

Cabinet Member for a More Prosperous Powys



County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

For further information please contact

steve.boyd@powys.gov.uk

01597 826374

NOTICE OF INTENDED PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

The Portfolio Holder has received the following report for a decision to be taken under delegated authority. The decision will be taken on **2 May 2023** (i.e. 3 clear days after the date of this note). The decision will be published on the Council's website but will not be implemented until 5 clear days after the date of publication of the decision) to comply with the call-in process set out in Rule 7.35 of the Constitution.

1.	TRANSFORMING EDUCATION PROGRAMME - MACHYNLLETH LIBRARY AND YSGOL BRO HYDDGEN NEW BUILDING DEVELOPMENT
----	--

(Pages 3 - 18)

This page is intentionally left blank

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**REPORT FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION**

by

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR PETE ROBERTS
CABINET MEMBER FOR A LEARNING POWYS**

&

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVID SELBY
CABINET MEMBER FOR A MORE PROSPEROUS POWYS****REPORT AUTHOR: Service Manager for Schools Transformation****REPORT TITLE: Transforming Education Programme – Machynlleth
Library and Ysgol Bro Hyddgen New Building
Development**

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

1.1 This report outlines the findings of a 28-day engagement relating to the possibility of relocating Machynlleth Library to the new school building at Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, planned to open in 2026.

Appendix A: Engagement Report

2 Background

2.1 On the 11th October 2022, Cabinet approved a new Strategic Outline Case/Outline Business Case for capital investment to build a new 540-place all-age school at Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, Machynlleth. The school currently operates over two sites with primary and secondary teaching taking place at separate ends of the town. The intention is to build the new school on the site of the secondary campus.

2.2 The new school building will incorporate early years facilities, areas for primary, secondary, post-16 education, a community room, an additional learning needs centre and wellbeing areas as well as external areas and a 3G pitch.

2.3 Cabinet was also keen to understand the views of the local community about the possibility of including the town library within the new school as well. If the library relocated to the school, this could provide a capital receipt in the region of £120,000. A condition assessment of the library in 2020 indicated that there were also maintenance costs of approximately £55,000.

2.4 The Council held a 28 day public engagement exercise which took place between the 1st February 2023 and the 28th February 2023.

2.5 Information about the engagement was shared with a wide range of stakeholders, and the engagement questionnaire was available on the Council's website throughout the engagement period. The engagement exercise was also publicised in the local press and on the Council's social media platforms. There were paper copies available at Machynlleth library and a return post box for the paper copies at the library.

2.6 Meetings with representatives of the Council's Library Services, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen,, Machynlleth Town Council and local members took place prior to the engagement period to ensure that they were aware of the exercise.

2.7 The Engagement Report can be found at Appendix A, but the following is a summary of the main findings:

- A total of 200 questionnaires were received, both online and in paper form.
- 89% of respondents were current library members
- 87.6% of the respondents identified as a resident living in the Machynlleth area
- In relation to the direct question: *To what extent do you agree that the Council should move Machynlleth library from its current location to the new Ysgol Bro Hyddgen Building?* A combined 89.5% answered Strongly Disagree and Disagree (see table below)

Response	Number	%
Strongly Agree	7	3.5
Agree	4	2.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	5.0
Disagree	71	35.5
Strongly Disagree	108	54.0
Total responses	200	100.0%

- The main concerns were that the current library is in the most convenient location being in the town centre and accessible. Concerns were raised about the distance from the town centre to the school.
- When asked if anything would prevent people from using the library at its suggested location; 176 people responded and cited distance from town/location 81 times as the main barrier/prevention.

3. Advice

3.1 It is advised that the school project continues without the inclusion of the town library – this will enable the project to move on to the procurement stage with a clear scope and critical path.

3.2 However, given the significant financial pressures facing the Council, it is also advised that further consideration is given to the provision of the most cost-effective library service within the town of Machynlleth.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 Maintaining the library in its current location has resource implications. There are an estimated £55,000 of backlog maintenance required to the currently library building. The running costs of the current building are currently £12,000 p.a, - this doesn't include staffing costs. By locating the library within the new school it would be net zero carbon in operation which would be not be possible in the current location without significant investment.
- 4.2 Retaining the library in its current location foregoes a potential capital receipt of £120,000 which could be used to replace borrowing in the capital programme saving approximately £6,000 per year over 50 years.
- 4.3 The project is still at an early stage and the additional cost for fitting out the library within the new school is estimated at £50,000. There would also be an impact on the current design which would also lead to additional costs around re-designing. It should be noted that Welsh Government would contribute 65% of these costs as part of the school project, leaving the council with only 35% of these costs. Any works required to the currently library would need to be funded in their entirety by the council.
- 4.4 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the report.

5 Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal: the recommendations can be accepted from a legal point of view
- 5.2 The Head of Legal Services and the 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 Cllr Michael Williams: "I totally agree with the library not going to the proposed new school. However, please carry out repairs as required. The county council is in the position it is because very little has been invested in the building since its construction".

Cllr Elwyn Vaughan: I agree with the recommendation within the report and reflects the general opinion within the local community

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

N/A

8. Recommendation

8.1 It is advised that the school project continues without the inclusion of the town library – this will enable the project to move on to the procurement stage with a clear scope and critical path.

8.2 However, given the significant financial pressures facing the Council, it is also advised that further consideration is given to the provision of the most cost-effective library service within the town of Machynlleth.

Contact Officer:	Marianne Evans
Tel:	01597 826155
Email:	marianne.evans@powys.gov.uk
Head of Service:	Emma Palmer – Head of Transformation & Communications Jenny Ashton- Head of Community Services
Corporate Director:	Lynette Lovell – Director of Education

CABINET REPORT TEMPLATE VERSION X



**Machynlleth Library and Ysgol Bro Hyddgen
New Building Development Report
February 2023**

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. SUMMARY OF THE ENGAGEMENT	4
2.1 THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD.....	4
2.2 RESPONSES RECEIVED	4
3. ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PAPER RESPONSES	5
4. MEETINGS WITH LIBRARY SERVICES.....	11
5. CONCLUSION	11
APPENDIX A – ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE/PAPER QUESTIONNAIRE.....	12

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Powys County Council has been working on plans to build a new school for Ysgol Bro Hyddgen since 2017, but the project faced an unforeseen delay due to the collapse of the main contractor, Dawnus Construction Ltd.

A new Strategic Outline Case/Outline Business Case was prepared by the council and approved by Welsh Government in January 2023 for a new 540-place all-age school at Ysgol Bro Hyddgen's secondary school site to replace the current primary and secondary school buildings.

When built, the replacement building will incorporate early years facilities, areas for primary, secondary and post-16 education, a community room, an additional learning needs centre, wellbeing areas as well as external areas and a 3G pitch.

The design could also include a space for a public library if required. This would be subject to the outcome of the public engagement.

A formal engagement exercise has taken place. This report outlines the findings of this engagement exercise.

2. SUMMARY OF THE ENGAGEMENT

2.1 THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD

Engagement on a potential change to the future location of Machynlleth Town Library took place between the 1st of February 2023 and the 28th of February 2023.

Information about the engagement was shared with a wide range of stakeholders, and the engagement questionnaire was available on the Council's website throughout the engagement period. Information about the engagement was shared in the local press and on the Council's social media platforms. There were paper copies available at Machynlleth library and a return post box for the paper copies at the library.

Meetings with Library Services, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, Machynlleth Town Council and local members School took place prior the engagement period.

2.2 RESPONSES RECEIVED

156 responses were received to the online response form. 17 respondents completed the Welsh language version of the online response form, and 139 respondents completed the English language version of the online response form.

In addition, 44 paper surveys were received. 2 paper surveys were received in Welsh, and 42 paper surveys were received in English.

A combined total of 200 responses were received as part of the engagement.

3. ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PAPER RESPONSES

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

1. Are you a Machynlleth library member? (mandatory)

Response	Number	%
Yes	178	89.0
No	17	8.5
Don't know	5	2.5
Total responses	200	100.0%

2. If you answered *No, what reasons or barriers prevent you from using Machynlleth library?

Response	Number
None/Non-Specific reason	3
Not open when I finish work	1
Don't really read books	1
Not resident in the town	1
Lack of books that interest me and I cancelled my membership because of covid. I'm yet to come back because I've been busy with work.	1
The only day i can attend is on a weds eve after work as it opens later	1
Recently moved to area and not joined yet	1
I do use the library but am not a member	1
I own the books I want to read	1
I have internet access and the library is uninspiring.	1
Family is a member	1
Outside the area	1
Lack of Welsh History books	1
I live in Dolgellau and borrow books from there	1
Total responses	16

3. How frequently do you visit Machynlleth library? (mandatory)

Response	Number	%
Daily	1	0.5
Weekly	29	14.5
Fortnightly	46	23.0
Monthly	55	27.5
Less than once a month	57	28.5
Never	12	6.0
Total responses	200	100.0%

4. Please indicate how you are responding to this questionnaire? (mandatory)

Response	Number	%
A resident living in the Machynlleth area	191	87.61
A representative of the town and community council in the area	2	0.92
A public organisation	4	1.83
A teacher, school pupil or school governor	7	3.21
A library employee	1	0.46
Other*	13	5.96
Total responses	218	100.00%

Breakdown of Other*	Number
Library user	3
Parent of a child at the school	2
Working in Machynlleth but lives in Gwynedd	1
A former member of the community	1
Social Care Support Worker	1
Lives in Corris	1
Library member	1
Visitor	1
Environmental group	1
Library volunteer	1
Total responses	13

5. What do you use Machynlleth library for?

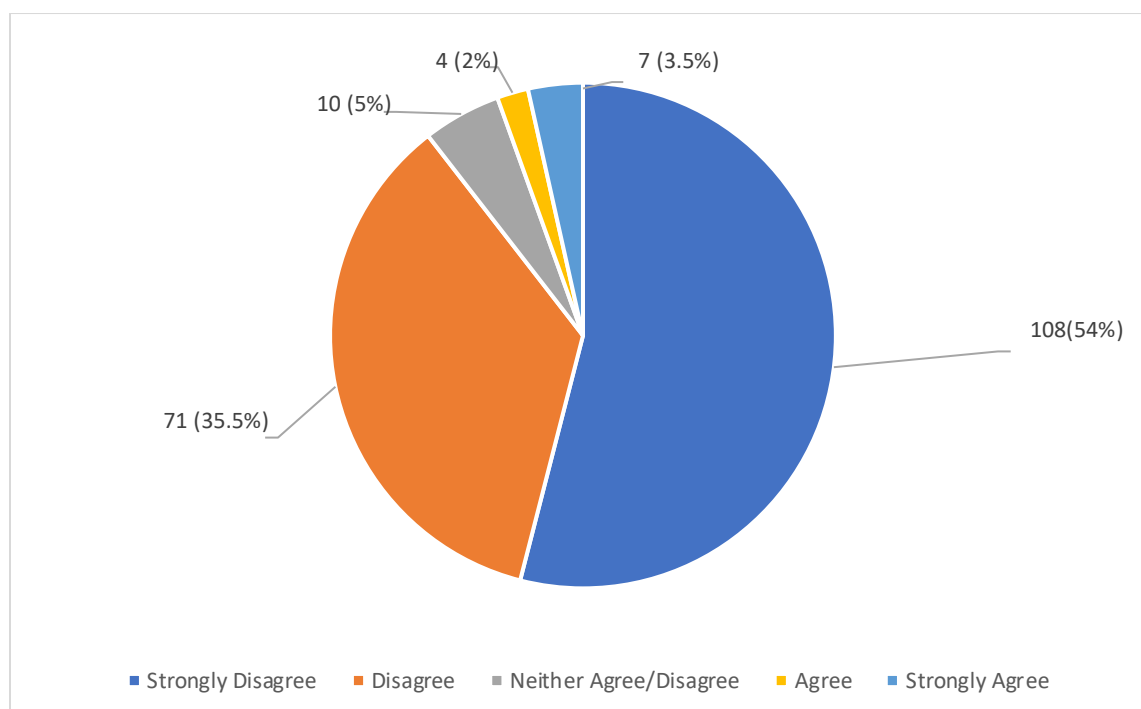
Response	Number	%
To borrow books	171	24.43
To borrow audio books	19	2.71
To use free public computers and internet	64	9.14
To use free Wi-Fi	49	7.0
To research/work/study	59	8.43
To meet people	47	6.71
To read/relax	60	8.57
To attend an adult learning course	8	1.14
School visit/Nursery Visit	5	0.71
To use printer and scanning facilities	70	10.0
Access to Council Services	36	5.14
To attend children's activities/events	43	6.14
ICT support	8	1.14
A warm Space	34	4.86
Other*	27	3.86
Total responses	700	100.0%

Breakdown of Other*	Number
Borrow children's DVD and use the children's corner/toys	3
To borrow DVDs and discuss community events with staff	1
Display posters for local events	3
Useful info about local activities	3

Public toilet	5
To have access to the 'no borrowing' book collection	1
To use the noticeboard. To enjoy activities on the green hosted by the library and community.	1
running art workshops	1
To support an Adult with learning Differences to pursue hobbies and use IT	1
Information	2
Practice Welsh with users	4
Use garden area	2
Total responses	27

6. To what extent do you agree that the Council should move Machynlleth library from its current location to the new Ysgol Bro Hyddgen building? (mandatory)

Response	Number	%
Strongly Agree	7	3.5
Agree	4	2.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	5.0
Disagree	71	35.5
Strongly Disagree	108	54.0
Total responses	200	100.0%



(All questionnaires combined)

7. Reasons/responses for answer to question 6. 190 respondents provided additional comments. The comments received are summarised below:

Response	Number
Distance from town centre of current site is ideal (i.e proximity to shops) Current location is ideal.	97
Current location is ideal (accessibility)	51
Safeguarding issues	28
The current site is an integral part of the community	26
Parking is convenient	24
Reduced footfall if moved	21
Better where it is	15
Garden space is valued at current site	13
School site not suitable	10
Better in the school with newer/warmer facilities	8
No financial sense/viable	5
Redundant building in town not a good option	5
Causes disconnect between the town	4
Need more information before making a comment	3
Concern loss of public toilet	3
No concern over location if service is preserved	3
Concerns over opening hours	3
Better use of library space in the school design to meet education needs	2
Friendly staff at current site	1
Not going to save money by moving the library	1
Security of tenancy under school involvement	1
Inevitable that library is closing	1
Total responses	325

8. Would anything prevent you from using the library at the suggested new location? 176 respondents provided additional comments. The comments received are summarised below:

Response	Number
Too far out of the town/location	80
Would feel part of the school/school site not suitable/safeguarding concerns/intimidating	26
Parking concerns	19
Discourage drop in	11
Accessibility issues	9
Noise concerns	9
Safeguarding concerns	9
Separate journey needed	8
Out of town/out of mind	4

Not as inviting	3
Would still use but be unhappy	2
Location would be difficult to find	1
Nothing	15
Total responses	196

9. Further comments. 115 respondents provided additional comments. The comments received are summarised below:

Response	Number
Current library location is good/access and parking included	18
Don't move the library	14
Should be a Q&A session and presentation as part of this consultation, more person part	10
Improve current library	9
If it's not broke don't fix it	8
This is a money saving exercise	8
Safeguarding concerns	7
Public library doesn't integrate well in schools	4
Loss of garden/play area	4
Don't understand why library needs to move	3
Moving the library is an excellent idea/support the idea	3
Loss to the town would be detrimental	3
Parking	3
School doesn't need a public library	3
Provide better MCCP accommodation	2
Public would use less	2
Bad idea	2
Listen to the residents of the area	1
Powys County Council have more pressing matters	1
No better facilities in the new build proposal	1
Hurry up and build the school	1
Bilingual library be well placed in a Welsh medium school	1
There are enough vacant buildings in Machynlleth.	1
This questionnaire is badly laid out so that in the potential answer to 6 above you need to scroll down to say "Strongly disagree". Misleading; rigged!	1
will you publish the full results of the survey as you didn't about the school ? if not why	1
Library also offers another rare public available toilets to the town centre.	1
New library offered adult education courses then that would encourage me to attend.	1
School should concentrate on a really good quality School Library for Students to access College standard facilities, Library should be part of the Town centre.	1
Ill feeling in the community about proposed library move	1
What are the future plans for the library?	1
Total responses	116

10. What best describes your gender?

Response	Number	%
Female	120	60
Male	55	27.5
Prefer not to say	20	10
Prefer to self-describe	1	0.5
Not answered	4	2.0
Total responses	200	100.0%

11. What is your age?

Response	Number	%
Under 13	1	0.5
13-19	1	0.5
20-29	5	2.5
30-44	45	22.5
45-64	83	41.5
65+	61	30.5
Not answered	4	2.0
Total responses	200	100.0%

12. Do you have a long-standing health condition or disability?

Response	Number	%
Yes	55	27.5
No	140	70.0
Not answered	5	2.5
Total responses	200	100.0%

4. MEETINGS WITH LIBRARY SERVICES

Teams meeting were held between Library services and the Transforming Education team to establish the format of the questionnaire to reflect the appropriate data required to ensure a meaningful and measurable survey. The format of the questionnaire was agreed by both parties before it was published online and made available to the public.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the majority of responses to the questionnaire indicated support for the library to remain at its current location. 179 out of 200 participants responded with Strongly Disagree or Disagree which accounted for 89.5% of the overall responses to the direct and mandatory Question 6: *To what extent do you agree that the Council should move Machynlleth library from its current location to the new Ysgol Bro Hyddgen building?*

The current location was cited as favourable, given its integral part of the town, ease of access and parking. Issues surrounding safeguarding were noted as a concern if the library did move. The results of the questionnaire reflected people's concerns over the distance of the proposed library within the new building development from the town centre and how this would discourage users.

APPENDIX A – ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE/PAPER QUESTIONNAIRE



Llyfrgell Machynlleth a Datblygiad Adeilad Newydd Ysgol Bro Hyddgen AROLWG (2).pdf



Machynlleth Library and Ysgol Bro Hyddgen New Building Development SURVEY (2) (2).pdf