

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE  
22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Rosemarie Harris  
Leader

**REPORT TITLE:** Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon Language Category

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 26th January 2021, the Council has carried out consultation on the following proposal:

- To make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from dual-stream to Welsh-medium
- This would be introduced on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022

1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet members of the responses received to the consultation and to determine whether or not to proceed with the statutory process to change the school's language category.

1.3 The report is supported by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** – Consultation Document
- **Appendix B** – Consultation Report
- **Appendix C** – Minutes of meetings with School Council, Governors and Staff
- **Appendix D** – Updated Impact Assessments
- **Appendix E** – Comments from the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee (To follow)

**2. Background**

**Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys**

2.1 On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.

2.2 The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October

2019 and March 2020. The Strategy sets out a new vision education in Powys, 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.'*

2.3 The new strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

- *A world class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core*
- *Schools that are fully inclusive, with a culture of deep collaboration in order to improve learner outcomes and experience*
- *A broad choice and high quality of provision for 14 – 19 year old learners, that includes both academic and vocational provision, meeting the needs of all learners, communities and the Powys economy*
- *Welsh-medium provision that is accessible and provides a full curriculum in Welsh from Meithrin to age 19 and beyond Provision for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) that is accessible as near to home as is practicably possible, with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables every learner to meet their potential*
- *A digitally-rich schools sector that enables all learners and staff to enhance their teaching and learning experience*
- *Community-focused schools that are the central point for multi-agency services to support children, young people, families and the community*
- *Early years provision that is designed to meet the needs of all children, mindful of their particular circumstances, language requirements or any special or additional learning needs*
- *Financially and environmentally sustainable schools*
- *The highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development*

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

- 2.5 On the 26th January 2021, the Council's Cabinet considered an options appraisal paper in respect of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, and agreed to carry out consultation on the following:
- To make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from Bilingual (dual-stream) to Welsh-medium
  - This would be introduced on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.

### **The Consultation Period**

- 2.6 Consultation on the proposal to change the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon commenced on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and ended on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- 2.7 The consultation document was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2018). The consultation document that was issued is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.8 Consultees were asked to respond to the consultation by either completing the online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the Transforming Education Team, or by writing to the Transforming Education Team.
- 2.9 During the consultation period, virtual meetings were also held with the following:
- Staff of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon
  - Governors of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon
  - School council of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon

The minutes of these meetings are attached as Appendix C, and the issues raised in the meetings are included in the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

### **Consultation Responses**

- 2.10 71 respondents completed the consultation response form which was included in the consultation document. This included paper copies as well as responses submitted using the online response form. In addition, 9 written responses were received from respondents including Estyn, by e-mail or post.
- 2.11 As well as responses from parents, pupils, staff and governors at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon and members of the local community, responses were received from the following organisations:

Trefeglwys Community Council

Llanidloes Town Council  
Mudiad Meithrin  
Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg – RhAG

- 2.12 Estyn's response to the consultation is provided on page 18 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).
- 2.13 The consultation response form asked respondents to answer a number of questions. The findings are provided in full on pages 5 to 8 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

### **Consultation Findings**

- 2.14 As part of the consultation, a consultation response form was issued, which was completed by 71 respondents. 54.9 % of respondents indicated that they were associated with Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, 8.5% indicated that they were associated with another school and 33.8% of respondents indicated that they were not associated with any school.
- 2.15 Written comments were also received by e-mail and post. These comments, as well as issues raised by those completing the consultation response form and those raised in the consultation meetings, are listed in the Consultation Report (Appendix B) from page 25 onwards, along with the Council's response to these issues. The issues raised relate to the following headings:
1. General support for the proposal
  2. General disagreement with the proposal
  3. Impact on pupils
  4. Reference to English language provision / skills
  5. Reference to the need for choice
  6. Concern about impact on pupil numbers at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon in the future
  7. Additional support that would be needed to support the change of language category
  8. Reference to transport arrangements
  9. Comments about Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon
  10. Comments about other schools
  11. Financial impact
  12. Impact on staff
  13. Impact on families / parents
  14. Reference to early years provision
  15. Reference to transition arrangements
  16. Impact on the community
  17. Comments about the Welsh language
  18. Reference to Welsh-medium education delivery models
  19. Reference to discrimination / inequality
  20. Impact on protected characteristic groups

21. Comments about the consultation documentation
22. Comments about the consultation process
23. Reference to council strategies
24. Reference to alternative options

### **3 Advice**

- 3.1 Based on the findings of the consultation, the advice of officers is that the Council should proceed with the proposal to change the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon by publishing a Statutory Notice.
- 3.2 The reasons for this are outlined below:
  - i) To improve educational outcomes
    - Children would no longer be taught in small mixed age classes
    - There would be more pupils who are fluent and confident in using the Welsh and English language equally
  - ii) To improve educational provision
    - Opportunities to develop a broader curriculum to meet the needs of pupils
    - Having one language stream would make it easier to track and target the progress of pupils and their well-being
  - iii) To improve leadership and management
    - The school's management team could work more efficiently
  - iv) To improve efficiency in the delivery of education
    - Potential for the school to operate more efficiently through more efficient deployment of staff and resources
  - v) To increase the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education
    - More pupils would be fluent in both Welsh and English, therefore contributing to the Welsh Government's aim to achieve a million Welsh speakers by the year 2050.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the Statutory Notice will be published in June 2021, and that a further report, summarising any objections received, will be considered by the Council's Cabinet in the autumn term 2021.
- 3.4 The target would be to implement the change on a phased basis, year by year, starting with Reception aged pupils in September 2022.

- 3.5 It must be noted that proceeding with the proposal to change the school's language category does not preclude that school from being a part of future reorganisation proposals.

#### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1 Based on the current formula, the formula funding requirement will reduce as a result of these proposals and 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, and there would be no capital costs.

- 4.2 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, HR and Finance.
- 4.3 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report and can support the recommendation.

#### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view.
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services ( Monitoring Officer ) has commented as follows: " I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

#### **6. Comment from local member(s)**

- 6.1 Cllr Phyl Davies: I hope that Cabinet will take account of all responses before making the decision and thank members of the community for the responses received.

#### **7. Integrated Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 An initial impact assessment was considered by Cabinet on the 26th January 2021.
- 7.2 In addition, a range of draft impact assessments were produced as part of the consultation documentation. These included an Integrated Impact Assessment, an Equalities Impact Assessment, a Community Impact Assessment and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

7.3 These draft impact assessments have been updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation period, and are attached in Appendix D.

## 8. **Recommendation**

- To receive the Consultation Report in respect of changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon.
- To approve the publication of a statutory notice to make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon to Welsh-medium, on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.

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