

## Appendix C

### Comments from the Welsh-medium Education Forum

The following is a summary of comments provided by the local authority's Welsh-medium Education Forum at a meeting held on 12th December 2022:

'The Welsh-medium Education Forum is aware of the background to this matter and has had sight of the papers due to be considered by the Council's Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee on the 14th December 2022 and the Council's Cabinet on the 20th December 2022 which include the findings of the work undertaken to assess the viability of establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau.

Whilst the Welsh-medium Education Forum supports the aspiration to provide additional Welsh-medium provision in the mid Powys area, it does have concerns about the suggestion that this provision should be established in the building currently occupied by Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School in the village of Dolau.

These are summarised below:

- The school is a small school, which has a capacity of 36. This would not allow for any future growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers.
- Establishing Welsh-medium provision at Dolau would not fit with the vision outlined in the Council's WESP to establish Welsh-medium provision in strategic locations where there is sufficient population to make the provision viable and to ensure its future growth.
- There could be more suitable sites in the area which are located in more populated areas.

Whilst the Forum identified concerns regarding the suggestion that Welsh-medium provision could be established in Dolau, concern was also expressed that not proceeding with this would mean that the school would close, and that the Cylch Meithrin which currently meets on the school site would close. This will need to be taken into consideration should Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P. School close.

Concern was also expressed that measuring demand for new provision as has been done as part of this exercise is not the current preferred approach at a national level – the current preference is to create demand for Welsh-medium education by establishing new provision in strategic locations, in accordance with the commitments made by local authorities in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Overall, whilst pleased to note the Council's aspiration to establish new Welsh-medium provision in the area, the Forum understand and agree with the officer recommendations that establishing Welsh-medium provision in Dolau is not viable.

Despite the Forum considering that Dolau is not the best location for Welsh-medium education, members still wish to emphasise the importance of promoting Welsh-medium education in the area, and ensuring that the community sees Welsh-medium education as an option for them. There is an opportunity to ensure that parents of pupils in the area are aware that pupils can transfer to Welsh-medium education at nearby schools such as Ysgol Trefonnen in Llandrindod or Rhayader C. in W. School. This would include supporting parents in the area, ensuring that parents fully understand what exactly is Welsh-medium education and increasing the provision of trochi. The Forum would be happy to give any assistance to the Council with this work.'