

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET EXECUTIVE
13th March 2018**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Myfanwy Alexander
Portfolio Holder for Education and Welsh Language

SUBJECT: School Organisation Policy – Vision 2025

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information about feedback received during the recent consultation on the Plans for Powys Schools Policy, and to seek approval of an updated version, which has been renamed 'School Organisation Policy', and an associated Delivery Plan which outlines the Council's priorities for the period 2018-2021. The new policy, if approved, will replace the current Schools Organisation Policy 2015, and will become effective from the 1st April 2018.
- 1.2 This report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix 1: School Organisation Policy – Vision 2025
 - Appendix 2: Delivery Plan 2018-2021
 - Appendix 3: Consultation Report
 - Appendix 4: Integrated Impact Assessment
 - Appendix 5: Pupil Numbers on Roll (Teachers Centre 11/01/18)

2. Proposal

- 2.1 On the 7th November 2017, Cabinet approved the commencement of consultation on a draft 'Plans for Powys Schools Policy', which took account of the Cabinet's vision, as outlined in Vision 2025.
- 2.2 Consultation on the policy took place from the 21st November 2017 to the 30th January 2018.
- 2.3 The consultation document was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. Respondents could respond in writing to the Schools Transformation Team, or could fill in an online response form. In addition, 3 drop in sessions were held across Powys to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss the policy with officers.
- 2.4 91 written responses were received. Of these, 77 were via the online response form, as well as 14 other written responses.

- 2.5 A consultation report which summarises the issues raised in the consultation responses is attached as Appendix 3.
- 2.6 The policy has been updated, taking account of the feedback received during the consultation period. The updated policy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.7 The main changes to the policy are outlined below:
- i) Page 1 – Title changed from ‘Plans for Powys Schools’ to ‘School Organisation Policy’ in order to ensure that the purpose of the policy is clearer
 - ii) Page 5 – ‘Background and Context’ section added to outline the background to the policy, the legislative background and to outline links with National and local policies / strategies
 - iii) Page 7 – ‘Our Aims’ section has been renamed ‘Key Purposes and Aims’
 - iv) Page 7 – Aims developed further to take account of feedback received during the consultation period
 - v) Page 9 – ‘How We Will Achieve This’ has been renamed ‘Priorities’ in order to provide greater focus on these elements. Two overarching ‘priorities’ added, which all schools will be encouraged to work towards
 - vi) Page 9 – A section on ‘Closure of provision’ has been added in response to queries raised in the consultation responses
 - vii) Page 11 – ‘The School Organisation Process’ – this section has further developed, and now includes the establishment of a School Organisation Steering Group to monitor progress of the Delivery Plan and make recommendations to Cabinet.
 - viii) ‘Key Considerations’ section has been renamed ‘Development of Proposals’. This section has been updated to link more closely with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code.
- 2.8 In addition to the updated policy, a Delivery Plan for 2018-2021 has been developed, which outlines the Council’s priorities for School Organisation for this period. This is attached as Appendix 2.

3. Options Considered / Available

n/a

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 4.1 To approve the post-consultation version of the School Organisation Policy – Vision 2025
- 4.2 To approve the Delivery Plan for 2018-21

5. Impact Assessment

- 5.1 Is an impact assessment required? Yes

5.2 If yes is it attached? Yes

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

6.1 Every local authority has a statutory obligation to manage and plan school places. The Policy relates to the Vision 2025 Corporate Improvement Plan’s priority for Learning and Skills, which states that pupils in Powys should have access to education provision that is equitable and access to high quality teaching and learning environments.

7. Local Member(s)

7.1 All local members are affected.

8. Other Front Line Services

Does the recommendation impact on other services run by the Council or on behalf of the Council? Yes

In order to implement school organisational changes, it is necessary to seek support from a number of services, including schools service, HR, finance, legal, governor support, property, ICT and communications. Dependent on the nature of the change proposed, it may be necessary to seek additional support within these service areas from time to time.

9. Communications

Have Communications seen a copy of this report? YES

Have they made a comment? NO

10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

10.1 Legal: “The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view”.

10.2 Finance “I note the contents of the report, the Programmes and timescales. The finance team will fully support the programmes and ensure robust costings are provided as required.”

10.3 Corporate Property (if appropriate)

10.4 HR: “Whilst the proposal outlined in this report has no direct impact on staffing, HR advice and support is available to the Schools’ Service should it be required at a later stage.”

10.5 ICT (if appropriate)

11. Scrutiny

Has this report been scrutinised? No, but Education Scrutiny Committee has been consulted on the draft Policy.

12. Statutory Officers

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report."

The Head of Financial Services (Acting Section 151 Officer) comments that the funding of schools represents a large proportion of the Council's budget, it is therefore essential that the model for delivering education in Powys is efficient and enables schools to operate effectively within the funding provided to them.

13. Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
1. To approve the post-consultation version of the School Organisation Policy	To enable the Council to move towards a more efficient network of schools
2. To approve the Delivery Plan for 2018-20	

Relevant Policy (ies):	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan & 21 st C Schools Programme Band B		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All members
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Marianne Evans
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	1 April 2018

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Background Papers used to prepare Report: