



Plans for Newtown Schools

Options Appraisal

July 2023



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1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2021, the Council merged Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren Junior School in Newtown to establish a new school, Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. The school was established on the existing school sites, with the intention that a replacement building would eventually be provided, which would be co-located with the North Powys Well-being Programme's planned Health and Well-being Campus.

Since then, the Council has been developing plans for the new school building. A Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been developed and approved by the Council's Cabinet and Welsh Government, and plans for the new building had been developed to the end of RIBA Stage 2 (concept design).

However, following consideration of these plans by the Council's Cabinet, officers were asked to consider whether it would be possible to increase the size of the planned new building, to accommodate more pupils, potentially the pupils currently attending Maesyrrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School as well as Ysgol Calon y Dderwen pupils.

An initial review of the plans by the Council's Property Design Services suggested that this might be possible, and officers were subsequently asked to carry out a period of engagement with the three school communities to further investigate this.

In early June 2023, the Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys, Cllr Pete Roberts wrote to parents, staff and governors at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, Maesyrrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School to let them know of the Council's intention to explore the possibility of increasing the size of the new build to accommodate pupils from other schools in Newtown. As part of this, meetings were held with staff and governors at the three schools, and an engagement questionnaire was launched for parents and the wider community in order to understand their views. A summary of the findings of the engagement exercise are provided in a separate Engagement Report.

Following the completion of the engagement exercise, the purpose of this paper is to review and explore options for the provision in Newtown, and to identify a preferred way forward.

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Following the inspection of Powys Education Services carried out by Estyn in the summer of 2019, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020 and updated and relaunched in July 2022.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. The Vision Statement is as follows:

All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.

The Strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims which will underpin the Council's work to transform the education infrastructure over the coming years. One of these Strategic Aims sets out the Council's commitment to developing a network of all-age schools and reconfiguration and rationalisation of primary provision, as indicated by the Strategic Aim 'to improve learner entitlement and experience'.

This is supported by the following Strategic Objectives:

S.O.1.1 *Develop a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations*

S.O.1.2 *Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision*

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

The Council's new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council, as outlined in the Strategy:

i) High proportion of small schools

Based on PLASC 2021 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 43% of the primary provision in the county. 15 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to decrease further over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 5% by 2026.

iii) High number of surplus places

Based on PLASC 2021 figures, there was 14% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

iv) Building condition

Whilst the Council has invested in its schools' estate through the 21st Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,512 to £11,689 in the primary sector in 2022-23.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes

are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

The Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the past left a legacy in Powys.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN NEWTOWN

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

The transformation of education in Newtown began in 2017, with an initial review of schools in the town. At the time, there were 7 primary education providers located in the town itself, along with Newtown High School:

- Hafren Junior School
- Ladywell Green Infant School
- Maesyrhandir C.P. School
- St. Mary's Catholic School
- Treowen C.P. School
- Penygloddfa C.P. School
- Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd – Welsh-medium school

Following the review, it was agreed to merge Hafren Junior School and Ladywell Green Infant School, and, following a school reorganisation process, Cabinet approved the establishment of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.

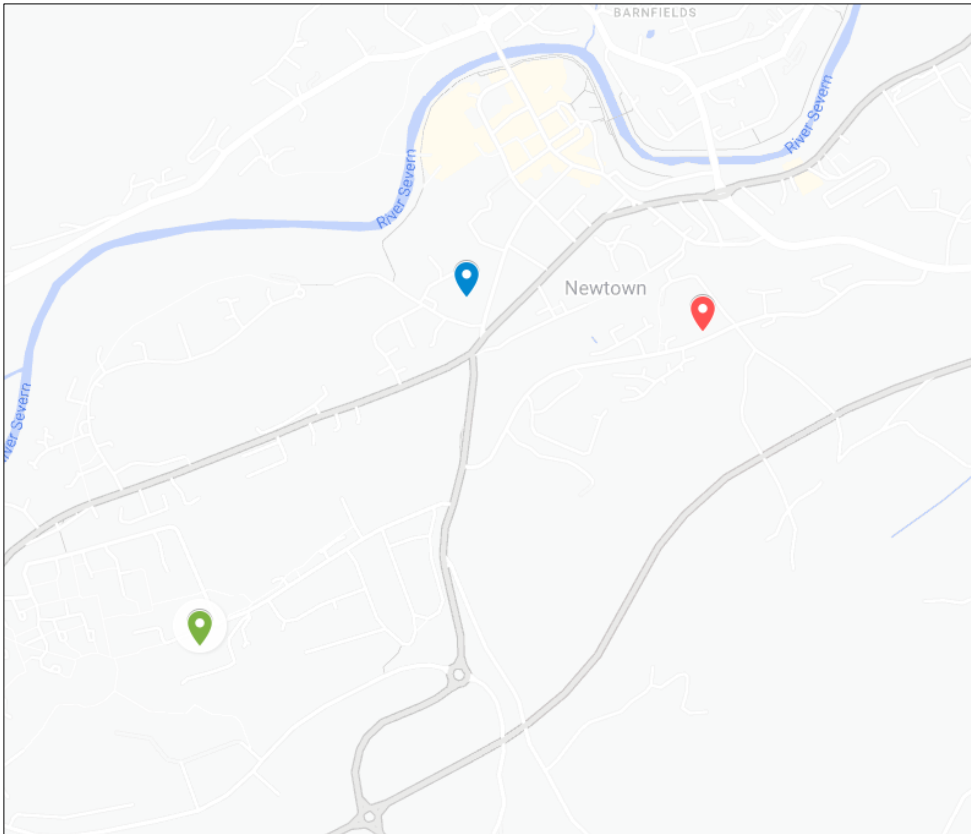
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is an English-medium primary school located in the town of Newtown in North Powys. It was established in September 2021 following the amalgamation of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren Junior School.

Whilst Ysgol Calon y Dderwen was established in the previous Ladywell Green and Hafren buildings, the intention was that eventually a replacement building would be provided on the existing site. There is also an intention to provide a new Health and Well-being Campus as part of the North Powys Well-being Programme on the site, so the Council has been working closely with the North Powys Well-being Programme when developing plans for the new school building.

Following consideration of initial plans for the new school building, officers were asked to consider whether it would be possible to increase the size of the planned new building, to accommodate more pupils, potentially the pupils currently attending Maesyrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School as well as Ysgol Calon y Dderwen pupils.

The scope of this option appraisal is Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, along with Treowen C.P. School and Maesyrhandir C.P. School. All three are English-medium primary schools predominantly serving pupils who live in the southern part of Newtown, however all schools attract some pupils from all over the town.

The 3 schools are shown on the following map of Newtown:



Blue – Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, Red – Treowen C.P. School, Green – Maesyrrhandir C.P. School

A summary of key data related to the 3 schools is provided below. Further data is provided in [Appendix A](#).

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number ¹	Rural School? ²
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	Community Primary School building owned by the Powys County Council	English-medium	48	No
Treowen C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by the Powys County Council	English-medium	24	No
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	Community Primary	English-medium	30	No

¹ Powys County Council’s Admissions Information and Arrangements 2023-24

² Annex F of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code (2018)

(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>) includes a list of ‘rural schools’, to which the ‘Presumption against the closure of rural schools’ applies.

	School building owned by the Powys County Council			
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Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers³

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total R-Yr6
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	40	36	44	25	34	39	33	251
Treowen C.P. School	10	15	15	9	16	14	27	106
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	12	11	12	10	15	19	16	95
Total	62	62	71	44	65	72	76	452

i) Historical pupil numbers⁴

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	285	270	256	264	239	231	230	230
Treowen C.P. School	132	146	146	145	131	136	135	114
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	202	210	193	172	144	139	116	118
Total	619	626	595	581	514	506	481	462

ii) Projected pupil numbers (Live birth info)⁵

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	232	239	235	225	225

³ Teacher Centre, 5th October 2023

⁴ PLASC

⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC 2022 & Birth Rates (Reception to Year 6) – Projections based on PLASC 2023 are not yet available

Treowen C.P. School	110	108	95	94	87
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	104	91	83	73	70
Total	446	438	413	392	382

Building Capacity and Condition

i) Capacity

	Capacity⁶	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	342	251 (73.4%)	91 (26.6%)
Treowen C.P. School	172	106 (61.6%)	66 (38.4%)
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	214	95 (44.4%)	119 (55.6%)

ii) Building condition⁷

	Condition	Suitability	Sufficient
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	C – Poor	B - Satisfactory	No
Treowen C.P. School	B – Satisfactory	B - Satisfactory	Yes
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	B/C – Satisfactory Poor	B/C – Satisfactory Poor	Yes

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil⁸

⁶ Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

⁷ Transforming Education PowerBI Dashboard - 2022

⁸ Section 52 Budget Statement, 2023/2024

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	£986,000	£4,401	£55,000	£63,250
Treowen C.P. School	£485,000	£4,528	£38,000	£28,750
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	£538,000	£5,323	£79,000	£63,250
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,729	N/A	N/A

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN NEWTOWN

As work on the designs for the planned replacement building for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen moved forward, officers were asked to consider whether it would be possible to increase the size of the planned new building, to accommodate more pupils, potentially the pupils currently attending Maesyrrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School as well as Ysgol Calon y Dderwen pupils.

The reasons for this are as follows:

i) Decrease in pupil numbers

As shown in the table on page 9, total pupil numbers at the three schools have decreased from 619 in 2016 to 452 in 2023. This is a decrease of 167.

The projections on pages 9-10 suggest that pupil numbers are projected to continue to decrease significantly at Treowen C.P. School and Maesyrrhandir C.P. School, whilst remaining steady at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.

The projections also indicate that both Treowen C.P. School and Maesyrrhandir C.P. School will fall below the Welsh Government definition of a small school of less than 91 pupils in the future.

ii) Increase in surplus places

Currently the three schools combined have a surplus capacity of 276 pupils, or 37.9%. This is much higher than the current 21% of surplus places in primary schools across Powys.

As pupil numbers in the three schools are set to fall, significantly in Treowen C.P. School and Maesyhandir C.P. School, these surplus places will increase. By 2027, according to the projections, surplus places could be 346 places or 47.5% based on the current configuration of schools.

iii) Building condition

There are issues with building condition in the three schools, in particular the former Ladywell Green Infants building of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen which has been assessed as Condition C/D.

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PART B – OPTIONS FOR NEWTOWN SCHOOLS

The options assessment in this section has been carried out based on the assumption that Ysgol Calon y Dderwen’s new building already has a Welsh Government-approved Strategic Outline Case and will be part of an integrated development of the North Powys Wellbeing Campus.

The site available for the new building will be smaller than the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site.

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution:

Option	Description
1	New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, other schools to remain as they are
2	New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Maesyrrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen
3	New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Maesyrrhandir C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen
4	New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the three options are provided below.

Option 1 – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, other schools to remain as they are

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides pupils at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with a modern new building to replace existing poor buildings - Provides a more efficient model of education as all pupils would be taught in a single building rather than across two separate buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not allow pupils from other schools to benefit from the investment in the new building - Would not reduce surplus places in Newtown

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of backlog maintenance at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen - New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act - New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government's net zero targets - No disruption to pupils, parents or staff at Treowen or Maesyrhandir - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen staff, who have only recently been through a change process, would not be affected by a further change - Schools would continue to be located in the various communities within Newtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not address issues with building condition at Treowen and Maesyrhandir - Would not provide any efficiency savings
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for children and families to benefit from close integration with the proposed North Powys Wellbeing Campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new attractive learning environment at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen may attract more pupils, which may lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at Treowen C.P. School and Maesyrhandir C.P. School – this could have an impact on funding and staffing levels at these schools.

Option 2 – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Maesyrhandir C.P. School and Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides the opportunity for all learners from the current three schools to benefit from an improved learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constraints around space on the site, particularly as the site will be shared with the North Powys Wellbeing Programme

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A larger school provides a more efficient model of education - Removal of backlog maintenance at three schools - New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act - New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government's net zero targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There would be no room to extend the school should there be an increase in pupil numbers in the future - Possible congestion in the local area if more pupils were attending the current Calon y Dderwen site - Pupils currently attending Maesyrrhandir and Treowen would have to walk/travel further to get to school - Possible impact on attendance due to having to walk/ travel further to school - Maesyrrhandir and Treowen schools would lose their unique identities as provision would no longer be linked to those communities - Community opposition to the proposals - Parents may be concerned about their children being part of a much larger school than they are used to
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for more pupils, including those from deprived areas, to benefit from a modern learning environment - Opportunities for children and families to benefit from close integration with the proposed North Powys Wellbeing Campus - Opportunity to improve social cohesion across areas of Newtown - Opportunities for staff development as part of a large school - Opportunities to develop Active Travel Routes - Reduces surplus places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new building would be almost full from the beginning, without any 'buffer' should pupil numbers in the area increase in the future - Availability of capital funding – a larger school would cost more than the current budget available for this project - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes

Option 3 – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Maesyrrhandir C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

Strengths	Weaknesses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides the opportunity for all learners from both Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Maesyrrhandir C.P. School to benefit from an improved learning environment - A larger school provides a more efficient model of education - Removal of backlog maintenance at two schools - New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act - New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government's net zero targets - Reduces surplus places but places remain available at other schools in Newtown, including Treowen C.P. School, to accommodate for future fluctuations in pupil numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils from Treowen C.P. School would not be able to receive the benefits of a new modern learning environment - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Maesyrrhandir have a very different pupil profile which could make the transition into a new school more challenging – the percentage of pupils with additional learning needs and pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher in Maesyrrhandir - Possible congestion in the local area if more pupils were attending the current Calon y Dderwen site - Pupils currently attending Maesyrrhandir would have to walk/travel further to get to school than they do currently - Possible impact on attendance due to having to walk/travel further - Community opposition to the proposals - Parents may be concerned about their children being part of a larger school than they are used to - Doesn't address backlog maintenance issues at Treowen C.P. School
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for more pupils, including those from a deprived area, to benefit from a modern learning environment - Opportunities for children and families to benefit from close integration with the proposed North Powys Wellbeing Campus - Opportunity to improve social cohesion across areas of Newtown - Opportunities for staff development as part of a large school - Opportunities to develop Active Travel Routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of capital funding – a larger school would cost more than the current budget available for this project - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes - A new attractive learning environment at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen may attract more pupils, which may lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at Treowen C.P. School – this could have an impact

	on funding and staffing levels in future.
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Option 4 – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides the opportunity for all learners from both Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School to benefit from an improved learning environment - A larger school provides a more efficient model of education - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School have a similar pupil profile in terms of additional learning needs and pupils eligible for free school meals – this would enable a positive transition process - Removal of backlog maintenance at two schools - New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act - New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government’s net zero targets - Reduces surplus places but places remain available at other schools in Newtown, including Maesyrrhandir C.P. School, to accommodate for future fluctuations in pupil numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils from Maesyrrhandir C.P. School would not be able to receive the benefits of a new modern learning environment - Possible congestion in the local area if more pupils were attending the current Calon y Dderwen site - Pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School would have to walk/travel further to get to school than they do currently - Treowen is located on top of a hill which may make walking to school challenging for some - Possible impact on attendance due to having to walk/travel further - Community opposition to the proposal - Parents may be concerned about their children being part of a larger school than they are used to - Doesn’t address backlog maintenance issues at Maesyrrhandir C.P. School

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for more pupils, including those from a deprived area, to benefit from a modern learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of capital funding – a larger school would cost more than the current budget available for this project

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for children and families to benefit from close integration with the proposed North Powys Wellbeing Campus Opportunity to improve social cohesion across areas of Newtown - Opportunities for staff development as part of a large school - Opportunities to develop Active Travel Routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes - A new attractive learning environment at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen may attract more pupils, which may lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at Maesyrrhandir C.P. School – this could have an impact on funding and staffing levels in future.
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6. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must align with the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032, to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032 - Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032 - Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-2032 • The option must optimise the benefits of the Council’s Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning • The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must be politically acceptable at local, county and national level • The option must be achievable within current legislation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must be operationally achievable / physically achievable
4 – Supply-side capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option must secure sufficient appropriate resources and expertise to be deployed within Powys to achieve the investment objectives
5 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted revenue of participating organisations The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding of participating organisations

The options have been scored against the critical success factors using the following system:

- ✓ - meets the criteria
- ? – may meet the criteria
- X – does not meet the criteria

The following is a summary of the evaluation given for each option:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Strategic fit and business needs	?	✓	✓	✓
Value for money	X	✓	?	?
Potential achievability	?	X	?	✓
Supply-side capacity and capability	✓	✓	✓	✓
Potential affordability	✓	?	✓	✓
Total ✓	2	3	3	4
Total x	1	1	0	0
Outcome	Discounted	Discounted	Possible	Preferred

7. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the work carried out, the emerging preferred option for Newtown schools is:

Option 4: New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

The reasons for this are:

- Provides the opportunity for all learners from both Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School to benefit from an improved learning environment
- A larger school provides a more efficient model of education
- Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School have a similar pupil profile in terms of additional learning needs and pupils eligible for free school meals – this would enable a positive transition process
- Removal of backlog maintenance at two schools
- New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act
- New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government's net zero targets
- Reduces surplus places but places remain available at other schools in Newtown, including Maesyrrhandir C.P. School, to accommodate for future fluctuations in pupil numbers

There are a number of possible implementation options within this emerging preferred option. These are considered below.

8. POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

The following emerging preferred option has been identified:

Option 4: New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School with pupils to attend the new build at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

There are a number of implementation options within this option. These are as follows:

4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School continue to operate as separate schools until the new building is constructed. - When the new building opens, Treowen C.P. School closes, and pupils transfer to the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen along with Calon y Dderwen pupils.
4B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School continue to operate as separate schools until the new building is constructed. - When the new building opens on the Calon y Dderwen site, a new primary school is established in the new building by merging Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School.
4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From September 2025, Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is extended to include the current Treowen C.P. School building. Treowen pupils would continue to attend the Treowen site, however the school would be part of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. Treowen C.P. School would close. - When the new building opens, all pupils move to the new building on the Calon y Dderwen site. The Treowen site would close.
4D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From September 2025, a new primary school is established by merging Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School. The school initially operates from the current Calon y Dderwen and Treowen buildings. - When the new building opens, all pupils move to the new building on the Calon y Dderwen site. The Treowen site would close.
4E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From September 2025, Treowen C.P. School closes and pupils transfer to Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. - Pupils continue to occupy current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen buildings until the new building is ready.

9. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

Option 4A – Both schools continue to operate as separate schools until the new building is constructed and then Treowen C.P. School closes. Pupils transfer to Ysgol Calon y Dderwen’s new building along with Ysgol Calon y Dderwen pupils.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed. - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed. - Limited disruption to pupils and staff at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers would continue to decrease until the new building is constructed. - Pupils would be taught separately until the new building is constructed. - Treowen would lose its identity once the new building is constructed. - Impact on staff at Treowen as management of change process would need to take place - Would not provide any efficiency savings until the new building is constructed. - Temporary leadership arrangements would continue at Treowen until the new building is constructed. - No opportunities for pupils and staff to be part of a single identity prior to the move to the new building.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for greater collaboration / federation between Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen until Treowen closes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability. - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes.

Option 4B – Both schools continue to operate as separate schools until the new building is constructed and then Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School closes. A new primary school is established at the new building.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Treowen would continue to decrease until the new building is constructed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed. - All staff at both schools would be treated in the same way and would have the same opportunity to secure positions at the new school - Both schools would have the opportunity to contribute to shaping the new school's identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would be taught separately until the new building is constructed. - Both schools would lose their identity once the new building is constructed. - Impact on staff at both schools as management of change process would need to take place. - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen staff would have to go through another management of change process, having only recently gone through a process - Would not provide any efficiency savings until the new building is constructed. - No opportunities for pupils and staff to be part of a single identity prior to the move to the new building. - Would close Ysgol Calon y Dderwen which only opened in September 2021. - Would incur costs to establish a new school.
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for greater collaboration / federation between the Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen until both schools close. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability. - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes.

Option 4C – Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is extended to include the current Treowen C.P. School building and pupils continue to attend school in the existing Treowen building from September 2025. When the new building opens, the Treowen site closes and pupils move to the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal impact on staff and pupils at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen who have only recently gone through a staffing restructure process during the establishment of the new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would be taught separately until the new building is constructed. - Impact on staff at Treowen as management of change process would need to take place.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed. - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed. - Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across both sites during the transition period. - Would enable the school to run more efficiently during the transition period through shared staffing and resources - Improved transition arrangements to support pupils' move from Treowen to the new building as they would already be part of the school. - Avoids expenditure associated with establishing a new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not provide any efficiency savings until the new building is constructed. - Would incur costs to rebrand the Treowen site as Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for staff to be part of a larger team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability. - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes.

Option 4D - A new primary school is established in September 2025 over both existing sites and pupils attend school in the existing buildings. Closure of Treowen C.P. School and Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. Pupils then move to the new building when constructed.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed. - Treowen pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed. - Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across both sites. - Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils would be taught separately until the new building is constructed. - Impact on staff at both schools as management of change process would need to take place. - Ysgol Calon y Dderwen staff would have to go through another management of change process, having only recently gone through a process

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All staff at both schools would be treated in the same way and would have the same opportunity to secure positions at the new school - Both schools would have the opportunity to contribute to shaping the new school's identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not provide any efficiency savings until the new building is constructed. - Would close Ysgol Calon y Dderwen which only opened in September 2021. - Would incur costs to establish a new school.
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Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May address the issue of recruitment to leadership positions in Newtown. - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability. - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes.

Option 4E – From September 2025, Treowen C.P. School closes and pupils transfer to Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. Pupils continue to occupy current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen buildings until the new building is ready.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited disruption to pupils and staff at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. - Would help solve building condition in the short term. - Pupils would be taught together in one building. - Would lead to a reduction in surplus places in the short term. - Improved transition arrangements to support pupils' move from Treowen to the new building as they would already be part of the school. - No costs incurred to establish a new school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision in Treowen would be lost immediately. - Impact on staff at Treowen as management of change process would need to take place. - Treowen would lose its identity. - No opportunities for pupils and staff to be part of a single identity prior to the move to the new building. - Pupils from Treowen would be subject to two moves. - Not enough surplus places in Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to accommodate Treowen pupils. - A larger number of pupils would be on site during the construction period.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for staff to be part of a larger team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability.

	- Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes.
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10. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the Critical Success Factors on pages 17 and 18 above. Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets ? – Could meet x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 4A	Option 4B	Option 4C	Option 4D	Option 4E
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	?	?	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	✓	✓	?	x	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	?	✓	?	x
4 – Supply-side capacity and capability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5 – Potential affordability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total ✓	4	3	4	3	4
Total x	0	0	0	1	1
Outcome	Possible	Possible	Possible	Discount	Discount

Based on the assessment against the Critical Success Factors, options 4A, 4B and 4C are possible. However, having considered the SWOTs on each option carried out in Section 9, option 4C is the preferred option. This is as follows:

Option 4C – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School with pupils attending the new build at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

- Treowen C.P. School closes from 31 August 2025. Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is extended to include the current Treowen C.P. School building and pupils continue to attend school in the existing Treowen building from September 2025.
- When the new building opens, the Treowen site closes and pupils then move to the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen.

The reasons for this are as follows:

- Minimal impact on staff and pupils at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen who have only recently gone through a staffing restructure process during the establishment of the new school
- Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed.
- Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed.
- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across both sites during the transition period.
- Would enable the school to run more efficiently during the transition period through shared staffing and resources
- Improved transition arrangements to support pupils' move from Treowen to the new building as they would already be part of the school.
- Avoids expenditure associated with establishing a new school

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals.

Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option:

Option 4C – New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the closure of Treowen C.P. School, extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include Treowen site and pupils attending the new build at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen

This will be based on implementation of the emerging preferred option on a phased basis:

- **Phase 1:** Extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to operate over the Treowen C.P. School site and closure of Treowen C.P. School
- **Phase 2:** Moving to a new building located on the existing Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site and closure of the Treowen site.

12. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

12.1 Likely impact on standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills

Standards of education and progress at both schools are currently good. The Council would expect the preferred option to further strengthen the current standards.

This would also apply in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

It is anticipated that extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the current Treowen site would have a positive impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, through improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources across the school, and through improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately following establishment of the new school, these would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future.

12.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning are currently good in both schools. Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the current Treowen site would provide an opportunity to strengthen these further. It is anticipated that this would have a positive impact, particularly with regard to pupils' emotional health.

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupil wellbeing during transition to the new operating model, however the Council would work with the governing body and the headteacher of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to minimise any negative impact. Pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School would continue to attend the same location during the transition period, and it is likely that they would continue to be taught by the same staff.

In the longer term, the intention is that the new school would move to a new building located on the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site. It is possible that there would also be an impact on pupil wellbeing during the transition to the new building, including pupils who would be attending the Treowen site of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen who would need to travel further to school. However, all pupils would be attending a brand new building, which would provide significantly improved accommodation compared with the current accommodation of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School, which should have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning.

12.3 Teaching and learning experiences

12.3.1 Quality of teaching

Quality of teaching is currently good in both schools. It is anticipated that extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would provide an opportunity to enhance this, by providing flexibility to share good practice and teaching experiences, resulting in positive benefits for staff and pupils.

Being part of a larger primary school with a larger pool of teaching staff would also lead to enhanced opportunities for pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School.

Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately following the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, these would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future.

12.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would provide the opportunity to further strengthen the curriculum offered to pupils. The new school would be better placed to develop provision which meets the requirements of the new curriculum.

Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately, these would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future.

12.3.3 The provision of skills

The provision of skills is good in both schools now, however, extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would provide an opportunity to strengthen this.

Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately following the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, these would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future.

12.4 Care, support and guidance

12.4.1 Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding

There are no concerns currently about these aspects at either school. Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would provide an opportunity to further develop these aspects across the two sites. For those children that need additional support, this continuity of approach would be beneficial. This is also the case in respect of personal development and safeguarding.

In the longer term, the Council intends to invest in a new building to replace the current buildings. Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately following the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, these would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future. Safeguarding arrangements would be a key consideration when planning the site, and when designing the new building, particularly given that the intention is for the new building to be part of a new well-being campus to be developed by the North Powys Well-being Programme.

12.5 Leadership and Management

12.5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self evaluation processes and improvement planning

There is currently a permanent leadership team in Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, but not at Treowen C.P. School. Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would provide an opportunity to secure permanent leadership arrangements across both sites.

The expanded Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be a larger school and would enable increased focus on leadership. Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to

include the Treowen site would also provide enhanced opportunities to develop leadership across the school, on both sites and would provide enhanced leadership opportunities for staff, and enhanced opportunities for improvement planning across the school.

The intention is to initially extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site. Whilst some benefits would be realised immediately following this change, it is acknowledged that operating across two sites could cause some challenges for the school's leaders during this phase.

In the longer term, the intention is for the school to move to a new building. This would enable the new school to maximise the benefits in terms of leadership and management.

12.5.2 Professional learning

Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would result in a larger staff team at the school and would provide improved professional learning opportunities for staff through greater opportunities for cross phase working, opportunities to develop leaders more effectively and more opportunities to develop middle leaders across both sites. In addition, there would be improved opportunities to see the progression of learning across both sites and improve opportunities to apply the principles of the new curriculum.

Whilst it is expected that some improvements in professional learning opportunities would be realised immediately following the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, this would be further enhanced following a move to one new building in the future.

12.5.3 Use of Resources

Should Ysgol Calon y Dderwen be extended to include the Treowen site, Treowen C.P. School would close. Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be funded as one school, with one budget, and would be run by one headteacher, one leadership team, and one governing body. This would eventually enable the school to operate more efficiently compared with the current arrangements, and should result in some efficiencies within the school's delegated budget through shared staffing and the ability to share other resources.

Initially, Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would operate from two sites. This would mean that there would be a need to maintain all buildings in the short term, which would not be the most efficient operating model. The school would be funded as two separate schools whilst on split sites so there would be no saving to the Council from Phase 1, however there could be some efficiencies within the school's delegated budget.

In the longer term, the intention is for the school to move to a new building which would reduce the surplus capacity that currently exists in the two schools. This would enable the new school to maximise the benefits in terms of the use of resources and deliver savings to both the school's delegated budget and the Council's budget.

12.6 Impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Implementation of the emerging preferred option would impact on any vulnerable pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School and Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, including any pupils with ALN/SEN.

Based on January 2023 PLASC 19.2% of pupils at Treowen C.P. School and 23.8% of pupils at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen had additional learning needs.

Whilst the emerging preferred option would impact on these pupils, there is no reason to believe that their needs would not be met with the new arrangements.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with the schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with ALN/SEN, and their families. Pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School would continue to attend the same location during the transition period, and it is likely that they would continue to be taught by the same staff, which would help support their transition to the new delivery model.

This would be further enhanced following the planned move to a brand new building.

12.7 Ability of the school/schools which are the subject of the proposals to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and each key stage of education, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this

Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would enable the provision of a full curriculum to pupils across the primary age range.

Initially, Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be extended to include the existing Treowen C.P. School site. Whilst one headteacher and governing body would be responsible for all three sites during this period, the full curriculum would continue to be provided to pupils in the foundation phase and key stage 2 on both sites. The provision available for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision, and there would be additional opportunities to provide enhanced opportunities to pupils across all three sites through shared staffing and the opportunity to hold all-school activities.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. This would provide enhanced opportunities to offer a full curriculum to all pupils across the primary age range in brand new facilities.

13. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

13.1 Will the alternative provision have sufficient capacity and provide accommodation of at least equivalent quality for existing and projected pupil numbers?

The intention is to initially extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the site currently occupied by Treowen C.P. School.

The following table provides information on the number of spaces available and buildings condition of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen:

School	Capacity	Current Pupils ⁹	Available Space	Available Capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	342	251	91	26.6%	C	B
Treowen CP	172	106	66	38.4%	B	B

This information shows that there is enough capacity within the existing Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School buildings to accommodate existing and projected pupil numbers on the two sites.

The accommodation at both sites would be at least equivalent quality for current pupils until the new building is constructed, as pupils will remain on their existing sites until the new building is ready.

The new building is expected to be built for 360 pupils, which would be sufficient to hold all the current and projected pupils and would provide access to accommodation which is of improved quality compared with the current accommodation.

⁹ Teacher Centre, 5th October 2023

Alternative English-medium provision is also available at a number of other schools in Newtown. The following table provides information on the number of spaces available and the building condition of these schools:

School	Capacity	Current Pupils ¹⁰	Available Space	Available Capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	214	95	119	55.6%	B/C	B/C
Penygloddfa C.P. School	312	266	46	14.7%	B	B
St Mary's RC School	117	63	54	46.2%	B	B/C

Places are available at these three schools for any pupils wishing to attend alternative provision.

Welsh-medium provision is also available in Newtown at Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd. The following table provides information on Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd:

School	Capacity	Current Pupils	Available Space	Available Capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	266	195	71	26.7%	A	A

Places are also available at this school for any pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium provision.

13.2 Is the alternative provision sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same language category and (if relevant) designated religious character?

Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School are both English-medium community primary schools. The proposal is to extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, which would provide continued access to community primary provision for pupils currently attending these schools. As indicated in section 13.1, there are sufficient places at the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and

¹⁰ Teacher Centre, 5th October 2023

Treowen buildings to accommodate current and projected pupil numbers at these two schools.

The new building is expected to be built for 360 pupils, which would be sufficient to hold all the current and projected pupils at these two schools, ensuring continued access to community primary provision for these pupils.

Additional English-medium community primary provision is also available at other providers in Newtown, such as Maesyrrhandir C.P. School and Penygloddfa C.P. School.

13.3 What will be the nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils including SEN pupils?

Initially, the intention is to extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the current site of Treowen C.P. School. During this phase, pupils currently attending school on the Treowen site would continue to attend the same location, so there would be no change in terms of the nature of journeys and journey times for pupils during this phase.

Eventually, the intention is that the school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. This would result in additional travel for pupils for whom Treowen C.P. School is currently the closest school. The Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site is approximately 0.8 miles from Treowen C.P. School, therefore whilst there would be additional travel time for all pupils for whom Treowen C.P. School is currently the closest school, including SEN pupils, the nature of journeys and journey times would not be unreasonable, and would not exceed 45 minutes.

It is also acknowledged that Treowen C.P. School is located up a hill, which could mean that it would be less convenient for families from the Treowen estate to get to school following the move to the new building, however the additional distance is not considered to be excessive. As part of the process of developing the new building, consideration will be given to active travel arrangements, to ensure that there are safe routes for pupils to access the new building.

13.4 Is there evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places?

The latest pupil projection figures for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School suggest that pupil numbers at the three schools are not expected to increase over the coming years. This is in-line with the general trend in

terms of pupil numbers in Newtown. The following table provides the latest primary projections for all primary schools in Newtown¹¹:

School	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	104	91	83	73	70
Treowen C.P. School	110	108	95	94	87
Penygloddfa C.P. School	301	303	306	302	297
St Mary's RC School	66	67	63	55	50
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	232	239	235	225	225
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	179	189	196	196	198
Total	992	997	978	945	927

13.5 Will the proposals improve access for disabled pupils in accordance with requirements under the Equality Act 2010?

The intention is to extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, meaning that pupils would continue to access the same accommodation initially. Pupils currently attending the Treowen site would continue to attend the same location during this period, so there would be no change in terms of access for disabled pupils during this phase.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen, which would be built to meet the requirements of the Equality Act. This would provide improved access for disabled pupils compared with the provision currently at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School.

14. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

¹¹ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC 2022 & Birth Rates (Reception to Year 6) – Projections based on PLASC 2023 are not yet available

14.1 What effect will the proposals have on surplus places in the area?

The proposal is to initially extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, therefore there would be no impact on surplus places in the area during this phase.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. The current intention is that the new building would be built for 360 pupils. This is a reduction of 154 places compared with the current combined capacities of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School, which is 514, therefore this would lead to a reduction in surplus places in Newtown.

14.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's Sustainable Communities for the Future and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

Plans to provide a new primary school in Newtown are included in the Council's SOP for Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. This is linked to wider plans to develop a multi-agency Health and Well-being campus in Newtown.

The Council intends to implement this change on a phased basis, and to initially extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site. This is not dependent on Sustainable Communities for Learning funding.

14.3 What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?

The recurrent costs of this proposal would be the increased rates charges for a new build which are currently estimated to be an additional £14.0k. This has been included in the delegated revenue costing and is funded through savings in other areas of the formula in relation to this proposal.

It is also anticipated that utility costs borne by the school could rise in the new build by an estimated £20.0k.

14.4 Will additional transport costs be incurred as a result of the proposal?

No additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site. During this phase, pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School would continue to attend school in the same location.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. It is currently projected that there would be no additional transports costs as the new building is located less than 1 mile from the existing Treowen school building.

14.5 What are the capital costs of the proposal and is the necessary capital funding is available?

There are no capital costs associated with the initial phase, which would see the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. It is estimated that the capital cost of this (excluding optimism bias, risk, client costs and fees) would be £16m, based on current costs.

The intention is that this would be funded by the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. Plans to provide a new primary school in Newtown are included in the Council's SOP for Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. As part of the business case process, a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been developed and approved by the Council's Cabinet and Welsh Government and plans for the new building had been developed to the end of RIBA Stage 2.

However, the original SOC was based on a 270-place school, with an estimated cost of just under £12m, based on 2010 costs. It is noted that the Council would need to submit a revised SOC if the scope of the project was to change.

14.6 What is the scale of any projected net savings (taking into account school revenue, transport and capital costs)

The intention initially is to extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site. No savings to the Council would be identified at this stage in terms of delegated funding, however the school would be able to combine resources and potentially reduce management costs for the school, as there would be one senior leadership team.

There would be no additional transport costs associated with this phase, however there may be some additional costs associated with extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site, such as new signage. This is estimated to be in the region of £15k and would be funded by transformation.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school would move to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. It is estimated that

the capital cost of this (including optimism bias) would be £16m, however this would be reviewed and updated as the design process moves forward.

The move to one new building would result in estimated revenue savings in delegated funding amounting to £108.6k per annum (after taking account of the estimated increase in business rates of £14.0k). In addition, there may be some minimal savings for catering functions. It is currently projected that there would be no additional transport costs as the new building is located less than 1 mile from the existing Treowen school building. The school itself is also anticipated to realise savings to its budget as they will be able to pool resources as well as put more cost-effective class structures and a single leadership team in place, however it is expected utility costs would increase by approximately £20.0k for the new school.

14.7 Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?

Based on the latest information held by the Council's Finance Team¹², Calon y Dderwen is projecting a cumulative surplus of £61,543 in March 2024, Treowen a projected cumulative surplus of £36,161 in March 2024.

Neither school is projecting a deficit position over the next 3 years but both are spending more than the funding delegated to them in-year in 2025/26. They are able to do this as they have cumulative surpluses available to them, but if this in-year position continued, then they would be likely to fall into a cumulative carry forward deficit in 2026/27.

14.8 Will any savings in recurrent costs be retained in the local authority's local schools budget?

Any savings would be available for reinvestment as part of the Council's corporate budget process and any reinvestment in the schools system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

14.9 Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?

Initially there would be no redundant sites as Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would initially be extended to include the Treowen site.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the old Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. This would result in the Treowen site becoming surplus. The Council would need to consider what to

¹² August 2023

do with this site in the future. This would initially be considered through the Council's Strategic Asset Board.

Should the site be declared surplus, the Council would hope to realise a capital receipt for the site. Any capital receipts received would be reinvested into the Transforming Education programme in order to improve the educational provision across Powys.

15. OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

15.1 What impact will the proposals have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds?

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Treowen C.P. School and Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. Based on PLASC figures from January 2023, 42% of pupils attending Treowen C.P. School and 36% of pupils attending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen were eligible for Free School Meals therefore it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on some pupils from economically deprived backgrounds.

However, it is not anticipated that the extension of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would have a negative impact on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds. Initially, pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School would continue to attend school in the same location, which would minimise any impact on the educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds and would support their transition to the new model. They would be part of a larger school, which would have a larger pupil deprivation grant, which could be used to support pupils consistently throughout their time in primary school.

Eventually, the intention is that the new school moves to a new building located on the site of the current Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. This would mean that pupils attending the school would need to transfer to the new site. For pupils currently attending Treowen C.P. School, this would require additional travel. However, the Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site is located less than 1 mile from the existing Treowen school building, so it is not expected that the additional travel required would impact on pupils' educational attainment.

During the engagement exercise carried out when developing this proposal, some concern was raised that moving to the Calon y Dderwen site would make it more difficult from pupils from economically deprived backgrounds to attend school as it would be located further away, and that this would impact on attendance, which could impact on their educational attainment. The

Council would work with the school to prepare for the transition to the new building, to minimise any impact on attendance.

15.2 Any equality issues, including those identified through equality impact assessments

Extending Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the Treowen site would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the schools. However, the aim of the proposal is to improve the provision available for all pupils, including those belonging to protected characteristic groups.

15.3 Whether the school / schools involved are subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land.

Ysgol Calon y Dderwen or Treowen C.P. School are not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposed option.

16. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

16.1 Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option

A range of options have been considered in respect of Treowen C.P. School, these are outlined in section 4 of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

The preferred option is to retain the Treowen C.P. School building through the expansion of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen into a multi-sited school, until the new building is constructed for learners on the existing Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site.

16.2 Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

Whilst the preferred option involves closing Treowen C.P. School, it does retain educational provision on the Treowen site, until such time that the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen is constructed.

A range of options have been considered and these are outlined earlier in the document, as well as an assessment of each option.

Federation of Treowen C.P. School and Ysgol Calon y Dderwen has not been considered, as becoming part of a federation would not solve the key issues of surplus places and decreasing pupil numbers.

16.3 Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

The preferred option involves utilising the existing Treowen C.P. School as a site of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen until the new building is constructed. Therefore, education will be retained in Treowen until a new building is available for pupils to transfer to.

Upon transfer to the new building, the future of the Treowen site would be explored.

16.4 The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community)

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that provision would continue to be available in Newtown. Ultimately, there would be a positive impact on the community in Newtown, through the provision of a new primary school with enhanced community facilities.

During the first phase, provision would continue on the current Treowen site, so the impact on the community would be minimal. However eventually, there would no longer be provision in Treowen. This would have a negative impact on the Treowen community and would result in the loss of primary provision in Treowen, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, a community impact assessment would be carried out, which would include input from the affected schools to identify the potential impact on the community. This would be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received and would be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

16.5 How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventual implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, thereby ensuring full engagement with Ysgol Calon y Dderwen. The nature of this support will depend on the needs of the parents/pupils.

17. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the options appraisal carried out and further consideration of the emerging preferred option against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code, the preferred option is as follows:

New build for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen with increased capacity, the expansion of Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to incorporate the Treowen C.P. School site initially, the closure of the Treowen site with all pupils to transfer to the new building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen when completed.

The reasons for this are:

- Provides the opportunity for all learners from both Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School to benefit from an improved learning environment
- A larger school provides a more efficient model of education
- Ysgol Calon y Dderwen and Treowen C.P. School have a similar pupil profile in terms of additional learning needs and pupils eligible for free school meals – this would enable a positive transition process
- Removal of backlog maintenance at two schools
- New school building at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen would be fully accessible and would meet the requirements of the Equality Act
- New build is planned to be a Passivhaus building which is a very efficient energy standard, and the school would meet Welsh Government's net zero targets
- Reduces surplus places but places remain available at other schools in Newtown, including Maesyrrhandir C.P. School, to accommodate for future fluctuations in pupil numbers
- Minimal impact on staff and pupils at Ysgol Calon y Dderwen who have only recently gone through a staffing restructure process during the establishment of the new school
- Would provide education in Treowen until the new building is constructed.
- Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location until the new building is constructed.
- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across both sites during the transition period.
- Would enable the school to run more efficiently during the transition period through shared staffing and resources
- Improved transition arrangements to support pupils' move from Treowen to the new building as they would already be part of the school.
- Avoids expenditure associated with establishing a new school

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on the proposal.

It is recommended that the consultation is on the following proposal, which would see the preferred option being implemented on a phased basis:

- **Phase 1:** Close Treowen C.P. School from 31 August 2025 and extend Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to include the former Treowen C.P. School site from 1 September 2025.
- **Phase 2:** Ysgol Calon y Dderwen to move to a new building located on the existing Ysgol Calon y Dderwen site during 2026/27, and the Treowen site closes.

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APPENDIX A – KEY DATA

Pupil Numbers

iii) Current pupil numbers¹³

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total R-Yr6
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	40	36	44	25	34	39	33	251
Treowen C.P. School	10	15	15	9	16	14	27	106
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	12	11	12	10	15	19	16	95
Total	62	62	71	44	65	72	76	452

iv) Historical pupil numbers¹⁴

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	285	270	256	264	239	231	230	230
Treowen C.P. School	132	146	146	145	131	136	135	114
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	202	210	193	172	144	139	116	118
Total	619	626	595	581	514	506	481	462

v) Projected pupil numbers (Live birth info)¹⁵

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	232	239	235	225	225

¹³ Teacher Centre, 5th October 2023

¹⁴ PLASC

¹⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates (Reception to Year 6) – projections based on PLASC 2023 are not yet available

Treowen C.P. School	110	108	95	94	87
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	104	91	83	73	70
Total	446	438	413	392	382

Building Capacity and Condition

iii) Capacity

	Capacity¹⁶	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	342	251 (73.4%)	91 (26.6%)
Treowen C.P. School	172	106 (61.6%)	66 (38.4%)
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	214	95 (44.4%)	119 (55.6%)

iv) Building condition¹⁷

	Condition	Suitability	Sufficient
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	C - Poor	B - Satisfactory	No
Treowen C.P. School	B – Satisfactory	B - Satisfactory	Yes
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	B/C – Satisfactory Poor	B/C – Satisfactory Poor	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

¹⁶ Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

¹⁷ Transforming Education PowerBI Dashboard - 2022

	Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	Treowen C.P. School	Maesyrhandir C.P. School
Date of inspection	Not yet inspected	May 2018	June 2022
Standards	N/A	Adequate and needs improvement	N/A
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	N/A	Good	N/A
Teaching and learning experiences	N/A	Adequate and needs improvement	N/A
Care, support and guidance	N/A	Good	N/A
Leadership and management	N/A	Adequate and needs improvement	N/A
Next steps	N/A	School placed in Estyn Monitoring. Removed from monitoring in December 2019.	5 recommendations listed for action plan for implementation by school.

Financial information

iv) Cost per pupil¹⁸

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	£986,000	£4,401	£55,000	£63,250
Treowen C.P. School	£485,000	£4,528	£38,000	£28,750

¹⁸ Section 52 Budget Statement, 2023/2024

Maesyrhandir C.P. School	£538,000	£5,323	£79,000	£63,250
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,656.50	N/A	N/A

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals¹⁹

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census Day
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	36%
Treowen C.P. School	42%
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	56%

ii) Pupils in care²⁰

	Number of pupils in care (rate per 100 pupils)
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	3.04
Treowen C.P. School	0
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	0

iii) SEN/ALN²¹

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	18.6%	4.8%	0.4%
Treowen C.P. School	8.0%	11.2%	0.0%
Maesyrhandir C.P. School	20.9%	24.3%	1.7%

¹⁹ PLASC 2023

²⁰ January 2023

²¹ PLASC 2023