



**Proposal to close Ysgol Bro Cynllaith**

**Draft Community Impact Assessment**

**June 2021**

## Draft Community Impact Assessment – Ysgol Bro Cynllaith

This draft Community Impact Assessment has been developed with input from the school. Should the Council proceed to consultation, the Community Impact Assessment will be updated after the consultation period to reflect feedback received.

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

The closest provider for pupils attending Ysgol Bro Cynllaith in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Ysgol Bro Cynllaith	88.5%
Llangedwyn C. in W. School	3.8%
Trefonen Primary School (Shropshire)	3.8%
Gobowen Primary School (Shropshire)	3.8%

This suggests that 88.5% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 11.5% 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:

- After School Club
- Breakfast Club
- Dragon Sports Club
- Table Tennis Club
- Music lessons
- Eco Club
- Dance Club (ran by pupils)
- Drama Club (ran by pupils)
- Tennis Club
- School Council
- Criw Cymraeg
- Film Club

- ICT and Code Cub
- Craft Club
- Cooking Club
- 5-a-side Football Club
- Welly Wednesday Club (where pupils explore the local environment and learn about nature)

Whilst some of these clubs are run by staff and governors, some are run by pupils.

**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:

- After School Club (Clwb Cynllaith – also open to secondary pupils)
- Ti a Fi Llansilin held on the site
- Cylch Meithrin Llansilin weekly meetings
- National and local government elections and referendums
- Llansilin Over 60 Club held fortnightly
- Llansilin Village Show held annually
- Llansilin Bowls Club
- Llansilin Choir Rehearsal/Practice
- History Club
- Community Council meetings
- The school field is in constant use as a village plying field for all children and was listed as a Public Green Space in a recent planning application
- Bring and Buy Sales
- The school field is used for the annual school Sports Day – a well attended event by parents, grandparents and other members of the community.

**iv) Other use by the community of the school building**

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

- Ffair yr Ysgub
- Easter Bingo - a well supported community event vital for fundraising
- Macmillian Coffee Mornings
- Cake Sales
- PTFA Meetings
- Storytelling Workshops

- Christmas Fayre including Santa's Grotto
- Use of the school field for the annual Llansilin Village Show

**v) Other links between the school and the community**

- The premises of Llansilin Memorial Hall are leased to Powys County Council giving the school a substantive exclusive occupation of the premises. The premises are shared with the school by the Hall Trustees (the Hall Management Committee) to provide out of school hours accommodation for the activities of the following community organisations:
  - o Cymdeithas Ddywylliadol
  - o Llansilin Playschool (Cylch Meithrin)
  - o Over 60s Club
  - o Indoor Bowls Club
  - o Llansilin Community Council
  - o History Society
  - o Annual Village Show
  - o Parent Teacher Association
  - o Whist Drives
  - o Playing Fields Association
  - o Côr Cymysg Llansilin
  - o Table Tennis Club
  - o Funeral refreshments
  - o After school activities
- Use of St Silin's Church for various celebrations through the year, eg. Nativity Plays, Harvest Festival, Leaver's Service – these links between the two establishments are vital for the community
- Pantomimes/Plays
- Christmas Fayre with Santa's Grotto
- Annual Llansilin Show Day
- PTFA meetings
- Community Carol Singing and refreshments
- Easter Bingo – a massive fundraising event
- May Day Fun Day where children take part in Maypole Dancing
- Bore Cymraeg
- Printing of the Village Show Programme and Church Newsletter
- Pupil litter picking activities benefiting the village

**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, Ysgol Bro Cynllaith would close and pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools in Powys and there would no longer be a school in Llansilin. It is acknowledged that this would mean that there would be no school in Llansilin, meaning that

any community facilities provided by the school would no longer be available.

There is a community hall in Llansilin (village memorial hall) which is located near the school, and which provides facilities and services, which are complemented by the school. Should there be no school in Llansilin, the community hall would continue to be available for community events and activities.

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

Should the proposal be implemented, Ysgol Bro Cynllaith would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools in Powys. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Llangedwyn C. in W. School.

In March 2021, the Council's Cabinet agreed to carry out consultation on a proposal to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School, which could mean that there would be no school in Llangedwyn in the future. Should there be no school in Llansilin or Llangedwyn, the closest alternative school for pupils currently attending Ysgol Bro Cynllaith would be Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant C.P. School and Llansantffraid C. in W. School

An analysis of pupils attending Ysgol Bro Cynllaith in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to an alternative school in Powys for pupils for whom Ysgol Bro Cynllaith is their closest school would be 5.8 miles. **If there was no school in Llansilin or Llangedwyn, the furthest distance to an alternative school for pupils in Powys for whom Ysgol Bro Cynllaith is their closest school would be 14.5 miles.**

Home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport which is in operation at that time. Whilst free transport would be provided to eligible pupils, 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.

**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 closest alternative schools.

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

- A current mini bus driver who transports children from Cefn Canol, through Rhiwlas, Moelfre and Llansilin to Llanrhaeadr says that the journey ONE WAY is 28 miles which can take up to 75 minutes.
- Parents have raised serious concerns about subjecting very young children to long journey times, early starts and late returns, bad enough in summer months but made even worse in the winter months, this is bound to have a massive impact on their capacity to learn.
- The worsening state of the roads is also a major concern which will be made all the more worse by heightened use by parents taking / collecting their children from either Llanfyllin or Llanrhaeadr.
- There are so many things to consider, including none the least, toilet issues for the very young.
- Child safeguarding – there will be no teacher/child/parent interaction during school drop off / collection – a vital part of the day for some pupils for their mental health and welfare.
- Very often the only contact parents from the outer rural areas of this community have with others is when the drop/collect their child from school. This will be very damaging for the community.
- Child wellbeing is not being considered, a four year old child should not be sitting on a coach for over 40 minutes before arriving at school.
- Moving children to Llanfyllin/Llanrhaeadr would result in a child's school day being increased to 8 hours which is far too long for young children and totally unacceptable.
- Ultimate traffic congestion in our small village street as there will without doubt be more coaches / mini buses used to take the children to and from school. This also raises serious road safety issues for the children. The current high school bus already struggles to turn about sometimes and as we are all well aware children can be unpredictable when distracted and confused in crowds of other older children with the potential of running out behind the bus.
- Ideally, a child should not be expected to make several changes on public transport. Best practice suggests that a child of primary school age should not travel for longer than 45 minutes
- There will be a huge impact on the environment with increased emissions/pollution.
- In a time where we are being encouraged to walk or cycle to school this seems to go completely against what the Government are saying.
- The current bus stop is totally unsuitable for the volume of children it would be expected to house.

- Many children will be at a disadvantage as they would be unable to take part in after school activities due to the fact that there will be no transport home and parents do not have the time or the wherewithal to collect them. Unacceptable that these children will be unable to join in with clubs they have come to love.
- Many parents have already said they WILL NOT be sending their child/children to either Llanfyllin or Llanrhaeadr – they don't want them on buses and driving them to school is not an option when they work in the opposite direction. We stand to lose these families to England
- The local roads are narrow and poorly maintained, poorly lit or not lit at all with virtually no pavements – if we are expecting young children to wait at pickup points especially in the winter months – we feel this is a very worrying safety issue.
- School closure will require the provision of transport for children to the alternative school. This will, presumably be a cost borne by the LEA. Children of primary age will also require additional supervision while travelling. How will this be achieved and at whose cost?
- There is confusion over which is Llansilin's actual 'nearest' Welsh school – we should already be armed with this information, but nonetheless as we understand it transport will only be supplied to our 'nearest' school. If this is indeed Llanrhaeadr – the new Welsh medium school – then many parents will not be sending their children there – the option then would be the long journey by car to Llanfyllin or to simply take their child across the border to an English school.
- We were led to understand that it was when the Education Committee visited the school in 2003 and experienced for themselves the journey involved, that they decided against closing the school. The journey involved has not changed.

**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 Ysgol Bro Cynllaith 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 a developer of a new housing estate in Llansilin, via the school indicates that there currently 23 homes being built which will mostly go to couples and young families. The development will be fully completed within 12 months. They have suggested that if the school is closed then these

properties may be bought as second homes which they suggest would have an impact on the local economy.

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services and activities are provided by the school, including some facilities which could be attractive to families and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families. Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi settings meet on the school site.

Should there be no school in Llansilin, it is likely that there would be an impact on the other associated facilities available in the village, which could have an impact on families with school-age children, and which could encourage these families to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

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

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services are provided in the school, and it is regularly used as a village meeting and performance place.

There is a community hall in Llansilin which would continue to be available should there be no school in the village, therefore community activities, events and other services could be provided here. However, it is suggested by the school that closure of the school could have a significant impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

- **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 a wide range of events take place in the community events and activities take place in the school, as indicated in sections (iii), (iv) and (v) above. It is anticipated that that these events and activities would take place in the community hall should there be no school in Llansilin. However, it is acknowledged that the Hall relies on the support of the school, and that closure of the school could have a significant impact on the viability of the hall in the longer term.

- **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, and potentially the loss of families from Llansilin could have some impact on local business in Llansilin and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area. Information received from the school suggests that the possible loss of the school would also have an impact on the community cohesion of the area. Implementation of the proposal could eventually lead to a reduction in employment opportunities in the village of Llansilin.

- **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)**

As indicated in section (viii) above, 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 closest alternative schools in Powys.

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 is currently extensive use of the Llansilin building, and significant links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Llansilin would have a significant effect on the local community.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it is anticipated that these services would be provided in the community hall should there be no school in Llansilin. However, the school has indicated that the closure of the school could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run. Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it would endeavour to work with the community in Llansilin to identify a suitable alternative.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Ysgol Bro Cynllaith. Should there be no school in Llansilin, pupils would transfer to alternative schools in Powys. 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 for pupils for whom Ysgol Bro Cynllaith is currently the closest

school, additional travel would be required to enable pupils to access their closest school. This could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

The information received by the school suggests that there are extensive links between the school and the local community, and that many community activities are arranged in the school which are accessed by the community. It is therefore acknowledged that closure of the school could have an impact on the community in terms of the services and activities available.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal, it is anticipated that facilities and services would be provided in the community hall should there be no school in Llansilin. However, the school has indicated that the closure of the school could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llansilin 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.