



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

## QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

<b>Question From:</b>	County Councillor Iain McIntosh
<b>Subject:</b>	Threat of further school closures?
<b>Question To:</b>	County Councillor Pete Roberts Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

### Question:

During the previous Welsh Labour and Welsh Liberal Democrat Welsh Government Administration, rural primary schools faced closure throughout the whole of Wales, resulting in a decision being made to close three primary schools in Brecon and Radnorshire; Llanfihangel Rhydithon (Dolau), Llanbedr and Cradoc. As a previous Cabinet member, I was part of the decision making process to close Dolau and Llanbedr schools, but as has already been widely reported, I made that decision with the impression neither school would be able, or would struggle, to deliver the curriculum. Shortly after leaving Cabinet, Welsh Government confirmed both schools **would indeed** be able to deliver the curriculum, and further to that, that small rural schools actually played a part in developing the new curriculum. I therefore withdrew my support for the closure of the schools.

During the run up to the County Council elections in May, Liberal Democrat and Labour candidates, now elected and forming this Council's administrative group in coalition, either pledged to keep the primary schools open, or participated in events and activities which gave voters the impression they would keep the schools open. Powys voters therefore consider it unacceptable to hear both parties have **not** abandoned plans to close any of the schools above.

Can the Cabinet member for education now reveal how many Powys schools, both primary and secondary, face closure under the new administration? Can he please reveal any processes, criteria or benchmarking data, set by this authority, or Welsh Government, which determines how and why any school could, or should, be considered for closure? Can he also please reveal if Cabinet members recognise the protection given to rural schools within the School Organisation Code, which sets a presumption against rural school closures, and that if a rural school is to be considered for closure, it should be a separate process to an urban school closure, in order to correctly apply that protection and presumption?