

## Appendix E – Full Council Discussion – 7<sup>th</sup> March

In accordance with the motion approved by Full Council in July 2016, a discussion on the recommendation to be considered by Cabinet relating to Banw C.P. School and Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School took place at the Full Council meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> March.

A webcast of the meeting is available to view via the following link: [https://powys.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/409897](https://powys.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/409897). The discussion on this matter takes place between 3.24.16 and 4.31.45.

### i) Draft minutes

The draft minutes of the item relating to Banw C.P. School and Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School is as follows:

<b>16.</b>	<b>BANW C.P. SCHOOL AND LLANERFYL C. IN W. (FOUNDATION) SCHOOL</b>
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Council debated proposals to close Banw C.P. School and Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School and to establish a new school to establish a new Welsh-medium Voluntary Aided primary school on the current site of Banw C.P. School.

County Councillor Myfanwy Alexander spoke as the local member of the vital importance of sustaining Welsh as the daily language of these communities. She asked members to keep in mind the impact of the decision on the community and the need to ensure continuity of Welsh language education in the area. She then left the meeting during the debate.

Members raised issues on pupil numbers at the two schools, the condition of the buildings, transport costs, the need for a wider look at education in the area, pupils travelling out of the area to avoid Welsh medium education and the way the consultation had been carried out. The comments made would be taken into account by Cabinet when the proposal was considered on 12<sup>th</sup> March.

### ii) Issues raised

The concerns / queries raised are outlined below, as well as a response.

Issue	Response
If closing a Church in Wales School, doesn't the receiving school have to be a Church in Wales School too?	<p>The proposal is that the new school is a Church in Wales School, therefore pupils currently accessing Church in Wales provision would continue to be able to access Church in Wales provision.</p> <p>Should any parents of pupils currently attending Banw C.P. School not wish their children to attend a Church in Wales school, there are other Welsh-medium community primary schools in the local area, namely Pontrobert C.P. School and Llanfair Caereinion School, so parents could apply for a</p>

	<p>place for their child at one of these schools instead of the proposed Church in Wales School.</p>
<p>At the current time, Llanerfyl is by far the bigger school – it has twice as many pupils as Banw</p>	<p>At the current time, there are 29 pupils attending Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School and 21 pupils attending Banw C.P. School. However, as explained in the Consultation Document issued in respect of this proposal, as a Foundation School, Llanerfyl C. in W. School is responsible for its own arrangements, and has continued to admit nursery pupils since the Council raised the age of admission in September 2017.</p> <p>Comparing the number of R-Yr6 pupils in both schools would show that there are 22 pupils in Banw C.P. School and 26 pupils in Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School – therefore Llanerfyl is not ‘by far’ the bigger school, nor does it have twice as many pupils as Banw at the current time.</p>
<p>Concern that the total pupil numbers would still be a small school. Concern that if it goes to Banw, which is further away from Llanfair, are some of the children that currently go to Llanerfyl closer to Llanfair? If some of the pupils went to Llanfair, the pupil numbers would be even less, and the school won’t be viable.</p>	<p>It is true that the total pupil numbers would still result in a small school. ‘Pupils might transfer to other schools instead of the proposed new school, which would impact on pupil numbers’ was identified in the Consultation Document as a risk related to the option to establish a new school on the Banw site. However, this is also identified as a risk in respect of the option to establish a new school on the Llanerfyl site.</p> <p>There is always some element of risk in relation to school reorganisation proposals that parents will choose for their children to attend an alternative school. Parents are entitled to apply for a place for their child in whichever school they choose, and the Council has a duty to accommodate that choice where there is space available.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanerfyl, 6 of the current pupils would live closer to Llanfair Caereinion, however 2 of these pupils already live closer to Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School than Llanerfyl School. Of the remaining 4 pupils, 1 is in year 5, so would have moved to high school by the time the proposal was implemented.</p>
<p>Query about transport costs – if you are moving the children to the smaller school, won’t that increase the school transport budget? How much extra will it cost to transport children from the Llanerfyl area to the Banw area.</p>	<p>An estimate of the impact of implementation of the two site options on school transport costs was received, which took account of the impact on the total cost of home to school transport in the Banw Valley, which includes transport to Caereinion High School and NPTC College.</p> <p>The estimate was that the implementation of either option – to establish the new school on either the Banw site or the Llanerfyl site - would result in an increase in the daily cost of home to school transport from the current cost of £546.02 per day to approximately £730 day.</p>

<p>If more children go to Llanerfyl school than Banw school, logic suggests that if the school is built in Banw, more people will be travelling</p>	<p>There is no intention to build a new school – the consultation was based on establishing a new school in one of the two current buildings.</p> <p>It is true that there would be an increase in the number of pupils travelling to school should it be located on the current Banw site. However, pupils travel further to Banw C.P. School than to Llanerfyl School, and the option to establish the new school in Llanerfyl would mean that pupils would be travelling further – as outlined in the Consultation Document, the maximum travel distance for pupils currently attending Llanerfyl School should the school be located on the Banw site would be 5.85 miles, whilst the maximum travel distance for pupils currently attending Banw School should the school be located on the Llanerfyl site would be 10.01 miles.</p>
<p>Concern about surplus capacity – there would be more surplus capacity on the Banw site</p>	<p>It is true that there would initially be more surplus capacity should the new school be opened on the Banw site. However, amalgamating the two schools to establish one new school in either of the current buildings would lead to a significant reduction in overall surplus capacity in the Banw Valley area. The space and facilities on the Banw site also mean that there would be opportunities to locate other facilities on the site, such as early years provision. This would reduce the surplus places, and would also enhance the school’s offering.</p> <p>There is no space in the Llanerfyl building to accommodate provision such as this.</p>
<p>Should we have looked at the wider Llanfair area to see whether there is more radical reform to be undertaken?</p>	<p>The aim during this exercise, as agreed with the two governing bodies during the early discussions carried out in respect of these proposals was to retain Welsh-medium provision in the Banw Valley.</p>
<p>How confident are we that a proposal won’t be coming back in another 2 years with a proposal saying that the school is too small? If that is a risk, shouldn’t we bite the bullet now?</p>	<p>It is true that the new school would still be a relatively small school, wherever it was located. There are risks associated with all school reorganisation proposals, and in the Consultation Document, ‘Based on current pupil projections, there is likely to less than 50 pupils in the school in a few years time’ is identified as a risk for both site options.</p> <p>However, a number of pupils travel out of the Banw Valley to access provision in Llanfair Caereinion. It is hoped that in the longer term, the establishment of a new school, with a strong curricular offering and a range of facilities would reverse this trend, and would encourage more pupils to access this school instead of travelling further afield. There is also the potential that a strong Welsh-medium school in the area could attract pupils from areas such as Llanfair Caereinion.</p>

<p>Llanerfyl pupils probably won't go to Banw – this would be a shame.</p>	<p>There is a risk with either site option that pupils would transfer to other schools instead of the proposed new school.</p>
<p>More importance should be put on schools in communities that are more cost effective.</p>	<p>Establishing one new school to serve the area would be more cost effective, whichever site the school was located on.</p>
<p>What about federation, why isn't this being considered?</p>	<p>It is not possible to federate a Church in Wales School with a Community Primary School, therefore federation is not an option for these two schools. A multi-sited option was considered, however the views expressed by the community during the early engagement work carried out suggested that the communities did not consider this to be a suitable way forward.</p>
<p>Would question some of the results of the survey.</p>	<p>This was a public consultation exercise, and anyone who wished to respond was able to do so. The survey was carried out in the same way as other surveys.</p> <p>The findings reflect an earlier survey of parents of pupils attending the two schools and the local Cylch Meithrin carried out as part of the early engagement work in early 2018, where a higher number of parents identified the Dyffryn Banw as their preferred site option. As outlined in the report produced outlining the findings of this earlier survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'However, the order is different if we consider the number of times each option was ranked '1', the preferred option. On this basis, the order in terms of preference is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 1 A new school operating in the current Dyffryn Banw building – 12</li> <li>o 2 A new school operating in the current Llanerfyl building – 11</li> <li>o =3 A new school dual sited school operating across the two current buildings – 2</li> <li>o =3 A new school built on a new site in the area – 2'</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The report goes on to state on page 12 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Whilst 16 questionnaires were received from families that currently have children attending Ysgol Llanerfyl, only 11 questionnaires ranked the option of 'A new school operating in the current Llanerfyl building' as their preferred option. In contrast, only 8 questionnaires were received from families that currently have children attending Ysgol Dyffryn Banw, however 12 questionnaires ranked 'A new school operating in the current Dyffryn Banw building' as the preferred option.'</li> </ul>

	<p>The findings of the survey are only one element to be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed – a large number of written responses were also received, and these have also been taken into consideration in making the recommendation.</p>
<p>26 pupils already go out of the area every day to avoid Welsh-medium education – this has an impact on numbers at the two schools.</p>	<p>It is agreed that pupils choosing to travel to access provision outside the Banw Valley has impacted on pupil numbers at the two schools. It is hoped that in the longer term, establishing one new, larger school in the area would encourage more pupils to remain in the Banw Valley rather than travelling to alternative providers.</p>
<p>Concern that there is no provision for latecomers in Powys – that could be provided in the Banw Valley</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Should look at the provision in the area as a whole, as there are a number of small schools in this area</p>	<p>The aim during this exercise, as agreed with the two governing bodies during the early discussions carried out in respect of these proposals was to retain Welsh-medium provision in the Banw Valley.</p>
<p>What is the capital spend going to be to bring both schools up to an acceptable condition? Wouldn't it be prudent to keep the school with the least cost to the Council?</p>	<p>Either option outlined in the consultation document is achievable without the need for any capital spend.</p>
<p>As Llanerfyl has the most pupils, wouldn't it make the most sense to move Banw pupils to Llanerfyl?</p>	<p>As outlined in the Consultation Document, there are strengths and weaknesses associated with both site options. However, the findings of the consultation exercise carried out suggest that the community's preferred option is to establish a new school on the current site of Banw School.</p>
<p>Will be important that schools go further than school hours, and provide breakfast clubs, after school activities – need to consider these elements when making changes in terms of school reorganisation</p>	<p>Agreed. The current site of Banw C.P. School, which is more spacious and has a separate dining area as well as hall on site, is a more suitable site on which to provide services such as these.</p>
<p>The paper distributed suggests that on every level, the new school should be in Llanerfyl.</p>	<p>The paper distributed was prepared by the governing body of Llanerfyl School, and therefore only includes one perspective.</p>

	<p>There are advantages and disadvantages associated with both site options, and the two site options are explored in full in the consultation document which was published in relation to this proposal.</p> <p>Having considered the information in the consultation document, the feedback from the consultation response form and the written feedback received during the consultation period, the Banw site is considered to be a more suitable location for the new school.</p>
<p>As outlined in the paper distributed, less money needs to be spent on Llanerfyl</p>	<p>It is true that the Condition of the Llanerfyl building has been assessed to be better than the Banw building. However, the Suitability of the Banw building has been assessed to be better than the Llanerfyl building.</p> <p>It is likely that significantly more money would need to be spent to ensure that the suitability of the Llanerfyl building is the same as the Banw building compared with the amount that would need to be spent to ensure that the Banw building is the same condition as the Llanerfyl building.</p>
<p>As outlined in the paper distributed, the condition of Llanerfyl is better</p>	<p>It is true that the condition of Llanerfyl School is better. However, Banw School has been assessed to be more suitable than Llanerfyl. The written responses received to the consultation raised concerns about the accommodation and facilities at Llanerfyl School, their suitability to accommodate a higher number of pupils, and the building's suitability to meet the requirements of the new curriculum.</p>
<p>Far more Welsh is spoken in Llanerfyl as shown on the paper distributed</p>	<p>Wherever the new school is located, the proposal is to establish a Welsh-medium school. Whilst it is noted that a higher proportion of pupils currently attending Llanerfyl School are from Welsh speaking homes, the Council and the Welsh Government's aim is to increase the number of Welsh speakers, with the aim of achieving a million Welsh speakers by the year 2050. Attracting pupils from non Welsh speaking homes to Welsh-medium education will be key in order to achieve this.</p> <p>Estyn agrees that either site option would contribute to the aim to increase the number of Welsh speakers – in their response to the consultation, they stated that 'Both <i>option a and b</i> would contribute to realising the Welsh Government's strategy of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050.'</p>
<p>The way that the consultation is undertaken, the questions are loaded to capture what the Council wants to come back.</p>	<p>This is untrue. The consultation response form asked for views on both site options, and the questions were phrased in exactly the same way. The questions were not loaded in any way – this was a genuine consultation exercise, and the Council were keen to hear the views of the communities involved on both site options.</p>

<p>We shouldn't be pitting communities against each other, we should be working to provide something that meets the needs of communities.</p>	<p>There was no intention to 'pit the communities against each other'. Extensive engagement has been carried out with the affected communities in developing these proposals, and the hope was that it would have been possible to come to a consensus.</p> <p>Unfortunately, this was not possible, therefore an opportunity was provided for the communities to give their views on both site options, in order to inform the outcome.</p>
<p>Cabinet member for Finance mentioned condition of schools, and I think he got them the wrong way around – what he said was different to what is in the paper provided by Llanerfyl School.</p>	<p>The Cabinet member of Finance was referring to the Suitability assessment of the two schools, not the Condition assessment.</p>
<p>The consultation has asked obvious questions – if you ask the people of Llanerfyl where they want the school, they are obviously going to say they want it in Llanerfyl, likewise with Banw.</p>	<p>The consultation response form did not ask respondents the question 'where do you want the school to be located?'. The response form asked whether respondents considered each site to be a suitable way forward in order to safeguard the provision of Welsh-medium education in the Banw Valley:</p> <p>6. <i>If the Council were to proceed with merging the two existing schools to create one new school, do you agree that establishing a new school on the current site of Banw C.P. School would be a suitable way forward in order to safeguard the provision of Welsh-medium education in the Banw Valley?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes                      No                      Don't know</p> <p><i>Please provide any additional comments:</i></p> <p>7. <i>If the Council were to proceed with merging the two existing schools to create one new school, do you agree that establishing a new school on the current site of Llanerfyl C. in W. (Foundation) School would be a suitable way forward in order to safeguard the provision of Welsh-medium education in the Banw Valley?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes                      No                      Don't know</p> <p><i>Please provide any additional comments:</i></p> <p>The findings of the questionnaire show that a higher proportion of respondents were of the opinion that establishing a new school on the Banw site is a suitable way forward compared with the proportion of respondents that</p>

	consider establishing a new school on the Llanerfyl site to be a suitable way forward.
Think we have gone about this the wrong way, and are going to end up with a new school in the wrong location.	Extensive engagement has been carried out with the two communities before making the recommendation. The recommendation reflects the feedback received from the affected communities during the consultation exercise carried out.
It's the governors of Banw school that said something needs to change – the report compares the numbers over the last few years, shows the decrease in pupil numbers.	Pupil numbers in both schools have decreased in recent years.
The original report favoured having the school in Llanerfyl – why did the position change?	The original recommendation was based on an options appraisal carried out by officers, however the scoring was very close between the two sites. The Cabinet Member's view was that it would be fairer to the affected communities to provide the opportunity for residents to give their views on the two site options.
Consultation report says that there are many schools in Powys without a hall.	It is true that there are other schools in Powys that don't have access to a hall on site. However access to a hall on site would be preferable to not having access to a hall on site.
The report says that if we put the school in Banw, there will be no school in Llanerfyl, and that if we put the school in Llanerfyl, there will be no school in Banw, don't think it was necessary to state this as it is obvious.	The Consultation Document has been produced in accordance with the School Organisation Code, which states that Consultation Documents must outline the advantages and disadvantages of proposals. These statements are listed in the Consultation Document as disadvantages associated with each site option.
The report says that there is a possibility pupil numbers would reduce because not all pupils would go to the new school, but it says that we will counting them – I'm not sure what that would achieve.	The Consultation Document has been produced in accordance with the School Organisation Code, which states that Consultation Documents must outline risks associated with proposals. 'Based on current pupil projections, there is likely to less than 50 pupils in the school in a few years time' and 'Pupils might transfer to other schools instead of the proposed new school, which would impact on pupil numbers' are listed as risks for both site options. Appropriate mitigating actions are also outlined for each risk.
Not in our history to move the largest number of pupils to the school with the smallest number of	The proposal is to close both current schools and to open a new school on one of the two sites.

<p>pupils. Because of this, I can see why there is huge objection.</p>	<p>At the current time, there is no evidence of ‘huge objection’ to the recommendation. The findings of the consultation exercise carried out suggests that the community’s view is that the Banw site is more suitable as a location in which to establish the proposed new school, however it is acknowledged that not all respondents agreed that this was a suitable option.</p> <p>Should Cabinet approve continuing with the process, the next stage would be to publish Statutory Notices, and there would be 28 days for people to submit objections. This would provide an opportunity to consider the level of objections, and the reasons for these objections, and there would be a further opportunity for Cabinet to consider whether or not to proceed with implementation of the proposal.</p>																								
<p>There are at least 7 other primary schools within an 8 mile radius of Banw and Llanerfyl – how many pupils are in these schools, and why aren’t we looking at these schools as well?</p>	<p>There are 7 primary schools in total in the Llanfair Caereinion catchment area, however Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School is the only school located within an 8 mile radius of both Banw and Llanerfyl Schools:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="587 898 1391 1648"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><b>Distance from Banw C.P. School</b></th> <th><b>Distance from Llanerfyl C. in W. School</b></th> <th><b>Current pupil numbers (8<sup>th</sup> March 2019)</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ysgol Pontrobert</td> <td>9.7 miles</td> <td>7.9 miles</td> <td>31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School</td> <td>7.4 miles</td> <td>5.6 miles</td> <td>173</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ysgol Meifod</td> <td>11.7 miles</td> <td>9.9 miles</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School</td> <td>12.4 miles</td> <td>10.5 miles</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ysgol Rhiw Bechan</td> <td>13 miles</td> <td>11.2 miles</td> <td>172</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The aim during this exercise, as agreed with the two governing bodies during the early discussions carried out in respect of these proposals was to retain Welsh-medium provision in the Banw Valley.</p>		<b>Distance from Banw C.P. School</b>	<b>Distance from Llanerfyl C. in W. School</b>	<b>Current pupil numbers (8<sup>th</sup> March 2019)</b>	Ysgol Pontrobert	9.7 miles	7.9 miles	31	Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	7.4 miles	5.6 miles	173	Ysgol Meifod	11.7 miles	9.9 miles	79	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	12.4 miles	10.5 miles	30	Ysgol Rhiw Bechan	13 miles	11.2 miles	172
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<p>Not right that the consultation was only in the valley – it is a very small area</p>	<p>The consultation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. It was a public consultation exercise, and anybody was able to respond, whether they lived in the Banw Valley or not.</p>																								

<p>How many vacant places are there currently on the buses that are taking pupils to Llanfair High School? This needs to be analysed as part of this exercise.</p>	<p>There are currently two buses transporting pupils from the Banwy Valley to Caereinion High School, a 70 seater which currently has 67 pupils travelling on it, and a 50 seater which currently has 38 pupils travelling on it.</p>
<p>When we close schools, have to look at the cost to this authority. We don't own the site in Llanerfyl – if there is a capital receipt, that should be consideration, as there would be a capital receipt from the Banw site. Can't see this included in the consultation document.</p>	<p>The consultation document does identify that in respect of the option to establish a new school on the Banw site 'The Council would not benefit from any sale of the Llanerfyl site as it isn't owned by the Council'. It is also identified in respect of the option to establish a new school on the Llanerfyl site that there is a 'Potential capital receipt to the authority from sale of the Banw C.P. School building'. However, it is also noted that 'Sale of the Banw site could be difficult due to the co-location of the community centre'.</p>