



Proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Updated Impact Assessments

Updated September 2021

Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	2
2 Integrated Impact Assessment	3
3 Equality Impact Assessment	21
4 Community Impact Assessment	28

Proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

Updated Impact Assessments

1. Introduction

Powys County Council has consulted on a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

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.

These impact assessments were provided in draft form during the consultation period and have been updated following the consultation. The Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out based on the latest PLASC information available. The Community Impact Assessment has been carried out with input from the affected school.

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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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	RW – Transforming Education Programme Officer	January 2021
2	ME – Senior Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021
3	SA / ME – Amended following consultation	August 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL
£	£	£34,416.67	£24,583.33	£	£59,000.00

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 between 14 th April 2021 and 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	✓
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	✓
Education	✓
Finance	✓
Highways, Transportation and Recycling	✓
Housing and Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal and Democratic Services	✓
Property, Planning and Public Protection	✓
Transformation and Communications	✓
Workforce and OD	✓
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 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?	IMPACT 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?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	<p>Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in the village of Dolau as there would no longer be a school in the area. It is also possible that there would be an impact on local businesses in Dolau and the surrounding area, should there be less people in the area.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation expressed concern that the proposal would mean that Dolau would be less attractive to new / young families which would impact on the economy. However, pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon have been low for a number of years, which does not suggest that significant numbers of families have moved to the area in recent years, even though the school has been in existence.</p> <p>Comments were also made which suggested that the Mid Wales Growth Deal would increase the</p>	Poor		Poor

	number of families in the area. The Mid Wales Growth Deal is intended to boost the Mid Wales economy, however it is unlikely that this would directly increase the number of young families in the Dolau area.			
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	<p>As stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School teaches children in two classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council's funding formula, the school's funding per pupil is higher than the Council's average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys' Strategy is intended to improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil's learning entitlement and experience.</p> <p>It is the Council's view, as confirmed by its education specialists, that delivering the new curriculum will be significantly more challenging and place greater demands on teachers in very small 2 class schools. This does not mean that it</p>	Good		

	<p>would be impossible to deliver the curriculum in these schools, but it is clear that the skills required by teachers will need to be very wide ranging to support the full and effective fulfilment of the curriculum's high ambitions.</p> <p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, the closest alternative school would be Crossgates C.P. School, however some pupils would live closer to other schools, including Llanbister C.P. School, Ysgol Trefonnen, Cefnllys, Rhayader C. in W. School and Knighton C. in W. School.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P School was in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations whilst Crossgates C.P. School was in the yellow support category. No categorisations have been carried out since 2019 therefore. However, there are no concerns in relation to quality and standards at Crossgates C.P. School, and the Council's view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils.</p> <p>In addition, Crossgates C.P. School is a larger school, with a larger number of pupils and a larger team of staff, which could have a positive</p>		
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	<p>impact on the opportunities available for pupils and staff.</p> <p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, a small number of pupils would live closer to other schools, in particular Llanbister C.P. School, Knighton C. in W. School and Llandrindod C.P. School. These schools are all in the yellow support category based on the 2019 categorisations, therefore there are no concerns about the provision pupils would receive should they transfer to these schools.</p> <p>Concerns were raised during the consultation period that the quality of provision in the alternative schools would not be as good as the quality of provision at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The Council is of the view that all the alternative schools are self-improving schools and provide education to a standard that is equitable. Estyn's response to the consultation stated that 'The proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.'</p>			
Residents and Communities We will support our residents and communities	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport</p>	Very Poor		

	<p>Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General concern about the impact on the community / village - The school is the heart of the village - Comments about impact on the community centre - Reference to other community activities/organisations - Closure of the school would mean that pupil would not want to live in Dolau - Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school - Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close - Comments about the impact of previous school closures on communities - Comments about community well-being 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comments about community impact beyond the village of Dolau - Comments about the role of the community during the Covid pandemic <p>Responses to all of these issues are provided in the consultation report.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.</p>			
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements
Consultation report

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

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	IMPACT 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?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
A prosperous Wales: 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	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, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and proportionately across Powys schools, ensuring better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		

<p>generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>Should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close, all the alternative schools are prepared to deliver the new, innovative curriculum for Wales from September 2022. This should lead to developing a skilled and well-educated population.</p>			
<p>A resilient Wales: 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for whom this is their closest school. However, pupils could be accommodated on current transport routes, therefore no additional transport would be required.</p> <p>Currently, a high proportion of pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are transported by private arrangement as the school is not their closest school. This means that additional transport is currently being used to transport pupils to the school, which would not be required if pupils transferred to their nearest alternative schools.</p>	Neutral		
<p>A healthier Wales: 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: 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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>A significant number of comments were received during the consultation about the impact on pupil</p>	Poor	<p>An experienced member of staff from the Council is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for pupils. The Council would also expect pupils to be fully supported by their teachers and other staff at the school during any period of uncertainty, to minimise the impact on their well-being.</p> <p>Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. The receiving school would work closely with the closing school during</p>	Neutral

	<p>well-being due to the consultation taking place during the current pandemic, creating an additional pressure on their well-being during a difficult time. Some of the current pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School were also pupils at the school during the previous consultation process on closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in 2016.</p> <p>Some comments were received by people who had experienced school closures in Radnorshire in the past, stating that they had not been supported through the change.</p>		<p>the transition to identify and address areas of concern amongst pupils and families. The headteacher of the receiving school would be able to meet with families to discuss concerns, and there would be opportunities for families to visit the receiving schools and meet teachers and other pupils.</p> <p>Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.</p>	
A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. 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>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of</p>	Very Poor		Very Poor

	<p>income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General concern about the impact on the community / village - The school is the heart of the village - Comments about impact on the community centre - Reference to other community activities/organisations - Closure of the school would mean that pupil would not want to live in Dolau - Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school - Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close - Comments about the impact of previous school closures on communities - Comments about community well-being - Comments about community impact beyond the village of Dolau - Comments about the role of the community during the Covid pandemic <p>Responses to all of these issues are provided in the consultation report.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from</p>		
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	the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.			
<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 pupils, ensuring that all affected by the plans have 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
<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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	Neutral		

	<p>Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>Comments were received during the consultation which suggested that pupils would not have access to the same opportunities to use Welsh in the alternative schools compared with their current experience at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School and all the other alternative schools are taking part in the Siatr laith initiative, and all schools are currently working towards the bronze award.</p> <p>Comments were also received which expressed concern about that closure of the school would lead to closure of the Cylch Meithrin which operates from the school site, and that this would impact on the opportunity for pupils to access Welsh-medium pre-school provision. Should the school close, the Cylch could continue to operate in the area should there sufficient demand. Pupils would still be able to develop their Welsh language skills in the alternative schools, and would be able to use this in their homes and their communities.</p>			
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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>See additional comments above.</p>	Neutral		

<p><i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i></p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. 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>The comments received during the consultation period suggest that there are a number of extra-curricular activities happening at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, including after school clubs. The comments received also suggest that due to the size of the school, pupils have more opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities and whole school activities than in larger schools. However, all the other alternative schools provide a range of extra-curricular activities that are teacher-led. There is also the availability of extra-curricular activities within the Llandrindod catchment area which are delivered by other organisations.</p> <p>The Council has acknowledged that it may be difficult for some pupils to access after school activities due to reliance on home to school transport, however the alternative schools also have pupils that rely on home to school transport, and they are experienced in ensuring that all pupils are able to take part in activities.</p> <p>It must also be noted that just under half of the pupils currently attending the school live closer to other schools and are therefore reliant on private</p>	<p>Good</p>		
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	transport arrangements to access after school activities and are able to manage.			
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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?	IMPACT 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?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
<i>Disability</i>	<p>The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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 expressed concern about the impact on pupil with ALN if they had to be taught in larger cohorts, with the view that small schools / classes enable more 1:1 support. The Council's view is that pupils with additional learning needs would be fully supported at any of the alternative</p>	Neutral		

	schools. There is very good support across the Calon Cymru cluster for pupils with ALN.			
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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		
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon School, regardless of their religion or belief. Some of the alternative schools named in the consultation document are Church in Wales schools. A comment was received which suggested that attending a faith-based provision would be detrimental to children. However, it is the view of the Council that there would be no impact.	Neutral		
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.	Neutral		
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		

<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, including any eligible for Free School Meals, however based on PLASC 2020 information, no pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School were eligible for Free School Meals.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Llanfihangel Rhydithon. This would mean that pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. 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. The school is not the closest school for a number of pupils that currently attend, therefore transferring to their nearest alternative school would reduce the transport requirements for these pupils and their families.</p>	Neutral		

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?	IMPACT 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?	IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION Please select from drop down box below
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	Pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and proportionately across Powys schools, ensuring better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		
Collaboration: Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.	Full consultation has been carried out, which has enabled all interested parties to give their views. This included an opportunity to suggest any alternative solutions for the catchment.	Neutral		
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including: Unpaid Carers: Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account	Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This provided an opportunity for all interested parties to give their views on the proposal. A Consultation Report has been prepared which outlines the issues raised in the consultation responses, and this will be considered by Cabinet Cabinet when determining how to proceed. Concerns were raised during the consultation period about the consultation taking place during the pandemic, and that this meant that some members of the community were unable to give	Good		

	their views. However, a significant number of responses were received to the consultation which does not support this view.			
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding: <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>	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, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and proportionately across Powys schools, ensuring better strategic management of the Powys schools estate. All schools are required to have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.	Good		
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>	No impact.	Neutral		
Powys County Council Workforce: What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?	Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School as there would no longer be a school in Llanfihangel Rhydithon, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process. Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process was supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR), and included a consultation meeting with staff, which ensured that they had an opportunity to give their views.	Poor		

	<p>A member of the HR team met with the staff informally at the start of the process.</p> <p>There would be an impact on staff at Llanelwedd C.i.W Primary School as the current arrangement of a shared headteacher would come to an end. Llanelwedd C.i.W Primary School would need to review its staffing structure as the headteacher would return to his substantive role.</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?	Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School.	Neutral		
Welsh Language impact on staff	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff.</p> <p>Some of the staff at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School have attended Welsh language Sabbatical courses in order to improve their Welsh language skills. There would be opportunities for these staff to continue to use their Welsh language skills in any other future employment opportunities.</p>	Neutral		
Apprenticeships:	No impact.	Neutral		

Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?				
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

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
Dolau	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Dolau as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. 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>	Major		Major	

	<p>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is co-located with a community hall. Should the school close, the community hall would continue to be available for community activities. Whilst the proposal would not impact on the community hall, it is acknowledged that the potential loss of income to the hall from school activities no longer needing to take place could impact on the community hall.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General concern about the impact on the community / village - The school is the heart of the village - Comments about impact on the community centre - Reference to other community activities/organisations - Closure of the school would mean that pupil would not want to live in Dolau - Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school - Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comments about the impact of previous school closures on communities - Comments about community well-being - Comments about community impact beyond the village of Dolau - Comments about the role of the community during the Covid pandemic <p>Responses to all of these issues are provided in the consultation report.</p> <p>A separate draft community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.</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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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 whilst the process is ongoing	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	An experienced member of staff from the Council is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for pupils. The Council would also expect pupils to be fully supported by their teachers and other staff at the school during any period of uncertainty, to minimise the impact on their well-being.	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 Dolau due to loss of educational provision from the area, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils, and the impact on general well-being, particularly due to the consultation having taken place during the pandemic.

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

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

Full consultation has been carried out on the proposal. The impact assessment has been updated to reflect the feedback received.

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	28 th September 2021
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3. Equality Impact Assessment

Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



Proposal	To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
Service Area	Schools Service
Date of Assessment	February 2021 Updated September 2021
Lead Person undertaking the assessment	RW / SA / ME
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

In April 2020, the Leader approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years. One of the objectives is to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision'.

Powys County Council has consulted on a proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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
- Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements
- 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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
- Pupils would attend schools with permanent leadership arrangements

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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wider research reports and findings.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?

Yes

Please state the gaps:

- No qualitative data is currently available

How will the gaps be addressed going forward?

- Qualitative data will be collected as part of the forthcoming consultation process.

No

6. DATA ANALYSIS

<p><u>6.1 Quantitative</u></p> <p>Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics.</p> <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> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?	<p><u>PLASC January 2020</u></p> <p><u>Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School</u></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: 0.0% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals- ALN: 6.1% of pupils have special educational needs. Of these, 3.0% of pupils are on School Action, 3.0% of pupils are on School Action Plus and 0.0% of pupils have statements.- Disabilities: 6.1% of pupils have additional learning needs- English as an Additional Language: 0.0% of pupils are identified as EAL pupils.- Ethnicity: The ethnic group of 72.7% of pupils in the school is White British. 0.0% of pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British.- Looked after Children: 0.0% 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">- 0.0% of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is significantly lower than the Powys average for primary schools (12.7%)- 6.1% of pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School have additional learning needs. This is lower than the Powys average for primary schools (18.8%) <p>In addition, there are no pupils belonging to ethnic groups other than White British, no EAL pupils and no Looked After Children at the school.</p>
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	<p>The proposal to close Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would impact on all pupils currently attending the school, including those pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups.</p>
<p><u>6.2 Qualitative</u> Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. 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>Full consultation has been carried out on the proposal relating to Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School, which will include consultation with pupils at the school. This has provided qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and any additional impact on pupils that belong to protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>The following comments were raised about the proposal's impact on the protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits of Llanfihangel Rhydithon / small schools for pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups - Concern that moving to larger schools would have a negative impact on pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups - The proposal wouldn't impact on pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups - Impact on pupils with additional learning needs - Impact on disabled pupils - Impact on other protected characteristic groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pregnant women / new mothers - Religion - Gender identity - Age <p>Responses to all of the issues raised are provided in the consultation report.</p>

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.

The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]	<input type="checkbox"/>
The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment. i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected? ii) Will people on low incomes be affected? iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?	i) The protected characteristic group most affected by the proposal would be pupils with additional learning needs. However, the proportion of pupils with ALN at the school is lower than the Powys average. Comments received during the consultation expressed concern about the impact on pupils with ALN if they had to be taught in larger cohorts, with the view that small schools / classes enable more 1:1 support. ii) None of the pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is significantly lower than the Powys average. iii) Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is an English medium school - therefore the proposal will not directly affect Welsh speakers.
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9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed? <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>	Should the proposal be implemented, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close, and pupils transfer to their nearest alternative school. This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done? ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact? iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have? 	<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. The number of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is very small.</p> <p>The protected characteristic group most affected by the proposal would be pupils with ALN. However, the Council's view is that pupils with additional learning needs would be fully supported at any of the alternative schools. There is very good support across the Calon Cymru cluster for pupils with ALN.</p> <p>The proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove the impact on protected characteristic groups.</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 type="checkbox"/> <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. Draft Community Impact Assessment – Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School

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

January 2020

The closest provider for pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Crossgates C.P. School	36.4%
Knighton C. in W. School	6.1%
Ysgol Cefnllys	9.1%
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	48.5%

This suggests that 48.5% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 51.5% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

Updated information – September 2021

This information has been updated for the pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. The closest provider for pupils attending the school in September 2021 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Crossgates C.P. School	28%
Knighton C. in W. School	5%
Ysgol Cefnllys	11%
Rhayader C. in W. School	3%
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School	53%

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:

- Weekly Key Stage 2 club featuring ICT, Art and Cooking
- Weekly Welsh club
- Weekly Sports club
- Football Club
- Choir
- Weekly drop in sessions for reading and educational development
- Clwb Cymraeg
- Eco Club
- School Council
- Criw Cymraeg
- Music lessons

Whilst some of these clubs are run by staff and governors, some are run by community volunteers / parents and outside organisations.

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:

- Daily Breakfast Club
- Dolau Ti a Fi Club held on the site
- Cylch Meithrin which is held on the site and has good links with the Foundation Phase
- Community Library Bus
- Young Sports Ambassador Scheme
- Youth Club relies on pupils from the school

The school also provides a rural play space as the village has no communal play space other than the school.

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

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

- Local YFC use the school grounds and community hall
- Community hall use the school grounds and car park
- Youth Club use the school grounds

- The community hall uses the school as a ‘green room’ for local shows and entertainment
- The school’s conservation area is used by all user groups and members of the community. The local WI and YFC hold meetings and the Youth Club, Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi use the grounds to learn about wildlife and the environment

v) Other links between the school and the community

- Harvest festival is held every September in the community hall. This involves the local vicar, members of the community and the pupils and staff of the school
- Christmas Carols around the Christmas Tree is held every year in the school playground
- Dolau Christmas Fayre is held annually in the community hall. The pupils make items to sell at the event and pupils record songs and poems to sell
- Annual Christmas Concert is held by the school in the community hall. It is a very popular and well attended event
- Dolau Summer Fayre
- Annual Sport Day which is held in a local farm field. This is well attended by the community, parents and governors
- The school participates in DRA events throughout the year e.g. games evenings quizzes, cinema
- The school has close links to local businesses such as horse riding
- Links with the local church magazine
- Links with the local vicar who leads collective worship at the school
- Liaisons with Dyfed Powys Police through the School Community Police Officer
- Liaisons with Mid & West Wales Fire Service through visits from local firefighters
- Links with the local Eisteddfod in Llandrindod Wells
- Friends of Dolau School which work tirelessly to raise funds for the school to support buying resources to enable a full 21st Century curriculum
- Links with local concerts, singing, poetry, instrumental etc.
- Links with local History Group and arts projects
- Dolau YFC & Dolau Youth club rely heavily on Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP School for the vast majority of their new members, the majority of who go on to take up senior roles in the club, Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary etc
- Llandrindod Junior Silver Band consists of 14 members, a majority of those band members have been taught in Dolau School. The band attend and support lots of local events held within Llandrindod, Rhayader and Builth Wells.

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, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close and pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools and there would no longer be a school in Dolau. It is acknowledged that this would mean that there would be no school in Dolau, meaning that any community facilities provided by the school would no longer be available.

There is a community hall in Dolau which is located next to school, and which provides facilities and services, which are complemented by the school. Should there be no school in Dolau, the community hall would continue to be available for community events and activities. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall could have a significant impact on the ability for the hall to continue to run.

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

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. There would therefore be an impact on distance and travelling times for pupils currently attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School for whom this is currently their closest school.

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.

January 2020

The closest alternative school for the pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020 is as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Dolau
Crossgates C.P. School	75.8%
Llanbister C.P. School	9.1%
Ysgol Cefnllys	9.1%

Knighton C. in W. School	6.1%
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An analysis of pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in January 2020 suggests that the furthest distance to the nearest alternative school for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently their closest school would be 6.4 miles.

Updated information – September 2021

The closest alternative school for the pupils that were attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in September 2021 is as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Dolau
Crossgates C.P. School	67%
Llanbister C.P. School	14%
Ysgol Cefnllys	11%
Knighton C. in W. School	5%
Rhayader C. in W. School	3%

An analysis of pupils attending Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in September 2021 suggests that the furthest distance to the nearest alternative school for pupils for whom Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School is currently their closest school would be 6.4 miles.

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

- Concern about extended journeys for pupils to their closest alternative school, which would contribute to the environment and have a significant impact on daily traffic
- Concern that young pupils would be unsupervised on journeys to school

- Concern that the length of the journey to school would be too long and have a detrimental effect to their learning focus whilst at school
- There would be an impact on local employment as most staff at the school are local people
- School car park is used by local residents to park safely in the evenings limiting cars parked in the country lanes.
- A significant number of young families have moved back to the area and are preparing to make the area their home and have strong ties with the school & community. Many children from these young families that have returned to the area are 2nd & 3rd generations attending the school
- Being in a rural setting is safer for the children and staff. 1 in 3 of the schools in Powys not to be subjected to the COVID-19 virus.
- The hall committee and Community Council have installed a defibrillator on the outside wall of the community hall. If the community hall loses its users groups, social events not supported well, funding will not be available to maintain the defibrillator. Therefore, the community would lose the valuable lifesaving equipment.

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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. 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 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 Dolau, 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 Dolau 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 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 school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fêtes, 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 these events and activities would take place in the community hall should there be no school in Dolau. 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 Dolau could have some impact on local business in Dolau 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 rural lifestyle of the area. Implementation of the proposal could eventually lead to a reduction in employment opportunities in the village of Dolau.

- **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.

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 Dolau 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 Dolau 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 Dolau. However, the school has indicated that the loss of income provided by the school to the community hall 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 Dolau to identify a suitable alternative.

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 additional travel costs
- Concern about the impact on the environment
- Concern about impact on pupils' access to after school activities
- Other comments

- **Impact on the community**

- General concern about the impact on the community / village
- The school is the heart of the village
- Comments about the impact on the community centre
- Reference to other community activities / organisations

- Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Dolau
 - Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school
 - Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close
 - Comments about the impact of previous school closures on communities
 - Comments relating to community well-being
 - Comments about community impact beyond the village of Dolau
 - Comments about the role of the community during the Covid pandemic
- **Comments about early years provision**
- Comments relating to the Cylch Meithrin at Dolau
 - Concern about the future of the Cylch Meithrin at Dolau
 - Comments about funding of the Cylch Meithrin
 - Comments about registration
 - Comments relating to Dolau Parent and Toddlers Group
 - Comments about early years provision at other locations
 - Other comments

4.2 Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School. Should there be no school in Dolau, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. 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 Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School 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 and during the consultation period 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 centre should there be no school in Dolau. However, comments have been received which indicate that the loss of income provided by the school to the community centre could have a significant impact on the centre's ability to continue to run.

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

Concerns were raised during the consultation period about what would happen to the school building should the school close, and references were made to other closed schools in Radnorshire which have been left derelict. The Council's policy is to dispose of any surplus assets in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Policy. Once the asset has been transferred to a third party, the Council has no control over what happens to it. Some schools that have been closed have been transferred to other service areas, e.g. housing or to a community and should the school close, there would be an opportunity for the community council to discuss the future of the building with the Council.