

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET EXECUTIVE
21 September 2021**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rosemarie Harris
Leader

REPORT TITLE: Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon Language Category

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 22nd June 2021, the Council published a Statutory Notice proposing to change the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from dual stream to Welsh-medium 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 outcome of the statutory objection period.
- 1.3 The report includes a recommendation to proceed with implementation of the proposal on a phased basis from the 1st September 2022.
- 1.4 The report is supported by the following appendices:
- **Appendix A** – Statutory Notice (Welsh)
 - **Appendix A** – Statutory Notice (English)
 - **Appendix B** – Objection Report
 - **Appendix C** – Updated Impact Assessments

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 was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018) from the 25th February 2021 to the 15th April 2021.
- 2.7 A Consultation Report listing the issues raised during the consultation and the authority's response to them was published. This was considered by Cabinet on the 22nd June 2021.
- 2.8 At the meeting on the 22nd June 2021, Cabinet agreed to proceed with the process to change the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon through the publication of a Statutory Notice.

Statutory Notice

- 2.9 Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 22nd June 2021, the Council published a Statutory Notice proposing the following:
- i. *To make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, Trefeglwys, Powys, SY17 5PH from Dual Stream to Welsh-medium.*
 - ii. *This would be introduced on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.*

The proposal will be introduced on a phase basis as the pupils joining the school's Reception class in September 2022 move through the school. The phasing of the implementation for each year group would be as follows:

Reception – September 2022	Year 4 – September 2026
Year 1 – September 2023	Year 5 – September 2027
Year 2 – September 2024	Year 6 – September 2028.'
Year 3 – September 2025	

- 2.10 The Statutory Notice was published on the 24th June 2021 for a period of 28 days, in accordance with the guidance within the School Organisation Code (2018). A copy of the Statutory Notice is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.11 The objection period ended on the 22nd July 2021.

Objections

- 2.12 Two objections were received during the statutory objection period. These objections and the Council's response to the issues raised are listed in the Objection Report, which is attached as Appendix B.

3 Advice

- 3.1 Having considered the objections received, it is recommended that the Council proceeds with implementation of the proposal to change the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon from dual stream to Welsh-medium on a phased basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022, as outlined in the Statutory Notice (Appendix A).

- 3.2 The reasons for this are as follows:

- 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 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 The draft impact assessments were updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation period and the updated impact assessments were considered by Cabinet on the 22nd June 2021 when considering whether or not to proceed with the publication of a statutory notice.

7.4 These have been further updated following the objection period, and the updated version is attached as Appendix C.

8. **Recommendation**

- To receive the Objection Report in respect of changing the language category of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon.
- To approve the proposal to make a regulated alteration to alter the medium of instruction at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, Trefeglwys from Dual Stream to Welsh-medium on a phase basis, year-by-year, starting with Reception in September 2022.

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