

Response

1 I object strongly to Llandrindod and Builth schools being closed on 31 August 2018. I have a son in year 7 in Llandod and I cannot see how shutting the 2 schools will raise standards at all. It will only create more work for a very stressed and over worked staff. No new teachers will want to apply for jobs at either school with this hanging over them and current staff are already looking for new jobs because they are uncertain how this will effect them!! I think the whole process has been a waste of valuable money and time and it will not improve standards. It has created stress and unrest in both schools which has had a negative impact on students. The whole process has been a shambles and makes me question whether I want my children to stay in education in Powys.

2 I strongly object to Llandrindod and Builth schools being closed on 31 August 2018. I have 2 daughters in Llandrindod High School and I cannot see how shutting the 2 schools will raise standards at all. It will only create more work and stress for pupils and staff. The best teachers will leave for fear of loosing their jobs and the poor teachers will be hanging on for redundancy , any new posts which are advertised will not have quality applicants with this uncertainty hanging over them. The proposal made by Llandrindod Governors was by far the best suggestion.

The whole process has been a huge waste of money and time as well as jeopardising our children's education, how exactly has this exercise improved standards. It has created stress and unrest in both schools which has had a negative impact on students.

I find it heart breaking to think I left the school 25 years ago when children were offered at least 5 additional subjects at GCSE level- What are you doing?

Is this the legacy you want to leave from your time employed by Powys County Council?

I hope you feel ashamed, while you are fiddling about with figures and delaying the decision children's futures are being damaged and this blame is placed firmly in your hands.

The whole process as usual with PCC has been a shambles and makes me question whether I want my children to stay in education in Powys. My eldest daughter is in year 11 currently doing her GCSEs . She attended Shrewsbury Sixth Form College last week , what an eye opener? I suggest you take a few hours out of your day to see how things should be done properly. Whatever your decision it should be done by September 2017.

Pull your finger out ...STOP PLAYING WITH OUR CHILDRENS FUTURES.

3 Please accept this letter as my objection for both Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High School to be established together as a dual-sited secondary school.

I feel that the whole process has been extremely disruptive to the children of both schools, focusing their attention and worries on bureaucratic changes, rather than challenging their focus on their education. My two children are at a crucial stage of their education, Matt has just gone into Year 10 and Abi has just gone into Year 7 of Llandrindod Wells High School.

The proposed date for implementation of September 2018 will be such a time at which Matt will have just completed his GCSEs. However, I fear that the focus of this year group will be dominated by the implementations to be put in place. I desperately want for him to focus his attention on his work and his potential achievements, but am worried that this is a huge distraction at this point in his life. The implementation process will ultimately have an impact on this Year group's overall results.

My daughter, Abi will be entering Year 9 in September 2018, she will be thinking about her 'options' and what direction she will choose to go. I fear that her choices will be dominated by 'which school will house which subjects'? Locations shouldn't influence a child's ability to make decision which will affect their future. I fear that children will be spending the majority of their time travelling between campuses. This will be mentally and physically exhausting for them. How are they to achieve their best goals in this state of mind?

I fail to see how the huge spend to provide this additional transport can be seen as cost effective. Injecting this money into current resources would be more beneficial surely?

I am also worried about having one Head teacher between both campuses. I believe that over time, one campus will inevitably secure more favourable attention over the other. This will be at the detriment of the pupils.

Ultimately, as a result of this proposed implementation, we are not going to attract new Teachers to the area which means that families will not want to move here, resulting in a detrimental impact on both towns. Llandrindod Wells has always been community driven and a safe place to bring up our children. I fear that these plans are going to take all of that away in one swoop. The town, the children and the wider community will suffer.

I hope that these objections are considered at this point.

4 Please may I request more information on this proposal? The 3 pieces of paper you sent back with my child from school does not explain to parents what exactly will happen to our children's education? And where exactly they will be receiving this education?

We live in Llanwrtyd and our children attend Ysgol Dolafon. I made the choice to put my children through an English medium education because of the lack of Welsh Medium Education in Powys and the quality of how it is provided. (I am talking from experience as i was educated through the Welsh medium attending the Welsh stream at Ysgol Dolafon and then at Builth Wells High School) Ysgol Dolafon is a very bilingual School delivering both Welsh & English education. But after you forced the closure of Ysgol Dolafon Welsh stream and you now send the children to Ysgol Gymraeg Llanfair y Muallt. I can only presume that your intention is to turn Builth High School into a Welsh Medium School in the long term if you get enough numbers? But it says in your Notice that Builth is going to be a bilingual school? Which is where I get a little confused? As is it not a bilingual school already? Surely it is not viable? This was one of your main reasons for closing the Welsh stream as Ysgol Dolafon? Surely the best thing for Welsh Medium Education is a Welsh Medium School? May I suggest that you take a leaf out of Ysgol Is Coed in Newport. They have opened with 86 pupils on an existing school site in porta cabins as an independent school sharing the school site? Until there numbers increase and they find and build a new school.

Surely this would be a better option than proposing to close both schools and re open as a dual site?

May I also point out that other high schools share resources across schools but are not dual sited? (Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in Torfaen & Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni in Caerphilly).

I look forward to receiving more detailed information on this Notice.

5 We, the undersigned, strongly object to the closure of Builth Wells High School and the creation thereof of a Welsh-medium school and would prefer that BWHS maintains its current position.

Though my child is in the Welsh stream, he takes his science and numeracy lessons in English.

If the Council persists with the closures, then we would be asking the Council for a list of suitable alternative schools.

6 I would like to object to the councils decision to merge Builth and Llandod High Schools as one school on two sites.

This will be an actual cut in funding for the schools, when we should be spending more on educating our young people.

Estyn said that they do not believe this course of action will even maintain standards, let alone improve them.

It will not increase the variety of subjects that can be taught, if anything it will be less due to the cut in funding.

The management team of the school and all the teachers will have an increased work load, meaning it will be difficult to recruit new teachers when required.

It would seem to me that Powys council are trying to ensure the demise of both schools but insisting on this course of action, this will ultimately destroy the towns. Meaning we won't need councillors!

Please change your mind on this decision, it is the wrong decision for the young people of both Llandod and Builth.

7 I object to the decision by Powys County Council to merge Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools. This decision has been made in order to save money. Our children's education and future are worth more than the assumed £123,000 saving.

Estyn itself has said that it is not convinced that this proposal will even maintain standards, let alone improve them. You keep holding up Newtown and Presteigne and telling us how well this school on two sites is working, and it is true that more pupils have left that school with 5 GCSEs, but Newtown school went from "excellent" before the merger, to "satisfactory" following the merger. So pupils at Newtown have not benefited from the merger.

You are proposing to merge the best high school in Powys with the worst. That is not going to improve standards, in fact when the best teachers, who form the leadership team, have additional travel, and an additional work load. At best, they will not be able to provide the best education for our children. At worst, they will leave, or go off on sick leave with stress.

Your proposal goes against the opinion of Estyn, it goes against the opinion of your own councillors and against public opinion, as pointed out in the consultation, and the subsequent council meeting.

8 I am a parent of a current year seven pupil and a past pupil of Llandrindod HS. I have a number of huge concerns about the proposal to merge Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools. Firstly, Powys CC state the objectives of increasing standards and saving money as a two pronged argument; how can giving a school less money (£123000 per year - source PCC) and equate this with increased standards? The answer is simple - it can't. This cut in funding means that less money is available to staff the curriculum and hence reduces the options available to the students. Indeed, ESTYN stated that they are not convinced that the proposal will at least maintain standards. This is pretty damning. Both schools are currently in special measures (even though Llandrindod's results are much improved - in quartile 2 for 5xA*-C inclusive and thus will be soon out of special measures. The reason they may not get out in November is due to the timing of the next visit - two weeks prior to result validation); how are the schools to get out of special measure if they merge, as the body that makes the judgements makes such a statement. How can the standards improve if the teachers have an increased workload; especially the leadership team? How can the head of science monitor effectively what goes on in their department on a different campus to where they are based? How can the senior staff be as effective with double the workload. How can they lead effectively if they are not on campus for half the time? When has an absent leader be a successful one? When the workloads increase, what happens to the staff? Many will look to move elsewhere. Who will be successful in finding new positions in other schools? - the better quality staff. There will be a brain drain away from the school, and this will happen quickly. The schools struggle to put specialists in front of classes due to a dearth of teachers in the area. Standards will plummet. It is ill thought out, poorly planned and is wrong for the two towns and the learners in our care. How do I know? I have worked in Llandrindod HS in middle and senior leadership positions for the last twenty years. I have two daughters who are in the school (or have been through the school). Less money, more workload for the staff and a separated school is not the way forward for our kids (certainly not my kids!). I am appalled that nine individuals can ignore the wishes of so many (including the rest of the council); and I remain hopeful that the cabinet can see the error of it's ways.

9 I was recently informed of the statutory notice to close Llandrindod High School and Builth Wells High School, and to open a new school operating across the two existing sites. This idea is supposedly the result of the consultation that the council held, although I would argue that there was overwhelming support to leave the schools as they are. The plan that the council has proposed may seem like a sensible decision at first, however, when analysed closer, it has many flaws, which is why I find it appalling that Powys County Council would go ahead with this plan.

The major issue with the plan is that it would reduce the school budget at Llandrindod High School alone by at least £128,000, which places an unacceptably high strain on teachers, resources and pupils. Not only could this lead to redundancy (even though Llandrindod High School already has a shortage of qualified teachers) and reduction of access to vital resources for pupils and staff at school, but it would also increase the workload of existing teachers and reduce standards at the school due to the aforementioned issues (despite the Council's argument that this plan would raise standards). These measures would drastically affect all pupils at both schools, which amounts to a total of roughly 1,100 young people across both sites.

The secondary impacts that the lack of high-quality education in Llandrindod and Builth can have is far-reaching, including reduction in house prices, employment demographics, small and large business investments in the area and health care.

Another issue with the proposal set out by the Council is that Estyn, the authority responsible for inspecting schools in Wales, is not convinced that "the main proposal will at least maintain standards", further consolidating the argument that the proposal will lower standards at the school. Also, despite having two sites, a lack of teachers due to significantly decreased funding will lead to less subjects being offered at AS and A2 Level, as well as at GCSE, at both schools – in contrast to the Council's opinion that the new school would be able to offer more subjects.

As a sixth-form student at Llandrindod High School, I feel that this is an unacceptable move by Powys County Council. I therefore urge the Council to drop the proposal, increase funding for both Schools and to leave them operating as two separate schools.

10 I write to express my total and utter OBJECTION to the absurd and detrimental proposals.

You have 25% of schools in Powys in SPECIAL MEASURES, and you seem intent on creating more Educational issues by CLAIMING to be making savings!!!

1: The proposal is a cut in funding, NOT making savings!!!

The so-called 'Saving money should NEVER be brought into this decision. This proposal is all about A CUT IN FUNDING, to schools already struggling with the budgets they currently have, so you want to give them LESS!!!

2: Estyn stated THEY ARE NOT CONVINCED "the proposal will at least maintain standards"!!!

You have 25% of schools in Powys in SPECIAL MEASURES!!! Estyn are telling you clearly that this proposal will not even maintain standards to the schools...WHAT are you not understanding about the standards you will force upon our young people??? YOU are setting them up to FAIL!!!

3: It will not improve our ability to increase the number of subjects taught, so what gain is there here???

4: Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the Leadership Team and Heads of Subjects.

This will most definitely lead to permanent staff members being off on the sick due to illness/stress, which in turn will increase the costs to the school to bring in supply teachers.

I know a child who had THREE supply teachers in ONE DAY last week. How are the children supposed to gain trust in the teachers, IF they are constantly being given supply teachers???

5: I would also like to know what you whether you will still be setting aside the £17million to use for your 50% share in the costs to build a new 'super school' when the budget is set, baring in mind you vehemently deny that there are any underlying plans to create this new 'super school' in the future?

6: If you look at the statistics, Llandrindod High School has come top in the County, so why are you insisting on CUTTING THEIR FUNDING???. Or should I say, in your words; making savings! Then there's Built Wells High School, coming 12th out of 12!!! WHAT are you doing to the Educational future of our young people?

"Savings" in Education will only decrease standards, meaning that the cost in the future will increase, due to the children not achieving during school years. It is simple to see, for all but YOU and the MEMBERS who have allowed this to happen.

I find it absurd to think that YOU could even allow this preposterous decision to have got this far. There should be a vote of NO CONFIDENCE in YOU!

11 I object to Powys cabinet issuing a statutory notice to close Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High Schools and open a new school on two sites.

I wish that Powys County Council will reconsider its decisions and plans in order to save Llandrindod High School from this merger and the resultant cut in funding.

I do not believe that Powys CC has secured a viable new site for a new super school in Builth Wells, I do not believe it is healthy for children as young as 11 to be travelling to school long distances by bus at the early peak commuter times for workers in Powys as it is dangerous, kids are vulnerable waiting for school bus and it adds traffic to the roads, I do not believe that you will find any cost savings and in fact the investment to build a new school is huge that could be better spent improving what we already have and securing employment of dedicated teaching staff that want to live and work in Llandrindod Wells rather than drive out an entire profession from the town.

Schools are important to Parents and the Community/County as a whole, without independent Town High Schools being run as they have done successfully for years the future is more uncertain than they would be as a merger.

If parents cannot be given confidence in Powys CC decision making and Education Policy they may well decide not to move into Llandrindod Wells Town at all and those Parents like myself living in Llandrindod Wells already may well decide that their children's educational future is disadvantaged here in Llandrindod Wells due to the actions of Powys CC and decide to relocate and move into England instead. The bigger picture is that only the unemployed and elderly will remain living in Llandrindod Wells as soon as the next 10 years and that creates its own social and economic problems that already exist here in Llandrindod Wells due to its remote location.

I trust that you will give my objection your full consideration and look forward to hearing from you shortly.

12 Please accept this email as a Objection to your proposed decisions on builth and Llandrindod Wells High schools.

13 As a resident of Llandrindod I wish to register my objection to this undemocratic decision for the following reasons:

1. The proposal is a cut of funding
2. Estyn are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards"
3. It will not improve our ability to increase the number of subjects taught
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team

14 See Folder

15 Following the Powys Council decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools and reopen them under one umbrella of one school with one management team, one team of governors may seem like a good plan but when we scratch beneath the surface they are still planning on reducing the schools budget initially by £128,000 at Llandrindod alone, increasing workloads for existing teachers, the threat of redundancy for others, reduction in resources and we feel standards WILL NOT be improved by the Council's proposals.

This will affect BOTH schools and ALL pupils of Llandrindod and Builth schools.

This will effect house prices, and the inability to sell as we ourselves have already found, employment, demographics, health care services, small businesses, large businesses, personal disposable income - the list is endless.....

The main points we object to are:-

1. The proposal is a cut of funding
2. Estyn are by no means convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards"
3. It will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team and less time due to travelling.

Please get the Council to rethink the proposals.

16 I refer to the above matter.

My reasons for objecting the proposal of the 'new' school plans are as follows;

1. The proposal will result in a big cut of funding
2. Estyn are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards"
3. It will not improve or increase the number of subjects taught
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team
5. The needs of the children will not be the schools priority but funding and targets will be.
6. Children will evidently 'slip through the net' with large amount of pupils across a larger campus. Children that need more attention and extra care are less likely to be on the Teachers radar.
7. With two large campus's to maintain regularly, I predict that they will get neglected as maintenance and repairs will take a 'back seat' and therefore the buildings will deteriorate. The lack of funding across the two sites will also contribute to this.
8. This proposal has not provided me with any evidence that the quality of education will improve. This should be the main focus.

17 As number 13 - Standard Response

18 As number 13 - Standard Response

19 As number 13 - Standard Response

20 As number 13 - Standard Response

21 See Folder

22 As number 13 - Standard Response

23 I write to you with great concerns of the above proposed closure and re-opening of both Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High Schools.

Our health and Education are the pillars of what our community stands on and for, I attended Primary and Secondary schools in Llandrindod from 1977 to 1988 which began to carve my ethos towards work for the career I have now. Many of my colleagues have left Llandrindod and have successfully pursued careers across the UK and beyond. Furthermore many of the pupils that attended Powys' schools have gone on to better brighter futures. The proposal for Llandrindod and Builth Schools is no less than a cut in funding, such funding will have a dramatic effect on the attendance of both schools affecting the performance of both schools. Teachers and the leadership team will be pushed to the brink due to dramatically increased workloads.

I, the education inspectorate and many others are well aware that such cuts will not maintain standards and will have the reverse effect. It is safe to say that if this proposal goes ahead the standard of education and the quality of jobs that pupils gain as a result will be affected. I ask you to question what positive outcome can this proposal have for the next generation? If it were your children attending either schools would you be happy with the above proposal? I think your answer would be the same as mine – No.

It is quite simple that such a proposal where funding is reduced will not improve output, results, or the quality of education, the result of such cuts will be by far the opposite.

As a tax payer I'd rather pay more Tax to guarantee a high standard of Healthcare and Education, no hard working man or woman would want to see their community affected by cuts.

Is Powys County Council hoping that class sizes will drop due to the lack of performance in both schools so more funding can be cut? PCC's track record in recent proposed cuts in Day Centre's, Primary Schools and now High Schools is an absolute sham!

Please PCC do not let this proposal go through as it will have a devastating effect on the education of hundreds of shining potential stars that the schools have already nurtured into society

24 As number 13 - Standard Response

25 I am writing to you concerning Powys County Council's decision on the future of Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools. I attended Llandrindod High School between 2008 and 2015 and thoroughly enjoyed my time there. The school helped me to achieve good grades in both my GCSE's and A-Levels.

One of the issues that have been raised include the fact that Estyn are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards". I feel this is an understatement and I do not believe that this decision has any benefits in improving the standard of teaching it will just allow you to be able to relabel the schools as 'new' and reset the status of them. This is just a quick fix option that will not benefit the students.

The decision is supposedly meant to increase the number of subjects taught in the school but this will not be the case as there will be the same number of students to be taught. The teachers will also have an increased workload following this decision having to initially travel in between the two sites. Teachers' workloads have already increased over recent years and they are becoming burnt out which means that another increase in workload will only have a negative affect on their teaching ability and so will reduce the standard of teaching. Leadership teams are comprised of some of the best teachers in both schools. Reducing the size of this leadership team will only encourage some of the best teachers in the area to leave and their experience and knowledge will therefore be lost.

There is already a struggle in these isolated rural towns to employ professionals in many different sectors. People such as Doctors, Nurses, Rectors, Teachers, etc are already hard to employ and removing a school from either town will only reduce the appeal of moving and living in the area. This decision will have a negative affect on the both towns and the area and therefore I hope you will reconsider this decision.

26 As number 13 - Standard Response

27 As number 13 - Standard Response

28 As number 13 - Standard Response

29 We are writing to lodge our objection to the closure of Llandrindod High School and to establish a new dual-sited bilingual school. As grandparents of 2 grandchildren attending LI/High one of whom is taking his mock GCSE next year we feel that the feelings of the students and community have been ignored, majority of CC voted against this proposal and the democratic vote was ignored by these 10 independant cabinet members who made this decision, PCC is known as a democratic council, this was ignored by the cabinet (as CC made a democratic vote) why were the other 2 High Schools up for the closure were saved at the last minute, this was very unfair by these independant cabinet members.

30 I am currently studying at Llandrindod High School in the lower sixth. The school is in excellent condition and the standard of teaching remains very high despite the negative reviews from Estyn. I understand that money needs to be saved, and that this is an area that does need improvement, but I do not agree with the proposal to close both Llandrindod and Builth high schools. My objection is on the basis that:

1) The proposal will effectively kill the life in Llandrindod Wells as I understand that the long term plan is to build a new school on a premises just outside Builth. The town relies on its sense of community that the school provides and incoming families will be put off by the lack of school leading to a smaller population and the closure of more shops and services which already struggle to remain open. The town takes great pride in the school and its students.

2) Estyn are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards." This shows that the current proposal will fail to maintain standards, let alone improve them which is the aim of the proposal.

3) The proposal will not allow either high school to increase the number of subjects on offer which is also a goal of the proposal. I agree that the schools are unable to offer enough subjects but this is not the right way in which more subjects can be offered.

4) Teachers will have an improved workload, especially the leadership team. Teachers already have a large workload in comparison to their pay and in recent years have the added stress of dealing with Estyn inspections which seem to give no positive feedback and just make the already stressful life of a teacher even worse. How does the area expect to attract more teachers of a better standard if they will be forced to travel back and forth between two sites. The leadership team will have to stretch across both sites which would hugely increase their workload.

I hope you consider my arguments and will take the opinion of the public into account before making any cemented decisions on the proposal because it would be disastrous for both the high schools of Llandrindod and Builth but also the communities.

31 As number 13 - Standard Response

32 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth Wells High schools and merge and reopen them as one school on two sites. I object on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is a cut in funding of apparently £128,000 initially at Llandrindod alone.

I attended the council meeting back in the spring when Cllr Avril York insisted (and expected us to believe??!!) that this proposal was nothing to do with saving money but all to do with improving the standard of education.

2. Estyn are not convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards".

3. I could agree with merging the sixth forms if this resulted in more "A" level subjects being available but there seems to be no guarantee that this would be the case.

I am glad that the proposal to build one brand new school on a new site has been shelved as I would have considered that an awful waste of money.

33 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Builth and Llandrindod High Schools, to be merged and re-opened as one school on two sites. I object on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is a cut in funding
2. Estyn are not convinced the proposal will at least maintain standards
3. It will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team.
5. Powys can not expect the communities to accept a proposal when we have no details of what it will look like, what it will mean for our children.
6. Welshpool High school had a similar merge with Llanfair Caereinion, that did not work, if this happens here that will waste further money

Powys County Council need to lobby the Welsh Government to request the further funding that we need in Powys, we should have parity.

34 I have lived in the area for over 25 years and have been very happy with the education all four of our children have received in Llandrindod High School, indeed our youngest is currently in year 12. I am very disappointed and dismayed with the plans you have made to close the High Schools in Llandrindod and Builth Wells and reopen them under one leadership team. The next step would be relocating them in a newly built school, allegedly close to Builth. This would be catastrophic for Llandrindod and would result in even more difficulty attracting people to the area to work. We have experienced tremendous problems attracting medics and nurses to move here, partly because there are limited career opportunities for spouses, and a town without a High School will make things far, far worse. On top of closing shops in Middleton Street, removing the High School would make us even more like a ghost town which is surely not what you would choose for the town where the County Council is based.

Going back to the original plan of reopening the two schools on their current sites under a shared leadership team, I am very concerned at the extra pressure this would put the teaching staff under as they battle to manage teaching pupils on two different sites. The extra time required in doing this would take teachers out of the classroom, particularly the leadership team so our children will lose out on benefitting from their longer experience of teaching. I sadly already see increased numbers of teachers needing support, counselling, medication and time off work in my role as a GP and this will undoubtedly increase if your plans proceed. How this will improve our young people's standard of teaching escapes me. Indeed, Estyn themselves recognise the progress being made by each High School but are not convinced the proposal will even maintain the current standards.

One of the reasons given for merging the two schools was to improve the choice of subjects available in the schools but this in fact will not be the case. Also any alleged saving of money will be swallowed up and overtaken very quickly by paying for a new school to be built (and the interest on any loans you will need to take out) and also on the colossal transport issues for moving pupils to a school which is no longer based in the community where many live, and is even further away for those who already have to commute in from villages and farms out of town. Truancy will inevitably increase and the deprived families in Llandrindod who already struggle to nurture children to fulfil their potential, will suffer even more.

The whole proposal if carried out will result in a cut of funding to our children's education which will impact a whole generation negatively. All the time this whole merger and threat of school closure is being discussed, the morale of the students and teachers is in decline and replacement of any that retire or leave is increasingly unsuccessful.

I urge you all to listen to your communities, reconsider this disastrous decision and give our towns a chance to provide a decent education to our younger generation.

35 I write to strongly object to the proposal to close Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High School in August 2018 and re-open as one school, over two sites in September 2018. I do not believe that this proposal is in the best interests of the pupils; staff and both towns.

The plans should be visionary and transformational. They are neither. What a wasted opportunity.

What concerns me the most is that the views of the citizens of both towns; the company that conducted the consultation process; the majority of the County Councillors and, most crucially, of Estyn have been utterly ignored and swept aside by the minority that makes up the Cabinet.

Estyn is our inspectorate of Schools. Their vision is to be recognised, through the expertise of their staff, as an AUTHORATIVE voice on education and training in Wales. They have stated that they are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards" in the two schools. This means that Estyn feel this proposal will decrease the standard of education that my child and her peers will receive. This means that the Cabinet are openly and deliberately agreeing to reduce the quality of education that our young people receive. It is shameful. My daughter deserves so much better.

Llandrindod High School was graded by "Wales online" as top of the league tables this year. The school is going from strength to strength as it comes out of special measures and I wish for this to continue.

In the scheme of things the minimal savings this will make will therefore decrease the standards of education; increase pressure and stress on an already struggling staff body (where is your duty of care to them?); decrease staff motivation; potentially increase indiscipline within the pupil body and will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects being taught.

I believe this proposal is the first step to closing both schools and opening one new school somewhere in the vicinity of Builth Wells. Leaving both towns without a High School. Llandrindod Wells will become a ghost town. What business would come to a County town with no High School? Who would move here with children or to start a family when there is no High School? This has such a wide impact on the future of the towns and of Powys that I urge you to reconsider your decision and listen to what you are being advised.

36 I am a Year 7 Pupil at Llandrindod High School. I am writing to object to the proposals to close MY school and Builth Wells High School and reopen them as one school over two sites.

Estyn have said that they are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards". This means that you are openly proposing to decrease the quality of education that I and my friends are to receive. How dare you do this to us? I believe that we deserve so much better.

I am worried about the extra pressure and stress these proposals will put on my teachers. They do such a good job and make our lessons interesting. These proposals will mean that we as pupils will face more teacher absences, meaning cover teachers who do not understand the subject properly and do not follow the curriculum properly. This will decrease the standard of our education. How can Heads of Year and Subjects be expected to give 100% to their pupils if they are split over two sites; stressed and tired? I am worried that the standards of behaviour will fall and the school will be unruly which will decrease the quality of my education.

Please LISTEN and reconsider your plans

37 As number 13 - Standard Response

38 We are writing to register our objection to the short- sighted proposal to merge Llandrindod and Builth High Schools. The proposal is clearly based on the desire to reduce funding and not in order to raise standards and improve the quality of education for the young people in both towns. Estyn have remarked that there is no evidence to suggest that "the proposal will at least maintain standards."

The proposal will increase the workload of teachers, especially those in the leadership team ,at a time when across the country it is acknowledged that the workload needs to be reduced ,in order for teachers to perform at their best.

We strongly urge you to rethink and NOT to implement the continued cuts to services resulting in a poorer education for the young people of Powys, who deserve better.

39 As number 13 - Standard Response

40 My daughter will be starting at Llandrindod High School in September 2018, and I am also the owner of a small business that employs 15 local people, and it is with this concern that write to you about the closure of Llandrindod High School and subsequent merger with Builth High School. I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools, and to merge and re-open as one school on two sites. I object on the following grounds:

The proposal is a cut in funding for both schools.

Estyn are not convinced the proposal will at least maintain current standards.

It will not improve our ability to increase the number of subjects taught, with special concern with the already poor provision of science subjects at GSCE and A-level currently at Llandrindod Wells High School.

Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team, which will lead to a drop in standards.

I cannot see any benefit in this merger for either Llandrindod Wells or Builth Wells High School, other than cost cutting for Powys County Council.

I fear for the future for both of my children's high school education and hope that this retrograde step will not be taken.

41 I am writing to object to the proposal of the closure of Llandrindod Wells High School and to establish a new dual sited bilingual school on the current sites of both schools from Sept 1st 2018 the cabinet decision.

1 to go forward with this proposal is a cut in funding

2 Estyn are not convinced the proposal will at least maintain standards

3 It will not improve ability to increase the number of subjects taught

4 Teachers will have an increase workload especially the leadership team

5 This proposal will have a devastated effect on the town and also the pupils attending Llandrindod High School

42 As number 13 - Standard Response

43 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools, merge them and reopen as one on two sites with the intentions to later close Llandrindod.

I am currently studying A Levels at Llandrindod High School, and although this will not directly affect my education, it will have a detrimental impact to the town and will impact my long-term future here.

I object on the following grounds:

1. Llandrindod has the only high school in Radnorshire, it is the county town of Powys with a population of over 5300 people.
2. Builth has less than half that population at 2,500. If one school does have to close, how can it possibly make sense for that to be the larger catchment area?
3. By closing the larger school, there will be increased transport costs and traffic on roads. It will lengthen the school day for the pupils and reduce attendance at after school activities, a critical part of their development and the community.
4. Families are very likely to be put off staying or moving to the area with no High School here and this will adversely impact current and future businesses, including the council itself.
5. Llandrindod serves as the seat of Powys County Council and is thus the administrative centre of Powys, how will having no high school enable you as the council to recruit people to work?
6. Estyn have clearly stated that they are not convinced 'the proposal will at least maintain standards', let alone improve them. As the education and training inspectorate for Wales, their view should be critical to this decision.
7. It will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught
8. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team
9. This is simply a short-term cost cutting exercise which will cause long term pain.
10. It does not have the needs, best interests or wishes of real people at heart.

I really don't think you are listening to any opinions from the actual people of the town or of ESTYN and I personally feel it is absolutely disgusting how you have still decided to go ahead with the plans. You need to understand that decisions like this don't just impact short term and the local area, they will affect peoples' decisions on continuing to live and bring up families in mid Wales.

I sincerely hope you actually take time to read this email and truly HEAR what is being said.

44 As number 13 - Standard Response

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78 Following the Powys Council decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools and reopen them under one umbrella of one school with one management team, one team of governors may seem like a good plan but when we scratch beneath the surface they are still planning on reducing the schools budget initially by £128,000 at Llandrindod alone, increasing workloads for existing teachers, the threat of redundancy for others, reduction in resources and we feel standards WILL NOT be improved by the Council's proposals.

This will affect BOTH schools and ALL pupils of Llandrindod and Builth schools.

This will effect house prices, and the inability to sell as we ourselves have already found, employment, demographics, health care services, small businesses, large businesses, personal disposable income - the list is endless.....

The main points we object to are:-

1. The proposal is a cut of funding
2. Estyn are by no means convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards"
3. It will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team and less time due to travelling.

Please get the Council to rethink the proposals.

79 I am writing this e-mail to object to the recent decision by the Cabinet of Powys County Council to close Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools in July 2018 and reopen them as one school on two sites in September 2018. As a former teacher at Llandrindod High School as well as the parent of three pupils who attended the high school and have gone on to degree courses and successful careers, I have grave concerns about the Cabinet's decision and its likely effect on the future education of pupils in the Llandrindod and Builth catchment areas, to say nothing of its likely impact on the town of Llandrindod Wells and its future. I should imagine that you have become very familiar with these objections by now, but the first reason that this proposal seems misguided to me is that it seems to be centred around saving money, rather than improving the educational provision for pupils in the area, as the Cabinet have always claimed. In effect the proposal amounts to a reduction in funding per pupil, so it is difficult to see how this can possibly improve educational provision, let alone the "world class education" that the Cabinet have vaunted. In actual fact the amount of money that the proposal will save is negligible not only in terms of the financial advantage to Powys County Council but also in comparison with the damage that it will cause to children's education, as I shall explain below.

My second objection is that teachers, particularly those in middle and senior management positions, will face a vastly increased workload, to say nothing of the difficulties of trying to administrate two campuses. Those who have invested much in time and energy to their work as Heads of Departments and Tear Team Leaders will have to reapply for their own jobs, and some will not be successful. Rather than increasing efficiency, this proposal is guaranteed to make life much more difficult for teachers, with its inevitable knock-on effect on the education that Powys children receive, which must be our gravest concern.

The cabinet have suggested in the past that there needs to be wider range of subjects available to pupils, both at GCSE and at 'A' Level. In the past the high schools have done their best to work together to provide as wide a range as possible for pupils, particularly with 'A' level provision. I cannot see how the Cabinet's proposal will do anything to increase the number of subjects available; indeed, it may well have exactly the opposite effect.

My greatest objection, however, is the cavalier manner in which the Cabinet has completely ignored the advice given by ESTYN in response to their proposal. They have stated clearly that there is no evidence that the proposal will even MAINTAIN existing standards. Essentially they are warning that this proposal will jeopardise children's future education, undoing all the hard work that Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools have invested to remedy the faults identified in their recent inspections. To simply disregard this warning displays the Cabinet's arrogance and irresponsibility in a very unflattering light.

Finally I am in no way clear why the Cabinet seems determined to pursue this proposal when it has already reversed a similar proposal to merge Brecon and Gwernyfed High Schools, presumably for similar reasons to the ones that I have enumerated above. This seems to me to be unfair to the present and future pupils of Llandrindod and Builth Wells High schools, and to their parents. I would implore the Cabinet to reconsider its decision for the good of the two communities, the teachers at both schools, the parents, but above all the pupils.

80 We are writing to object to the proposal to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools and open as one with a further intention to build a new school near and outside Builth.

All our three children attended Llandrindod High School and travelled on the Bus from our village. This proposal seems to involve lots of cars and possibly buses moving around to get children to school. Children in the north of the county particularly will have unnecessary travelling time.

Our towns are suffering enough and a closure of a school in Llandrindod would have a fundamental effect on the whole town and its businesses and employment.

Also taking the school out of the town in Builth would impact on the town in the same way and cause traffic problems in the town and on the bridge.

81 As number 13 - Standard Response

82 As number 13 - Standard Response

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84 As number 13 - Standard Response

85 See Folder

86 See Folder

87 See Folder

88 I am 15 and a pupil in Llandrindod High School

With current uncertainty hanging over the school, I looked at Shrewsbury 6th Form College last month and was very impressed.

This means I am considering travelling 3 hours on top my school day because I am so concerned that LHS is not in a position to offer me a secure education to complete my A-levels.

I feel that teachers and staff at Llandrindod High School are doing all they can to hold the school together while your ' School Modernisation Team' at Powys County Council have NO regard for us or our future.

I am being let down by Powys County Council and your processes, the damage you are doing is irreparable and you are playing with my future, I should be focused on my GCSE's not worrying where they are going to do my A levels. I feel completely disillusioned with the process and uncertainty that surrounds my school,

I am hoping to take History, English, Art and either Welsh or French at A level. My teachers for these subjects are fantastic and so supportive. Can you give me any reassurance that if I decided to stay in Llandrindod to take my A levels that I will have consistency. I am asking that if there is a change to the circumstances of the school that provision will be put in place for the students that are studying A levels and that their education is not thrown into turmoil during the second year by changes in teaching staff and location?

Please respond to this email.

89 As number 13 - Standard Response

90 As number 13 - Standard Response

5. Children with learning disabilities will be lost in the system, moreso than they are now

91 As number 13 - Standard Response

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249 I would like to record my objection to the proposal to make a new school by merging Llandrindod High School with Builth on the following grounds:-

Our children's education is not being considered... disruption caused etc. Also Estyn have concerns that standards cannot be maintained under this new proposal. They are not the only ones!

Both schools are likely to suffer if the leadership team is stretched between the two school sites. This raises issues with communication, extra travel and losing touch with one site or the other. Also the extra work that any management team will have trying to be in two places at once.

This also appears to be a first step in losing our High School! It is working extremely well at present. The pupils achievement level is above many other schools in Wales. Surely this would tell a sane person that the school is working perfectly well as it is, in the format it is... so, why change it? Surely if something is working well it should be celebrated... not closed and merged with another school! I realise that the council is trying to save money, but surely there are better ways than this!

Powys proclaims to be building stronger communities in the heart of Wales... but how can this be if our school is closed and merged with another one out of our community? The proposed savings are not significant enough to justify this change, especially as they do not consider the extra work and travel that staff must do to make this proposed scheme successful.

I do not believe this is a sound plan for the future. I do not want my son to be bussed to another town for school in the future. (I have enough fears having him travel to Llandod from our rural home!!!).

The timing of this proposal coincides with proposals to close many of our rural primary schools. I think it has been very unfair to parents of children whose primary schools have been compromised to propose compromising their High School at the same time. We parents can only realistically fight on one front at a time. After all, it is our children who will be most affected by the upheaval of this proposal (if it goes ahead). My son is due to start High school September 2017.

I ask Powys to think again before they commit to upsetting the balance of this very successful school. I am not a person who fears change, but it must be a change for the better... and I do not think this is!

250 I am writing to object to the councils decision to merge Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools in a bid to improve standards and save money.

* I understand that Llandrindod school has improved it's standards since their Estyn Inspection, and has actually come out on top in Powys according to another survey measuring other aspects and qualities of the school. Surely the upheaval for staff and pupils will not help them to continue to raise standards. Estyn are not convinced that the proposal will even maintain the present standards!

* The estimated saving of £123,000 (as mentioned at the Llandrindod public meeting) is not a good enough reason, as this would be less than one Chief Executive's salary.

Also with Machynlleth to have £20 million spent on a new through school, this is a drop in the ocean.

* The teachers, particularly the leadership team, heads of year and subjects etc, will have a hugely increased workload if they are to cover both schools equally. How can they manage their work and commitments as they would on one site, with the travelling between sites, parent events etc and provide a fair provision to every child and parent?

Eg - Newtown and John Beddoes School - their school production means that Pupils in John Beddoes will not have a chance to perform on stage as it will be in Newtown. They will only be able to take part in playing the music.

There aren't enough hours in the day to cope with the pressure, but as dedicated professionals, they will soldier on until they are unable to manage and will break under the strain. Where will the savings be then when supply teachers will need to be paid for?

* If the new school is just to have one 6th form in Builth, have the extra costs of transporting the Llandrindod students there daily been calculated amongst the savings, as well as time lost in travelling? I think not.

I urge you to reconsider your decision and take the common sense approach as if this goes ahead, it may well have a detrimental effect on the town and community of Llandrindod. Would you like to have that on your conscience?

*One last point - for decisions affecting Radnorshire and Breconshire, I feel that the councillors and officials representing those areas make the decisions, not Montgomeryshire, as it appears that the schools in the North have been mainly unaffected by the Powys cuts.

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* The estimated saving of £123,000 (as mentioned at the Llandrindod public meeting) is not a good enough reason for this proposal. Also with Machynlleth to have £20 million spent on a new through school, this is a drop in the ocean.

* The teachers, particularly the leadership team, heads of year and subjects etc, will have a hugely increased workload if they are to cover both schools equally. How can they manage their work and commitments as they would on one site, with the travelling between sites, parent events etc and provide a fair provision to every child and parent? .

There aren't enough hours in the day to cope with the pressure, but as dedicated professionals, they will soldier on until they are unable to manage and will break under the strain. Where will the savings be then when supply teachers will need to be paid for?

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252 See Folder

253 I am writing to you in order to formally voice my objections to the proposed changes to secondary provision at Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells high schools. These proposals are a massive step backwards for our local communities, how dare you mess with the future of our children?! The proposal is a cut in funding. How is this beneficial? How can it be argued that this is better for our schools?

Even Estyn are not convinced that the proposal will even at least maintain standards. This is disgraceful and this alone should deter you from making changes!! It will not improve the schools ability to increase the number of subjects taught. Sixth form provision is already a joke within Powys, with students travelling for miles just to receive an education! Now you are putting increased pressure on schools and limiting our children further.

It will not help teachers, who will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team, split across two campuses.

History will record this period of education within Powys as the darkest of times. You who support such changes are leaving behind a legacy of cuts, closures and failures. That's how you will be remembered, that is what your great grandchildren will read about you in the history books.

Why not fight?! Fight the Welsh Assembly for a better deal, Kirsty Williams WILL listen. Don't go down in history as the ones with no backbone, no vision, no care for the children of Powys. Make a difference! Make a stand, please! Listen to the people you represent, it is not complicated.

254 as number 13 - Standard response

In addition, as a retired teacher living near the school I should like to comment that I am very impressed with the behaviour and manners of the Llandrindod school pupils. They are a credit to the town and to the school and are essential to the future of Llandrindod

255 As number 13- standard response

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Our children deserve to be schooled in their home towns in schools of the highest standard. This decision will not deliver that

264 As number 13 - standard response

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296 I would like to register my objection to the decision made by the council cabinet to close Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools on 31st August 2018 and open one new school operating on the same two existing sites from 1st September 2018.

This decision has been made “to improve teaching standards” but with absolutely no evidence to back up its claim. It states the example of John Beddoes School being taken over by Newtown High School as its role model but this is an entirely different situation due to the differing sizes of schools, combined with the changing provision at Presteigne.

Both schools are currently in special measures after Estyn inspections and are having regular termly monitoring visits. This is obviously an increased stress placed on the teaching staff and time consuming trying to raise standards and come out of special measures. Estyn have said that they are not convinced this proposal will at least maintain standards. I have great difficulty understanding how the cabinet can disregard such a pertinent statement from an austere national body with such disdain.

There seems to be a lack of understanding of basic logic on behalf of the cabinet that having a school with two sites will make it possible to increase the number of subjects taught without a major movement of pupils from site to site and consequent associated transport costs. With the current proposal there will have to be three learning streams in each academic year; an english stream on both sites and a welsh stream in Builth Wells. This will involve three class groups and so using efficient class sizes of up to thirty pupils won't be possible. Whereas the proposal says more subjects will be able to be taught I would suggest it would reduce the number of subjects, which can be provided.

The teaching staff, and especially the senior leadership team, at Llandrindod are under great pressure at present. This is brought about by increased workload created from termly monitoring visits but also the pressure to provide the current curriculum. The low morale of this excellent staff is further undermined by this proposal, which creates uncertainty of future employment as well as immense difficulty in acquiring much-needed new staff to Mid Wales. Consequently this plan will massively increase the workload especially in the leadership team.

There is a reducing school population at present, although it is predicted to increase again within 10 years, and with this comes a reduction in capitation funding to schools. This proposal is a further cut to education spending in Mid Powys and I believe will lead to a fall in standards.

It is essential to keep high schools in both towns as the centre of education of learning of our young people and also to maintain a healthy mixed age population. These need to be managed locally to ensure good timely management in all areas and to improve the teaching provided our children.

The cabinet against the wishes of the council made this decision and I hope it can be reversed for the sake of the local population.

297 I am writing to you to express my wholehearted objection to the proposal to close both Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High Schools and re-open them as one school.

The whole idea of cutting funding to schools and education is entirely wrong in the first instance!! The money being talked about is a mere drop in the ocean in Powys's budget and I am sure such money could be saved elsewhere, rather than having a detrimental effect on the education of my children and the children of the other residents of both towns.

The whole concept that running one school on two sites with head teachers and heads of department being stretched between the two makes no sense! How can over worked staff and less money be better for our children's education? I thought that the key focus here is for improving our children's education not diminishing it! Estyn have themselves have reported that they are not convinced that standards will improve stating 'the proposal will at least maintain standards'. It will furthermore not improve the schools ability to increase the number of subjects on offer and further restrict our children's opportunities!

This all seems to be leading to the creation of one large school in the future, which makes no financial sense! The cost of the interest on a loan to build such a school will far exceed the money saved by keeping the current two schools separate, let alone then paying the actual loan back! On top of that there would be the additional cost of transporting all the children back and forth, the additional stress on the already busy lives of the parents who will have to deal with transporting their children further to after school activities and so on, and the detrimental effect on the town by not having a school. We will lose wages and money to the local economy and the town will also be far less appealing to people considering moving to the area. It would be a backwards step, when Llandrindod and its residents are trying and succeeding to improve the town.

298 As number 13 - standard response

299 As number 13 - standard response

Llandrindod Wells would go down hill, it not to good at this time. The park is like a wood. Do help put Llandrindod back on the map. Do not close Llandrindod Wells School "It is a good school" The best. We all would school in Llandrindod or Builth

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332 as number 13 - standard response

333 I am writing to lodge my objection to the proposed merger of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. The rationale for this is that it will raise standards and save money.

I work as an educational consultant and an additional inspector in the post-16 sector in both England and Wales. I provide advisory services to a wide range of organisations including general further education colleges, sixth form colleges, independent specialist colleges, private training and several large national charities. I have written several reports and policy papers on education for the Welsh government.

There is no widespread empirical evidence that mergers improve standards.

The proposed savings are minimal.

This area is already suffering from economic deprivation. This proposal will not do anything to attract young families to the area leading to further decline.

I already know of a GP who has decided not to relocate to this area because of the proposed school merger.

Sharing staff across two sites will lead to additional expense in their travelling expenses and the cost of busing children around the county plus add to the burden of carbon emissions.

Children and the community will be deprived of services should this proposal lead to one school on one site in the future.

There is no evidence to prove that a merger will attract specialist teachers to the area.

Children are already leaving the area to attend sixth form college in Hereford due to the proposed merger.

I would like you to provide me with hard factual evidence backed up with three year trend statistical data (such as that used on inspection) to PROVE that a merger will lead to improved outcomes and standards.

I would like you to provide me with a monetary break down of how a merger can possibly make substantial and sustainable savings.

I would like to have your word that this is not the first phase of a plan to eventually build only one school on one site (leading to the death of the town which does not get the new build)

I would like you to confirm receipt of this email and provide responses to my requests

I am prepared to use my vote in any future council elections to express my concern for this proposed merger - only voting for those who see sense in this matter

334 as number 12 - standard response

335 as number 12 - standard response

336 as number 12 - standard response

337 as number 12 - standard response

338 I think the standards were poor - Huge bullying issues which were never addressed at Builth High School and left my child with severe anxieties. Poor school. Poor teachers. In experienced teachers. Good it is closing.

339 As number 13 standard response

340 I am writing to lodge my objection to the proposed merger of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools. The rationale for this is that it will raise standards and save money.

There is no widespread empirical evidence that mergers improve standards

The proposed savings are minimal

This area is already suffering from economic deprivation. This proposal will not do anything to attract young families to the area leading to further decline.

Sharing staff across two sites will lead to additional expense in their travelling expenses

341 I am against the proposed merger for the following reasons

1 Although the school will operate on two sites this is obviously a precursor to closing one or both sites and merging the school physically into one school.

2 The idea that one super school will be better than the two we have at the moment is unproven and the same investment in the current school sites will be beneficial to the education of our children.

3 The schools have suffered due to a lack of investment, which has been a political decision taken some time ago to work towards a merger of schools

4 The idea of choice when it comes to choosing schools is important, when the schools merge our children will have no realistic choice but to go to the only school in the area, which will be in Builth

5 Schools are a positive for the local towns, people looking at moving to the area access the school provision and if there is none it could cause Llandrindod to stagnate. The town is currently going through a revival and something like this could put it back indefinitely

6 Time spent by children traveling to school should be minimized

7 Once the schools merge it will only be a matter of time until they close them and merge them physically into one school

8 Once the school in Llandrindod is closed it will never come back

A better idea in my opinion is to invest in the school separately and allow them to develop separately to allow us as parents some choice as to where our children go to school. Failing that allow us to access the money spent by Powys on our children so we can arrange for their own education.

(I've CC'd my current CC to represent my views in chamber. However I am about to move house to Hundred House)

342 Llandrindod Wells Town Council has previously put in a submission to the first consultation with regard to the closure of Llandrindod High School.

Below is the response to the current consultation prompted by the decision of Powys County Council to close both schools in August 2017 and re-open in September 2017 as one school on two sites.

Llandrindod Wells Town Council is totally opposed to this move for many reasons and below is some of the information which should be considered prior to making the final decision.

1. We understand that Estyn is not convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards." This statement in itself should ring alarm bells within Powys County Council who state that its intention is to provide the best possible standards of education for its pupils. If Estyn, governing body is not convinced that the standards will be maintained, we feel that improvement is extremely unlikely with the new model.

2. The Town Council feel that the proposal is merely a method to cut funding, however the travel costs to be incurred by parents does not seem to have been considered. Also the increased cost incurred for teachers travelling from one site to another will have a significant impact on the already stretched budget, therefore reducing the projected budget saving.

3. Llandrindod High School is an extremely good school and although it is currently in Special Measures, it is evident from recent reports that significant works have been carried out and the standard has improved greatly over the last few months. This is despite the fact that the teachers, staff and pupils are working under the threat of closure.

4. There is also a serious concern that the new model will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught in either school. The children of our town and the surrounding area deserve the right to have choices and to have a better selection of courses available to them to give them the best possible opportunities in life.

5. The Town Council is also concerned about the well being of the teaching staff with the new model; they will have increased workloads, additional travel time and more pressure placed upon their already busy schedules. The introduction of one management time will, we feel, be a disaster and the pressure of increased workloads will lead to staff absences, sickness and is likely to leave to long term sickness, this will then have an additional cost to the County Council.

6. There is an underlying feeling that this decision is cut and dried and the greater plan is to carry forward this model and then build a new school within the Bwlth Wells area, and rumours of "done deals" and an element of corruption are rife within the community. Openness and transparency is crucial within the County Council and particularly for its members and officers. Llandrindod Wells Town Council urges Powys County Council to dismiss the idea of creating one school on two sites and continue with the existing model with a High School in both towns, particularly in Llandrindod Wells which is the County town of Powys and hosts the County Council headquarters.

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376 I am against the proposed merger of Llandrindod and Builth high schools.

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3. The schools have suffered due to a lack of investment, which has been political decision taken some time ago to work towards a merger of schools
4. The idea of choice when it comes to choosing schools is important, when the schools merge our children will have no realistic choice but to go to the only school in the area, which will be in Builth
5. School are a positive for the local towns, people looking at moving to the area access the school provision and if there is non it could cause Llandrindod to stagnate. The town is currently going through a revival and something like this could put it back indefinitely
6. Time spent by children traveling to school should be minimalized
7. Once the schools merge it will only be a matter of time until they close them and merge them physically into one school
- 8 Once the school in Llandrindod is closed it will never come back.

377 I am writing to lodge my objection to the proposed merger of Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools.

The rationale for this is that it will raise standards and save money

There is no widespread empirical evidence that mergers improve standards

The proposed savings are minimal

This area is already suffering from economic deprivation. This proposal will not do anything to attract young families to the area leading to further decline

Sharing staff across two sites will lead to additional expense in their travelling expenses and the cost of busing children around the county plus add to the burden of carbon emissions

Children and the community will be deprived of services should this proposal lead to one school on one site in the future

There is no evidence to prove that a merger will attract specialist teachers to the area.

Children are already leaving the area to attend sixth form college in Hereford due to the proposed merger.

I would like you to provide me with hard factual evidence backed up with three year trend statistical data (such as that used on inspection) to PROVE that a merger will lead to improved outcomes and standards

I would like you to provide me with a monetary break down of how a merger can possibly make substantial and sustainable savings

I would like to have your word that this is not the first phase of a plan to eventually build only one school on one site (leading to the death of the town which does not get the new build)

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1706 See Folder

1707 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Builth Wells High School and to merge it with Llandrindod High School as one school on two sites. I object on these points:

1: I believe that this proposal is not about increasing the level of education but is merely a matter of money saving;

2: As I believe that the proposal is savings driven I am of the opinion that it will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught;

3: Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team;

4: There is an obvious lack of morale amongst the staff at Builth High School. I believe it is time that Powys acknowledged its role in contributing to this due to the uncertainty over the last few years.

5: I fear that if this proposal comes to fruition Builth will be forced to become a solely Welsh Medium school against the wishes of the majority of the schools catchment area;

6: Estyn are not convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards". Surely even Powys should not consider closing Builth High School when it is the 8th best school in Wales with regards to GCSE and A level Results;

7: Perhaps the local Councillors should try and listen to their electorate and I hope they remember elections are coming up.

1708 See Folder

1709 See Folder

1710 As a parent of students at Llandrindod High School I must protest in the strongest possible terms to the planned merger of these schools. Powys has stated that it aims to save money and improve standards by this merger:

There has been no evidence put forward or proposals as to how standards are to be improved. ESTYN has clearly stated that they are not convinced that the proposal will at least maintain current standards.

It will not save money! The projected cut in funding of £123,000 is insignificant on a joint budget of over £4.2 million. This “saving” will be eroded by increased transport costs and duplication of senior management in the run up to September 2018.

The whole process is creating a great deal of uncertainty for staff and students. We have already lost one fantastic teacher and more will follow. Significant numbers of year 11 are looking at out of county or private options for their sixth form. Please stop this process now and support our schools rather than undermine them. Your actions are harming the education of thousands of young people.

1711 I wish you to note my objection to the closure of Llandrindod High school.

I feel strongly that until the whole plan has been made clear to the pupils and the public there is insufficient evidence upon which to base the hoped for improvements in the standards in education.

The expectation that both schools will be expected to manage with less budget and less senior managers leaves great uncertainty on the way ahead.

The forward planning for the 6th Form provision is a crucial element for our current and future pupils. Until this is open and clear many pupils are unable to choose their options and feel engaged in planning their future education within Powys. Given the length of time this matter has been under discussion it is understandable that many youngsters feel disadvantaged and let down by the education offered to them by Powys County Council.

The lack of possible other options do not seem to have been considered; for example the possible educational benefits for pupils by developing through schools in both towns linking their high school with the main feeder primary schools.

Is there a plan to develop a reliance upon other establishments such as Hereford 6th form College to provide subjects which are not available within Powys, or is there a plan to develop resources to meet the needs of all our pupils?

Given the proximity of Rhayader children to Llanidloes High School, what is the plan going ahead for this High School, will it offer the same provision or offer different opportunities.

It may be that some of these options have been considered but not shared this is unfortunate.

- 1712 1. Two schools in special measures will be better served by two management teams that can adequately meet each community's distinct education requirements.
2. The proposal is a cut in funding. Our children and families here in Powys already have less access to services than more populated areas. At the very least the Council should provide children with an education in their own community in order to successfully access extra curricular activities to bridge this gap.
3. It will not improve the schools ability to increase the number of subjects taught. Specialist teachers that excel in their field will not be attracted to Powys whilst the council facilitate a shutdown of services in the area. Lack of services, job insecurity and an inability to commute elsewhere are not attractive to career professionals.
4. Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team. Staff morale is already at an all time low due to this instability. Powys County Council and Schools Service need to open up constructive dialogue with the Schools that support good learning environments. Powys County Council needs to consider that stability could potentially offer more than transformation. The council needs to hone its people management skills to inspire positive change instead of forcing our teachers to undergo the humiliation of reapplying for their jobs.
5. The council need to put the children's needs first and this involves listening and representing all the families that have objected to this merger.

I would like a receipt for my response,notification of when the objection report will be available and the objection meeting.

1713 See Folder

1714 See Folder

1715 See Folder

1716 I am writing to object to the Statutory Notice to close Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools and to open a new dual-sited school in September 2018. I understand Powys County Council needs to make savings, but the proposed changes will not save very much at all and there is no guarantee that these minimal savings will result in even the maintenance of current standards.

I am particularly concerned about:

- The confusing consultation process and changes to the proposal
- The lack of consideration of standards or evidence for improved standards.

Estyn's response cites:

- i. Lack of consideration of how the reorganisation would have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils at any key stage
 - ii. No evidence to demonstrate how the proposed reorganisation would lead to improved standards of teaching, or how these potential benefits would link to improved outcomes for pupils
 - iii. No consideration of the impact that the reduction in overall funding to a single school will have on the school's ability to deliver its curriculum
 - iiii. No clarity about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management
- Lack of information and clarity on how Welsh Medium education will be developed or at least maintained, including:
 - i. The uncertainty around the future of Welsh Medium provision in Brecon and how that impacts the proposed merger here
 - ii. A much smaller percentage of Welsh Medium learners resulting in more dilution of the Welsh language
 - iii. The potential impact of the merger on the distribution, recruitment and retention of Welsh Medium teachers and leaders

I believe the two schools could work together to deliver sixth form provision. This would mean a wider choice of subjects, moving nearer the Learning and Skills Measure, and less travelling between many schools. It would help to stop the loss of so many post 16 pupils to Hereford College. I also believe that consideration should be given to delivering Welsh Medium on one site and English Medium on the other, ideally as two separate schools, one being a category 2A Welsh Medium Secondary School. Such a school would enhance provision and encourage take up of Welsh Medium education. It would also provide parity with the proposed category 2A school in North Powys.

1717 This proposed merger should not go ahead. Both schools are important to both communities. Whilst I no longer live in Builth Wells I had three children who went to this truly wonderful school. A merger is unacceptable.

1718 I don't agree with the merger, too many miles traveled by too many children.

1719 Standard response

1720 As a young person currently revising for my GCSEs at Builth Wells High School, I would like to state (as I am sure you will have anticipated) that I oppose the proposed merging of the Llandrindod and Builth high schools.

There will be many people having contacted you with countless good reasons as to why they share my beliefs, however, I think it would be appropriate to regurgitate some tired reasoning in order to prevent you from assuming my opinion is formed from some sort of childish loyalty. I hope you enjoy once more reading that:

- The financial benefits hypothesized are negligible, and have been reducing, which is a sure sign that you the council have pretty much no idea what you're doing.
- There is no evidence that it will improve standards. None.
- Estyn have expressed doubts about it, and seeing as most schools seem to care more about their opinion than the actual well being and education of their pupils, we might as well trust them.
- "The proposer does not consider the impact that the reduction in overall funding to a single school will have on the school's ability to deliver its curriculum."
- "The proposer identifies appropriately that the transition to the new school will provide substantial additional workload for the shadowing governing body and appointed leadership team, and how the council aims to support this process. However, the proposer is less clear about how the proposal will result in improvements in the quality of leadership and management once the new school is established."
- Do we really want department heads running around between two schools constantly? Do we? Truly? Will that be anything short of a nightmare?
- I'm afraid we really do not need additional funding cuts!
- The cost of introducing a new uniform may not be much, but it's honestly a lot of bother for what is very little reason.
- Shamelessly I repeat myself: it's honestly a lot of bother for what is very little reason.

So I'm probably the thousandth person to write to you about this and I am not sure if this will even be read. I am aware that this is largely a hopeless pursuit, but I am expressing my opinion anyway, because I am a narcissist.

1721 Standard response

5. Until the schools show they are capable of leaving special measures I do not see how we can move forward

1722 I am writing to object to the proposed merger of Llandrindod and Builth High Schools. I am somewhat disappointed that you have allowed things to progress this far, but given the poor quality of the biased and mistake-riddled questionnaire that was used as part of the “consultation” process, unfortunately I am not surprised.

To me, it is quite clear that the ineptitude of Powys officials has allowed yourself, and the cabinet, to be hoodwinked into thinking the proposed merger will be a success. Have you any evidence for this? During the consultation process, I asked Ian Roberts directly what differences my 9-year-old would be able to see in two year’s time – Ian Roberts was not able to answer the question. I asked him how the funding of transport was to be organised – he was not able to answer the question. I asked him on what site individual subjects would be taught - he told me that this would be decided by the governing body, i.e. he didn’t know and was hoping that someone else could decide for him!

For a saving of a few thousand pounds, that will be swallowed up by the Headteacher’s pay that has not been budgeted for and the expenses of the actual merger, (new identity, new paperwork, new signage, etc.), never mind the damage done to the communities themselves and the heartache and stress that it has caused and is still causing, Powys County Council is proposing this disaster. The staff themselves at the schools are already having to deal with the difficulties the uncertainty is causing and the pupils are suffering as neither school can plan ahead. It is indeed laughable that Powys are asking for budget proposals for the next three years - does the accounting dept not realise there is a proposal to merge the schools?! Yet again, it shows the lack of joined up thinking that exists at PCC and you, as chief executive, must take responsibility for that.

It will take a strong person to go against these proposals, Mr Patterson, and I hope that person is you. I trust that you have taken the time to actually look at the proposals and to look at the effects that they will cause. Like you, I have a child that will be directly affected by this proposal. If it was to make the education better and to provide an improved service, I would welcome it with open arms and applaud PCC for their forward-thinking. However, this proposal is not about improving education – it is about saving money. Unfortunately, to every one apart from PCC, it is clear that it will not save money. Transport costs, location of subjects, location of sixth form, potential movement of staff – none of these have been considered nor budgeted for. Everyone knows that transport of pupils is a huge cost and yet potential movement between sites has not been considered. Builth have five one hour lessons per day, Llandrindod have six fifty minute lessons – how is this to be resolved? Each school starts and ends at a different time and has different lunchtimes, etc. It is all well and good for Ian Roberts to state that the governing body will decide “the details” but these are non-paid volunteers and most do not understand the intricacies of the school day.

Mr Patterson, I implore you to stop this proposal. It is ill thought-out and not truly costed. It will not improve the education of our youngsters.

1723 Standard

On a personal note, I wish to add that Llandrindod Wells is a good place to bring up children and my three children who went to Llandrindod Wells High School – in their words – “had a fantastic childhood”. I wonder how many children would say that if this planned merger was to take place? In the words of my 23 year old son “they want to take Llandrindod off the map” – how sad.

1724

1725 I wish to register my objection to the proposals to close Builth Wells and Llandrindod High schools and to reopen them as a dual site school in 2018 I object on the following grounds:

Estyn have clearly stated that they are not convinced 'the proposal will at least maintain standards', let alone improve them. As the education and training inspectorate for Wales, their view should be critical to this decision.

It will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught

Teachers will have an increased workload, especially the leadership team

This is a cut in funding which will actually reduce the ability of the new school to deliver an effective and improved curriculum.

It does not have the needs, best interests or wishes of real people at heart, especially the young people of the future of either town.

1726

1727 I am writing to voice my objections to the proposed merger and closure of Llandrindod and Builth Wells High Schools. As a former student of Llandrindod High School who finished sixth form in 1997 and a parent of a two year old who will be requiring quality secondary education I am worried about the implications of the proposals.

It appears that the primary reason for the proposals is to provide a cut in funding. Surely the only reason to merge or close a school should be to provide pupils with a better education. I cannot understand how issues such as less funding, increased workloads for teachers, less senior teachers, and increased travelling for pupils can lead to anything but a detrimental effect on a pupil's education. The Council should take notice of the fact that Estyn were not convinced that 'the proposal will at least maintain standards'.

When I was a pupil of Llandrindod High School as well as benefiting from some truly excellent teaching I was lucky enough to take part in many extra curricular activities such as the school hockey team, choir and orchestra. As well as being concerned about the effect on education I am also concerned about the effect on extra curricular activities that can make a big difference to a pupils life and even improve future career prospects etc. I am concerned that teaching staff with an increased work load and increased stress will not be able to commit to extra curricular activities. I am also concerned that if pupils have to travel a much greater distance to get to school then many will struggle to take part in such activities out of school hours. It would be a great shame if an aspiring sportsperson or musician for example does not reach their full potential because they cannot get home after their extra curricular activities.

I am also concerned about the effect on the local community of closing a high school. A town without a high school will attract less young people especially young professionals with young families to the area. It will effect house prices, and lead to a general deterioration of the town.

Please take these concerns into consideration. Your decisions have such a great consequence on the future of our children and our communities.

1728 See Folder

1729 I am dismayed to learn of the recent Statutory Notice issued by Powys County Council to close Builth Wells and Llandrindod High Schools and open a new school on two sites. Please consider this letter a formal objection to the Council's proposal.

I grew up in Builth Wells and attended Builth Wells High School from 1991 to 1998. This school provided me with an excellent educational bedrock; it gave me the skills and confidence to excel at University in Manchester and York and my school experiences have continued to shape a successful professional career in the United States. The proposal for a new dual-sited school jeopardizes the type of educational environment that i took for granted. It places an unnecessary travel burden on students and staff, loosens the local community ties with each school site, and potentially deters students from certain subject and extra-curricular selection. Ease of access to quality, local secondary education is an essential pre-requisite for future success in life, but i am not convinced that the Council's proposals satisfy this condition

1730 I am writing to object to the decision to merge Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells High Schools in September 2018. This is a matter of great concern to my family and my friends, as well as the community of Builth Wells as a whole.

From a personal perspective, my daughter should be starting her secondary school education in Builth Wells High School in September 2017. I am extremely worried about the implications that this merger will have on the quality of the education that she will receive. I do not think that merging two schools, which are both in special measures, will raise the standard of educational provision in Builth. It will increase stress levels in the teaching team in Builth and Llandrindod, reduce already depleted morale and create more uncertainty; not provide the opportunity for developing skills, capacity, leadership and expertise as is required. Instead, very precious energy and resources will be taken up with planning and dealing with the merger.

Whilst I appreciate that there are financial restrictions in the current economic climate, I believe there are other alternatives for reducing budgets. Estyn themselves do not consider that the proposal will maintain standards and in my experience, staff going through organisational change do not perform to the highest standards, but they do go off sick and become stressed and de-moralised.

As a parent of a child who has undertaken her primary education through the medium of Welsh, I see no way in which this proposal will increase the number of subject teachers who will be able to teach through the medium of Welsh.

The impact that these changes are already having on the community of Builth Wells is huge. The lack of clarity on the future of secondary education in the town makes it a less attractive place to live or move to for people who have children.

I urge you and your cabinet to re-consider your decision and instead find other ways to support our local schools and communities that they support.

1731 See Folder

1732 I wish to affirm my objection to the decision to close Builth and Llandrindod High Schools, to be merged as one school on two sites. I write with particular reference to the view expressed by Estyn that it is not convinced that 'the proposals will at least maintain standards'. Raising standards at both schools is clearly a priority for all stake-holders since both Builth and Llandrindod were recently placed in "special measures".

Between 1996 and 2007, I worked as a Registered Inspector for Estyn. During that period I inspected over one hundred schools in all parts of Wales. The secondary schools I inspected ranged from under 400 to over a 1000 on roll. As evidenced in my reports and other Estyn reports that I have read, there is no correlation between the size of the school and standards achieved. This has been confirmed by Estyn when asked to comment on the proposed merger of Gwernyfed and Brecon High Schools as well as Builth and Llandrindod High Schools.

Powys County Council has also expressed the view that Builth and Llandrindod High Schools are no longer viable in order to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. As I indicated, some of the schools I inspected were below 400 on roll. Many of these are in Gwynedd and have received commendable reports from Estyn. Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen with just over 400 on roll (11-18) was judged as "excellent" in its most recent report. If schools in Gwynedd are able to achieve good and excellent standards, it should be achievable in Powys.

From my experience of discussions with parents at pre and post inspection meetings during the inspection cycle, uppermost in parents' minds are the standards achieved by pupils. It follows that the prime duty of every education authority is to ensure that all schools under its jurisdiction achieve the highest possible standards. I trust that the Education Authority in Powys will give due consideration to the overwhelming objection to these proposals as expressed in a recent public meeting held at the school and overturn its decision to close both schools and merge them as one school on two sites

1733 My name is Daniel Bywater and I am in year 7 in Llandrindod High School. I am writing to ask you NOT to go ahead with your plans to merge Llandrindod and Builth High Schools. I am asking you this because I understand it is to save the council money by reducing the funding to the school. Now Mr Patterson i like school but i don't really find my class work easy, i really struggle. I currently get extra lessons and help with numeracy and literacy. This as you know is very very important for me. I am very worried that if funding it cut there won;t be money left to fund this extra help that i really need - and then where will i be?

I hear adults talking about this merger everywhere i go and the adults all say the same things - its a ridiculous idea. How is it going to improved the kids education and results? Its just another one of Powys' stupid ideas. Everyone is against the merger except you.

I dont full understand about Estyn but i do know they are very important in education in Wales in that they give advice and guidance to improve the running of schools and their results. Even Estyn are not convinced the proposal will at least maintain standards. If you are not going to listen to those who give advice and guidance how can you expect kids to? Mr Patterson, please don't merge our schools

1734 Whilst we fully appreciate that Powys County Council faces difficult decisions on the future of education in the county, the proposal to close both Llandrindod High School and Buith Wells High School and establish a single sited school on two sites is something which we both strongly object. In the whole consultation process, financial and quite possibly political reasons seem to outweigh the educational reasons for such a decision. There are a number of concerns that we have;

At no point in the process has anyone explained fully, supported the empirical evidence, that one school over a split site will improve educational standards for a generation of school children in Radnorshire

Rumours continue to abound that a potential site in Buith has been investigated - are you able to confirm definitely whether any preliminary investigations or discussions with landowners have taken place between representatives of Powys County Council and owners of potential sites?

With the temporary removal of the Radnorshire Children's Services Team, the clear establishment of a North and South Powys Hub for Neath Port Talbot College, and now a proposal to have just one secondary school in the area, it does appear that mid Powys is fast becoming the forgotten region of the county

The consultation document had a number of flaws in it, some of them quite significant. It raises an issue of confidence for us parents in the whole process, if something as important as a consultation document is not totally accurate.

Neither of us opposes progress and it is laudable that the county council wants to raise standards. With the scrapping, however, of the proposed Brecon-Gwernyfed merger and the reversal of proposals to shut several primary schools, we are left with the feeling that the merger between Buith and Llandrindod has to go ahead in order for the council to appear to "be doing something".

Quite simply, there has to be valid and proven educational argument for such a change; we along with many others that we have spoken to, have not been provided with such an argument. Therefore we are left with the conclusion that the driving force is to save money; that quite simply is not good enough when the future of thousands of children is at stake.

1735 See Folder

1736 We wish to register our objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools in 2018 and merge to form 1 school over 2 sites. We would like to strongly object of the following grounds:

1. The proposal would be a cut to the funding of High School children in Llandrindod and Builth.
2. Both schools are currently in Estyn Special Measurers and therefore both have individual Action Plans that have been set out by Estyn and the Local Authority and it is the duty of the County Council's Education Department to see that both schools complete their action plans in order to increase the educational standards of both schools. Each school needs their SLT to be working on these plans in order to increase the standards for the children currently within the system. This cannot be done whilst merging the school and removing a number of senior management from each school.
3. Estyn have state they are not convinced "the proposal will at least maintain standards" in either school therefore are we not jeopardising the education of our children on this proposal without any indication that it will raise standards which has been given as the primary objective for this move.
4. If you merge the 2 school's you will be removing both school's from special measurers therefore removing any additional support and funding that they are currently receiving in order to help improve standards. This therefore would be a cut in funding that Estyn have clearly stated that both schools currently need to improve their overall standards.
5. Whilst you do not move pre 16 children between the 2 campuses the classes sizes will remain the same therefore you are not changing the critical mass of learners. As the critical mass of learners in pre 16 education will not change this will not improve the ability to increase the number of subjects taught.
6. The senior leadership team of the new school will have an increased workload, without having the in-depth knowledge of the school or their teams in order to raise standards.
7. The time and money spent on transporting staff between campuses will increase the costs to the school budget without additional income to cover this.
8. The consultation process is inherently flawed and therefore does not give the ability for an open discussion/dialogue to find the best possible outcome to the problems that the local authority is facing regarding budget cuts in education.
9. It has been stated that this project would save £130,000 but the consultation documents sent out did not give the details of how this was going to be done and gave a false impression of the financial situation for each school currently therefore it is impossible for the cabinet, the council and the community to come to an informed decision on the proposals.
10. By ring-fencing jobs this will give the new school the inability to get the best people for the jobs. You only have 1 standing head therefore there is no ability to get the best person for the job.

1737 Standard

It it wrong to close an almost new building and build yet another new one. New doesn't mean better!! Think of the children and the distance they have to travel

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1779 As a business based in Llandrindod Wells we would like to strongly object to the amalgamation of Llandrindod High School with Builth High School.

We have been based here in the town for 90 years and during that time we have employed 100's of local people. The business has expanded over the last few years and the staff we require are now not only lorry drivers, but administrative staff and mechanics. This means it is essential to keep a successful school within the town. As Estyn has stated they are not even convinced that this planned amalgamation will at least maintain standards, how can this be right for the youngsters of our town. We all owe them an education that will give them the best start to their life and this plan obviously wont.

When bussiness's like ours are looking to recrute staff it is already a struggle, if there is no school or a poor school within our town the younger people we require to fill our positions, those with children, will move to other areas and this will make employment much more difficult and therefore put off prospective bussiness's from locating here.

As someone who lives in our town you must surely be able to see that this proposal is not to the benefit of the town, its residents and most importantly its children.

What we cant understand is that Powys have spent a fortune on consultants and have asked the people of Powys for their opinions and have obviously been in contact with Estyn who have also made their views known but at the end of the day have ignored everything they have been told and have gone ahead with their initial proposal. This is not democracy in any way. It is very easy for the cabinet who are mainly made up of Montgomeryshire Councillors to hit the Brecon & Radnor schools with no effect on their career whatsoever but surely when even the majority of Councillors voted agaianst this proposal when asked for their opinion and that is not taken into account either, something is very wrong with you present system.

We urge you to re think this proposal and to ask the County Coucillors to think about what their constituents want before making their final decision on what could be the final stroke for our town.

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1781 An extraordinary meeting of Builth Wells Town Council was held on Tuesday 6th December 2016 to discuss the proposed closure of Builth Wells High School in August 2018. County Councillor Avril York was in attendance at the meeting and was given permission by the Mayor/Chair to participate in the debate, and to provide relevant information relating to the proposed school closure from her perspective as a Powys County Council cabinet member.

In view of recent public meetings held in Builth Wells, where the opinions of participants has overwhelmingly been against any closure of Builth High School and merger with Llandrindod High School, the Town Council attempted to evaluate all, or indeed any, hard facts that are available from Powys CC, the governing body, the public consultation process, the Estyn report, parents and teachers that may give weight to the claim that teaching standards and exam results will improve after the closure and merger in 2018

The town council resolved to register a strong objection to the proposed closure of Builth High School based on the following conclusions:

1. The Estyn inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales does not concur with the Powys County Council assumption that teaching standards and exam results will improve as a result of the proposals to close and merge Builth and Llandrindod schools as one school on two campuses
2. The proposals are a gamble and not based on hard facts, with the result that the education of a number of cohorts of pupils in both schools is being put at risk during the inevitable prolonged reorganisation process and settling in period. Teacher morale will also be affected, resulting in further adverse disruption to educational standards and student outcomes.
3. The information provided by Powys County Council with reference to the future of both schools has been drip-fed to the communities over a period of time, much of it appearing to be anecdotal and rumor. The Town Council concluded that there are still too many unresolved possibilities in relation to future provision of A Levels and Welsh medium education for example, and on which campus, to enable a reasoned opinion based on fact to be decided
4. It will be difficult to make comparisons with the John Beddoes/Newtown merger as all schools are different. It is not obvious that the experience of that merger is relevant to the Builth/Llandrindod proposed merger.
5. There is no evidence of a medium/long term plan. We had no assurance that the school would still exist in ten years time.
6. If the educational outcomes are doubtful then surely the aim is economic
7. It is not obvious that other options are being explored - such as closer co-operation between both schools AND staff to present a wider curriculum and to save money enhancing the educational opportunities

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1785 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools and merge then and reopen them as one school on two sites. I believe that this process would prove highly detrimental to educational standards for a variety of reasons.

The logistics of transporting pupils and teachers between the sites have not been adequately addressed. The current transport provision which exists for the sixth form consortium, in which both schools participate, is unsatisfactory. Pupils are frequently late for lessons on both sites and there have been many instances when the transport has simply not materialised and parents have had to step in to rescue stranded children. This does not bode well for a school based on two remote sites.

Estyn are not convinced that "the proposal will at least maintain standards" were the schools to merge. Nor are they convinced that Powys County Council have addressed the possibility that parents may, in the future, choose not to send their children to the new split site school.

Powys County Council claim that a model for improved educational standards can be found in the recent merger of Newtown High School and John Beddoes School in Presteigne but this assertion is flawed as the circumstances are not similar to the merger proposal involving Llandrindod and Builth High Schools. Both these schools are in Special Measures whereas only John Beddoes school was in Special Measures not Newtown High School and therefore an increase in educational standards is unlikely.

Powys County Council claim that the school merger must occur in order to make financial savings. However, the initial proposed saving of £123,000 does not take into consideration the salary of the new head teacher which is directly proportional to the size of the new school. A dual site school would also necessitate a large increase in inter-site transport costs. Provision for this increase does not seem to have been taken into account.

A merger will not offer the pupils of the new school a greater choice of subjects. To achieve this, an increase in funding must be implemented, not a cut. The new school would have to attract specialist teachers who would expect a greater job security, promotion prospects and more competitive salaries. As the closure and merger of the existing high schools only represents the first phase of Powys County Council's long term plans for education, the uncertainty surrounding the future of the dual site school is unlikely to attract specialist candidates.

A merger would place an additional burden on any new leadership team which is likely to result in an immediate decrease in standards and logistical chaos.

1786 I am very disappointed that you and your team believe that closing Llandrindod and Builth High Schools and reopening them as one school on two sites, is the way forward and education in Powys. I therefore object to this proposal

It was clear from the start of this process that the information considered in the making of this decision was flawed and inaccurate. You team visited Llandrindod High School to answer questions. The staff spent the whole session highlighting the many inaccuracies in the facts contained in the questionnaire. The staff were told these inaccuracies would not be corrected. Straight away this sent out the message that you are not prepared to listened to anyone. If teachers persisted in teaching inaccurate information and refused to correct it, i am sure you would view this as a problem and seek to correct it and yet you don't when it comes from your own council.

Secondly, the questionnair was a perfect example of a biased questionnarie. Pupils are taught at KS3 and in GCSE mathematics, hwo to write an unbiased questionnaire. Your questionnaire will be the perfect resource for them to use in future, when highlighting problems with questionnaires. Perhaps the person who wrote the questionnaire needs to attend Maths lessons and take a GCSE in Maths, to ensure they know how to write an unbiased questionnaire.

Thirdly, a group of children from primary school, one whom was my son, were taken to a meeting to canvas their views. They were asked not to think of anything negative about the proposed changes, before their views were taken. I was appalled at this, once again Powys forcing their biased views on our children by telling the young people what to think.

Fourthly, the proposal has not been costed fully or accurately and so the supposed financial savings will not occur, if anything cost will rise not fall, when all cost are factored in.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, it is very clear to me that Powys does not care about the standards of education in these schools; especially as it ignores Estyn's advice stating that it was not convinced that the proposal would even maintain standards. So, you are putting inaccurate financial considerations ahead of our children's education.

Overall this proposal will damage education standards and young peoples life chances in Powys and as a parent, a Powys resident and tax payer, i am mortified by this. I hope that you are able to see the damage you are causing to education by doing this and throw out this proposal

1787 I wish to register my objection to the decision to close Llandrindod and Builth High Schools to be merged and reopened as one school on two sites. I object on the following grounds:

The proposal is cut in funding

Estyn are not convinced the proposal will at least maintain standards

It will not improve the ability to increase subjects taught

Teachers will have an increased workloads

I am 9 years old and don't want a lower standards of education than my brother who is in high school