



Proposal to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

Final Impact Assessments

June 2021

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Proposal to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

Final Impact Assessments

1. Introduction

Powys County Council is consulting on proposals to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative school.

In line with the Council's policy, an Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out which incorporates the Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management.

In addition, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) requires local authorities to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment in relation to all school reorganisation proposals. For proposals which affect teaching through the medium of Welsh, local authorities are also required to carry out a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

The impact assessments are provided in draft form as part of the consultation documentation. The draft Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out based on the latest PLASC information available. The draft Community Impact Assessment has been carried out with input from Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.

Following the consultation period, the impact assessments have been updated to incorporate any issues raised during the consultation period. The updated versions will be considered by the council's Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.

2. Integrated Impact Assessment

The Impact Assessment (IA) below incorporates Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management, supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Emma Palmer/Lynette Lovell	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
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Proposal
To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

Outline Summary / Description of Proposal
In February 2021, the Council's Cabinet approved carrying out consultation on the following proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Date
1	Sarah Astley - Strategic Programme Manager – Schools Transformation	January 2021
2	Marianne Evans - Senior Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021
3	Marianne Evans – Service Manager Schools Transformation	June 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£33,891.67	£24,208.33	£	£58,100

3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	Consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code was carried out from the 14 th April 2021 to the 2 nd June 2021.

4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?) PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY	
Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing and Community Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data Protection Impact Assessment	

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ✓ No

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ✓ No

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys

North

Mid

South

Brecon

Builth and Llanwrtyd

Crickhowell

Hay and Talgarth

Knighton and Presteigne

Llandrindod and Rhayader

Llanfair Caereinion

Llanfyllin

Llanidloes

Machynlleth

Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welshpool and Montgomery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in Castle Caereinion as there would no longer be a school in the village. It is also possible that there would be an impact on local businesses in Castle Caereinion and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area.	Poor		Poor
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		
Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills	The proposal would result in closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative	Good		

	<p>school would be Berriew C.P. School. However it is possible that pupils may also choose to attend Welshpool C. in W. School as the nearest Church in Wales school, or Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School or Guilsfield C.P. School as other nearby schools.</p> <p>The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils. Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, Berriew C.P. School and Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School were categorised as Amber in the latest school categorisations carried out in 2019, whilst Welshpool C. in W. School was categorised as Yellow. Guilsfield C.P. School was classified as a Green school.</p> <p>The alternative schools which pupils may attend are larger schools, and it is anticipated that they would provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Welshpool C. in W. School moved to a new build in January 2021, which has further improved the educational experience provided to learners, ensuring that the school can provide education which fully meets the requirements of the new curriculum in 21st century facilities. Any current pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School</p>			
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	transferring to Welshpool C. in W. School would also benefit from these improved facilities.			
<p>Residents and Communities</p> <p>We will support our residents and communities</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion. Many comments received emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community for the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close.</p> <p>In particular, there could be an impact on the financial viability of the community centre and closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Castle Caereinion in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village. In addition, the village has already suffered a loss of community facilities, and there is concern that closure of the school could lead to closure of other facilities in the village.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement</p>	Very Poor	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.</p> <p>Most of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, should Castle Caereinion C. in W. school close, are located in rural areas. These schools would already be experienced in providing a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils including those who access home-to-school transport.</p>	Very Poor

	<p>for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Comments received suggest closure of the school could mean that families and others aren't attracted to live in the Castle Caereinion area any more, reducing community interaction.</p> <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This will be updated as required throughout the process.</p>			
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>A prosperous Wales:</p> <p>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which</p>	No impact	Neutral		

<p>generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>				
<p>A resilient Wales:</p> <p>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to their nearest alternative school..</p> <p>It is also recognised that there may be additional transport required for secondary aged pupils to Welshpool High School if pupils transferred to alternative schools in the Welshpool cluster area.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is expected that the number of pupils requiring additional transport would be relatively small, and it is possible that they could be accommodated on transport which is already operating.</p>	
<p>A healthier Wales:</p> <p>A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p> <p>Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017:</p> <p>Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.</p> <p>Any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for the pupils involved, and that this is exacerbated this year due to the Covid pandemic.</p> <p>Information received during the consultation includes the potential impact of closing the school on the Community Centre, and concern</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools.</p> <p>Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The Council would expect that pupils are fully supported by their teachers and other staff at the school during any periods of uncertainty to minimise the impact on their wellbeing.</p> <p>Should the school close, the receiving school or any other school pupils would transfer to would provide support to pupils to aid their transition, ensuring a successful transition to their new school to ensure that all pupils can achieve their potential.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

	around the future viability of the Centre. The Centre plays an important role to support the wellbeing of members of the community as a number of events and activities take place at the Centre.		Should the school close, the management committee of the Community Centre would need to consider how best to utilise the Centre so that it remains viable.	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities:</p> <p>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion. Many comments received emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close.</p> <p>In particular, there could be an impact on the financial viability of the community centre and closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Castle Caereinion in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village. In addition, the village has already suffered a loss of community facilities, and there is concern that closure of the school could lead to closure of other facilities in the village.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p>	Very Poor	As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.	Very Poor

	<p>Comments received suggest closure of the school could mean that families and others aren't attracted to live in the Castle Caereinion area any more, reducing community interaction.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>			
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> <p>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</p> <p>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.</p>	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>The Council has carried out consultation on the proposal, which included consultation with all pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans had the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p><i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i></p>	<p>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>During the consultation period, comments were received which expressed concern that pupils transferring to primary schools in the Welshpool cluster would then transfer to Welshpool High School, which is an English-medium secondary school, instead of Caereinion High School, which is a dual stream secondary school, and that this would mean that they had less opportunities to use the language and less exposure to the language.</p>	Neutral	All schools of all language categories are expected to provide opportunities for pupils to use Welsh.	
<p><i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i></p>	<p>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>During the consultation period, comments were received which expressed concern that pupils</p>	Neutral	All schools of all language categories are expected to provide opportunities for pupils to use Welsh.	

	transferring to primary schools in the Welshpool cluster would then transfer to Welshpool High School, which is an English-medium secondary school, instead of Caereinion High School, which is a dual stream secondary school, and that this would mean that they had less opportunities to use the language and less exposure to the language.			
People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.	<p>Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools.</p> <p>It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>However, during the consultation period, comments were received about the extent of activities available at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School and that the size of the school meant that all pupils had an opportunity to take part, which may not be the case in larger schools.</p>	Neutral	All schools, regardless of size, are expected to provide extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, including sport, art and recreation.	Neutral

A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u>
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		drop down box below		Please select from drop down box below
Age	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
Disability	<p>The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation refer to the fact that Castle Caereinion C. in W. School has received significant investment to make disability adaptations to the school.</p>	Neutral	Should the school close, the Council would ensure that the requirements for pupils with additional needs are met at whichever school they may choose to attend.	Neutral
Gender reassignment	No impact			
Marriage or civil partnership	No impact			
Race	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
Religion or belief	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, regardless of their religion or belief.	Neutral	The Council has an appeals process for transport applications. If transport is refused, parents could appeal the decision.	Neutral

	<p>Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is a church school. Should the school close, alternative church provision is available at Welshpool C. in W. School for pupils wishing to continue to access denominational provision, however the Council's home to school transport policy does not provide transport to denominational provision, therefore pupils would not receive transport to the school unless it was their closest school.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation suggest that this has a negative impact on the ability of pupils/parents to access alternative denominational provision, and that this could particularly impact any parents on low incomes or without access to their own transport who wish for their children to continue to access church provision.</p>			
Sex	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.	Neutral		
Sexual Orientation	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		
Pregnancy and Maternity	No impact	Neutral		
Socio-economic duty	The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including any eligible for Free School Meals, however based on PLASC 2020 information, no	Poor	Most of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, should Castle Caereinion C. in W. school close, are located in rural areas. These schools would already be experienced in providing a range of	

	<p>pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School were eligible for Free School Meals.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. This would mean that pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households or pupils from homes that do not have their own transport. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>		<p>extra-curricular activities for pupils including those who access home-to-school transport.</p>	
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
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<p>Long Term: <i>Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</i></p>	<p>Pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are low and are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p>	<p>Good</p>		
<p>Collaboration: <i>Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.</i></p>	<p>Consultation has been carried out, which has enabled all interested parties to give their views. This included an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		
<p>Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i></p> <p>Unpaid Carers:</p> <p><i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i></p>	<p>Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code in order to achieve this. All interested parties have had an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise will be reported to Cabinet and will be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed.</p> <p>All stakeholders have had the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this would include any unpaid carers in the area.</p>	<p>Good</p>		
<p>Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i></p> <p>Safeguarding:</p>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation</p>	<p>Good</p>		

<p><i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i></p>	<p>proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>			
<p>Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		
<p>Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School as there would no longer be a school in Castle Caereinion, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process.</p> <p>Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process was supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). This included consultation with staff, which ensured that they had an opportunity to give their views.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		
<p>Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?</p>	<p>Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>All staff at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are female.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		

Welsh Language impact on staff	Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff.	Neutral		
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements
Consultation responses

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Castle Caereinion	There would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion. Many comments received emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils.	Major	As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.	Major	

	<p>It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close.</p> <p>In particular, there could be an impact on the financial viability of the community centre and closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Castle Caereinion in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village. In addition, the village has already suffered a loss of community facilities, and there is concern that closure of the school could lead to closure of other facilities in the village.</p> <p>Comments received suggest closure of the school could mean that families and others aren't attracted to live in the Castle Caereinion area any more, reducing community interaction.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for</p>				
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	<p>parents in order to access school activities / events, which is likely to have a greater impact on low income families and/or families who do not have access to their own transport.</p> <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out. This has been updated to reflect comments received during the consultation period.</p>				
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
Period of uncertainty for Castle Caereinion C. in W. School if a statutory process is carried out and implemented which might have a negative effect on standards at the school	Medium	The Council to provide advice and support to the school and governing body to ensure that standards and performance do not deteriorate during the transition period	Medium
Uncertainty for staff during any transition period might result in some staff leaving	Medium	Engagement with staff to take place throughout the process and staff to be kept informed of developments	Medium
Negative impact on pupils wellbeing which has already been affected due to the pandemic.	High	It is expected that pupils are supported through any periods of change by teachers and other staff at the school.	Medium

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Castle Caereinion due to loss of educational provision from the village, potential impact on the viability of the Community Centre, loss of close links with the local Church, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils and impact on families. The wellbeing of pupils, staff and families has also been raised as a key concern, particularly as the consultation process has been carried out during a pandemic.

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Consultation responses.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

This impact assessment will be reviewed at each stage of the process

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley		
Head of Service:	Lynette Lovell		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Phyl Davies		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Cabinet	Date required	

3. Equality Impact Assessment

Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



Proposal	To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
Service Area	Schools Service
Date of Assessment	January 2021
Lead Person undertaking the assessment	Huw Rowlands
Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	Lynette Lovell

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

1. AIM or PURPOSE

Briefly describe the aim or purpose of the change proposal being assessed.

In February 2021, the Council's Cabinet approved carrying out consultation on the following proposal:

- To close Castle Caereinion C. in W. Primary School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

2. OBJECTIVES

Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.

The Council is proposing to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES

i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?

The benefits of the proposal are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Castle Caereinion C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities

4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE

How does this change proposal relate to Vision 2025?

Learning and Skills is one of the four priorities outlined in Corporate Improvement Plan 2020-25: Vision 2025. Within this priority, the Plan includes a commitment to 'Improve our schools infrastructure'.

5. DATA USED

5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment?

Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.

Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	✓
Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics.	
Wider research reports and findings.	
Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment.	

5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?

No

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Quantitative Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics.	<u>PLASC January 2020</u>
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<p>Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?</p>	<p>Based on the information provided in the school’s PLASC return in January 2020, the following pupils belong to the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free school meals: 4.2% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals. - ALN: 29.2% of pupils have special educational needs. Of these, 16.7% of pupils are on School Action, 12.5% of pupils are on School Action Plus and 0.0% of pupils have statements. - Disabilities: 29.2% of pupils have additional learning needs. - English as an Additional Language: 8.3% of pupils are identified as EAL pupils. - Ethnicity: The ethnic group of 79.2% of pupils in the school is White British.8.3% of pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British. - Looked after Children: 0% of pupils are looked after. <p>This information shows that a proportion of pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups will be affected by this proposal. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4.2% of pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is lower than the Powys average for primary schools (12.7%) - 29.2% of pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School have additional learning needs. This is higher than the Powys average for primary schools (18.8%) - 8.3% of pupils are identified as EAL pupils and belong to ethnic groups other than White British. <p>The proposal to close Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would impact on all pupils currently attending the school, including those pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups.</p>
<p>6.2 Qualitative Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns.</p>	<p>Full consultation will be carried out on the proposal relating to Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, which will include consultation with pupils at the affected schools. This will provide qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and any additional impact on pupils that belong to protected characteristic groups.</p>

<p>Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this? ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views? iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position? iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics? 	<p>Further detail will be added to this EqIA following the conclusion of the consultation period and the consideration of the responses received.</p>
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7. EqIA RESULT

Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.

<p>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]</p>	✓
<p>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]</p>	
<p>The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]</p>	

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?</p> <p>ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?</p> <p>iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) The proposal will impact on pupils with additional learning needs, pupils that belong to ethnic groups other than White British and EAL pupils. The proportion of pupils with ALN at the school is higher than the Powys average.</p> <p>ii) 4.2% of pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is lower than the Powys average.</p> <p>iii) Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is an English medium school - therefore the proposal will not directly affect Welsh speakers.</p>
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9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p> <p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?</p> <p>iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>Should the proposal be implemented, Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, including any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend that school, as some additional travel would be required in order to attend their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the school, there is no reason to believe that the nearest alternative schools would be unable to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils belonging to Ethnic Groups other than White British, pupils eligible for Free School Meals and Looked After Children. It is recognised that Castle Caereinion has received significant investment for disability adaptations, however, the Council would ensure that all schools would be able to meet the needs of learners with disabilities.</p>
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9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?

<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</p>
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4. Community Impact Assessment – Castle Caereinion C. in W. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Berriew C.P. School	4.2%
Castle Caereinion C. in W. School	75.0%
Guilsfield C.P. School	8.3%
Llanidloes C.P. School	4.2%
Welshpool C. in W. School	8.3%

This suggests that 75% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 25% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides the following after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Craft Club
- Coding Club
- Sports Club
- Science Club
- Breakfast Club

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

The school works closely with Castle Caereinion Bright Sparks playgroup. The children from the playgroup benefit from the use of the school building as well as the Community Centre. This helps the children

familiarise themselves with the school in readiness for their transition. It also enables a sharing of equipment and resources between the school and the playgroup. This close working relationship allows for the youngest members of the community to attend a playgroup that is linked to their feeder primary school. The playgroup is able to take place in the hall as the school covers the hiring fee for the time that the hall is being used by Bright Sparks.

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- Various activities such as school plays and Summer and Winter fetes, which are very popular with members of the community.

v) Other links between the school and the community

- The school are regular attendees at the Church for Services, with children doing readings and singing at Services.
- Links with the Castle Caereinion Recreation Association.
- Members of the community are invited to all school events, which they enjoy being able to attend.
- The school have organised for a Dragon Bags clothes recycling bank to be sited in the school carpark to allow members of the community to have clothes recycling facilities in their immediate area.
- The Community Hall benefits from using the school's refuse facilities, thus saving them additional costs.
- The school contributes to the community's quarterly newsletter, Castle News.
- Community Remembrance Day activities, to include collecting money and attending a prayer service with local members of the community.
- Harvest – the school collects donations of food items to create hampers which are then donated to members of the local community who are most in need, which are delivered by the children.
- The school is the main financial contributor to the Community Centre.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school, and Castle Caereinion C. in W. School would close.

As a Church in Wales School, The Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

It is acknowledged that there would be a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion were the school to close. There would be a potential loss of community facilities and services provided by the school.

Comments received during the consultation suggest that the adjacent Community Centre would be unviable as the school is the main financial contributor.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, then the intention is that all existing Castle Caereinion C.in W. pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school. There would therefore be an impact on distance and travelling times for pupils currently attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School for whom this is currently their closest school.

The closest alternative school for the pupils that were attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 is as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Castle Caereinion
Berriew C.P. School	70.8%
Welshpool C. in W. School	12.5%
Guilsfield C.P. School	8.3%
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	4.2%
Llanidloes C.P. School	4.2%

An analysis of pupils attending Castle Caereinion C. in W. School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to the nearest alternative school for pupils for whom Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is currently the closest school would be 3.8 miles.

Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is also acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include provision for effective transition to the receiving school by the headteacher and class teachers.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

The school's grounds are used by members of the community and local children outside of school hours. Children, young people and their families sit in the gardens of the school grounds having picnics and using the frames to play on. If the school was closed, this facility may no longer be available, and there would be an impact on community safety as this forms a safe place for families and children to be when the school is closed, without requiring children to cross the road to the local playground.

Should the school close, although the Local Authority would provide transport for pupils, if a parent needed to attend the new school they would struggle to get there in a timely manner with the current public transport options.

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Castle Caereinion C. in W. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that the school provides a number of facilities which could be attractive to families, and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families.

Should there be no school in Castle Caereinion, it is possible that families would leave the village in order to live in the community of any alternative school, and that young families would be discouraged from moving to the village.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. As a Church in Wales School, the school building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that there are extensive links between the school and the community, and that the school and the support and join each other's events. The school's outdoor space is available for use by the members of the community, and functions being held in the hall also use the school's outdoor areas for some of their activities, and events held by the school are attended by the whole community. There are also extensive links with the local church.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, there would be no school in Castle Caereinion. As a Church in Wales School, the school building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school could impact on the local economy. In particular, there would be a reduction in employment opportunities in the village, and an impact on local businesses in Castle Caereinion and the surrounding area. It is also noted that the school is an important funding source for the community centre, and therefore in the longer term, it is possible that closure of the school could impact on the viability of the community centre.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

Should the Council continue with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support would depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include provision for effective transition to the receiving school by headteacher and class teachers.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities/events.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)**

The information received from the school indicates that there are extensive links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Castle Caereinion would have a significant effect on the local community.

As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

xi) Issues raised during the consultation period

A number of comments were received during the consultation period which related to the proposal's impact on the community.

These comments are listed in full in the consultation report produced in respect of this proposal along with the Council's response to the points raised, and are also summarised below:

- **Travel implications**

- The proposal would lead to additional travel
- Concern about the impact on the environment
- Concern about impact on pupils' access to after school activities
- Concern about the impact on low income families

- **Comments about Church in Wales provision**

- Links between the church and the school
- Concern that pupils would not be able to access alternative Church in Wales provision
- Transport to alternative Church in Wales provision

- **Impact on the community**

- General concern about the impact on the community / village
- Concern about impact on the community centre
- Reference to housing developments in Castle Caereinion
- Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Castle Caereinion
- Reference to the loss of other community facilities
- The school brings the community together / is a focus for community activity
- Concern that pupils would no longer feel part of the community
- Comments relating to community well-being
- Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school
- General comments about the closure of rural / village schools
- Queries about what would happen to the school building

xii) Conclusion

The proposal would have a significant impact on the community of Castle Caereinion as there would be no provision in Castle Caereinion. Many comments received during the consultation period emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close.

In particular, there could be an impact on the financial viability of the community centre, and closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Castle Caereinion in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village. In addition, the village has already suffered a loss of community facilities, and there is concern that closure of the school could lead to the closure of other facilities in the village.

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Castle Caereinion C. in W. School, and that as the school is a small school, all pupils are able to take part in all activities. Should the proposal be implemented, then the school would close with pupils moving to their nearest alternative school. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school provision in the village of Castle Caereinion. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Castle Caereinion building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Castle Caereinion School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Castle Caereinion.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Castle Caereinion is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils to their nearest alternative school in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events, which is likely to have a greater impact on low income families and/or families who do not have access to their own transport. The Council recognises that should Castle Caereinion C. in W. School close, pupils would transfer to alternative primary schools, and that some of these would be in a different secondary cluster i.e Welshpool High School. The Council also agrees that this would have transport implications as outlined below:

Pupils who attend Castle Caereinion CiW School normally transfer to Caereinion High School and free home-to-school transport is normally provided for those pupils attending Castle Caereinion CiW School to Caereinion High School.

Should Castle Caereinion CiW Primary School close, pupils living in the Castle Caereinion area would be provided with free home-to-school transport to their nearest or catchment secondary school. In the case of pupils choosing to attend Berriew CP School, Welshpool CiW Primary School or Guilsfield CP School, they would ordinarily transfer to Welshpool High School.

Pupils currently accessing free home-to-school transport from the Castle Caereinion area to Caereinion High School would continue to receive this service until they finish their education. However, this would not be available to pupils from Castle Caereinion if they have transferred to Berriew C.P. School, Guilsfield C. P. School or Welshpool C. in W. School unless Caereinion High School is their nearest secondary school. This would have an implication for families who may already have older siblings being transported to Caereinion High School.