

Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to consider options for the future language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon. Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is located in Trefeglwys, North Powys.

The current language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is Dual Stream Primary School¹.

Current pupil numbers² at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	11	15	13	16	12	21	9	97
English-medium	0	0	1	1	4	2	4	12
Total	11	15	14	17	16	23	13	109

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future.

One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. Within this objective, the Strategy includes an aim to 'Move schools along the language continuum'.

The purpose of this paper is to consider options in respect of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category, in accordance with the aims outlined in the Council's Transforming Education Strategy.

¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/defining-schools-according-to-welsh-medium-provision.pdf>

² Finance Figures – NOR 2020 count day

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Following the inspection of Powys Education Services carried out by Estyn in the summer of 2019, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. The Vision Statement is as follows:

All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of the Strategic Aims is to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. Within this aim, the Strategy sets out a Strategic Objective to 'Move schools along the language continuum.'

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

Whilst there has been some reorganisation activity in Powys over recent years, the county's schools' infrastructure largely remains similar to that which was in place 20 years ago.

The Council's new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 40% of the primary provision in the county. 21 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to decrease further over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 4% by 2025.

iii) High number of surplus places

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there was 18% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

iv) Building condition

Whilst the Council has invested in its school's estate through the 21st Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,127 to £7,877 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED AT YSGOL DYFFRYN TRANNON

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is a dual stream primary school located in the village of Trefeglwys in North Powys. As well as serving the village of Trefeglwys and the surrounding villages, the school is the only Welsh-medium primary provider in the Llanidloes catchment area, therefore a significant number of pupils from the town of Llanidloes attend the school.

The following is a summary of key data relating to Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School? ³
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	Community Primary School School building owned by Powys County Council	Dual Stream	20	Yes

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers⁴

Current pupil numbers at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	11	15	13	16	12	21	9	97
English-medium	0	0	1	1	4	2	4	12
Total	11	15	14	17	16	23	13	109

ii) Historical pupil numbers⁵

³ Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>) includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

⁴ Finance Figures – NOR 2020 count day

⁵ PLASC

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	124	118	122	138	121	125	129

iii) Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)⁶

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	116	111	101	99	94

iv) Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)⁷

	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	119	106	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

The following table provides information about the school's current capacity:

	Current Capacity ⁸	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	170	109 (64.1%)	61 (35.9%)

ii) Building condition

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school.

⁶ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

⁷ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school – November 2020

⁸ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	B Good	B Good	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon
Date of Inspection	February 2017
Standards	Adequate
Well Being	Good
Learning Experiences	Adequate
Teaching	Good
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Learning Environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving Quality	Adequate
Partnership Working	Good
Resource Management	Adequate
Outcome	The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

ii) School Categorisation

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	N/A	D	Red
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Financial information

i) Cost per pupil (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	£549,0000	£4,650	£24,000	£5,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals⁹

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	7 (5.4%)

ii) Pupils in care¹⁰

	Number of pupils in care
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	0

iii) SEN/ALN¹¹

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	11.6%	0.8%	0%

⁹ PLASC 2020

¹⁰ PLASC 2020

¹¹ PLASC 2020

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN YSGOL DYFFRYN TRANNON

The number of English-medium pupils at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon has decreased over recent years. Current pupil numbers at the school are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Welsh-medium	11	15	13	16	12	21	9	97
English-medium	0	0	1	1	4	2	4	12
Total	11	15	14	17	16	23	13	116

The very low number of English-medium pupils at the school causes a challenge to the school in providing appropriate provision for these learners. Pupils are taught in small classes, with a high number of year groups in each class.

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes an aim to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages', as well as an objective to 'move schools along the language continuum'.

In order to meet these aims and objectives, the Council is keen to explore options to change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category in order to address the small number of pupils accessing English-medium provision at the school. This would ensure that all pupils attending the school have the opportunity to become fluent in Welsh and English, therefore contributing to the Welsh Government's aspiration to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

PART B – OPTIONS FOR YSGOL DYFFRYN TRANNON

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified to address the challenges caused by the school's current dual stream structure:

Option	Description
1	Status quo – Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon continues to operate as a dual stream school
2	Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium
3	Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to English-medium

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

Option 1: Status quo – Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon continues to operate as a dual stream school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No impact on pupils, parents or staff - No additional travel for pupils - No impact on pupil numbers at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon - No impact on staff at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon - No need for a statutory process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not enable Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon to operate more efficiently - Some pupils do not become fully bilingual - Small numbers likely to continue in the English-medium stream - Does not provide access to designated Welsh-medium primary provision in the Llanidloes catchment - Does not meet the aims and objectives of the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued small numbers in the English-medium stream

Option 2: Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently as a single stream school - All pupils at the school would study through the medium of Welsh and would develop bilingual skills - Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh - More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh - Improvement in pupils' Welsh language skills through improved Welsh ethos - Would ensure that all pupils would be taught in appropriately sized year groups - Small potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils may choose to attend other schools in order to access English-medium provision - May be unpopular with some members of the local community - Impact on non-Welsh speaking staff
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible impact on pupil numbers should pupils choose to attend other schools in order to access English-medium provision

Option 3: Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to English-medium

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would enable the school to operate more efficiently as a single stream school - Small potential financial saving to the authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There would be no Welsh-medium primary provision in the catchment - Would not attract pupils from Llanidloes who travel to Trefeglwys to access Welsh-medium provision - Does not reflect parental choices / current pupil trends - The number of English-medium pupils at the school is currently very low - Likely to be unpopular with some members of the local community - Would not provide access to designated Welsh-medium primary

	provision in the Llanidloes catchment - Does not meet the aims and objectives of the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys - Does not meet the Welsh Government's aspiration to increase the number of Welsh speakers
Opportunities	Threats
- Opportunity to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of English	- Significant reduction in pupil numbers as pupils from Llanidloes would no longer be eligible for home to school transport to the school

6. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 • The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning • The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must be achievable within current legislation • The option must be operationally achievable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets ? – Could meet x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	✓	x
2 – Value for money	x	✓	?
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	x
5 – Potential affordability	✓	✓	?
Total ✓	2	4	0
Total x	0	0	2
Outcome	Discount	Preferred	Discount

7. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred option for Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is:

Option 2: Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium

The reasons for this are:

- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently as a single stream school
- All pupils at the school would study through the medium of Welsh and would develop bilingual skills
- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh

- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh
- Improvement in pupils' Welsh language skills through improved Welsh ethos
- Would ensure that all pupils would be taught in appropriately sized year groups
- Potential financial saving to the authority
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

In order to minimise the impact on current pupils, it is recommended that the emerging preferred option would be implemented on a phased basis, with pupils currently accessing English-medium provision at the school being able to continue to do so until the end of year 6.

Further consideration of this option will now be carried out, to include consideration of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, to change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium by phasing out the English-medium stream.

8. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

8.1 Likely impact on standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills

The Council would expect changing Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to have a positive impact on provision, standards and pupil progress overall. As the change is phased in, the Council would expect that implementation would lead to more effective and efficient use of resources as the school would no longer need to duplicate provision, which, in turn, would ensure improved opportunities for learners across all ages.

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on provision, standards and progress overall for all pupils, including pupils belonging to specific groups such as English as an Additional Language, eligible for Free School Meals, Looked After Children, Additional Learning Needs.

It is also anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the skills of all pupils, in particular Welsh language skills, as it would enable all pupils to become fully bilingual in Welsh and English. Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to target support across all phases of education more effectively.

8.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would mean that eventually, all pupils would receive a fully Welsh medium education. This would mean that all pupils would be taught together, ensuring improved cohesion across the school and impacting positively on pupil well-being.

8.3 Teaching and learning experiences

8.3.1 Quality of teaching

The Council would expect that changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would lead to improvements in the quality of teaching at the school, due to the improved Welsh medium professional development and

collaboration opportunities that could be offered to staff, for example collaborating with other Welsh-medium schools within Powys and in other local authorities and educational regions to share best practice in pedagogy.

It could also enhance teachers' ability to build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills and provide pupils with a suitably wide range of experiences to develop their interest and literacy skills across a range of subjects and areas of learning.

8.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum at the school. Should this be implemented, the school would be able to focus on delivering in one language medium, which should have a positive impact on the curriculum that could be provided, ensuring that the curriculum meets the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales, as outlined in 'Our National Mission'.

8.3.3 The provision of skills

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the literacy skills of all pupils, through improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources across all age ranges, and through the ability to target across all phases of education.

In particular, the change would have a positive impact on Welsh language skills, as all pupils would be taught through the medium of Welsh, enabling all pupils to become bilingual in Welsh and English. The change would also enable the school to enhance Welsh language skills in formal teaching activities and in informal situations.

8.4 Care, support and guidance

8.4.1 Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding

Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to improve its tracking and monitoring of pupils.

The Council would expect that changing the school's language category would enable the school to further enhance its provision to prepare pupils, including those with special educational needs, to become active citizens, for example by making decisions about the life and work of the school.

It would also support how well the school's provision helps pupils to develop their understanding of the Welsh language and culture, the local community and the wider world.

8.5 Leadership and Management

8.5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self evaluation processes and improvement planning

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would lead to improvements in terms of leadership and management at the school. The proposed change would help the school to establish a clear, strategic rationale for the curriculum in terms of its benefits for pupils in preparing them to learn throughout their lives and to play a full part in society. It would also support the extent to which leaders and managers are purposeful and successful in meeting the national priority of providing purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in formal and informal situations.

Operating as a single stream school would enable the school to operate more efficiently, and leaders and managers would have more time to focus on developing effective provision across the school.

8.5.2 Professional learning

Supporting the school to move along the language continuum could provide improved professional learning opportunities for staff through greater opportunities for collaboration with other Welsh-medium schools within Powys and across Wales.

8.5.3 Use of Resources

Should the change be implemented, the school would eventually become a single stream Welsh-medium school and would be funded as such. As a Welsh-medium school, the school would be able to operate more efficiently, as there would be no need to duplicate provision, or to teach the small groups of pupils that currently exist in the school's English-medium stream.

8.6 Impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Should the school move along the language continuum, there could be a negative impact on pupils with ALN who are from families where very little or no Welsh is spoken. This would require the school to provide an enhanced level of support to these pupils in order to meet their needs.

8.7 Ability of the school/schools which are the subject of the proposals to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and each key stage of education, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this

It is anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a positive impact on the ability to deliver the full curriculum in the foundation phase and each key stage of education, as there would no longer be a requirement to duplicate provision in two streams.

It is possible that there could be some challenges during the transition period as the school would need to accommodate decreasing numbers of English-medium pupils, however should the change to the school's language category be implemented, the Council would continue to support the school throughout the transition period to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is provided to all pupils.

9 NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

9.1 Will the alternative provision have sufficient capacity and provide accommodation of at least equivalent quality for existing and projected pupil numbers?

It is not anticipated that the preferred option would impact on the school's capacity, projected pupil numbers, or the quality of accommodation.

It is possible that changing the school's language category could have some impact on pupil numbers, should pupils from the local area choose to attend alternative English-medium providers. However, it is also possible that changing the school's language category could lead to an increase in pupil numbers, as more pupils could choose to attend the school to access Welsh-medium provision.

9.2 Is the alternative provision sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same language category and (if relevant) designated religious character?

There is sufficient provision to meet existing and projected demand for Welsh-medium provision. For pupils wishing to access English-medium provision, there is alternative English-medium provision available in the catchment area at Llanidloes C.P. School, Caersws C.P. School and Llandinam C.P. School.

The school does not have a religious character – this would continue to be the case following any change to the language category.

9.3 What will be the nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils including SEN pupils?

The plan to introduce the proposed change to the school's language category on a phased basis would mean that all current pupils at the school would continue to be able to access the school, therefore there would be no impact on journeys to school or journey times.

Should pupils choose to attend English-medium provision in other locations, there would be an increase in journeys / journey times, however the distance from Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon to the nearest alternative English-medium primary provision would not be excessive.

10. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 What effect will the proposals have on surplus places in the area?

The intention is to introduce the change on a phased basis starting with the Reception year group and moving through the school each year as pupils move through the school. The intention is that all current pupils would continue to attend the school, therefore there would be no impact on surplus places.

It is possible that changing the school's language category could have some impact on pupil numbers, should pupils from the local area choose to attend alternative English-medium providers. However, it is also possible that changing the school's language category could lead to an increase in pupil numbers, as more pupils could choose to attend the school to access Welsh-medium provision.

10.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The preferred option for Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

10.3 What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?

There are no recurrent costs associated with changing the school's language category.

10.4 Will additional transport costs be incurred as a result of the proposal?

The intention is to introduce the change to the school's language category on a phased basis as pupils move through the school. It is not anticipated that additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of the change.

10.5 What are the capital costs of the proposal and is the necessary capital funding is available?

There are no capital costs associated with changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon.

10.6 What is the scale of any projected net savings (taking into account school revenue, transport and capital costs)

It is estimated that changing the school's language category would eventually result in annual revenue savings to the Council of £122k per annum, once the school is fully single-stream. There would be no saving in the first year, and although there would be opportunities for savings as the phasing takes place, this would be dependent on pupil numbers.

It is not anticipated that there would be an impact on transport costs, catering savings, and there would be no capital costs.

10.7 Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is currently projecting to be in a deficit budget position by 2022/23.

10.8 Will any savings in recurrent costs be retained in the local authority's local schools budget?

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

10.9 Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?

Changing Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category would not result in any capital receipts.

11. OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

11.1 What impact will the proposals have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds?

There would be a positive impact on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds, as they would be able to participate in a fully bilingual curriculum from the beginning of their education.

In the future, any pupils for whom Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon who wish to attend English-medium provision would need to attend alternative provision, which would have an impact on travel. However, the Council would hope that all pupils living in the catchment area of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would attend Welsh-medium provision at the school.

11.2 Any equality issues, including those identified through equality impact assessments

Supporting the school to move along the language continuum would have an impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups, however in the majority of cases, it is not anticipated that this would be a negative impact.

It is acknowledged that there may be concern about the impact of changing the school's language category on pupils with additional learning needs, however, the school would need to provide intensive and specialist support to these pupils to ensure that they weren't disadvantaged.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

11.3 Whether the school / schools involved are subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land.

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon is not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the plans to change the school's language category.

12. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF LANGUAGE MEDIUM

12.1 The extent to which existing provision by the local authority of education in the medium of English and/or Welsh exceeds or falls short

of demand or projected demand from parents for that type of provision, and the contribution the proposal would make to remedying that situation

There is currently no dedicated Welsh-medium primary provision in the Llanidloes catchment. Implementing the proposed change to the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would ensure that this type of provision was available.

Implementing the proposed change would mean that education through the medium of English would no longer be available in the village of Trefeglwys. However the trend has been an increase in demand for Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon and a decrease in demand for English-medium provision, therefore the proposed change reflects this. The proposed change would also ensure that all pupils attending Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would be fully bilingual, therefore contributing to the Welsh Government's aim to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Should pupils not want to access Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, there are other English-medium providers available in the Llanidloes catchment.

12.2 The extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon would support the local authority to meet the targets in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, as well as the Council's objective to 'Move schools along the language continuum' as outlined in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

13. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the options appraisal carried out and further consideration of the emerging preferred option against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code, the preferred option is as follows:

Option 2: Change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium

The reasons for this are:

- Would enable the school to operate more efficiently as a single stream school
- All pupils at the school would study through the medium of Welsh and would develop bilingual skills
- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh
- More opportunities could be offered through the medium of Welsh

- Improvement in pupils' Welsh language skills through improved Welsh ethos
- Would ensure that all pupils would be taught in appropriately sized year groups
- Potential financial saving to the authority
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to change Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon's language category to Welsh-medium.