

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE**

**July 5<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Arwel Jones  
Portfolio Holder for Education**

**SUBJECT: Statutory Objection Period - Talgarth and Bronllys C.P.  
Schools**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**Summary**

1. Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016, the authority published a Statutory Notice on the following proposal:
  - **To close Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. Schools on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017, in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and to establish a new community primary school on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 that will operate across the current two sites. Upon the opening of a new school building in Talgarth, the two current sites will close.**
2. This report includes an Objection Report, and also includes a recommendation to close Talgarth and Bronllys CP Schools on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017, as stated in 1) above.
3. The report is supported by the following appendix:
  - Appendix A – Objection Report

**Background**

4. Formal Consultation Period  
Formal consultation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2013) from the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 to the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016. A Consultation Report listing all issues raised during the consultation and the authority's response to them was considered by Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2014, the Cabinet agreed to proceed to publish statutory notices for the closure of both schools.

## 5. Statutory Notice

Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016, the authority published a Statutory Notice in respect of the proposal outlined above in 1) on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016 for a period of 28 days, in accordance with the guidance within the School Organisation Code. One objector raised objections during the statutory objection period and these are set out in the Objection Report and is attached as Appendix A.

## **Proposal**

6. It is recommended that:

- Cabinet considers the Objection Report attached as Appendix A.
- Cabinet approves the closure of Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. Schools on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017, in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and establish a new community primary school on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 that will operate across the current two sites. Upon the opening of a new school building in Talgarth, the two current sites will close.

7. A financial analysis of the draft recommendation has been carried out.

- From September 2017, the total net savings are £49,495.00 – as the school operates across two sites as an interim arrangement;
- Upon the opening of the new school in 2018/19, the total net savings for the new school on a single site are £62,477.00.

## **One Powys Plan**

‘Transforming Learning and Skills’ is one of the priorities within the One Powys Plan. Within this priority, the Plan states that *‘There is a need to review the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Behaviour services’*, and that the authority will *‘Work with our partners to review and re-configure services for children and young people with additional learning needs to...provide improved support for children and young people and all schools.’*

## **Options Considered/Available**

N/A – consultation is a statutory requirement in any school reorganisation proposals.

## **Preferred Choice and Reasons**

N/A

## **Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc**

Detailed Impact assessments in relation to the Proposal were considered by Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

### **Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

The wellbeing and educational progress of young learners is central to delivery of the ALN strategy. Having full access to mainstream classes with appropriate levels of support facilitates access to the school curriculum delivery model and the range of relationships that all other children in school enjoy. This gives children equal access to the range of opportunities both socially and academically within a school.

The Authority's School transformation Programme is intended to improve educational outcomes for children and young people. This aligns with the aspiration to improve safeguarding and well-being for children and young people.

### **Local Member(s)**

Councillor William Powell: Having considered the Objection Report and some of the valid concerns expressed in the single objection lodged during the consultation period, I am content that the Local Authority is correct in its response and decision to proceed. It is essential that educational standards and public safety are central considerations in this process – and I am determined to ensure that these issues are fully scrutinised in the months to come, as the plans for the long awaited new school in Talgarth take their course. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

### **Other Front Line Services**

N/A

### **Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)**

HR: Any implications for staff employment will be taken forward by the schools, supported by HR, in line with the relevant employment law and the schools' policies and procedures.

**Finance Business Partner Schools comments:** I can confirm the estimated interim and final savings of £49,495 and £62,477 within the report. The figures have been updated to take account of the 2016/17 funding formula in place and has been run for the proposed school on current numbers, this generates the majority of the funding, however for premises related elements a number of assumptions have been made, as follows for the final option:

- Floor areas have been provided for the proposed school
- Rates have been maintained at current cost
- Statutory testing has been included at the cost of similar size school

- Grounds area has been included as the current site for Talgarth

These figures do not include any redundancy costs

Both schools ended the 15/16 financial year in a surplus position and in accordance with the scheme for financing of schools, finance are working with the schools to ensure that resources are used appropriately.

**Capital and Financial Planning Accountant comments:** I can confirm that the New School in Talgarth is included in the Capital Programme. The assumption is that the school will be funded by a 50% WG grant, excluding any site access works which have to be funded solely by the Council. The site purchase is included in the budget for the project.

**The Professional Lead Legal comments:** the process of formal consultation as set out in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2013 has been followed, and the closure of the Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. schools is in line with current Local Authority priorities.

#### **Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

N/A

#### **Corporate Communications**

**Communications Comment:** The report is of public interest and requires use of news release and appropriate social media to publicise the decision.

#### **Statutory Officers**

The **Professional Lead Legal (Deputy Monitoring Officer)** has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report."

The **Strategic Director Resources** (Section 151 Officer) notes the comments made by Finance, and notes that Welsh Government is expected to fund 50% of the Capital cost.

#### **Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<p>1. to consider the Objection Report; and</p> <p>2. to approve the closure of Talgarth and Bronllys C.P. Schools on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017, in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and to establish a new community primary school on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 that will operate across the current two sites. Upon the opening of a new school building in Talgarth, the two current sites will close</p>	<p>To provide a sustainable model of education within the Gwernyfed Primaries Catchment Area</p>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	School Transformation Policy		
<b>Within Policy:</b>	Y	<b>Within Budget:</b>	Y

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	Cllr Steve Davies and Cllr William Powell
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	Marianne Evans
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	July 2016

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
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**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**