

Appendix B



Talgarth and Bronllys Community Primary Schools

Consultation Report

May 2016

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1. Overview of the consultation

Powys County Council has carried out a formal consultation, in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the following proposal:

- **to close Talgarth and Bronllys community primary schools from August 2017, and to establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017, until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.**

The consultation was carried out between 7th March 2016 and 18th April 2016.

1.1 Consultation methods

The consultation documentation was available on the council's website throughout the consultation period, and was distributed to stakeholders, as required by the School Organisation Code (2013). A separate version for young people was also available and distributed to pupils, and was also available on the council's website throughout the consultation period.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing an online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall, or writing to the School Modernisation Team.

Meetings were also held with the following:

- Talgarth School Council – 12th April 2016
- Bronllys School Council – 12th April 2016
- Staff – 14th March 2016
- Governors – 14th March 2016
- Parents / Community of Talgarth– 14th March 2016
- Parents/ Community of Bronllys – 16th March 2016

1.2 Responses received

A total of 52 written responses were received to the consultation. These included:

- i) 10 written responses
- ii) with 42 responses from pupils using the questionnaire included in the young people's version of the consultation document.

This included a response from Estyn, which is provided on page 12.

2 Consultation with pupils

2.1 Written responses from pupils

42 responses were received from pupils using the questionnaire included in the young people's version of the consultation document. The majority of the responses were received from pupils who currently attend Talgarth C.P. School, however responses were also received from the School Councils of both Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. Schools.

The issues raised in the responses received from the pupils who currently attend Talgarth School is summarised below:

- The route from Bronllys to Talgarth is unsafe for walking and cycling
 - It's sad because the school has been here a long time
 - There will be more bullying at a bigger school
 - Smaller school is better
 - Pupils are used to the current building
 - Pupils are used to their teachers
 - Pupils like the current playing yard
 - The new school will take longer to get there
 - Memories of the current school will be lost
 - The current school and yard will be turned into houses
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- The current school building is very old
 - It will be a good opportunity to make new friends
 - It will be good to have new classrooms
 - It will be closer for some pupils to get to school
 - The toilets will be better
 - There will be better whiteboards and books
 - There will be better access for disabled children
 - Both schools are currently very small

The issues raised in the response received from the School Council of Talgarth C.P. School are summarised below:

- it would be a good idea for Talgarth and Bronllys pupils to get to know each other better before a new school would open
- pupils would like to see more books in the library
- pupils would like to continue to walk to school

The issues raised in the response received from the School Council of Bronllys C.P. School are summarized below:

- the pupils were worried about going to a bigger school with more pupils and teachers
- Talgarth and Bronllys pupils need to be nice to each other
- better choice of books in a new school would be a good idea

2.2 Meeting with the School Councils

Officers from the local authority met with the School Council of Talgarth C.P. School and the School Council of Bronllys C.P. School to get their views on the proposal. The issues raised in the meetings are summarised below:

What do you like about Talgarth School?

- The teachers
- Everyone is friendly
- The equipment in the hall
- It's a small school
- The playground
- The garden
- Most pupils can walk to school
- We have built a bug house
- The lessons
- Sports opportunities – sports day, football, cross country running
- End of term plays and concerts
- School dinners
- After school clubs
- School organises for people to come in to do talks e.g. Techniquet
- The library
- Trips to Llangrannog, the theatre and the forest
- The school building – like how the classrooms are set up – the school sort of looks nice from the outside
- The school fields
- Fruity Friday
- The activities with Bronllys e.g. swimming and some year 5 and 6 pupils have done some science project activities with Bronllys pupils, like measuring which playground had the most weed
- Making new friends with pupils from Bronllys

What don't you like about Talgarth School?

- Want to change the school dinner menu to the old menu
- Not allowed to get muddy
- Not allowed to fight
- The toilets are old, but the boys ones are new
- The school needs painting outside

- Holes in the shelter
- Don't like Welsh lessons, some of the books are boring
- Would like a bigger library and more choice of books to read
- Pupils want proper football goalposts – we only have small netted ones

What would be better in a new school?

- Better play equipment
- Better buildings
- Schools would look better from the outside
- Better classrooms
- Better library and books
- Bigger and better staff room for the teachers – better furniture

What would be worse in a new school?

- Wouldn't want the school to be too far away – more people would have to use cars and we would like to continue to walk to school
- What if pupils from Talgarth and Bronllys don't get along? We could have a meet and greet for one day before starting at the new school?

If the schools were to close and one of the pupils here had additional needs, how do you think it would affect them?

- It's difficult for get around Talgarth school as there are lots of steps
- New school would probably have a ramp as well, but ramps are slippery on rainy days
- New school would be better for pupils with additional learning needs – more space to go out of the classroom – would be more pupils, classes and doors
- Pupils to go the library or to the staff room to work – would be good in the new school to have more space for extra help

Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following issues were raised:

- Don't want to change
- Some pupils are quiet from Bronllys, would be good to have an opportunity to get to know each other before starting in the new school
- Some pupils start fights
- We know some of the teachers in Bronllys but it would be good to have the chance to get to know the teachers before going to the new school
- Would the school need a new name?

- Would the new school be bigger?
- Would there be two floors like Christ College Primary School? Pupils wanted a school on more than one floor. Pupils with disabilities could use a lift. Two floors would be better – infants could be on one floor and juniors on another floor. Also could have fun sliding down the stairs.
- There needs to be a breakfast club there, there is a breakfast club here and in Bronllys
- Pupils would like to see the site where the new school is going to be built
- White board/ smart TV – would we be able to have that in the new school?
- Will there be better books?
- Will there be codes to get into the school?
- Year 6 pupils will not see the new school, suggested that they could come back to visit when the new school is open.
- When will the new school be built?
- I would like a better choice of school dinners
- One pupil used to go to Cwmdu school and misses that school
- Will we have to speak Welsh in the new school?
- Will we be able to see what the new school looks like?
- Will we be able to choose where we can sit?
- What will the uniform be like?

What do you like about Bronllys School?

- There are not too many pupils, we can play without people running into us and can work easily
- We all know each other
- We like the library, lots of book choice
- There aren't too many teachers, we know them all and they are really nice – we have a good relationship with the teachers
- We have a big hall, lots of room to play
- Haven't got really big classrooms, feels cosy
- School dinners are nice, they get cooked in the school kitchen
- Organised games, but no rough games so that pupils are safe
- The lessons are good, pupils like a different variety of subjects e.g. P.E and Science and they do lots of experiments
- Sports – apparatus and Callum comes in to do sports
- Tag Rugby, 7 a side – all pupils can be in a team so that all pupils get a chance – in another school, it would only be the best so not everyone would have the chance
- Plenty of space to play – field outside with football posts and the field is open to the public too, but people walk their dogs there and it's dirty.
- Enough space in the hall to play when it's rainy outside
- Toy boxes for each day of the week
- We have a toy day at the end of term and we can bring toys in from home and play with them and we get to watch films.
- Children in Need day, we get to dress up in pyjamas
- Wprls book day
- Golden time – if you've finished working and teachers are pleased, we can get some free time.
- Help other children if they get stuck
- Like how the school looks from the outside – looks welcoming
- Equipment on the grass outside – like an obstacle course
- Lovely view from outside – the mountains
- Have all the white boards in the classrooms
- Cooking classes
- We all celebrate each other's birthdays
- Sale day – raise money for year 6 leaving day
- we have some friends in Talgarth school, we go swimming
- go to Talgarth school sometimes form science projects
- Bronllys do better than Talgarth in tag rugby because we are a small school and we work together better

What don't you like about Bronllys School?

- Not enough books, the library is very small
- All teachers are female – some would like a male teacher
- Some smaller children fights
- Don't like Welsh lessons
- School computer systems – miss Windows XP and Vista, only two Windows XPs left
- Don't like how it looks from the outside – all bricks. But looks nicer inside. Would look nicer if it was all smooth, not bricks.
- Girls have more toilets than the boys – boys only have three toilets
- Toilets are olds and the boys toilets smell bad
- Toilets aren't very private
- Books in the library are old
- There aren't many computers in the library
- Sometimes people take books and don't bring them back so we have less books

What do you think about the plans?

- Most think that it's a bad idea because parents will have to move pupils from Bronllys

What would be worse if you had to move to a different school?

- Would rather just stay here
- Some of the teachers might not be here anymore
- Some pupils in Talgarth are not very nice to us
- Bigger classes – it would be noisier and harder to concentrate
- Worried that the pupils will not know each other

Is there anything that would be better if you had to move to a different school?

- There would be more pupils, we would be able to make more friends

If the school were to close and one of the pupils here had additional needs, how do you think it would affect them?

- They would be frustrated
- If pupils need to get out of class, teachers sometimes bring them into the library and computer room to work with them – in a new school there would be more room where they could do this

Pupils were asked whether they had any further comments or concerns to raise. The following issues were raised:

- Worried about what will happen to Gwernyfed High School
- Need to make sure that everyone's nice to each other in a new school
- Would like to get to know the new teachers before going to a new school
- Worried about going to a bigger school and that pupils will get lost
- Can we take toys from this school with us?
- What will the uniform be?
- How many children will there be in a new school?
- Will it be more modern than this school?

3 Consultation meetings

Joint consultation meetings were held between Talgarth and Bronllys staff, and a further joint meeting for the school governors, whilst separate meetings were held for the parents and the communities of Talgarth and Bronllys during the consultation period.

The minutes for each meeting can be found at Appendix 1 of this Report (page 50)

4 ESTYN

Estyn's response to the consultation is provided below:

Estyn's response to the proposal to close Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. Schools from August 2017, and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017 until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body that is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

Introduction

The consultation proposal is from Powys County Council. The proposal is to:

- *Close Talgarth and Bronllys CP schools from August 2017*
- *Establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017*
- *Construct a new school building on a new site in Talgarth with planned opening in September 2018.*

Summary/Conclusion

The County Council has a legal duty to look at the number and type of schools it has in Powys and is required to make sure that they are located in the right place, have the right facilities for the future and have the right resources to deliver education and training for pupils.

The plan is part of the council's Gwernyfed catchment area modernisation proposals. This is the second formal consultation as the original took place in 2012 and has now lapsed. In line with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2013 and the authority's Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, it is necessary to undertake a new programme of consultation.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal will at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. It states that it is line with the decision of the Area Project Board's decision in January 2011 that the number of schools in the catchment should reduce from ten down to five and to building five new primary schools in the catchment area, in line with the 21st Century Schools Programme. The Welsh Government has approved the Strategic Outline Case and the Outline Business case for the development of a new school building in Talgarth.

The proposer clearly defines the expected benefits of the proposal. These appear to be reasonable, and include greater opportunities for Talgarth and Bronllys CP pupils to learn with other pupils of the same age and increase their social, cultural and sporting activities by being part of larger year groups. The proposal will also reduce the level of surplus places in the authority, in line with the proposer's Community Focussed Schools strategy and the One Powys Plan.

The proposer has compared the benefits of the proposal with the status quo and has considered all other reasonable options fairly. They have demonstrated clearly the advantages and disadvantages of each option and the reasons for their preferred option.

The proposal identifies the number of current teaching staff at Talgarth and Bronllys and states that any implications or changes to staff employment would be taken forward by the schools in accordance with the authority's Management of Change procedures.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has considered well all available data for all affected schools, including the judgements made in the most recent Estyn inspection reports. In Estyn's opinion, the proposer has made reasonable assertion from the available data that the new provision will at least maintain the standard of education for the pupils of Talgarth and Bronllys CP schools and that it is likely that pupils will benefit from the high quality learning environment that the new build will offer.

At present both schools share an acting headteacher, and that it is likely that the proposal will make it easier to recruit a permanent member of staff into this position. The proposer has provided details of the equality and community impact assessments that have been completed. Whilst the Council is confident that the proposal will not significantly affect the pupils of each school. It does however recognise in the case of transport for pupils from Bronllys school, that the proposed new school site is an unsafe route for primary age pupils to walk along. The Council have therefore agreed to provide suitable transport. No Welsh language impact assessment has been undertaken due to the linguistic category of Talgarth and Bronllys CP schools and the proposed new school being predominantly English-medium.

The proposer has outlined well the transitional arrangements to ensure minimal disruption to pupils, indicating that parents of pupils currently attending Talgarth and Bronllys schools would automatically be given a place at the new school (on dual

sites) in September 2017 and at the new-build school site in Talgarth from September 2018.

5 ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD

The following tables list the issues raised during the consultation period, including all issues raised in writing by pupils and all other consultees, and all issues raised in the consultation meetings held with the School Council, staff, governors and parents / the community.

REF	ISSUE	LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE
1. IMPACT ON PUPILS		
	Concerns were raised that pupils will need opportunity to get to know each other before the changes are to be implemented.	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils, however should the schools close and re-opened as dual-sited schools from September 2017, the pupils from both schools will have opportunity to learn and play together before the new school is opened.</p> <p>Time will be allowed to ensure that the new school ethos is instilled and that teachers are fully able to support pupils in the transition period.</p>
	Concerns were raised about the continuity of teachers and Headteacher teaching the pupils.	The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils and staff. The Shadow Governing Body will appoint the headteacher and staff for the new school. The authority will work with the Shadow Governing Body to ensure that the lack of continuity of teachers for pupils will be kept to a minimum.
	Concerns were raised that the interim arrangements mean that pupils will be disrupted twice. Why not amalgamate when the new school is ready?	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for pupils and staff, however it is of the authority's view that by placing the interim arrangements for 12 months before staff and pupils relocate to the new school, this enables the staffing structure and governance of the new school to be in place before the relocation, resulting in less disruption for pupils.</p> <p>One of the first duties of the Shadow Governing Body of the new school will be to appoint a headteacher. The headteacher would then work with the Shadow Governing Body to establish a staffing structure for the new school. If</p>

	<p>Cabinet approve the proposal, the process of establishing the Shadow Governing Body could commence in the autumn term of 2016. Once the headteacher is appointed, the new staffing structure can be planned. Once the new school is set-up, the school will have 12 months to instil its ethos and will allow time for the pupils from both schools to get to know each other through learning and playing before they all move into the new school building.</p>
<p>You believe a 12 month gap for the interim arrangement is in the best interests of the children?</p>	<p>The authority is of the view that by providing a transition period of 12 months, the pupils will have a whole school academic year worth of experience working with the teachers and learning with other pupils.</p>
<p>Will the children remain on current school site with their present teachers when the new school is established?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body and headteacher will work together to finalise teaching arrangements for the interim period. It is likely that the pupils from Talgarth will remain in the same school building and pupils from Bronllys will remain in the same school building for the interim period.</p>
<p>Pupils of Bronllys CP School will remain in Bronllys and pupils of Talgarth CP School will remain in Talgarth until the new school building is ready. What is the difference?</p>	<p>When the new school is established, there will be one school with one governing body, one headteacher, one budget, one staffing structure and one Estyn inspection. The authority is of the view that by establishing the new school structure 12 months in advance of relocating to the new school will make the transition to the new school smoother as staff and pupils will already be familiar with each other and the new school structure and ethos.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about children being taught in mixed aged classes.</p>	<p>The proposal is to build a new 150 pupil capacity school, with 5 classrooms + early year's provision, this means that some of the pupils will be taught in mixed- aged classes. Both of the current schools operate with mixed age classes of up to 4 year groups, it is envisaged that the new school will have a maximum of 2 age groups per class.</p>
<p>What sort of measures will Powys County Council take to ensure that children will be mentored/ buddied?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body will work with the appointed headteacher and teachers to ensure that all pupils are fully supported throughout the transition process, with advice and guidance from the authority.</p>

Do you think children learn more in a larger rather than a small classroom?	The authority is of the view that pupils can learn better in a larger physical classroom with appropriate and 21 st Century facilities. The learning experience for each pupil will depend on the quality of leadership and management and the teaching and learning.
Who will speak to our children about the proposals?	The authority, as part of the formal consultation process, have made arrangements to speak to the School Council of Talgarth and the School Council of Bronllys (notes from the school council meetings can be seen on page 5 of this document).
Concerns were raised about the upheaval for pupils. Will it be the decision of the Shadow Governing Body to decide whether they ring-fence posts so the member of staff providing one to one support for individual pupils moves with the child?	The Shadow Governing Body will decide whether to ring-fence posts, with advice and guidance from the authority's Human Resources department. It is the authority's expectations that the posts will be ring fenced to staff currently employed across the two schools.
Concerns were raise about some pupils having to move primary schools twice.	Some pupils across the two schools were previously pupils in Glasbury on Wye which closed in December 2012. The authority will work closely with these pupils and parents to ensure that there is a smooth transition into the new school.
Concerns were raised that there could be more bullying at a bigger school	The teachers will work with parents and pupils to ensure that no bullying will happen at the new school.
Pupils are used to the current buildings, teachers and playing yard	The authority notes this comment.
The new school will take longer to get there	The authority notes this comment.
Memories of the currents schools will be lost	The authority notes this comment.

It will be sad to lose the school because pupils have been here a long time	The authority notes this comment.
Smaller school is better	The authority is of the view that small schools and larger schools are good in different ways.
The current school building is very old	The authority notes this comment.
It will be a good opportunity to make new friends	The authority notes this comment.
It will be good to have new classrooms	The authority notes this comment.
It will be closer for some pupils to get to school	The authority notes this comment.
The facilities will be better for pupils – toilets, whiteboards and books	The authority notes this comment.
There will be better access for disabled children in a new school	The authority notes this comments.
Currently, Talgarth and Bronllys schools are very small	The authority notes this comment.
2. IMPACT OF ADDITIONAL TRAVEL / IMPACT OF NEW TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS	
What will be the arrangements for the pupils who want to walk or cycle to the new school?	The authority has undertaken an assessment of the route from Bronllys to Talgarth, and although there is a footpath from Bronllys to Talgarth, there is also a busy trunk road that would need crossing, because of this, the route has been deemed as an unsafe route and the authority will provide Home to

	School Transport. The authority will work with the communities on options for developing a safe routes to the new site.
Would any new school transport provision be permanent? What if the authority changes its School transportation Policy?	The authority has duties around health and safety regulations, therefore the authority would provide transport for as long as the route was deemed unsafe.
Concerns were raised about a safe walking and cycling route from Bronllys to Talgarth.	The authority's Schools Service department and Transport and Highways Department will work together in relation to develop options for a safe route to school.
Does the authority not have a duty under the Travel Act 2014, to provide a safe walking and cycling route to schools?	Yes.
Will there be a pedestrian crossing?	The authority's Schools Service department and Transport and Highways Department will work together in relation to safe routes to school and consider what if any pedestrian crossing should be provided.
Concerns were raised about the speed of traffic on the trunk road and there is a need for a pavement for the walking route to the new school site	The authority's Schools Service department and Transport and Highways Department will work together in relation to safe routes to school. The authority will also evaluate whether there is a need to reduce the speed limit and to erect extra signage on the trunk road during the start and end of the school day.
Concerns were raised that the footpath on Hay road is incomplete	The authority will assess the access routes to the school, especially for those children living in Talgarth.
3. IMPACT ON STAFF	
Do we run for a term with the same staffing structure or will we have new	If the Cabinet approves the proposal, it is likely that the shadow governing body will be formed in the autumn of this year. The shadow governing body will comprise of the current governors from the existing schools. The authority

<p>contracts from when the new schools open?</p>	<p>will support the process to ensure that there is balance of representation from both Talgarth and Bronllys.</p> <p>One of the first duties of the shadow governing body of the new school will be to appoint a headteacher. The headteacher would then work with the shadow governing body to establish a staffing structure for the new school. The new staffing structure will be implemented from when the new school opens in September 2017.</p>
<p>Will staff who might not have a job in the new school have to remain in post for the term when the school is operating over the 2 sites?</p>	<p>The new staffing structure will be implemented when the new school opens in September 2017.</p> <p>The shadow governing body will determine what staff will have contracts in the new school. For the interim period before the new school building is open, it is likely that staff will work between the two sites.</p> <p>Notice for staff not appointed to the new school would be effective from the date that the new building opens. Teachers working their notices may be working for one term, however the authority will enter discussions with staff working their notices to evaluate practicalities.</p> <p>Staff will be entitled to a period of notice, either 1 week for every year of service up to a maximum of 12 weeks – or contractual notice. Support staff with longer than four years of continuous service will be entitled to be a given statutory notice period.</p>
<p>Would the authority be looking to redeploy staff who were not appointed to the new school or to make them redundant?</p>	<p>The authority's policy is to redeploy staff, where possible.</p> <p>All staff will be consulted in relation to their employment and consideration will be given to redeploying staff, where possible, in order to avoid compulsory redundancy. In the case of redeployment to another school, it is the governing body of that school who ultimately decides who is appointed to any vacant post</p>
<p>How many staff will be needed in the new school? What staff?</p>	<p>The Shadow Governing Body will work with the appointed headteacher to devise a staffing structure for the new school.</p>

<p>Will staff need to be interviewed for jobs in the new school?</p>	<p>Staff will not be required to complete application forms, however staff will be required to go through a selection process. The current policies require teachers to undertake a skills audit and support staff to go through an interview process.</p>
<p>Will all existing staff in Talgarth and Bronllys Schools be made redundant?</p>	<p>The posts would be made redundant as the current schools would no longer exist; however the authority would advise the Shadow Governing Body about ring-fencing posts within the new school. Some staff may request voluntary redundancy but it is anticipated that a significant proportion of the remaining staff will be successfully employed within the new school.</p>
<p>Would the contracts for staff in the new school be temporary or permanent?</p>	<p>Staff at the new school would be employed on permanent contracts.</p>
<p>If a member of staff currently works on a one to one basis supporting an individual child, would they have to reapply to work with that child?</p>	<p>All staff with the same job description would be treated together. If a circumstance arose where a member of staff was the only one providing one-to-one support for an individual pupil, the shadow governing body would make the decision as to how posts are ring-fenced, supported and guided by the authority's Human Resources department.</p>
<p>Will the Unions be involved when staffing structures change?</p>	<p>Yes, the Unions will be involved. The relevant documentation will be shared with unions and affected staff a week before the staff consultation commences. There would also be a pre-consultation meeting with the teaching and support staff unions.</p>
<p>If a member of staff is part time, are their days protected in the new school?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body would decide the new staffing structure with the appointed headteacher, fully supported by the authority's Human Resources department. The part-time opportunities would be looked upon on an individual basis. There is no guarantee that an employee's offer of a new role within the new school would be on the same days but part time staff cannot be treated less favourably than full time staff.</p>
<p>Will there be part-time positions available in the new school?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body would decide on the new staffing structure with the appointed headteacher, fully supported by the authority's Human</p>

	Resources Department. Part-time staff have protected rights under the “Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 (Amendment) Regulations 2002 Act”.
When will staff be declared to be at risk of redundancy?	At the point at which that member of staff was not successful in securing employment at the new school.
Where could staff be redeployed to?	The authority would consider individual needs as to what would be deemed reasonable in terms of the role; the reasonability of a redeployed post will depend on individual circumstances.
Will the level of pay be a factor in terms of what job is offered?	The Shadow Governing Body will decide upon a staffing structure with the appointed headteacher of the new school. If a member of staff are to be employed in a role with lower pay or reduced hours, that member of staff would receive a one-off taxable compensatory payment.
How would Level 2 and level 3 be taken into account?	Any decision with regards to Level 2 and 3 will be made by the shadow governing body
What will be the position of staff on rolling temporary contracts?	Any current member of staff who has been on a fixed-term contract for 4 years or more will automatically become a permanent employee, unless the employer can demonstrate that there is a good reason not to do so. During the Human Resources consultation process, information in relation to staff contracts including length of service will be looked at in detail.
With regards to the interim arrangements, if a teacher teaches year 3 and year 4 pupils, would the teacher need to move between Bronllys and Talgarth schools?	The proposal is to establish the new school, operating on the current sites from September 2017. Staff will be given new contracts which could allow them to move between sites so that pupils get used to their teachers.
Will there be support from the authority’s HR Service?	The authority’s Human Resources service will fully support the process by providing advice and guidance to the shadow governing body and by supporting the headteacher in leading on staff consultations.

<p>Why can't staff have some reassurance as to where they are going in 12/18 months' time?</p>	<p>The authority acknowledges that any school reorganisation process will create a period of uncertainty for teachers, however, there is a strict process to follow. The shadow governing body cannot be formed until the formal consultation to close Talgarth and Bronllys schools is approved by Cabinet. Once the shadow governing body is established, it will then appoint a headteacher. The shadow governing body and headteacher will then devise a staffing structure – this will be followed by formal staff consultation supported by the authority's Human Resources department. Staff will be appointed following the conclusion of these processes.</p>
<p>Originally when school closures were discussed by the Area Project Board, all the school staff at Bronllys and Talgarth were going to be the last pool.</p>	<p>The situation is different now due to the fact that 4 primary schools in the area have already closed, as part of that original review. The ring-fencing pool would therefore only include staff from Bronllys and Talgarth schools.</p>
<p>4. IMPACT ON PARENTS</p>	
<p>Do you build a school for the size of the town or at a size which reflects (parental) choice?</p>	<p>The new school size will reflect the current pupil numbers in Talgarth and Bronllys School, together with pupil projections taking into account the Local Development Plan. It is proposed that a new 150 pupil place school (reception to year 6) will be established and built in the town of Talgarth. The new school will be designed to accommodate maximum flexibility, a building that can be easily extended in the future, if needed.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the proposal to close Gwernyfed High School and the effect that may have on the demand of primary provision in Talgarth / Bronllys.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>

<p>Concerns were raised that parents may wish to transfer their children to other schools once the new school in Talgarth opens.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>5. IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY</p>	
<p>What would be the potential advantage of this proposal in terms of the impact on the community and use of sport facilities in Talgarth?</p>	<p>On the new school site, the proposal is to build a new school, car parking facilities, an area of land designated for outdoor learning, a hard play area, and consideration will be given as to what leisure/ sports facilities might be included on the site, however the site is limited.</p> <p>The community use of any sport facilities outside of schools hours on the new school site would be determined by the governing body.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that if Gwernyfed High School were to close, there will be more demand and need for community facilities on the new school site at Talgarth e.g. sports facilities such as an astro turf pitch.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that Bronllys will lose primary provision in the village</p>	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation process will create uncertainty, especially for the community of Bronllys, where it is proposed that the primary school would close and that the provision would no longer be available in the village. However the authority is of the view that by providing a new 21st Century School just over a mile down the road in the town of Talgarth, the learning experience of the pupils from Bronllys will be enhanced</p>
<p>6. POSITIVES ABOUT TALGARTH SCHOOL</p>	
<p>Talgarth pupils have access to a large playing area</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment, the new school will be established in accordance with Building Bulletin.</p>

Everyone is friendly and it's quite a small school	The authority notes this comment
Most pupils can walk to school	The authority notes this comment, and will work with the community to ensure that children in Talgarth will still be able to access the school by foot
7. POSITIVES ABOUT BRONLLYS SCHOOL	
Bronllys is a small school where all pupils know each other	The authority notes this comment, the new school is planned with a capacity of 150 pupils and is not considered to be a large school
Bronllys is a small school and more inclusive when playing sports	The authority notes this comment, and the new school will be established in accordance with Building Bulletin
Bronllys school pupils have access to a large playing field	The authority notes this comment, and the new school will be established in accordance with Building Bulletin
8. NEW SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS	
Would the new school need a new name?	The shadow governing body would decide on the new school name, for approval by the portfolio holder for schools
Would the new school be bigger?	The new school will be bigger than the current Talgarth School and the current Bronllys School. The new school is planned with a capacity of 150 pupils.
Will the new school design be on two floors?	The new school will not have two floors.
Concerns were raised around Safeguarding issues with the proposal to situate a community library within the school. Will the public only be	Safeguarding is of the utmost priority and all safeguarding procedures will be followed. The new school will be designed so that the community/ library room could be accessed separately from the school. The library would only be open out of normal school hours.

accessing the building during hours when the school is shut?	
Will there be better books?	The shadow governing body and the teachers will decide upon which books to transfer to the new school and if there will be a need to purchase new books for pupils.
Will the new school be modern and have modern facilities such as a white board and Smart TV?	The new school will have all the modern facilities to enhance the teaching and learning experience for pupils.
When will the new school be built?	Construction will begin in early 2017, if Welsh Government approve the Final Business Case, which will be submitted in the autumn of this year.
Will the lessons remain the same in the new school, e.g. will pupils receive Welsh lessons at the new school?	The teachers will continue to deliver the school curriculum
Will the communities and pupils be able to see what the new school looks like?	Yes. Once the appointed contractors have draft school designs, the authority will make arrangements for the contractors and Powys County Council staff to meet with the schools and stakeholders to discuss the designs. Arrangements can also be made for the pupils who currently attend Talgarth and Bronllys schools to visit the new school site when the construction starts.
What will be the classroom configuration - will pupils choose where we sit?	The school teachers will decide who sits where.
What will the uniform be like?	The shadow governing body, with input from teachers, pupils and parents will decide what the new school uniform will look like.
Can pupils take toys from the current school to the new school?	The shadow governing body and teachers will decide what toys can be transferred to the new school

Will there be more outside playing space for the pupils?	The proposal is to build a new school, car parking facilities, an area of land designated for outdoor learning, a hard play area, and consideration will be given as to what leisure/ sports facilities might be included on the site, however the site is limited.
What will be the size of the site for the new school, and how much land will there be around it?	The new school will have a 150 pupil capacity, with 5 classrooms + early year's provision. Although the site is constrained in terms outside space, there are guidelines in place around outside space for the new school.
Will there be a SEN Centre and a Welsh Unit in the new school?	The Area Review Board led on discussions on what provision the new school should have and it was of the Area Review Board's view that an SEN Centre and Welsh Unit was not needed at this present time, however this could change in the future.
Comments were made that it would be good for pupils with additional learning needs to have extra space/ break out area	The new school will have 'break out' are space for pupils with additional learning needs. Issues around pedagogy will be discussed in detail during initial design evaluations with the appointed contractors.
What would happen to the budget of Talgarth and Bronllys schools if they close?	If Cabinet approve the proposal, the new school would have a single budget from September 2017 onwards, any surplus or deficit held by the schools at the date of closure will be written off by the authority
What would happen to equipment in the present schools on closure?	The authority will work with the shadow governing body and teachers to conduct an audit of the current school equipment in order to determine what equipment would be needed in the new school and what new equipment would need to be purchased.
Concerns were raised about the cost to parents, e.g. the need to purchase new school uniforms.	The shadow governing body will work with parents to ensure that costs to parents is not too high.
Will the new school be a bespoke or a standardised design?	The proposal to build a new school in Talgarth forms part of a larger proposal to build further 4 new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment area. The schools will be of standardised designs, but with input from pupils and

	stakeholders, making some elements of the designs bespoke to an individual school.
Will there be two year groups in one classroom in the new school?	The proposal is to build a 150 pupil capacity school, with 5 classrooms and early year's provision. This means that some classrooms will consist of two year groups.
Concerns were raised that that there will not be enough children in the new school to have one teacher per year group.	The proposal is to build a 150 pupil capacity school, with 5 classrooms and early year's provision. This means that some classrooms will consist of two year groups
In the interim period, will the pupils from both sites have the same school uniform and will the school have a new name?	The shadow governing body together with the appointed headteacher will decide on the new school uniform and new school name, however the authority envisages that these arrangements would be in place in the interim period from September 2017.
Will the children be given an opportunity to choose an identity for the new school?	The shadow governing body will work with the appointed headteacher to decide on the new school identity, in consultation with Talgarth and Bronllys pupils.
Concerns were raised about the size of the classes in the new school, classes of single year groups with no more than 20 pupils.	The proposal is to build a 150 pupil capacity school, with 5 classrooms and early year's provision. This means that some classrooms will consist of two year groups, the authority currently funds on a pupil : teacher ratio of 1:25 and it is expected that the classes will have more than 20 pupils in them
Can you confirm that the new school will definitely open in 2018?	The authority is currently on target to construct the new school by September 2018, subject to Welsh Government Full Business Case approval.
Concerns were raised around the authority's proposal to change the age of admissions. Will the new school have provision for a pre-school setting?	The proposal is to include an early year's setting in the new school. The authority has a duty to fund a minimum of 10 hours pre-school provision for children commencing pre-school provision after their 3 rd birthday. The size of the pre-school provision will be different if the proposal to change the age of admission is approved.

<p>Will the Puddleducks pre-school setting close with the school?</p>	<p>If the change of the age of admission is approved, the authority would recommission pre-school provision; pre-school settings will be included in the new school.</p>
<p>In terms of the new school size, have you considered the possibility of increased pupil numbers, especially with the planned new housing developments in the area?</p>	<p>The proposal is to build a 150 pupil capacity school. This figure considers current pupil numbers (Reception to Year 6) at both Talgarth and Bronllys and projected pupil numbers up until 2020. The projected pupil numbers take into account the proposed new dwellings in the area within the Local Development Plan.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the projected pupil numbers at Bronllys school suggest it will soon be to the County average in terms of cost per pupil, whilst Talgarth is already there. A new school is likely to see more children (possibly including our own and particularly those from Bronllys) choosing Llangors school instead.</p>	<p>The fair funding formula is a complex formula which takes account of a number of factors. The new school will be funded in accordance with the agreed fair funding formula for the Primary Schools, it is expected that the larger school will have a lower cost per pupil (excluding NNDR).</p>
<p>Comments were received requesting that the authority takes into account the needs of pupils with additional learning needs in its design and implementation plans - also that the school be built with the highest available specification in terms of acoustics, for the benefit of all pupils, not least those with hearing impairments.</p>	<p>The authority will take into account the needs of pupils with additional learning needs in the design and implementation of the new school.</p>

<p>Will the new build be phased and when will the community be alerted as to what the phasing will be?</p>	<p>The new school in Talgarth will be on top of the priority list together with Hay on Wye and Clyro. The building work will be phased and the phasing will be communicated to the schools once the appointed contractor has finalised the arrangements. This will be before the Full Business Case is submitted to welsh government in the autumn of this year.</p>
<p>Comments were received on the importance of the new school incorporating the highest possible eco values and sustainability features. It must be designed and delivered with effective teaching at its core.</p>	<p>The new school will be built to meet BREEAM excellent standards.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the educational and financial benefits of the proposal</p>	<p>The authority is of the view that educational standards will be at least as good as in the current two schools. A full analysis if benefits and risks has been included in the Outline Business Case that has been supported by the Welsh Government.</p> <p>A financial analysis of the draft recommendation has been carried out, the interim arrangements net savings would be £49,495.00, and the total net savings for the new school arrangements would be £62,477.00.</p> <p>The proposal would also address the issue of the school maintenance backlog costs, which are £120,000 for Bronllys School, and £509,400 for Talgarth school.</p> <p>Analysis of figures can be found in the Consultation Document.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the costs and impact on a proposal to remodel the current schools are not considered.</p>	<p>The authority has evaluated the cost and impact of remodelling the schools, the issues are addressed in the Strategic Outline Case and in the Outline Business Case.</p>
<p>9. CRITICISM OF THE AUTHORITY</p>	
<p>The school reorganisation process has been going on for a long time, the uncertainty of school closures has</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>

<p>meant that parents have opted to send their children to other primary schools.</p> <p>What has the authority done to promote the new school in the area?</p>	<p>The authority will keep the schools and stakeholders within the communities of Talgarth and Bronllys updated about project and school development.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the process has been going on for a long time, with promises made and broken.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that this is the second formal consultation process.</p>	<p>The previous formal consultation lapsed because Cabinet made the decision to postpone until an Option Agreement on site acquisition has been</p> <p>Cabinet formally approved the completion of an Option Agreement to acquire the freehold of land on the new school site in Talgarth on January 26, 2016.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that goal posts in terms of time-scales have continuously slipped. Teachers have concerns that the interim arrangements are for 12 months, and not for one school terms as the authority originally stated.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Why has the timescales slipped?</p>	<p>The original timescale has slipped due to a number of issues, the authority is confident that the current proposed timescale will be met.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the authority cannot offer a definite opening date for the new school. Dates on the original timeline and the slippage meaning that the school will</p>	<p>The Final Business Case is due for Welsh Government submission in the autumn of this year, once the business case is approved, the building work can commence.</p>

<p>not be ready until September 2018. The dates keep changing.</p>	
<p>Concerns were raised that if there were to be a change in Welsh Government, that could mean further uncertainty for the project, staff, pupils and parents.</p>	<p>The 21st Century Schools Programme has been approved to run until March 2019, and the authority has a requirement to submit the Final Business Case by Autumn 2016.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the building schedule of the new school and that Talgarth should be prioritised given the current state of the buildings and the interim arrangements.</p>	<p>The new school in Talgarth is planned to be prioritised as one of the first three schools in the catchment with Hay-on-Wye and Clyro.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the Outline Business Case for the project was approved last year and the formal consultation process is only starting now. There's already been a 12 month slippage.</p>	<p>The Outline Business Case was formally approved by Welsh Government in October 2015. Powys County Council subsequently approved that formal consultation to close Talgarth and Bronllys schools should commence on 26th of January 2016. The formal consultation process opened on March the 7th and closed on April 18th, 2016.</p>
<p>Further concerns were raised about slippage. What assurance can the authority provide that the funding for the project is secure?</p>	<p>Welsh Government have already approved the Strategic Outline Case and the Outline Business Case for the project. The Final Business Case will be submitted this autumn, meaning that the building work can commence soon after. However, a new school in Talgarth will only happen if Cabinet approve the proposal.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the lack of parental presence in the consultation meeting in Talgarth due to parent believing that the project is a certainty when it's not. Parents do not understand why the consultation</p>	<p>The previous formal consultation lapsed because Cabinet made the decision to postpone until an Option Agreement on site acquisition has been Cabinet formally approved the completion of an Option Agreement to acquire the freehold of land on the new school site in Talgarth on January 26, 2016.</p>

<p>process is happening for a second time.</p>	
<p>Concerns were raised about the authority's lack of planning in terms of current site disposal at both Talgarth and Bronllys.</p>	<p>If Cabinet approve the proposal and the schools were to close, the authority's Schools Service would declare the Talgarth and Bronllys sites surplus to schools service use. The site would thereafter be offered to other departments within the authority and other partner agencies. If there were no interest, the authority would look to sell the site for other purposes and the capital receipt would go back to the authority.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that nobody from the authority will be held to account for the continuous time slippage.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the community will not feel confident that the new school project will be going ahead until foundations are laid.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the closure of Bronllys CP School. 50 new housing developments have been granted planning permission in Bronllys alone. Perspective buyers may not want to settle in Bronllys due to the proposals.</p>	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation process will create uncertainty, especially for the community of Bronllys, where it is proposed that the primary school would close and that the provision would no longer be available in the village. However the authority is of the view that by providing a new 21st Century School just over a mile down the road in Talgarth, the learning experience of the pupils who currently attend Bronllys school will be enhanced.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the authority has not undertaken adequate planning in terms of school size, especially due to the new housing developments.</p>	<p>The projected pupil numbers for Talgarth and Bronllys school for the year 2020 is 133 pupils (Reception to year 6), taking into account the proposed dwellings within the Local Development Plan. The authority is of the view that a school of 150 pupil capacity is suffice to meet pupil learning needs,</p>

<p>Concerns were raised about the uncertainty the whole school organisation process has created in the locality.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that some pupils will have to move schools twice in their primary education duration due to Bronllys school being the receiving school following the closure of Glasbury school.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment. Some pupils across the two schools were previously pupils in Glasbury on Wye which closed in December 2012. The authority will work closely with these pupils and parents to ensure that there is a smooth transition into the new school.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the authority's lack of assurances that the transition process will happen smoothly.</p>	<p>The authority accept that any school reorganisation will create a period of uncertainty, especially in the transition process. The authority will support the Shadow Governing Body (and the permanent Governing Body thereafter) and teachers throughout the process to ensure that the transition period will have minimal impact on pupils.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the authority's lack of evaluation to upgrade the schools rather than build a new school.</p>	<p>The school maintenance backlog costs for Bronllys school is £120,000 and £509,400 at Talgarth School. Following Welsh Government's evaluation of the schools building condition, Talgarth was graded a D for sustainability and Bronllys B/C for suitability.</p> <p>The options around refurbishing the schools are considered within the Strategic Outline case and the Outline Business Case. It the authority's view that building a new school for the pupils of Talgarth and Bronllys, rather than refurbishment is the best possible long-term solution for the pupils and the communities of Talgarth and Bronllys.</p>
<p>10. QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE PROCESS</p>	
<p>Has the Business case in respect of funding for the new school been completed?</p>	<p>The authority must follow a 5 Case Business Model process to secure Welsh Government funding for the proposal. Welsh Government approval has been received for the Strategic Outline Case and for the Outline Business Case for 5 new primary schools in Gwernyfed catchment.</p>

	The Full Business Case (which is the final business case) will be submitted to Welsh Government in the autumn of this year.
Is the process too far down the line for the project not to happen?	The authority has already gained Welsh Government approval for the first two business cases. If the authority gains Full Business Case approval, the contractors can begin the construction work.
As far as the authority is concerned, the new school will go ahead?	The authority is confident that the project will go ahead. This statement is without prejudice to the Cabinet decision making process.
If the proposal is approved, when will you know what the staffing structure will be?	The shadow governing body will appoint a headteacher and they will work collaboratively to devise a staffing structure for the new school. The process of forming the Shadow Governing Body will begin if and when the formal consultation process to close the schools is fully concluded – this could be in October or November 2016.
What are the Management of Change procedures and can the authority distribute it?	Neither Talgarth nor Bronllys CP Schools have adopted the authority's Management of Change Policy. The policy is currently being worked on by the authority.
Does the redundancy policy make any specific mention about staff who are on maternity leave?	If a member of staff is selected for redundancy whilst on maternity leave, their employment continues until the end of the statutory pay period. Employers must not discriminate against someone who is on maternity leave. By law, once a woman who is on maternity leave has been selected for redundancy, the employer has to give her preference over other redeployees when finding alternative work.
If an employee's name is on the Redeployment Register, are they guaranteed a post?	The authority's redeployment policy needs to be strengthened as currently, not everyone who is on the redeployment register is guaranteed a post. When staff are given notice and there are no issues in relation to capability, another school would need to give good reasons for not considering an applicant whose name was on the redeployment register.

<p>What does the Final Business Case involve?</p>	<p>The Strategic Outline Case focusses on the strategic justification, the investment objectives, the reasoning of the options and the proposed management structure of the proposal.</p>
	<p>The Outline Business Case focusses on the commercial strategy, the detailed analysis of the options, and details of match funding and profile of spend.</p>
	<p>Both business cases have been approved by Welsh Government.</p>
	<p>The Full Business Case ties every detail together, from the management structure, monitoring and evaluating the benefits and the agreed contract.</p>
<p>Is it possible that approval may be retracted if there is a change of administration following the Welsh Assembly elections?</p>	<p>The 21st Century Schools Programme will run until March 2019, therefore the project must be completed before then.</p>
<p>Will there be an opportunity to see the design of the new school?</p>	<p>The authority will ensure that the pupils and stakeholders have the opportunity to have an input in the designs. Although the proposed 5 new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment will be of standardised design, the appointed contractors and Powys County Council staff will work with pupils and stakeholders to finalise the initial designs.</p>
<p>If someone in the community objects to the proposal, even if they are not connected with school that could mean the proposal was rejected?</p>	<p>If Cabinet approves the proposal, there will be a 28 day objection period for people to submit their objections. An objection report will then go back to cabinet for consideration. It will be Cabinet's decision whether to approve the proposal, or not.</p>
<p>Has the timeframe you have given been planned on the basis that there are likely to be objections to the proposal?</p>	<p>If Cabinet approves the proposal, there will be a 28 day objection period for people to submit their objections. An objection report will then go back to Cabinet for consideration. The objection report will go to Cabinet in September 2016.</p>

<p>How is a Shadow Governing Body formed?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body would be established to include governors from the two existing schools. The authority will manage the process and would seek to achieve a balance of governors between the two existing schools. The authority would also provide a clerk to the new shadow governing body to provide independent advice and support. The process will also be fully supported by the authority's officers.</p>
<p>When do you envisage a Shadow Governing Body being established?</p>	<p>The shadow governing body will be established when the formal consultation process to close the schools is fully concluded and approved by Cabinet – this could be in October or November 2016.</p>
<p>Will there be a new prospectus for the new school when the new Shadow Governing Body is established?</p>	<p>There would need to be a statement around the vision for the new school before the new school is established in September 2017.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about staff uncertainty and that they may look for new jobs. Is there any way the new build could be brought forward?</p>	<p>The authority accepts that any school reorganisation process will create a period of uncertainty for all involved, however the completion of the new school in Talgarth is a priority and it will be in the top half of the priority list of the 5 new build schools.</p>
<p>Why is there a need for the interim arrangements? Why not wait until the new school is ready?</p>	<p>The authority is of the view that by establishing the new school 12 months in advance of relocating to the new building, the pupils will have time to get to know each other through learning and activities, the pupils will get to know the teachers, and time is given for the new school arrangements and ethos to be instilled.</p>
<p>What is the possibility of the one school two-sited option being shortened so this can be one term rather than full school year?</p>	<p>The authority is of the view that by establishing the new school 12 months in advance of relocating to the new building, the pupils will have time to get to know each other through learning and activities, the pupils will get to know the teachers, and time is given for the new school arrangements and ethos to be instilled. The authority is of the view that this wouldn't be feasible during one school term.</p>

What happens with the governing bodies and shadow governing body running concurrently because governors are appointed for a four-year term?	Governors would be appointed to the Shadow Governing Body but their appointment would cease upon the formation of a permanent governing body.
Would there be teacher governor on the Shadow Governing Body?	As the regulations currently stand, yes a teacher governor will form part of the shadow governing body.
Will it be possible for governors to be on both the governing body of the existing school and the Shadow Governing Body of the new school?	Yes.
What if you only have one year left as governor from the old school and there is a four-year term of office on new governing body?	Governors would be appointed to the Shadow Governing Body but their appointment would cease upon the formation of a permanent governing body.
Will the opening of the new school on two sites generate an Estyn inspection?	It is the authority's view that it would be highly unlikely for Estyn to inspect a new school within 18 months of opening, however that cannot be guaranteed. Any school is only 20 days from inspection.
Has the new school site been purchased?	The land has not been formally purchased, however the authority and the current landowner's legal representatives have agreed an Options Agreement. The Options Agreement is expected to be in place before the consultation process concludes. A 'break out' clause has been included within the Options Agreement by which the authority can pull out of the agreement at a cost to the authority. However, the landowner would be committed to the Options Agreement once it has been signed.
What would make Powys County Council pull out of the options agreement?	The authority would not commit to a significant sum of money without having an option to pull out, however the authority is confident that there is no

	significant issue that would halt the process. This is without prejudice to the Cabinet decision making process.
Has the timescale for all 5 new primary schools slipped?	The timescale for building all five primary schools proposed within the overall project has slipped against the original time-frame. The proposal to build the new school in Talgarth is part of the same overall project.
Will the authority be placing contracts with contractors this year?	The authority has met it's timescale for awarding the contract for the design and build of the schools. If all goes to plan, it is proposed that the new school would open in September 2018.
Why can't the new school open when the new school building is ready?	The authority is of the view that by establishing the new school 12 months in advance of relocating to the new building, the pupils will have time to get to know each other through learning and activities, the pupils will get to know the teachers, and time is given for the new school arrangements and ethos to be instilled. The authority is of the view that this wouldn't be feasible if all upheaval would happen at once, when the new school opens.
Concerns were raised about the interim proposals, why can't the new school open on two sites in September 2016?	It would not be possible to establish the new school on two sites from September 2016 because the authority has to adhere by the Welsh Government School Organisation Code (2013). The consultation process has to conclude before the new school can be established. It is the authority' view that the process will be concluded by October/ November 2016.
Is there a risk that the new school building will not go ahead if the administration is Welsh Government changes?	The 21 st Century Schools Programme has been approved to run until 2019.
Could the authority provide the names of those responsible for seeing through the project?	Gareth Jones, Senior Manager Central Support Services Marianne Evans, Senior Schools Transformation Manager
Is September 2018 the very last date by which the new school will be open?	The earliest time the school could open would be the beginning of the summer term in 2018, but if there were to be slippage, this would be September 2018.

What problems might there be which would cause further delay?	Several processes need to be concluded before the Final business Case can be submitted for Welsh Government approval in the autumn.
Has the Brecon Beacons National Park authority been consulted?	The authority's property department have had several discussions with the National Park Authority.
As part of the tendering process for the potential contractors, would you provide an outline plan of what the new school will be?	Yes.
Will governors have an input in terms of the design of the new school, inside and outside?	Yes. The authority will make arrangements for the contractors to consult with pupils, teachers, governors and parents about the new school designs.
Has the Outline Business Case covered the travel facilities, paths, sports grounds, library, and if it has not, with the Full Business Case include this?	The Full Business Case will include all details of the new school. Travel arrangements will need to be evaluated by the authority under its schools transport policy.
Is the full Business Case ready?	The authority is currently developing the Full Business Case ready for Welsh Government submission in the autumn of this year.
If the cabinet rejects the proposal will the project go to the 'bottom of the pile'?	If the Cabinet rejects the proposal, it will not be possible to proceed with closure of Talgarth and Bronllys Schools and the opening of the new school.
If the Cabinet rejects the proposal in relation to Talgarth/ Bronllys will the four other new school builds go ahead?	Yes.

Could this proposal be derailed by proposals for other primary schools on Gwernyfed catchment?	No due to the fact that the other 4 new primary schools are not required to go through a statutory process.
Concerns were raised that if the other new primary schools proposed for the catchment were built and the proposal for Talgarth did not go ahead, that would mean we would lose pupils.	The authority notes this comment.
Will the new build be phased and when will the community be alerted as to what the phasing will be?	The new schools to be built at Hay, Clyro and Talgarth will be priorities. The order in which the schools are to be built will be discussed in detail with the contractor.
Will one contractor be appointed for all the new school builds in the Gwernyfed catchment?	Yes.
Who is the named person/s who going to be responsible for the Full Business Case? Can we contact them directly?	Gareth Jones and Marianne Evans, as Senior Managers within the Schools Service. Betsan Ifan, the Schools Transformation Project Manager should be contacted directly with any queries.
Has Welsh Government funding been secured for the new school and, if so, is this likely to change following change in administration at Welsh Government or if the UK leaves Europe?	The 21 st Century Schools Programme has been approved to run until March 2019.
Why weren't Opinion Research Services brought in at an earlier stage so that we could feel reassured throughout the process?	The authority notes this comment. Opinion Research Services will be involved throughout the Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools formal consultation process.

Will parents, pupils and staff be involved in discussion concerning the design of the new school?	Yes
Does the authority now own the site identified for the new school?	The land has not been formally purchased, however the authority and the current landowner's legal representatives have agreed an Options Agreement. The Options Agreement is expected to be in place before the consultation process concludes. A 'break out' clause has been included within the Options Agreement by which the authority can pull out of the agreement at a cost to the authority. However, the landowner would be committed to the Options Agreement once it has been signed.
If the Cabinet approves the proposal, what date will the statutory notice be published?	The formal consultation process end date is April 18, 2016. The consultation report will be written and submitted to Cabinet in June. If Cabinet approve the proposal, a 28 days objection period will commence. An objection report will then be submitted to Cabinet in September 2016.
Will there be another meeting to update parents?	The authority will not hold another public meeting for parents. Teachers, governors and parents will be updated throughout the process.
(directed at Opinion Research) Are you still involved in the process when the report goes to Cabinet?	Opinion Research Services will only be involved during the formal consultation period.
What length of time will be included in the Options Agreement for payment for the site?	The full payment of the site will be made if and when Welsh Government approve the Full Business Case.
Concerns were raised that due to the authority not being able to provide assurances that the funding has been secured for the new-build, the schools will be stuck with the interim	The authority notes this comment.

arrangements and travelling between the schools for years to come.	
11. QUESTIONS ABOUT / ISSUES WITH THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION	
Concerns were raised that the Consultation Document failed to consider the establishment of a Welsh-medium primary school in the area, or the viability of establishing a Welsh-medium stream.	The Area Review Board discussed the viability of establishing a Welsh stream as part of the area review process. A Welsh work-stream was established but it was their recommendation not to develop a Welsh stream in the Gwernyfed catchment. Indications are that the learners attending Ysgol y Bannau were from the West side of the catchment area and no children attend Ysgol y Bannau from Clyro, Glasbury, Hay-on-Wye area.
Concerns were raised that no mention is made in the Consultation Document on the safe walking and cycling route to school for pupils from Talgarth and Bronllys	The authority notes this comment and will work with parents on the issue of a safe walking/ cycling route to school.
12. OTHER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS	
Is the authority aware of the potential for housing development on the same site as the new school?	Yes.
Will housing on the site be developed in tandem with the school? What about provision for works access?	The authority's property department have been in discussions with the developer about access to the school site.
Has sustainability been considered?	Yes. The new schools will be built to BREAAAM excellence standards.

<p>Will the proposal to close Gwernyfed High School affect this proposal?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Will the proposal to close Gwernyfed High School affect what kind of school will be built here?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Is the authority aware of any conversation taking place in relation to using an anaerobic digestion heating source to supply heating for the new school building?</p>	<p>The authority is aware of this.</p>
<p>With regards to the anaerobic digester plant, concerns were raised that the authority has a default obligation in providing acceptable primary education in the area.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment and is fully aware of its obligation in providing acceptable primary education in the area.</p> <p>The authority has taken advice on the impact this facility will have on the proposed location of the new school without any identified issues.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the authority choosing a site adjacent to an anaerobic digester plant and its associated noxious odours and its effect on outdoor play.</p>	<p>The anaerobic digester plant is on a farm which is approximately 500metres from the Talgarth site. The proposed school site is designated for community sand school use under the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Local Development Plan in the knowledge of the presence of the plant. Whilst the authority understands that the plant had some initial concerns, these concerns have reduced as the plant has been in operation.</p> <p>The authority would expect that as the plant is operating to standards set by the NRW and Local Authority Environmental Health, that good environmental controls are maintained. These controls will be tested during the planning application stage of the proposed development.</p> <p>The authority has taken advice on the impact this facility will have on the proposed location of the new school without any identified issues.</p>

<p>Concerns were raised about the need to maintain the school buildings in the interim, e.g. school toilets are in a bad state and the need to invest in the school buildings in the short term.</p>	<p>The authority accepts that there are significant school backlog maintenance costs at both schools, however minimal investments will be undertaken to ensure that the schools meet H & S requirements.</p>
<p>What will happen to the current school sites? Will they become derelict?</p>	<p>If Cabinet approve the proposal and the schools close, the Schools Service would declare the Bronllys and Talgarth CP School sites surplus to requirement. The sites would be offered to other departments within the authority and to other partner agencies. If there was no interest, the authority would look to sell the site for other purposes and the capital receipts would go back to the authority.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the National Park Authority favouring developments of brown field rather than green field sites</p>	<p>The authority's property team have had several discussions with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.</p>
<p>How long will the school stand empty waiting for a purchaser?</p>	<p>The school will stand empty until a purchaser is found.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the inadequate sewerage system in Talgarth.</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that the authority have not aspired to having Welsh medium in the Gwernyfed catchment area - but the new school should not be delayed because of it</p>	<p>The Area Review Board discussed the viability of establishing a Welsh stream as part of the area review process. A Welsh work-stream was established but it was their recommendation not to develop a Welsh stream in the Gwernyfed catchment. Indications are that the learners attending Ysgol y Bannau were from the West side of the catchment area and no children attend Ysgol y Bannau from Clyro, Glasbury, Hay-on-Wye area.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that parents are under the impression that some pupils</p>	<p>The shadow governing body in collaboration with the teachers and parents will decide upon the new school uniform policy.</p>

will receive free school uniforms, and other will not.	
Comments were received urging the authority to be transparent and to effectively communicate project updates to all stakeholders	The authority notes this comment.
Comment was made that the potential contractors had visited all of the other Gwentyfed catchment schools, but not Talgarth and Bronllys schools	The potential contractors were visiting the new school sites and not the actual schools. The reason that the potential contractors visited the other schools was that their new schools will be situated on the current school grounds (or adjacent to it). The situation in Talgarth and Bronllys is different as the new proposed school site is not situated near either the school.
13. COMMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSAL	
“The staff are keen for the new schools to become one school. We do work closely together as two schools and we are keen for that to continue and to move into the new building. We are supportive of a new school.”	The authority notes this comment
“I have not received any feedback from constituents to say that they don’t want this project to happen”	The authority notes this comment.
“The children deserve to have a decent school building. Teachers deserve not to be penalised because	The authority notes this comment

<p>of the fabric of the building when the school is inspected.”</p>	
<p>“In my opinion, the sooner there is one school, the better.”</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>
<p>“It would be nice if the pupils were involved in suggesting name of the new school This current school building is disinteresting and is putting off prospective parents.”</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>
<p>Concerns were raised that if this project was not to proceed, the town of Talgarth would lose more primary pupils</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>
<p>“The staff are keen for the new schools to become one school. We do work closely together as two schools and we are keen for that to continue and to move into the new building.”</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>
<p>“I write in support of the principle of the creation of new school for pupils at Talgarth and Bronllys Schools at the identified site in Talgarth. It is clear that that there is a great deal of community support for the proposals, but considerable disappointment that the new school building maybe further delayed. I would urge the Council to do all that it</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>

<p>can to expedite the building of the new facilities.</p> <p>I am also concerned that Powys County Council give full consideration and develop plans to address the issue of safe routes to Schools that would maximise the opportunity for children to pursue active travel measures to and from school. This must include appropriate speed limits, crossing provision and safe walking cycling routes.</p> <p>I hope you will take on board my points as part of this consultation.”</p>	
<p>“I am for closure of the 2 sites; the new school should have wrap around childcare + the nursery should also accept childcare vouchers”</p>	<p>The authority notes this comment</p>
<p>14. COMMENTS AGAINST THE PROPOSAL</p>	
<p>One written response was received objecting the proposal for the reason that it would likely to worsen primary provision in the Talgarth/ Bronllys area for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The close proximity of the site to an anaerobic digester plant 2) Road safety 3) Educational value for pupils and the impact on a proposal to remodel the current schools. 	<p>The authority notes the objection and has responded to each issue within the consultation report.</p> <p>1) The anaerobic digester plant is on a farm which is approximately 500metres from the Talgarth site. The proposed school site is designated for community sand school use under the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Local Development Plan in the knowledge of the presence of the plant. Whilst the authority understands that the plant had some initial concerns, these concerns have reduced as the plant has been in operation.</p> <p>The authority would expect that as the plant is operating to standards set by the NRW and Local Authority Environmental Health, that good environmental controls are maintained. These controls will be tested during the planning application stage of the proposed development.</p>

The authority has taken advice on the impact this facility will have on the proposed location of the new school without any identified issues

2) The authority has undertaken an assessment of the route from Bronllys to Talgarth, and although there is a footpath from Bronllys to Talgarth, there is also a busy trunk road that would need crossing, because of this, the route has been deemed as an unsafe route and the authority will provide Home to School Transport. The authority will work with the communities on options for developing a safe routes to the new site.

3) The authority is of the view that pupils can learn better in a larger physical classroom with appropriate and 21st Century facilities. The learning experience for each pupil will depend on the quality of leadership and management and the teaching and learning.

The authority has evaluated the cost and impact of remodelling the schools, the issues are addressed in the Strategic Outline Case and in the Outline Business Case.

APPENDIX 1 – Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of a consultation meeting with governors of Bronllys and Talgarth CP Schools, held on 14th March, 2016, on a proposal to close Talgarth and Bronllys CP School from August 2017 and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017 until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.

Present

Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager School Transformation
Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Service
Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance

Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services
Kara Stedman, Opinion Research Services

Governors

Tara Morgan	Teacher Govr. Bronllys CP	Ruth Ryan	Parent Governor, Talgarth CP
Anita Powell	Bronllys CP	William Powell	LEA Governor, Talgarth CP
Bev Matthews	Parent Govr. Bronllys CP	Nigel Martin	
Marie Blackwell	Minor Authority, Bronllys	Ann Dierikx	Parent Governor, Talgarth CP
Belinda Owen	Bronllys CP	Malcolm Dodds	Community Governor, Talgarth
Sam Toone	Acting Head Bronllys & Talgarth CP	Sophie Phillips	Teacher Governor, Talgarth CP

Ian Roberts thanked governors for agreeing to attend the meeting as two governing bodies. Officers and governors introduced themselves.

Governors were informed that Welsh Government have, without prejudice to the outcome of consultation, approved the Outline Business Case to build a new primary school in Talgarth. He explained that the purpose of consultation is to obtain views on a proposal to establish a new school on the current sites of Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools in September 2017 until a new school is constructed in September 2018. Governors were informed that the meeting was part of the formal consultation process defined by the Welsh Government School Organisation Code.

It was noted that issues raised during consultation and the Authority's response to them would be included in a consultation report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet at the end of the consultation period. Governors were advised that the consultation period would run to 18th April, 2016. Ian Roberts invited questions/comments from governors.

1. Question/Comment

**Where are we at in terms of pre application discussion in relation to the site of the new school?
The school organisation process has taken a long time.**

Response

In terms of awarding the contract for development of the new school for this area and other 4 schools, tender documentation from 5 companies is being evaluated currently and it is expected that

a decision to appoint a contractor will be made by the end of this week. Following appointment of the contractor there will be a 10-day period during which the contractors who have not been appointed have a right of appeal. The authority should be in a position to name the contractor by the end of the school Easter break. Colleagues in the Property Service have had discussions with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority about the planning processes to be followed. The final business case will need to be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of October/early November.

2. Question

What does the Final Business Case involve?

Response

Welsh Government has approved the Strategic Outline Case. When that has been approved an Outline Business Case needs to be completed – this is more detailed than the Strategic Outline Case and includes financial information and information on the options. Once the Outline Business Case is approved, a Final Business Case, including information on planning and design and detailed financial information needs to be completed. Welsh Government has approved the Outline Business Case. The next stage is completion of the Final Business Case. Welsh Government will not approve the Final Business Case until the statutory process has been completed and the planning application has been approved.

3. Question

Is it possible that approval may be retracted if there is a change of administration following the Welsh Assembly elections?

Response

I am not in a position to speak on behalf of Welsh Government but capital funding has been allocated for Band A of the programme and there has been no indication from Welsh Government that the funding will not be honoured.

Response

Powys Legal Team is in discussion with the legal representatives of the landowner of the proposed site for the new school in relation to an options agreement and once that agreement is in place it commits the landowner to selling the site subject to the Final Business Case being approved. There is a “break out” clause within the agreement which means the Authority can opt out of the agreement but the landowner can’t.

4. Question

Is the Authority aware of the potential for housing development on the same site as the school?

Response

It is understood that there will be some residential development on the site as well as the school. As part of the Schools Service Asset Management Plan all potential sites for housing development within the Brecon Beacons Park Authority area and the Local Development plan have been identified in order to plan school places.

5. Question

Will housing on the site be developed in tandem with the school? What about provision for works access?

Response

It is understood that colleagues in Property Services have had discussion with the developer about access to the school site.

Even if there is a change of administration following the Welsh Assembly elections, the civil servants in the 21st Century Schools section of Welsh Government will remain broadly the same.

6. Comment

At one time, there was a concern regarding the specification for new school builds. The Minister has advised that local authorities are expected to be sensitive to the surrounding area when considering designs for new school buildings especially when these are in a national park setting.

Response

Welsh Government is looking to more standardised school buildings but it is sensitive to local planning needs. Quality will not be sacrificed at the expense of standardisation.

Comment

When the tender documentation was sent to contractors they were asked how they can assure flexibility within the design to accommodate changes of educational delivery into the future.

7. Comment

Contractors tendering for the design and build of the new schools have visited staff in other schools in the catchment but they did not visit Talgarth or Bronllys CP School.

Response

We need to ensure that once a contractor has been appointed there is early engagement with schools.

8. Question

Has sustainability been considered?

Response

It is expected that the new schools will be built to BREAAAM excellence standard. Contractors will have to achieve sustainability.

9. Question

Will there be an opportunity see the design for the new school?

Response

Contractors will need to work with teaching professionals as to what works in terms of design. What is important is that children have high quality classroom environments. New schools will have ICT wireless connectivity and touch screens.

Response

Ysgol Trefonnen in Llandrindod Wells was built with an ICT classroom. Once a contractor has been appointed, site visits need to be arranged.

Response

The contractor will need to discuss with staff the requirements for the new schools. Even the colour of the walls in classrooms is important. The classroom environment has to be suitable for pupils with additional needs such as dyslexia and sensory impairment.

10. Comment

We are lucky with the surroundings at this school. We have plenty of outdoor space which is important particularly for the Foundation Phase. What is the size of the site for the new school and how much land will there be around it?

Response

There are guidelines in place around outside space for new schools.

Response

Consideration will be given to car parking and safe routes to school.

Response

It has yet to be determined whether the school will be designed with a capacity to accommodate the number of primary school living in the catchment areas of Talgarth and Bronllys CP schools or the current pupils of both schools.

11. Comment/Question

We are aware of potential bleed from some schools because of the uncertainty in relation to the future of Gwernyfed High School. Will the Gwernyfed issue affect what sort of school we will have?

Response

It is currently planned to build an English medium primary school to accommodate between 120 and 150 pupils. It is not appropriate to discuss the Secondary school proposal at this meeting.

Response

The new school needs to be of sufficient size to accommodate the current pupils of both schools and to have capacity to expand, if required in future.

12. Comment

As a governor of Talgarth School I am fairly certain that governors are all in favour of the new school but we have had so many promises and we have been waiting for so long. We want something concrete. Bronllys governors may have a different view.

Response

It is important to understand this is consultation on the closure of the two schools and there is no guarantee that the proposal will be taken forward as Cabinet may decide not to progress if there is a significant level of opposition. I am not hearing opposition to the proposal tonight but we do not know what the outcome of consultation will be. The Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council are attending the public consultation meeting this evening. It is not possible to progress to the next stage until the consultation phase has been completed.

13. Question

So if someone in the community objects to the proposal, even if they are not connected with school that could mean the proposal was rejected?

Response

All the issues raised during the consultation period and the authority's response to them will be collated and included in a consultation report to the Cabinet which has a duty to consider all the issues raised before taking a decision.

Response

An objection or a significant number of objections does not mean that the proposal will not go ahead.

Response

The consultation is not a referendum. It is about collating all the issues.

Response

It will be for the Council's Cabinet, not the Minister, to decide on the next steps. Under the current code, because the schools are County Primary schools, it will be the Council's Cabinet which takes the decision on the proposal. If there was an objection concerning the proposed site for the new school – for example, from someone living adjacent to the site, they would have the option to submit an objection under planning regulations.

14. Question

Has the timeframe you have given been planned on the basis that there are likely to be objections to the proposal?

Response

The statutory consultation period is for 42 days. If, following the consultation period, the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal statutory notices of closure will be published, following which there will be a statutory objection period of 28 days. During that time any objections submitted during the consultation period will need to be resubmitted in order to count as an objection.

15. Comment

We have been through the consultation process before.

Response

There was a formal consultation in 2012. Cabinet did not agree to publish notices then as there were issues around the site so there was a need to consult again.

16. Comment/Question

A parent raised concerns about a safe walking route from Bronllys to Talgarth. What happens if the authority changes its school transport plan?

Response

The reason why the authority said school transport would be provided from Bronllys was because there was an issue with pupils having to cross the main trunk road.

17. Comment

Parents of pupils in Talgarth School are also anxious about the walking route to the site of the new school. There is no safe footpath on some of the route.

Response

We will need to work with colleagues from the Highways Department regarding safe routes to school.

18. Question

Does the authority not have a duty under the Travel Act, 2014, to provide a safe walking and cycling route to schools?

Response

Yes

19. Question

Will there be a pedestrian crossing?

Response

Officers in the Schools Service will work with colleagues in the Transport and Highways Department in relation to safe routes to school.

20. Comment

Many pupils cycle to school. Consideration also needs to be given to a safe cycling route. I would not want children cycling on the main road.

21. Question

How is a shadow governing body formed?

Response

A shadow governing body would be established to include existing governors of the two schools. We would aim to achieve a balance of governors between the two schools. The Authority would probably provide a clerk to the new shadow governing body to provide independent advice and support. Senior Management would also provide support.

22. Question

When do you envisage a shadow governing body being established?

Response

That question was raised in the staff meeting in relation to concerns around their employment. If the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal a final decision may be taken by October half term. The Authority would provide support in establishing a shadow governing body for the new school. The two existing governing bodies would continue to run until the schools close.

23. Question

Will there be a new prospectus for the new school when the new shadow governing body is established? Staff will need a prospectus for the new school to be in place before the new build has been completed.

Response

There would need to be a statement around the vision for the new school before it is built.

24. Comment

In the staff meeting it was stated that, hopefully, staff would be transferring to the new build in September 2017 and I brought up an issue that members of staff are going to be expected to

operate from two sites for a term before the new school is ready. Staff might be prepared to do this for a term but it would be different if this was for a whole year.

Response

It is planned that the new school build will be ready in September, 2018.

25. Comment

The impression given was that 12 months would be the maximum period taken for the new school to be built. The goal posts have changed – one school on two sites for a whole year would be different to one term. Teachers have concerns about a whole year when the new school would be over two sites and, as a governor, I would have concerns about that as well. One school on two sites for a full year is very different to one term.

Response

Is it possible to do everything you need to do to establish a new school within a term?

26. Comment

The dates are totally different to what we were originally told. I thought originally that the new school was going to open September, 2017, and then the date was pushed back to January 2018, but September 2018 is taking it too far.

27. Comment/Question

An extra school year will mean the potential for problems if there are any objections and if there is a change at Welsh Government that could mean another year of uncertainty for staff. The dates keep changing. Are they going to keep moving?

Response

We would not want to move pupils into the new school too soon but we don't want the school ready to be occupied and leave it nine months before the pupils move in.

Response

For one year there will be a governing body and one staffing structure working across two sites. That will allow an opportunity for policies to be developed in advance of the move to the new build.

28. Comment/Question

There is concern about members of staff having to work 12 months and they will not have post in new school. They may look for new jobs. Is there any way the new build could be brought forward?

Response

It is necessary to follow due process. The outcome of consultation cannot be predetermined. Welsh Government has approved the Outline Business Case but we need to go through the planning process.

29. Comment

I am starting to feel anxious about possible stumbling blocks. You have already been through the consultation process once and now it is being carried out again.

Response

The statutory process has to be completed. The contract to develop the new schools is about to be awarded and that is a significant step. From then on the contractor will be working with the school on the design stage. At the same time the statutory process and planning process will be followed and Welsh Government approval sought for the Final Business Case. On the timescale provided by the Property Service, if there is a final decision for the new school to open on 2 sites in 2017, and the contractor develops the designs for the new school, the contractor could be in position to begin construction at this time next year. Welsh Government need the Full Business Case by November. If construction can begin this time next year it would be a 12-month build.

30. Comment

We understood that construction would begin on the new school at Talgarth after the new school at Hay because we are in a unique situation, but we have heard that the new school at Clyro will be the second school to be developed.

Response

That would be part of the discussion to be had with the developer.

One of the advantages, in relation to the development of the new school at Talgarth, is that it will be built on a green field site.

Response

It is also of benefit that one contractor will be developing all 5 new schools.

31. Comment/Question

The other four schools will continue with the same governance and staffing structure. Our schools are unique because everything is going to change for the two schools. There is going to be a massive impact on staff, pupils and parents so the shorter period between establishing one school and the new school building opening the better. What is the possibility of the one school two-sited option being shortened so this can be one term rather than full school year?

Response

There would need to be discussion with the HR department about the impact in terms of staffing and how long the appointment process would take. The appointment process would take at least 2 terms. It would be unlikely that the process could be completed in a term.

32. Comment

We were led to believe the new school would only operate over two sites for one term.

Response

A shadow governing body cannot be established until the Cabinet takes the final decision on the proposal to establish a new school.

Response

2 terms would probably be sufficient for a primary school to set up a new school structure but there would be a time pressure. There would be a process for the shadow governing body to complete in relation to appointment of a headteacher for the new school and to establishing a staffing structure.

The Authority would be appointing a clerk and identifying a senior manager as well as HR support to support the shadow governing body through the process.

33. Question

What happens with the governing bodies and a shadow governing body running concurrently because governors are appointed for a four-year term?

Response

Governors would be appointed to the shadow governing body but their appointment would cease upon formation of a permanent governing body.

34. Question

Would there be teacher governor on the shadow governing body?

Response

Yes. The first task of the shadow governing body, following the official opening of the new school, would be to appoint a permanent governing body. Parent governors would also need to be appointed.

35. Question

Will it be possible for governors to be on both the governing body of the existing school and the shadow governing body of the new school?

Response

Yes

36. Question

What if you only have one year left as governor from the old school and there is a four-year term of office on new governing body?

37. Question

Are you aware of any conversation taking place in relation to using an anaerobic digestion heating source to supply heating for the new school building?

Response

There were discussions in relation to this 18 months ago but I am aware that the community may not support this.

38. Question

Will the opening of a new school on two sites generate an Estyn inspection?

Response

It is highly unlikely Estyn would inspect a new school within 18 months of it being opened but that cannot be guaranteed. Any school is only 20 days from inspection.

Ian Roberts informed governors of the methods by which they could respond to the consultation.

It was noted that the consultation report would be publicly available a week in advance of the Cabinet meeting and that the minutes of the meeting would be included with the report.

Minutes of a consultation meeting with staff of Bronllys and Talgarth CP Schools, held on 14th March, 2016, on a proposal to close Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools from August 2017 and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017 until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.

Present

Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central School Support Services
 Catherine Cottle, Human Resources Business Partner
 Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation

Staff Members

Lorna Olley	Talgarth CP	Anita Powell	Bronllys CP
Sophie Phillips	Talgarth CP	Julie Robinson	Bronllys CP
Anthea Coles	Talgarth CP	Janet Lewis	Bronllys CP
Nicole Carey	Talgarth CP	Catarina Owen	Bronllys CP
Simon Johnson	Talgarth CP	Tara Morgan	Bronllys CP
Hazel Williams	Talgarth CP	Zoe Argent	Bronllys CP
Sarah James	Talgarth CP	Ydwena Jones	Bronllys and Talgarth CP
Cheryl Beckett	Talgarth CP	Sam Toone	Bronllys and Talgarth CP
Debbie Lewis	Talgarth CP	Vicki Williams	Bronllys and Talgarth CP
Becki Humphreys	Talgarth CP		
Leanne Davies	Talgarth CP		

Gareth Jones thanked staff for attending the. Officers and staff members introduced themselves.

Gareth Jones explained the purpose of the meeting was to gain views on the proposal to close both Bronllys and Talgarth C P Schools from August, 2017 and to establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September, 2017, until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September, 2018. Staff were informed that if they had any questions around the HR process these could be discussed without prejudice to the Cabinet’s decision but the main purpose of the meeting was to formally consult with staff on the school closure proposal. Gareth Jones informed staff about the background leading up to the proposal. It was noted that it had been the recommendation of the Area Project Board to close four of the 10 primary schools within the Gwernyfed catchment area and four of these – Ffynnongynydd Church in Wales School, Glasbury Church in Wales School and Llanigon and Rhosgoch CP School had already closed. Following completion of consultation, a report, including issues raised during consultation, would be considered by the Council’s Cabinet and if members decided to proceed with the proposal then a statutory notices of closure of both schools would be published. A statutory objection period of 28 days, to include 15 schools days, would follow the publication of statutory notices. Following the objection period, a further report, including an analysis of any objections received, would be considered by the Cabinet, which would take the final decision on the proposal. Once the final decision had been taken the HR process would begin. It was noted that the situation in terms of the HR process for Bronllys and Talgarth CP schools, this would be different to that followed in respect of the other four closed primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment. If a decision is taken to close both schools, and to open a new school, there would be a revised staffing structure for the new school and posts in the new school would be ringfenced to the existing staff of Bronllys and Talgarth CP Schools. It was noted that because the proposal is to close both schools and to open a new school from the existing sites from September 2017, the new school could be based on the 2 existing school sites until the new building opens.

1. Question

Has the Business Case in respect of funding for the new school been completed?

Response

Welsh Government approval has been received for the Strategic Outline Case and for the Outline Business Case for 5 new primary schools in Gwernyfed catchment. The Full Business Case must be with Welsh Government by the end of October.

As part of the process the Authority, needs to have planning permission for the new school and contractors appointed by the FBC stage. The new schools will be built on design and build basis. By the time schools return from the Easter break the contract should have been awarded. Evaluation of tenders is based 60% on quality and 40% on price.

2. Question

So the process is too far down the line for something to go wrong and for us not to have a new school? What about the impact of the proposal in respect of Gwernyfed High School?

Response

The Secondary school reorganisation process is linked but will not impact on the primary school development. In the Full Business Case, we will need to justify the size of the proposed new primary schools. Currently, more primary school-aged children live in Talgarth and Bronllys school catchments than attend the schools. There is a decision to be taken as to whether or not the new school is built to accommodate the number of primary school pupils in the catchment areas of both schools or whether it is built to accommodate the current pupils of both schools.

In relation to the site for the new school the Authority's legal representatives and representatives of the landowner are discussing an options agreement.

Once the options agreement has been signed by Powys County Council and the landowner then the landowner does not have an option to step away from that agreement, although that option remains open to the Authority.

3. Question

So as far as you are concerned the new school will go ahead?

Response

Yes

4. Question

If the proposal is approved, when will you know what the staffing structure will be?

5. Question

Do we run for a term with the same staffing structure or will we have new contracts from when the new school opens?

Response

If the Cabinet decide to take forward the proposal it is likely to be October or November before steps are taken to establish a shadow governing body for the new school. The shadow governing body will be made up of governors from the governing bodies from the existing schools and the Authority will support the process to ensure that there is a balance of representation from both Bronllys and Talgarth schools on the shadow governing body.

One of the first duties of the shadow governing body of the new school will be to appoint a headteacher. The headteacher would then work with the shadow governing body on a staffing structure for the new school.

If the Cabinet approve the proposal to close both Talgarth and Bronllys CP School and establish a new school, we would hope that the process for establishing a shadow governing body for the new school would begin in the autumn term, 2016.

The timing of the staffing process will depend on the appointment of the new headteacher who will then work with the shadow governing body. Once a headteacher has been appointed to the new school then the staffing structure for the new school can be planned. Discussion will also need to take place as to how the administration of the school will be managed. A library and a pre-school setting may be based in the new school.

6. Comment

There is already a pre-school setting at Talgarth School. If there is a pre-school setting attached to a school, children in the setting usually join the school when they reach school age.

Response

There is second consultation around a proposal to change to the age of school admission and if that proposal goes ahead, the numbers in pre-school may increase.

7. Question

If the new school initially operates over the sites of the existing schools, would staff have two places of work?

Response

The long-term staffing structure for the new school would need to be determined and then it would need to be decided what additional staffing would be needed to operate over both sites.

8. Question

Are you expecting staff who might not have a job in the new school to remain in post for that term when the school is operating over the 2 sites? I think that is ridiculous.

Response

I would be recommending to the governing body that they determine what staff will be needed in the new school and make those appointments and, in the meantime, staff would be expected to work across both schools. Notice for those staff not appointed to the new school would be effective from the date the new building opens. Teachers working their notice may well be working for that 1 term. We would discuss with those staff how to make that work for them. Staff will be entitled to a period of notice, either 1 week for every year of service up to a maximum of 12 weeks or contractual notice, whichever is longer. Support staff with longer than four years continuous service will be entitled to be given statutory notice period.

9. Question

Would the Authority be looking to redeploy staff who were not appointed to the new school or to make them redundant?

Response

The Authority's policy is to deploy staff, where possible.

There would be separate consultation with staff in relation to their employment and consideration would be given to redeploying staff, where possible, in order to avoid compulsory redundancy.

10. Question

Have you any idea how many staff will be needed in the new school?

Response

It would most likely be fewer staff than in employed in the two schools at the moment taking into account the change of school admission age.

11. Question

What staff?

Response

It is more likely that fewer teaching staff than support staff will be needed because of the way they are funded.

12. Comment

If the new school has capacity for 120 children it will be decided that there will be 4 classes of 30 pupils and that may not be appropriate.

Response

The authority has powers give protection around pupil numbers but the finance team will work with the schools on a joint budget for the schools.

13. Question

Will staff need to be interviewed for jobs in the new school?

Response

Staff will not have to fill in an application form but will have to go through a selection process. Usually for teachers this is a paper exercise based on a skills audit. For support staff there would be an interview.

Response

The Staff Disciplinary and Dismissals Committee of the shadow governing body will be responsible for selecting staff for redundancy.

14. Question

Will all existing staff in Talgarth and Bronllys Schools be made redundant?

Response

The posts would be made redundant but we would be looking to find staff employment in the new school. So not all the people would be made redundant.

15. Question

Would the contracts be temporary or permanent?

Response

If staff were employed in the new school this would be on permanent contracts and there would be no break in service and so there would be no impact on entitlement to sickness payment holiday entitlement. If some posts were available on a fixed term contract these entitlements would remain and staff would still be entitled to redundancy at the end of the fixed term contract if suitable alternative employment had not been found.

Comment

For staff who work in canteens there will be a separate consultation led by the Catering and Cleaning Service.

16. Question

If a member of staff currently works on a one to one basis supporting an individual child would they have to reapply to work with that child?

Response

All staff with the same job description would be treated together. If you are the only teacher with a particular pupil it would be a decision for the governing body, supported by HR, as to how the posts are ringfenced.

17. Comment

Parents will wish continuity of support to be maintained for their child because continuity is in the child's best interests.

Response

The Governing Body may decide to ringfence a post in the best interests of a pupil. That could be challenged by a union but it would be for the governing body to decide whether or not to protect that post.

18. Comment

The school reorganisation process has been going on for a long time now. I have come across a lot of parents who would have sent their children to Talgarth or Bronllys Schools but have opted for different schools because of the uncertainty. What have you done to promote the new school in the area? Have you considered the possibility of increased pupil numbers? There could be an influx of pupils particularly with the planned new housing developments in the area?

Response

That is a good question. Consideration needs to be given to the size of the new school. If it is built to a capacity to accommodate children who live in area then there would be 6/7 classrooms. If the new school is built to accommodate children currently in Talgarth and Bronllys CP School it would be a school with 4/5 classrooms, but flexibility to extend would need to be built into the design of the new school.

19. Comment

Parents who have opted for other schools may choose to transfer their children to the new school once it has been built.

20. Comment

A brand new pre-school setting will have the same effect.

21. Comment

The site for the new school isn't exceptionally large if you are putting in a pre-school setting, a library and the youth centre. I don't remember being told the field was large enough to extend.

Response

The Library Service is considering different ways of delivering the service.

22. Question

Will there be outside space? We don't want to move to a school where there will be less outside space.

23. Comment

It would be good to have a dedicated meeting room and space for pupils needing individual support with speech and language etc.

Response

That would be part of a discussion with the contractor once a contractor has been appointed.

24. Comment/Question

The Gwernyfed Area Project Board had discussions about an SEN Centre and a Welsh Unit. Is that possibility still being considered?

Response

It is proposed to establish an English medium primary school without an SEN unit. If it is your view that a Welsh medium stream and an SEN centre should be developed, that would need to be given consideration. However consideration is being given to closing specialist SEN centres. The specialist centre at Crickhowell Primary School is closing due to lack of numbers.

Question

In terms of the authority's proposal to close both schools and open one school are staff generally in support of this?

25. Question/Comment

It would depend on the budget made available to schools. What would happen to the budget of Talgarth and Bronlly Schools if they close? What would happen to equipment in the present schools on closure?

Response

Any underspend /overspend at the date of closure would be written off. In terms of equipment for the new school a budget would be provided for fixtures and fittings and ICT. Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd in Newtown and the new primary schools in Ystradgynlais have all new equipment.

An audit of equipment in the existing schools would be completed. When there is surplus equipment this is normally offered to neighbouring schools.

.Do I gather there is general support of the two schools closing and opening one new school?

26. Comment

In my opinion, the sooner there is one school the better.

Response

A suggestion has been received for the name for the proposed new school - Ysgol Mynydd Ddu- but it would be for the shadow governing body to propose a name for the school.

27. Comment

It would be nice if the pupils were involved in suggesting the name of the new school.

28. Comment/Question

The outdoor space at Talgarth CP School is huge resource in school particularly the forest area. It would be nice if thought was given to that provision in the new school. We don't want a concrete yard. Outdoor space for the pupils is important and schools are expected to have outdoor provision. Will there be enough space for that?

29. Comment

If there is a new uniform for pupils in the new school it will mean a lot of expense for parents. Parents may not be able to afford the financial outlay for a new uniform. Do we offer one new jumper?

Response

That is something that parents would need to raise. In Welshpool, the Authority is proposing to close three infants' schools and open one new County Primary school. It has been decided that pupils will retain their present uniform but there will be a new badge.

Response

In one new school the shadow governing body decided they wanted a new uniform for the school but allowed parents to choose for children to continue wearing the old uniform until they needed to buy a new uniform.

Response

The school or local authority cannot impose a uniform for primary school aged children because uniform is only compulsory for secondary school pupils.

30. Question

What are the Management of Change procedures and can we have a copy of them?

Response

Neither of the schools involved have adopted the Council's Management of Change policy. The policy is being worked on at the moment so I cannot let you have a copy of it at the moment. The policy is being worked on over the Easter holidays.

Response

The Redeployment Policy needs to be strengthened as the success of redeploying staff following small school closures has been quite low.

Response

It is expected that both schools will have adopted the Council's Redundancy Policy. There are separate policies for teaching and support staff which are available on the Intranet.

31. Question

What about involvement of the unions?

Response

Consultation paperwork would be sent to unions and affected staff a week before the consultation with the staff. There is always a pre consultation meeting with the teaching and support staff unions.

32. Question

If a member of staff is part time are their days protected in the new school?

Response

Not necessarily. That would be looked at on an individual basis.

33. Question

Will there be part time positions available in the new school?

Response

It would be the role of the governing body to decide that but governors would be advised that they should not discriminate against part time workers. They have rights protected under the "The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 (Amendment) Regulations 2002"

34. Question

Does the policy make any specific mention about staff who are on maternity leave?

Response

There is information that says if a woman is selected for redundancy while on maternity leave their employment continues until end of the statutory pay period. There are laws against discrimination. Employers must not discriminate against someone who is on maternity leave. By law, once a woman is on maternity leave has been selected for redundancy, the employer has to give her preference over other redeployees over finding alternative work.

35. Question

If an employee's name is on the Redeployment Register are they guaranteed a post?

Response

Not at the moment. We are aiming to strengthen the redeployment policy. When staff are given notice and there are no issues in relation to capability, another school would need to give good reasons for not considering an applicant whose name was on the Redeployment Register.

36. Question

When will staff be declared to be at risk of redundancy?

Response

At the point at which they were not successful in getting a job at the new school.

37. Comment

Every member of staff works so hard and we would hope there would be some loyalty to us as staff. It is very disturbing for a lot of staff that the school has been under threat of closure for a long time. Staff do not know what the future is.

Response

So many schools are going through a process of change now, that it is recognised staff may find themselves in a redundancy situation through no fault of their own. The authority's aim would be to redeploy staff wherever possible. We would want to retain people redundant who have good experience and skills.

38. Question

Where could staff be redeployed to?

Response

Consideration would need to be given as to what would be reasonable in terms of your role. Say, if you were a midday supervisor working 1.25 hours a day, it would not be reasonable for you to travel 10 miles but for a Headteacher that may be reasonable. What makes a job reasonable will be depend on your individual circumstances. What may not suit one person may suit another. There is no definition of what is reasonable. If there is no suitable alternative employment for you then there may be no alternative to redundancy.

Response

Consideration may be given to opening up a voluntary redundancy scheme if the proposal to change the school admission age goes ahead.

39. Question

Will the level of pay be a factor in terms of what job is offered?

Response

The school's governing body will create a staffing structure with the headteacher of the new school. If staff are employed in a role with lower a pay or reduced hours they would receive a one-off compensatory payment.

Response

TLRs have 3-year protection. The compensatory payment would be taxable whereas redundancy payments up to £30K are not.

40. Question

How would Level 2 and Level 3 be taken into account?

Response

That would be up to the governing body.

41. Comment

Originally when school closures were discussed by the Area Project Board when all the school close staff at Bronllys and Talgarth were going to be the last pool.

Response

In Ystradgynlais, when the 10 primary schools closed on the same day, all staff in those schools were included in the pool. In Gwernyfed the situation is different because 4 schools have already closed. The ringfencing pool would therefore only include staff from Bronllys and Talgarth schools.

42. Question

What about the position of staff on rolling temporary contracts?

Response

Any employee on fixed-term contracts for 4 or more years will automatically become a permanent employee, unless the employer can show there is a good business reason not to do so. During the HR consultation, information in relation to staff contracts including length of service will be looked at in detail.

Gareth Jones thanked staff for attending and for their contribution to the meeting. He informed them that those members of staff who were governors or community members would be welcome to attend the governors' consultation meeting and/or public consultation meeting taking place later that evening. He explained that the consultation period closes on 18th April, 2016, and that any responses received during that period would be analysed and included in a report to the Council's Cabinet at the end of May/early June. It was noted that if the Cabinet decide to take forward the proposal then statutory notices of closure for each of the schools would be published for a period of 28 days, 15 of which would be school days. Following the end of the objection period a further report would be submitted to the Cabinet, including analysis of any issues raised during the objection period and the Authority's response to them. It would be for the Cabinet to make the final decision, which would not be referred to Welsh Government.

Staff were informed that the minutes of the meeting would be shared with the headteacher and would be included with the Cabinet report. It was noted that if Cabinet members decide to take the proposal forward then the process to establish the shadow governing body for the new school would begin in October. As soon as the shadow governing body is in place, consultation with staff would begin. It was suggested that by the time the shadow governing body is in place the opening date for the new school would be confirmed.

43. Comment

We understood that it would take around 12 months for the new school to be completed. We think the new school at Talgarth should be prioritised over some of the other new school because the buildings here are falling apart.

Response

The first three schools to be built will be the new schools at Hay, Talgarth and Clyro.

Response

It is hoped to award the contract to build the new school within the next week and we will let school know who the contractor is. The contractor will be engaging with schools to work out the design of the new schools.

Minutes of a consultation meeting with parents and community of Talgarth CP School, held on 14th March, 2016, on a proposal to close Talgarth and Bronllys CP School from August 2017 and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017 until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.

Present

Cllr Barry Thomas, Council Leader
 Cllr Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education
 Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
 Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation
 Jane Thomas, Professional Lead Finance
 Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Services
 Betsan Ifan, Project Manager, Schools Transformation Team.

Kara Steadman, ORS
 Darren Ivey, ORS

Wendy May	Parent		Zoe Argent	Parent
Julie Evans	Parent		Bev Matthews	Governor Bronllys
Jo Hansel Davies	Parent		Heather Summerfield	Governor Talgarth
Julie Argent	Parent		Ruth Ryan	Parent & Governor Talgarth CP
Tom Slater	Parent/Governor		Pip Turner	Parent & Town Councillor
Kirsty Williams	AM Brecon & Radnor Representing		Jacqui Wilding	School Governor & Dep. Mayor Talgarth
Nigel Martin	William Powell AM			

Cllr Arwel Jones welcomed parents and community members to the meeting. Panel members introduced themselves.

Marianne Evans explained the background leading up to the proposal to close Bronllys and Talgarth Schools from August 2017 and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017, until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth. It was noted that the review of Gwernyfed catchment primary schools began in 2009/10 and, in 2011, the Gwernyfed Area Project Board had agreed to reduce the number of primary schools in the catchment from 10 to 5 and a Business Case for capital funding to support the project was submitted to Welsh Government. In 2012, there was formal consultation on the proposal to close both Bronllys and Talgarth Primary Schools but the Cabinet did not approve publication of statutory notices at that time so the formal consultation process is now being repeated. There is a three-stage Business Case process to be completed in order to apply for Welsh Government funding. Welsh Government has approved the first and secondary business cases (Strategic Outline Case and Outline Business Case) and the final Full Business Case is now being developed with a view to this being submitted to Welsh Government in November. The Full Business Case will include information on the design elements and detailed financial information.

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting would be included with the consultation report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet when the formal consultation period has closed.

Parents and community members were invited to ask questions and to give their views on the proposal.

1. Question

Has the site been purchased?

Response

The land has not yet been purchased although Powys County Council's and the landowner's legal representatives have agreed a purchase and are in the process of finalising an options agreement and it is expected that an options agreement will be in place before the end of the consultation process. A "break out" clause has been included within the options agreement by which the Authority can pull out of the agreement but there would be a cost to the Authority. However, the landowner would be committed to the options agreement once it has been signed.

2. Question

What would make Powys County Council pull out of the options agreement?

Response

The Authority does not want to commit to a significant sum of money without having an option to pull out but nothing is seen as a major hurdle to stop the development.

3. Question/Comment

Why has the schedule slipped by 12 months again? Originally, the plan was to open the new school in September, 2017.

Response

Tenders for the design and build are currently being evaluated and it is hoped to appoint a contractor by the end of March. As soon as the contract has been awarded, the Authority will be working with contractor. Part of discussion with the appointed developer will be about the timeline for prioritisation of the new school builds. September, 2018, is the latest date by which we expect the new school at Talgarth to be built. How long the interim period when the new school is run over two sites will be is a discussion to be had with the governing body.

4. Question

Why has the timescale slipped? This meeting is taking place 3 months later than we expected. You are obviously confident you are going to get through this consultation process. The Outline Business case was approved last year. I don't understand why there has been 12 months slippage.

Response

The Outline Business Case was submitted in May and we did not receive notification of approval of the Outline Business Case from Welsh Government until October, 2015 so this affected the timescales.

5. Question

Has the timescale for all 5 new primary schools slipped?

Response

Yes, they are all part of the same project.

Response

Once a contractor has been appointed there can be discussion in relation to the detail of the plan.

6. Comment

I would need to check my notes but I thought you said you were going to be placing contracts with contractors this year.

Response

The timescale for awarding the contract has been met. The new school will be ready in September, 2018, if everything goes to plan. A number of processes are happening at the same time. Consultation is one process, the process around awarding of the contract, and the planning process. Once the contract has been awarded the appointed contractor will be liaising with the school on design of the new school. The Full Business Case needs to be with Welsh Government by November, 2016, so all the processes need to have been completed by that time.

7. Comment

You said that there was a preferred builder.

Response

No, I said that contracts were being evaluated and that by the end of this month there would be a preferred contractor appointed.

Gareth Jones explained the tendering process:

A multi-disciplinary team will be evaluating the tenders. Once the contract has been awarded there will be 10-day period for other contractors to object. Following that, the Council will start the process with the appointed contractor. The appointed contractor will be working on the design and build plans at risk to the authority until the Full Business Case has been approved by Welsh Government. The Full Business Case needs to be submitted to Welsh Government by November, 2016.

8. Comment/Question

I worry about the process slipping again and again. People think we have been here before. This is a good school. We do not want this school to close and an interim arrangement to go on for years. What assurance do we have that the funding will be a reality?

Response

This consultation process ends mid-April and a consultation report will be submitted to the Cabinet in late May or early June. If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices will be published in relation to the closure of both Talgarth and Bronllys Schools and establishing a new school which will operate as a dual-sited school from September 2017, until the new school building has been completed. The statutory notice must be published for 28 days of which 15 must be school days. Following closure of the statutory objection period, any responses received during that period and the Authority's response to them will be included in an objection report for the Council's Cabinet which will take the final decision on the proposal. The design process will proceed concurrently with the statutory process. The site for the new school has been identified as a joint use site for the school and housing.

9. Question

Why can't the new school open when the new school building is ready?

Response

The children will be taught at the current sites of Talgarth and Bronllys Schools while the new school is built.

10. Comment

There is no guarantee that the children will have the same headteacher and staff in the new school.

Response

The acting headteacher will remain in place until the new school opens. The shadow governing body would appoint a headteacher for the new school and the headteacher would work with the shadow governing body to establish a staffing structure ahead of the move into the new build. It has been brought to our attention by governors the period between the opening of the new school and moving into the new build may be too long.

Response

For all posts, except those on leadership scale, the Authority would encourage the shadow governing body to ringfence posts to staff in the existing schools.

11. Comment

We currently have an acting headteacher covering both schools. We are in danger of a situation happening where the school loses its identity. I am not sure of the value of having a 12-month period where the school is operating as a new entity before moving to the new build. Is it not a paperwork exercise to go through the process of telling parents the school is closing before opening of new school?

Response

The question is how resilient is the current situation? There is potential for a situation where there is no leadership in either school. The sooner permanent leadership is secured across the two schools the more resilient the situation will be.

12. Comment/Question

Governors of Talgarth and Bronllys schools have made it clear that they are happy to work together. I would counter what you said with yes I agree but why delay until September 2017? Why can't we open as one school in September, 2016? Why drag out the process because Welsh Government took so long to approve the business case last year? It is frustrating.

Response

It is not possible to for the existing schools to close and to open a new school by September this year because of the statutory process to be followed.

Question

So your view would be that we should not move to one school on two sites but we should just move to the new school when it is ready?

Comment

There has to be a consultation process so that the proposal is open to objections. There appears to be broad support for the long term vision but there are concerns regarding the timetable for implementation.

13. Comment

The staff are keen for the schools to become one school. We do work closely together as two schools and we are keen for that to continue and to move into the new building.

14. Comment

There needs to be more clarity for parents. I rang round parents tonight as I was concerned that there were not many parents at this meeting. The parents seem to believe that the new school is set in stone. I get the impression that parents think this new school is going to happen when I

understand this is not guaranteed. Parents do not understand why the consultation process is happening again. I am concerned that parents' perception of what is going on is not clear. There are not enough parents here to understand the process.

Response

The key point is that the intention is to have a new school in Talgarth and a contractor is about to be appointed but the statutory process needs to be followed.

15. Comment

There is concern that, in the meantime, there is a need to maintain the current school buildings so that they are fit for purpose. The staff make a fantastic effort but there are problems with the existing school buildings. Friends of the school have raised funds for the school and bought whiteboards but are keen for the new school.

16. Comment

Parents are also concerned about the proposal for Gwernyfed High School and that this may overshadow the process for this school.

Response

Formal consultation on the Secondary school proposal has not yet started so that cannot be debated this evening. I would agree with you that this school building is worn.

17. Comment

This school building is disintegrating and it is putting off prospective parents.

18. Question

Is there a risk that the new school building will not go ahead if the administration in Welsh Government changes?

Response

Welsh Government has approved the Outline Business Case and has committed to fund the new primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment. It is unlikely that the commitment will not be honoured.

19. Comment

It is concerning that there are not many parents of younger pupils at the meeting tonight.

20. Comment

We are supportive of a new school.

21. Comment

I have not received any feedback from constituents to say that they don't want this project to happen. We have had concerns raised about the travel arrangements for the pupils from Bronllys to the new school site in Talgarth. What arrangement will be put in place for the children to walk or cycle to the new site? There are concerns about pedestrian safety and how children are going to get to the new school site safely.

Response

Governors brought up that issue at the meeting held earlier this evening. It is understood that many of the pupils living in Talgarth currently cycle to school and there is a need for safe cycle routes. That is something that needs to be considered and responded to within the consultation document.

22. Comment

There are also concerns about the speed of traffic on the trunk road and there is a need for a pavement for the walking route to the new school site.

23. Comment

Personally, I like schools to be in towns. One of the best things about this school building is its central location within Talgarth. What does Powys intend to do with the current site? Powys is a bit littered with old Council sites. The perception is that Powys County Council is closing down services in Talgarth but not legacy planning. I would like a new school to be built on this site. What do you intend doing with this site once it is no longer needed for the school?

Response

Once the schools close, the Schools Service would declare the Bronllys and Talgarth CP School sites surplus to schools services use. I would expect the Youth service would look to declare their site surplus together with the Bronllys site. The sites would be offered to other departments within the Council and to other partner agencies. If there was no interest, the Authority would look to sell the site for other purposes and the capital receipts would go back to the Authority.

Response

Part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is planning capital receipts for major projects. Any capital receipts from the sale of school sites would be used to fund future projects within the 21st Century Schools Programme or other prioritised projects.

24. Comment

I would have thought the National Park Authority would favour the development of brown field rather than green field sites.

25. Question/Comment

How long will the school stand empty waiting for purchaser? Ysgol Thomas Stephens was sold but nothing being done with it.

26. Comment

There is concern in the Talgarth community that the site will be allowed to become derelict because of what has happened with Mid Wales hospital.

27. Comment

You have an opportunity to do something positive with the site. I find it surprising that you do not have a plan of whether you are going to sell or use the site.

28. Comment

There is a rumour in the town that the site may be used for housing once it is no longer needed for a school.

29. Comment

When I attended a previous meeting I was totally assured that the new school would be opening its doors in September, 2017. I am wondering why the statutory procedures have not been undertaken before now. We have been promised a new school for a long time. It is a poor show that a site has been identified when you have not yet fulfilled the statutory requirements. What

have you been doing up to now? It is infuriating to be here again and to be told the new school will not be ready until September 2018. That is not good enough.

Response

I can appreciate your frustration but it is not possible to turn back the clock. We need to ensure that the statutory process is followed and proceeds to timescale. It is essential that the consultation is completed and for the Cabinet to consider the consultation report. It is essential that Welsh Government receives the Full Business Case by November, 2016, that a contractor is appointed, and a shadow governing body is established for the new school.

30. Comment

No one will be held to account for this not being done previously. We have been coming to meetings for four years and discussing this.

Response

Consultation took place in 2012 but the Cabinet decided not to publish a statutory notice, at that stage, so the statutory process had to be repeated. Since that time, work has been undertaken to complete and submit business cases to Welsh Government but it took Welsh Government 5 months to approve the Outline Business Case. Following formal consultation in 2012, the Cabinet wanted further work to be undertaken in relation to purchasing a site for the new school, so a statutory notice was not published at that time.

31. Question

Could we have the timescales and the names of those responsible for seeing through the project? What problems might there be which would cause further delay? Is September, 2018, the very last date by which the new school will be open?

Response

The consultation report will be considered by the Cabinet in May. If Cabinet members take a decision to publish a statutory notice, the notice will be published before the summer holidays. Following a statutory period of 28 days when objections may be received, an objection report will be completed and considered by the Cabinet in September, 2016. If Cabinet members decide to proceed with the recommendation, following consideration of the objection report, a shadow governing body will be established for the new school. The Authority is about to award the contract for development of the new schools and the name of the contractor will be announced after the school Easter holiday. The contractor will begin work on the design stage and a Full Business Case will be submitted to Welsh Government in November. Once Welsh Government approve the Full Business Case, work can begin on site. The earliest time the school could open would be the beginning of the summer term, 2018, but if there is slippage this would be September, 2018.

32. Question

Has the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority been consulted?

Response

Colleagues in the Council's Property Service have had discussions with the National Park Authority.

Comment

One of options for this site could be public sale.

33. Comment

We need social houses and homes for more families to move in but there cannot be more housing development in Talgarth because the sewerage system is inadequate.

34. Comment

With regard to the capacity of the sewerage system, members of staff at Powys County Council and Welsh Water are meeting on a regular basis to discuss sewerage capacity for Talgarth. If the sale of the school site goes through this will trigger demand for greater sewerage capacity in the town. Welsh Water are aware of new school and that will trigger a new sewerage system for the whole area.

35. Comment/Question

I have heard that a public library will be included on the school site. What measures will be put in place to safeguard the children? Are the public going to be accessing the school? Will the public only be accessing the building during hours when the school is shut?

Response

There will be robust safeguarding procedures in place. If there is a community library in the school building there would need to be a separate entrance. Access for the public would be restricted. The safety of the children is paramount.

36. Question

Would my child's one to one support have to reapply for her job?

Response

If a learner has a complex need there would be consideration as to whether the same member of staff should continue to work with that child in the new school to ensure consistency in terms of transition and that would be discussed with you as the child's parent.

37. Question

At the governors meeting, the possibility of visiting a new school with a standardised design was discussed. Will the school be a bespoke design?

Response

No, the new school will be built to a standardised design. Once the contractor has been appointed then it can be arranged for governors to visit a new standardised designed school designed by the contractor.

38. Question

As part of the tendering process would you provide an outline plan of what the new school will be?

Response

We would look at baseline costs provided by the construction industry but within a window of funding of what is possible in terms of Welsh Government funding.

39. Question

Will governors have an input in terms of the design of the new school?

Response

Although the new school will be built to a standardised school design, it will not be "off the shelf". Each of the tendering contractors will have their expectation of a standardised build. Although it is

not going to be a school specific design, the contractor will need to take account of individualities as far as the site is concerned. There will be some flexibility within the design and the contractor will be working with schools in relation to the interior areas of the school e.g in relation to where the Foundation Class might be positioned within the school.

40. Question

Will that include the external areas as well? I would like to see better sports facilities for the primary school and for the community as well.

Response

There is an issue around whether the pitch can be used outside school hours and that would be for the governing body to decide.

Question

If the proposal goes ahead what would be the potential advantage of this in terms of the impact on the community and use of sport facilities?

41. Comment

It is huge. We would like a good sports ground on the school site, which could be used by the community. If the sports hall was available for hire and there was a floodlit 3G pitch that would be popular with the community. We want to make sure that there are excellent sports facilities on the site.

42. Question

Has the Outline Business Case covered the travel facilities, paths, sports grounds, library, and if it has not, will the Full Business Case include this? Is the Full Business Case ready? We don't want there to be any further delay. Can we be assured that the Full Business Case will be ready?

43. Question

If the Cabinet rejects the proposal will the project go to the "bottom of the pile"?

Response

If the Cabinet rejects the proposal it will not be possible to proceed with closure of Talgarth and Bronllys Schools and the opening of a new school.

44. Question

If the Cabinet rejects the proposal in relation to Talgarth/Bronllys will the four other new school builds go ahead?

Response

Yes

45. Comment

If Gwernyfed High School is closed there will be more demand for community facilities on the new school site at Talgarth e.g. sports facilities such as an astro turf pitch.

Response

On the site of the new school there will be a school, car parking, an area of land designated for outdoor learning, a hard play area and consideration would be given as to what leisure/sports facilities might be included on the site such as a grass or hard surface games area but the site is limited.

46. Question

Could this proposal be derailed by proposals for other primary schools in the Gwernyfed catchment?

Response

No, the proposal for the other new primary schools does not involve a statutory process.

47. Comment

If the other new primary schools proposed for the catchment were built and the proposal for Talgarth did not go ahead that would mean we would lose pupils.

Response

That is why the authority is looking at the catchment as a whole. Do we build the school to a capacity to accommodate children living in the community or for pupils in the schools? There is a difference.

48. Question

Will the new builds be phased and when will the community be alerted as to what the phasing will be?

Response

The new schools to be built at Hay, Talgarth and Clyro will be prioritised. The order in which the schools are to be built will be discussed with the contractor.

49. Question

Will one contractor be appointed for all the new school builds in the Gwernyfed catchment?

Response

Yes

50. Question

Can you give me the name of the person/s who are going to be responsible for the Full Business Case?

Response

Marianne Evans and Gareth Jones

51. Question

So we can contact you to receive up to date information?

Response

I agree that communications need to be improved and we need to provide staff and governors with regular updates. Betsan Ifan is the named link for Gwernyfed catchment schools and there is also a named lead for the construction process.

52. Comment

The consultation process seems to take a long time and I am not convinced that the new build is going to happen. Until I see the foundations going in I can't believe the new school will be built.

Question

Is there anyone here tonight who would prefer the status quo or another option?

53. Question

Will there be two year groups in one classroom in the new school?

Response

It is planned to build an 120-place school so there will be more than one age group in a class. There would need to be 210-place school for there to be single age group classes.

54. Question

Do you build a school for the size of the town or at a size which reflects parental choice?

Response

Or compromise with flexibility to add to the school?

55. Comment

I think parents will not choose to send their children to school here if a decision is taken to close Gwernyfed High School so you would have to build the new primary school to a capacity based on the number of pupils here.

56. Comment

The school building here is appalling. This building is tumbling down. Will there be any finance available to this school to help it to be useable and tidy for the next two years?

Response

There is a Schools Major Improvement Programme and if there are any health and safety concerns these need to be addressed, but there are limits as to what can be spent on the present building when it is proposed to build a new school.

57. Comment

I am concerned about the state of the toilets in the junior part of the school.

Response

If there are concerns in relation to health and safety, it can be arranged for an officer for the Health and Safety team to visit the school.

58. Comment

There are no imminent health and safety issues but there are concerns about the poor state of the toilets.

59. Comment

Some money needs to be invested into this school building to make some improvements.

60. Comment

I have friends who send their children to Ysgol y Bannau for Welsh medium education. The statistics show that the number of children in the Gwernyfed catchment accessing Welsh medium education isn't very high but there is school transport from Talgarth to Ysgol y Bannau. I think we should think about offering a Welsh language stream in future. That option should at least be included in the consultation document. We have teachers here who speak Welsh. It is an 8-mile bus journey from Talgarth for the children who attend Ysgol y Bannau.

Response

A Welsh stream was discussed as part of the area review process. There was a Welsh workstream but its recommendation was not to develop a Welsh stream in Gwernyfed catchment. Indications

are that the learners attending Ysgol y Bannau were from the West side of the catchment area and no children attend Ysgol y Bannau from the Clyro, Glasbury, Hay area.

61. Comment

The ties with Welsh culture are not so strong in that area.

Response

I think the reason that there were fewer learners travelling from that area to attend Welsh medium education at Ysgol y Bannau was due to travelling distances and times but that would need to be checked.

62. Comment

There are teachers in this school who are able to speak and teach through the medium of Welsh and have attended Welsh language sabbaticals.

Response

Those sabbaticals are aimed at Welsh 2nd language competency. Teachers within a Welsh stream need to have language competency to teach the whole curriculum through the medium of Welsh.

63. Comment

I think the viability of a Welsh stream should be discussed.

Response

If a Welsh stream was to be considered there would be a need to consult again.

Response

Should there be a demand for a Welsh stream there would be nothing to stop that discussion happening once the school is in place. The Authority's strategy is to develop Welsh medium education. Gwernyfed is one of the two catchment areas where there is no school with a Welsh stream.

Response

The impact of having a Welsh stream in the Gwernyfed catchment area on Ysgol y Bannau would need to be considered as part of that discussion.

64. Comment

There is evidence to indicate that for children to become bilingual they need to be in a Welsh medium school. What happens in a stream environment is that the language of the playground is often English. There should definitely be an aspiration that every catchment in Powys should have a Welsh medium option. If people in Clyro and Hay had a choice locally they would opt for Welsh medium education as parents see the advantage of their children being bilingual. The Council should aspire to having Welsh medium in this catchment but the new school should not be delayed because of it.

Cllr Arwel Jones thanked parents and community members for attending the meeting. It was noted that the minutes of the meeting would be included with the consultation report for the Cabinet. Parents and community members were reminded that the consultation closes 18th April and were advised to respond to the consultation either online or by writing to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall or by e-mail to school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk.

Cllr Barry Thomas thanked parents and community members for their contributions to the meeting.

Minutes of a consultation meeting with parents and community of Bronllys CP School, held on 16th March, 2016, on a proposal to close Talgarth and Bronllys CP School from August 2017 and establish a new community primary school on the current sites in September 2017 until a new school building is constructed on a new site in Talgarth and opens in September 2018.

Present

Cllr B Thomas, Council Leader
 Cllr A Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education
 Ian Roberts, Head of Schools Service
 Marianne Evans, Senior Manager, Schools Transformation
 Gareth Jones, Senior Manager, School Central Support Service
 Jane Thomas, Professional Lead, Finance

Chris Doel, Opinion Research Services
 Darren Ivey, Opinion Research Services

Sonia Huddleston	Vice Chair of Governors	Huw Lewis	Bronlly C.C.
Bev Matthews	Chair of Governors	Aimie Bevan	Parent of pupil
Melanie Evans	Parent of pupil	Gareth Court	Parent of pupil
Lorna Olley	Community member, parent of former pupil & staff member Talgarth	Paula Bedford	Grandparent of pupil
Anita Powell	Staff member Bronllys	Louise Graham	Parent of pupil
Sam Toone	Acting Head, Bronllys & Talgarth	Stuart Graham	Parent of pupil
Kate Thomas	Parent of pupil	Sadie Williams	Parent & Playgroup Leader
Chris Perry	Grandparent of pupil	Shauna Harding	Parent, Playgroup and After School club asst.
Hayley Rendell	Parent of pupil	Karen Laurie-Parry	Community member
Sue Richard	Chair Bronllys CC	Victoria Jones	Parent of pupil
Janet Lewis	Staff Bronllys	Belinda Owen	Governor
Phoebe	Pupil	Rebecca Days	Parent of pupil
		Julie Jones	Auntie of pupil

Cllr Arwel Jones welcomed parents and community members to the meeting. He explained the meeting formed part of the statutory consultation process.

Darren Ivey welcomed all to the meeting and explained his role as an independent facilitator.

He informed parents and community members that the purpose of the meeting was to receive their views on the proposal to close Bronllys and Talgarth CP School from August, 2017, and to open a new school from September, 2017, to be run on the current sites until the new school is built on a new site in Talgarth. He explained that no decisions had yet been taken on the proposal and the purpose of consultation is to inform the decision. It was noted that the Cabinet has a duty to take account of the issues raised during consultation and the Authority's response to them before taking a final decision on the proposal.

Marianne Evans provided an overview of the background leading up to the proposal. It was noted that review of the Gwernyfed primary schools had commenced in 2010 and that the Gwernyfed Area

Project Board had recommended reduction of the number of primary schools in the catchment to 5 schools and to build 5 new primary schools.

Formal consultation took place in 2012, but, at that time, the Cabinet decided that statutory notices should not be published in relation to closure of Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools. In the meantime work continued on the Business Cases in relation to the bid for Welsh Government funding towards the new schools. Welsh Government has approved both the Strategic Outline Case and the Outline Business Case. The proposal is to close Bronllys and Talgarth CP Schools from 31st August, 2017 and reopen a single school on the two existing school sites until the new school is ready in September, 2018. If the new school building is ready it is possible that the new school building could be operational before September, 2018. Welsh Government will be providing 50% funding for the new schools. Tenders are currently being evaluated and it is hoped to appoint a contractor before the end of March, 2016. The consultation process concludes in April and it is intended to bring a consultation report to Cabinet in May.

Attendees were invited to ask questions and to comment on the proposal.

1. Question

You are planning to open the new school building in 2018 but to close the Bronllys and Talgarth schools the year before. Why disrupt the children twice? Why not leave Bronllys and Talgarth School as they are until the new school is ready?

Response

The aim is to ensure minimal disruption to the children. 12 months enables the Local Authority to establish a shadow governing body for the new school. At the moment, there is an acting headteacher of both schools and that position is not robust. The governing body of Talgarth School could decide they no longer want the shared headteacher arrangement. 12 months will enable staff to work with the pupils and the community to develop the ethos and the policies for the new school so that when it is ready there will be a seamless transfer to the new building.

2. Question

**So you believe a 12 month gap is in the best interests of the children?
Will the children remain on current school site with their present teachers when the new school is established?**

Response

A shadow governing body will be formed, which will appoint a headteacher for the new school. The headteacher will work with the shadow governing body and Local Authority officers to establish a staffing structure for the new school. By having a 12-month lead in period it enables children to continue to work on the existing sites until the new school building is ready. There may be changes of staff but the children will have had a year of working with the new teachers when they move into the new building.

3. Comment

Bronllys CP School is a small school. I am concerned that the children will be disrupted twice – a change of teacher possibly in this school, possibly not. There will be disruption for 12 months and then you will be moving the children into a new school.

Response

The Panel is here tonight to listen to your views and not to debate with you. You are right there is potential for two phases of disruption. If the view of the community is strong the Cabinet may consider whether or not it is desirable for the pupils to be working over the two school sites for 12

months but 12 months enables the staffing structure and governance of the new school to be in place when the new school building opens.

4. Comment/Question

You are saying pupils of Bronllys CP School will remain in Bronllys and pupils of Talgarth CP School will remain in Talgarth until the new school building is ready. What is the difference?

Response

When the new school is established there will be one school with one governing body, one headteacher, one budget, one staffing structure and one Estyn inspection. By having that already in place the transition into the new school building will be smoother.

5. Comment

It won't be smoother for the children because they will be mixed in classes with children they don't know.

Response

It is intended that the children of both schools will get to know each other through joint events and activities before the new school is established.

Comment

It is expected that all five new primary schools will be constructed by the same contractor. Some of the new schools may be ready for occupancy before September. 2018. The new school is one of the two new school builds to be prioritised.

Comment

It would not be possible to take occupancy of the new school building unless one school has already been established.

6. Question

Being a member of staff at Talgarth School I attended the consultation meeting for staff on Monday night. Is it possible that you may have a teacher working between years 3 and 4 and would it be possible that the teacher will need to move between schools beforehand?

Response

If the new school is established from September 2017, staff will have new contracts which could allow them to move between sites so that pupils get used to their teachers.

Response

Staff with specific subject specialisms may teach over two sites.

7. Comment/Question

Planning permission has been granted for around 50 new houses in Bronllys which may bring new families to the area. They are going to be coming to a village where the school is closing. Closing the school may deter people from settling in the village so it will be just the older generation who are left. It seems short sighted of Powys to close the school then grant permission for new houses in the village. It has been said that this is going to be a derelict site. What will happen to this site? The field has always been used by the local community. Is that going to be sold off?

Response

I understand your views about the school not being in the community. We are talking about a brand new building which will have all the facilities that you would expect of a 21st Century learning environment. I would not say that this school building is not fit for purpose but it is a “tired” build. It was built in the 1970s when there were different approaches to teaching – open plan environment and steps between teaching areas. Accessibility needs to be taken into account. Welsh Government would not fund new schools for 50, 60 or 70 pupils. I agree that when any school closes in a village there is an impact on the community.

Response

When planning pupil places, account is taken of the Local Development Plan. About 2/3 years ago there were just over 60,000 “Band D” properties in Powys, and at that time, it was estimated that there was 1 school-aged child for every 10 houses. In terms of overall planning for this area, there are a significant number of houses in the development area and the Authority will be making Section 106 funding bids against planning gain. In terms of the current school site, use of the field needs to be taken account of in the Community Impact Assessment. In terms of this building and site, when the new school is built and this site is surplus, the Authority’s Asset Management Process will be followed. The site would be offered to other services in the Authority and to partner agencies but account would need to be taken of the views of the community. If, following completion of the Asset Management disposal process, the site is bought by another party it would be up to the other party to decide how the land is used.

8. Comment

You said there would be likely to about 15 more school aged pupils as a result of the new development in Bronllys for which planning permission has been granted, but there is going to be a lot more development.

Response

As the officer with responsibility for planning school places, I have been through the Local Development Plan, identified sites for development and allocated developments against a school. We don’t want to be in a position where there are not enough pupil places but there is an issue to be considered when deciding on the capacity of the new school in Talgarth. A significant number of children living in Talgarth attend schools outside the catchment. Do we plan for pupils who live in Talgarth or for pupils who currently attend the school?

9. Comment

I am a parent of primary school-aged children living in the catchment of Bronllys CP School. Powys County Council made it a nightmare for me to decide which school to send my children to because there is so much uncertainty over the primary schools. My children should be at this school but Bronllys School has been under threat of closure for a number of years so my children now attend Llyswen V. A. School.

Response

As an admissions authority we have to plan school places for children living within the catchment area of a school but parents have a right to apply for a school place at any school they wish their children to attend. Where schools are oversubscribed the Authority applies admission criteria.

10. Comment

My children should have come to this school. I was a pupil at this school. There has been so much uncertainty in local communities. My children are at school in Llyswen and that school building is in a poor state.

Response

The Authority intends for five new primary schools to be built in the Gwernyfed catchment. We are aiming for quality across primary school buildings in the catchment. Most of the children will attend a primary school in their local community. I agree there has been a delay which has caused uncertainty.

11. Comment/Question

I don't believe you can sell the site of Bronllys School because it was my understanding that there is a clause within the sale agreement that said the site could only be used for educational or community purposes. Has Welsh Government funding been secured for the new school and, if so, is this likely to change following a change in administration at Welsh Government or if the U.K. leaves the E.E.C.?

Response

The deeds in relation to use of the school site/facilities will need to be checked.

Response

A change of government may mean a change of priorities but the civil servants in 21st Century Schools Division at Welsh Government will not change following the Assembly election and I don't think "Brexit" would affect Welsh Government's commitment to fund the new primary schools. 21st Century Schools funding is part of Welsh Government's strategy to improve schools across Wales. It is likely that those schemes currently in the programme will be the prioritised. There is a risk but it is likely to be minimal.

12. Comment/Question

Why weren't Opinion Research Services brought in at an early stage so that we were reassured throughout the process?

Response

No decision on the proposal has yet been made and Opinion Research Services will be involved throughout the process.

Response

The award of the contract will be made without prejudice to the Cabinet decision. In terms of the other four new primary schools there is no consultation because those schools are not changing. Those will progress. The only reason for the build not to progress at Talgarth is if the Cabinet decides not to progress the proposal following consultation.

Response

In relation to the award of the contract to the developer, there is a "break clause" included. The first stage of the tender is the design element.

13. Question

With regard to the setting up of the new school in September 2017, will both schools run under a new name and will the children on both sites have the same uniform?

Response

The new school will have one name. The Authority will expect the headteacher and governing body to work with parents in relation to uniform requirements. In Welshpool, where it is planned to close 4 primary schools and build a new English medium primary school. The governors and headteachers

have introduced a new crest, which can be sewn onto their uniforms following establishment of the new school.

14. Question

Will the children be given an opportunity to choose an identity for the new school?

Response

It will be right for the pupils to be involved in the process of choosing a name for the new school. We want the children to feel involved in the process.

15. Comment

I think there is concern that the new school will be in Talgarth.

Response

The new school will have to have a neutral identity.

Response

The temporary governing body of the new school will be made up of governors from the existing governing bodies of Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools. The temporary governing body will be similar in composition to the current governing bodies. There will be parent, teacher and staff governors and a balance of representation from both schools.

16. Comment

This school is so unique because there are the quieter/more vulnerable pupils in this school who are encouraged to take part in activities and are valued for who they are. What sort of measures will you have in a larger school that these children will be mentored/buddied?

Response

The new school will still be a relatively small school - 120 children.

17. Comment

That is a large school compared to the number of children the pupils at this school have been used to.

Response

The new school will be allocated a budget and a formula. There will be a need to ensure more vulnerable children are supported and pupils with additional learning needs are provided with the right level of support so that they are given the opportunity to flourish. I don't think it is an issue. The staff already know the pupils. It is not as if they will be new pupils from out of the catchment.

18. Question

Do you think children learn more in a larger rather than a small classroom?

Response

That depends on the quality of teaching. In Powys there are examples of quality teaching in classes of 30 as well as in classes of 12.

19. Comment

I was taught in a big class and found that the "bright" pupils were pushed and the ones that were less so were left behind.

20. Comment

The size of the classes in the new school will depend on the number of children in a particular age group. This school has benefited my son.

Response

What is important is the quality of teaching, governance and leadership. Every child has a right to be given an opportunity to succeed.

21. Comment

Teachers have too much paperwork.

Response

You are right. There is too much bureaucracy in the education system.

22. Comment

I think happy teachers mean happy pupils and I want to know that there will be support from the Authority's HR Service. Teachers are feeling vulnerable because of the uncertainty and that will have an effect on the children.

Response

The sooner we move to creation of the new school the uncertainty will be removed but guarantees of a post for every member of staff in the new school cannot be given. There were no compulsory redundancies when schools were reorganised in Ystradgynlais. HR support will be available to staff. It is crucial that the staff are happy and their views are taken on board throughout this process.

23. Question

Who will speak to our children?

Response

Officers from the Schools Service will be meeting with the school council.

Response

Sometimes messages are best given by the staff who work with the children on a daily basis.

Response

A consultation meeting with staff of both Bronllys and Talgarth Schools took place on Monday evening, as part of the consultation process, but that is not the only dialogue there will be with staff.

Comment

I need to assure you that the proposal has nothing to do with the standards or quality of teaching in either Talgarth or Bronllys CP Schools.

24. Comment

I was a staff member at Glasbury School and my nephew attended the nursery there. My nephew had to go through the process of transferring here during his first year. For the whole of his primary school he has had uncertainty. He has flourished in Bronllys School but his whole primary school life has been spent fearing he will need to move to another school. He will be starting year 6 in the new school. In his primary school life alone, he will have attended three different schools and there will then be uncertainty over Gwernyfed High School.

Response

I understand the point you are making.

25. Comment

At the meeting on Monday there were some points raised about the size and site of the school. Hopefully, the size of the classes in the new school will be 20 pupils or less with their own year group teacher and single age classes. That is of benefit to the pupils.

Response

A school of 120-150 pupils will not have single age group classes. It is possible there will be 2 year groups in one class. Even in a big school there might be mixed year groups. Development is far more important than age.

Response

The Fair Funding Formula is made up of mix of factors. The main funding stream for staff is based on pupil numbers and there are some lump sum elements. In terms of teacher pupil ratio, the formula is currently based on a 1:26 or 1:27. Classes of 20 are not affordable within the current budget. Key Stage 2 classes will be built to a size of 56 square metres to accommodate up to 30 pupils. For younger children the classes will be 65 square metres. The new school will be a 150-place school with 5 classrooms.

Response

Flexible teaching spaces will be built into the design of the school in order to take into account future changes.

26. Comment

The children deserve to have a decent school building. Teachers deserve not to be penalised because of the fabric of the building when the school is inspected.

Response

What is important is the quality of the teaching. It is hoped that the new school building will remove issues around maintenance.

Response

Flexibility around use of internal space in the new school building and around external space will be included in the brief for the tender.

27. Question

Will parents, pupils and staff be involved in discussion concerning the design of the new school?

Response

We would want staff and governance to be part of decision-making concerning the internal structure of school – for example colour schemes and layout.

28. Comment/Question

I appreciate the current financial problems but I am slightly concerned there is a teacher pupil ratio budget for new school. Why can't staff have some reassurance as to where they are going in 12/18 months' time?

Response

As soon as the consultation has finished and if the Cabinet takes a decision for a statutory notice of closure to be published, there can be discussion with staff regarding their position but this cannot happen before the Cabinet decision because it could be perceived that the outcome has been predetermined.

Response

A representative from one of the teaching unions was present at the consultation meeting with staff held on Monday evening. Although the consultation meeting was around the proposal, some questions were raised in relation to staffing and staff were reassured that there would be separate consultation with staff once the Cabinet has taken a decision on the proposal.

29. Comment/Question

The majority of the pupils who live in Bronllys walk or cycle to school. What will be the arrangements for getting them to the new school?

Response

An assessment of the route from Bronllys to Talgarth has been completed and there is a footpath all the way down. We are aware there is a trunk road and the outcome of the assessment undertaken was it would be unsafe for children to walk to the new school and transport would be provided. We need to work with the community on options for developing a safe route, for instance, temporary speed limits but unless there is a safe walking route, school transport will be provided.

30. Question

Would the school transport provision be permanent?

Response

School transport would be provided as long as there was no safe route. The Authority has a duty around health and safety.

31. Comment

I live in Talgarth and my children come to this school. The footpath along the Hay road is incomplete.

Response

We will work with colleagues in the Highways Department to ensure there is a safe route to school. Highways are a relevant consultee in the consultation process.

32. Question

Does the Council own the site identified for the new school?

Response

The Council does not currently own the site but there has been detailed discussion with the landowner's representatives. An Options Agreement is being developed which will name a price for the site. The Options Agreement is with the Authority's Legal Department and officers from the Authority's Asset Management Department do not foresee any problems with this. An escape clause has been written into the Options Agreement which means that Powys County Council can withdraw from the agreement but this option is not open to the landowner.

33. Question

Can you confirm that the new school will definitely open in 2018?

Response

It will only happen if the Cabinet approve the creation of a new school following this consultation. Should they not do so, then it won't happen.

34. Comment

There has been a lot of uncertainty in the community and the school has lost a lot of pupils. Parents are concerned that Talgarth and Bronllys communities are going to be served by one primary school when, historically, there has been some rivalry between the two communities. You need to guarantee to parents that in 2018 the transition to the new school is going to happen smoothly. Parents need reassurance.

Response

Until the statutory consultation process is complete and the Cabinet has taken a decision to proceed with the proposal, the new school cannot be guaranteed.

35. Question

If the Cabinet approves the proposal, what date will the statutory notice be published?

Response

The consultation will finish on 18th April. Following this, officers will draft a report for Cabinet which will include all the issues raised during the consultation period and the Authority's response to them. The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and take a decision on whether or not to proceed to the next stage. If the Cabinet decides to take the proposal forward then a statutory notice will be published for a period of 28 days, of which 15 must be school days, during which objections to the proposal may be received. Following the statutory objection period, officers will draft an objection report summarising all the issues which will be considered by the Cabinet. It is anticipated that Cabinet will consider the consultation report in May. If, at that stage, the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices could be published in June and an objection report taken to Cabinet in July.

Response

We would aspire for Cabinet to have taken a final decision on the proposal before the summer holidays. The Final Business Case cannot be submitted to Welsh Government until the statutory consultation process has concluded.

36. Question

Will there be another meeting to update parents?

Response

We do not intend to hold another public meeting but there will be drop in sessions.

37. Comment

People are so attached to this school. I came to this school.

Response

After this meeting, you will still have an opportunity to contribute your views before the end of the consultation period. You can submit your views by writing to the School Modernisation Team at County Hall or by e-mailing school.modernisation@powys.gov.uk

Comment

Potentially we could have another 2 ½ years in this school. This school has to be fit for purpose. There is an issue with the flooring in here and in the infants class and I know the budget has been cut. I am for the new school but Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools have to be fit for purpose and safe for the pupils during the time before the new school is ready.

Response

The Authority is not going to spend large amounts on these buildings but we need to ensure safety is maintained.

Response

If there are issues I would ask the Headteacher to draw our attention to them.

38. Comment

Somebody told me they were going to send their children to Talgarth School as they were offered free school uniforms.

Response

That is not true. Pupils who qualify for free school meals are entitled to a uniform grant when they transfer to High school but there is no statutory requirement for school uniform in a primary school.

39. Question (directed to Darren Ivey of ORS)

Are you still involved in the process when the report goes to Cabinet?

Response

The plan, at this stage, is that we are not.

Response

The Cabinet is duty bound to consider all the responses before making a decision. Opinion Research Services are here tonight to facilitate the consultation.

Response

The minutes of this meeting will be shared with the headteacher and the chair of governors to ensure they are true reflection of what is said.

40. Question

What length of time will be included in the Options Agreement for payment for the site?

Response

Probably 12-18 months

Response

Welsh Government Band "A" funding runs from 2014 -2019. The Authority has to draw down funding from Welsh Government within that period of time.

Response

If everything goes to plan we would expect construction to begin on site by early 2017. The site for the school is also identified as a site for housing within the Brecon Beacons Park Authority Development Plan.

41. Question

Will we be able to see plans of what the new school will look like?

Response

The plans will be publicly available as part of the planning process.

Response

Welsh Government require the school building to be built according to BREAAAM excellence standards.

Question

Are there people here who have concerns or objections to the plans?

42. Comment/Question

I agree with what is happening but there is a need to look at the bigger picture. I am concerned about the upheaval. A lot of parents travel to bring their children here because they want them to go this school. I am parent of a child who finds it difficult to deal with change. Is it going to be down to the shadow governing body to decide whether they ringfence posts so the member of staff providing one to one support for individual pupils moves with the child?

Response

We need to ensure that there is continuity for children who have one to one support but it cannot be guaranteed that the same member of staff will be supporting the child in the new school. We would work with the school. If the school felt an assessment of the child's needs was required, that could be arranged.

43. Comment/Question

I know that there is a proposal to change the age of school admission. Will the new school have provision for a pre-school setting?

Response

The Council has completed consultation on the age of school admission and the Cabinet will be considering a report on this in April. It is planned that the new school will have pre-school provision. The Authority has a duty to fund a minimum of 10 hours pre-school provision for those children commencing pre-school provision after their 3rd birthday. The size of the pre-school provision will be different if the proposal to change the age of school admission is approved.

44. Question

Will the Puddleducks pre-school setting close with the school?

Response

If the change of school admission age is approved there will be a need to recommission pre-school provision but I would expect there to be pre-school provision at the new school. The report on the proposal to change the school admission age will be considered by the Cabinet on 12th April and the Cabinet will take a decision on whether or not the school admission age will be changed.

45. Comment

I assume the other four new primary school builds are going ahead.

Response

Each of the companies that have put in a tender were given an opportunity to visit the sites. Until a contractor is appointed it is not possible to say what the design of the new schools will be.

We would want the designs to be shared with the Schools Service and the school staff as well. The school environment has to be right for all the pupils including those pupils with additional learning needs/sensory impairment.

Response

The tender documentation has been based 60% on quality and 40% on price. Quality carries more weight than price.

46. Comment

The other four new primary schools are going ahead.

Response

There is no requirement under the School Organisation Code to consult on the proposal for the other four new primary schools but all five new school builds are part of the same business case.

Response

There is a different funding element for one of the new primary schools because of the Church in Wales element. There will be some funding from the Church in Wales in respect of the new school at Llyswen because it is a Church in Wales Aided School but all 5 new primary schools are part of the same programme. There will be the same contractor across the five schools and the Authority will determine in what order the schools are built.

47. Comment

There will be an advantage for pupils in the other schools to see their new school being built but there will also be an advantage for pupils in Talgarth and Bronllys Schools that the new school is not being built on the same site and that they continue to be taught at the current sites while the new school is constructed.

Darren Ivey thanked parents and community members for contributing their views. He reminded them that they would have further opportunity to respond to the consultation before the end of the consultation period. It was noted that the minutes of the meeting would be included with the consultation report for Cabinet and account would be taken of all the responses. Attendees were informed that the consultation period closes on 18th April.

Cllr Arwel Jones thanked parents and community members for attending the meeting and for the useful and constructive debate. It was noted that the main concerns raised were in relation to transition of the pupils to the new school.

Cllr Barry Thomas thanked parents and community members for attending the meeting and assured them that Cabinet members would read the consultation report and take account of all the issues raised.