budget would benefit from a saving of around £101,000 per annum (£153,500 from formula funding plus £9,000 from catering cost savings, reduced by estimated additional transport costs of £43,700 and a potential loss of funding for pupils that may attend schools out of county of £17,700). Changes in pupil numbers across all schools affected and the phasing in of a new funding formula mean that these savings estimates will have changed.
- 4.2 When school budget allocations were issued, Llanbedr C. in W. School received a full year's funding for 2022-23 and indicative allocations through to 2024-25. After the decision was taken by the previous Cabinet to close the school on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, this was changed to provide a funding allocation for the five months to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022

only, with the balance for 2022-23 being retained within the schools delegated budget. Delaying the closure of the school to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 will mean reinstating the full year budget, requiring **£59,000** funding in 2022-23 (£79,200 formula funding and £5,300 catering funding reduced by £25,500 additional transport funding no longer required). In addition to this, it is estimated that a further **£39,500** will be required in the 2023-24 financial year for the five months to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. The potential loss of revenue support grant (RSG) funding as a result of pupils attending schools outside of the county (estimated at £17,700 per annum) will also be delayed by a year.

- 4.3 Funding is available for the £59,000 within the delegated school contingency budget, which is held centrally for unforeseen issues that arise during the year (including helping schools to manage the net costs of maternity cover, any required recalculations of formula funding and so on). Any balance at the end of the financial year is distributed to all schools. The additional £39,500 for 2023-24 will have to be factored into the formula for next financial year and funded from of the overall schools delegated budget. The primary phase formula changes and school closures were expected to redistribute funding from small schools to larger primaries and to secondary phase schools. This proposal will limit the ability to move funding as originally planned.
- 4.4 There would also be a financial impact associated with ensuring that the school building can remain operational for a further 12 months. Further information is provided in Appendix A. This would have to be funded from the Schools Major Improvements Programme 2023/24.
- 4.5 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) I note the resource implications set out above of the recommendation to delay the closure implementation by 12 months. The use of the contingency budget to reinstate funding to Llanbedr C in W School will limit the ability of the Schools Service to manage unforeseen issues that arise during the year and carries an element of risk. The allocation required for 2023-24 will be drawn from the delegated formula budget, which will affect funding for all other schools. The Schools Major Improvement Programme is already under significant pressure, redirecting these funds if required will limit the other projects that can be delivered.
- 4.6 If agreed by Cabinet, Human Resources colleagues will work closely with the school governors, management and staff to ensure that the appropriate employment processes are followed and that the staffing levels are retained at the most suitable level.

## 5. **Legal implications**

- 5.1 To follow.

## 6. **Data Protection**

6.1 N/A

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

7.1 Cllr Matt Beecham (Crickhowell with Cwmdru and Tretower):

‘Cllr. Sarah-Jane and I have always been vehemently opposed to the closure of Llanbedr and we welcome the proposed stay of execution pending a review of the Crickhowell catchment area. The majority of parents and supporters of the school are realistic to the fact that the status quo cannot be maintained, and a different method must be found to genuinely transform education within Powys. However, the proposal to close a strong local primary school remains unacceptable to the community. The community of Llanbedr would be catastrophically impacted if the school was to close. The school, along with the church, is very much integrated within the local community and does a lot to support many of the older and more vulnerable members of the Llanbedr community. The community, parents, teachers, and governors are tired by the uncertainty that has hung over the school since the announcement stating the intention to close was made public in February 2021. It is unfair to allow this uncertainty to continue. Many of the children who attend Llanbedr have joined from the other larger, local schools. Often these children have joined Llanbedr due to difficulties with their previous school setting whether that be bullying or unhappiness over the standards of education and opportunities provided. Therefore, closing Llanbedr would force many of the pupils to move school for a second, and in some cases, a third time before they leave the primary education phase. This is unacceptable. We have no way of measuring the impact that such a decision will have on their mental health and wellbeing especially off the back of the Covid pandemic.

Cllr. Sarah-Jane and I would strongly request that Cabinet end the uncertainty surrounding the school. As stated under s.53 of the 2013 Act, the local authority itself may determine to delay, bring forward or abandon the proposal. We would argue that given the change of administration, and the commitment to carry out an area catchment review, with the likely result being the clustering of the Crickhowell schools, that any existing proposal to close Llanbedr should be abandoned. This would provide a clear statement of intent and end the uncertainty to all those connected to Llanbedr Church in Wales School.’

**8. Impact Assessment**

8.1 Impact assessments were considered by Cabinet at each stage of the process. These were updated at each stage to reflect the issues raised.

**9. Recommendations**



- To delay implementation of the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School by 12 months to the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- To commence an area review of the Crickhowell catchment.
- To bring a further paper outlining the proposed way forward for the Crickhowell catchment to a future Cabinet meeting.
- A virement from delegated school contingency budget for £59,000 is approved to balance the budgets in this financial year. Noting in 2023-24 that the additional £41,000 requirement will be contained within the overall schools delegated budget.

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CABINET REPORT NEW TEMPLATE VERSION 3

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