



Proposal to close Llangedwyn C. in W.
School
Objection Report



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Objection Report

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Consultation on the closure of Llanedwyn C. in W. School

Objection Report

1. BACKGROUND

Powys County Council consulted on proposals to close Llanedwyn C. in W. School. The consultation took place from the 12th October 2023 to the 23rd November 2023. The Council published a consultation report outlining the findings of the consultation exercise.

On 19th December 2023, the Council's Cabinet agreed to proceed with the proposal, and a Statutory Notice was published from the 10th January 2023 to the 7th February 2024.

The proposal was as follows:

'To close Llanedwyn C. in W. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School.'

2. SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED

16 objections were received during the statutory objection period.

The objections are listed in section 3 of this report, along with the Council's response to the comments made in the objections.

3. ISSUES RAISED IN THE OBJECTIONS RECEIVED

The issues raised in the objections received are summarised below, along with the local authority's response to each issue.

Objection 1

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 1.1 | We strongly believe the closure of Llangedwyn school would be detrimental to the whole village community, it would take the heart away and ruin such a lovely village. | The Council recognises the school's role within the local community, and that closure of any school has an impact on the community in which it is located. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the proposal's impact on the local community, this has been updated throughout the process to reflect comments received. |
| 1.2 | It would also prevent future families moving to the area - if there is no primary school within the village, families are less inclined to want to move to the area. | The Council notes this concern, however, Llangedwyn isn't currently the nearest school for most of the pupils currently attending the school, which suggests that families in the area are already choosing to send their children to alternative schools. |
| 1.3 | This would also have an impact on the church and village hall within Llangedwyn as they are both establishments that the school use often. | The Council notes this concern about the possible impact of closure on the church and the village hall in Llangedwyn. |
| 1.4 | The school has been a huge asset to our children and many other children in the past and the present, it would be awful if many other children couldn't have the opportunity to thrive here. | The Council acknowledges the part that Llangedwyn CiW School has played in the area's history. However, pupil numbers at the school have decreased significantly in recent years, suggesting that parents in the area are already choosing to send their children to alternative schools. |
| 1.5 | We feel there should be a much fairer opportunity for us as a school and community to have a better chance at | The Council notes this comment, however, there are only 7 pupils currently attending Llangedwyn CiW School, and |

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| | building the school back up, to have more pupils and opportunities for other families. | there is no evidence that pupil numbers in the school are expected to increase significantly. |
| 1.6 | The school has many familiarities for the children here and they are happy and comfortable at their school, it would be detrimental for them to lose this and could have a huge impact on their mental health and wellbeing. | The Council recognises that any school reorganisation process creates a period of uncertainty for all involved, including children. The Council is committed to supporting schools and learners, including through periods of change, and it is also expected that school governors, staff, and parents support the children to ensure that there isn't a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. |
| 1.7 | We feel we have not been given enough time to consider other options for our children to go somewhere that is suitable for them, for us as a family Llanfechain is not an option at all and would mean considerably more distance to travel to get our children to a school that's suitable for them and their needs. The travel and cost to another suitable school would be considerably more, as it is very important to us that our children go to a school that is fitting for them. | Whilst the proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain, families can apply for a place at any school. All applications will be dealt with in accordance with Powys County Council's admissions arrangements. Transport will be provided in accordance with the Home to School Transport Policy. |
| 1.8 | It would also be something else taken away from the beliefs and opportunities that are held within it as being a Church of Wales Primary it has a huge connection with the church and parishioners of the community. The closure of this amazing and opportunistic school is taking away the history of the village for other future children and parents to enjoy. | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School to ensure that they can continue to access Church in Wales provision. However, the Council acknowledges that there may be an impact on links between the community and the Church in Llangedwyn. |

Objection 2

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 2.1 | I would like to formally object to the closure of Llangedwyn School on the grounds that the school has been badly managed and run as part of the Federasiwn Dwy Afon by | The Council does not agree that 'the school has been badly managed and run as part of the Federasiwn Dwy Afon by the current Federation Governing Body.' |

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| | the current Federation Governing Body, and other options have not been considered. | A range of options were considered by the Council when developing the proposal. In addition, a number of alternative options were suggested in the consultation responses. These were considered and assessed in the consultation report. |
| 2.2 | Governors advised parents to move children in June 2023 because Llangedwyn School is closing. Scare tactics used by governors to get parents to move children to reduce pupil numbers. | The Council was not involved in any discussions between Governors and parents which took place in June 2023. |
| 2.3 | I believe the financial data used to make final decision didn't cover all costs. | The estimated savings included as part of the proposal are based on the revenue funding provided to the school and estimated additional transport costs. However it is acknowledged that there could be some additional costs which haven't yet been calculated, such as redundancy costs. |
| 2.4 | Distance from Llangedwyn School to Llanfechain School is incorrect in the consultation document, it is 8.2 miles along current bus route, double the estimate. | The information in the consultation document is based on the shortest distance between Llangedwyn and Llanfechain, however, it is acknowledged that this route may not be suitable for buses. |
| 2.5 | Pre-school children born in Llangedwyn area not considered. | Pre-school aged children are reflected in the projections for future pupil numbers that were included in the consultation document. |
| 2.6 | Cost saving within Federation not considered by governing body or Powys County Council. | The federation has existed since 2018, so any cost savings across the federation could have already been realised. Federation does not result in any cost savings for the Council. |

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| 2.7 | There is a culture of bullying and removal of any governors or teachers that question the core controlling governors aiding pupil number decline. | <p>The Welsh Government's '<i>School Governors' guide to the law</i>¹ states that:</p> <p><i>'Governing bodies and individual governors should act at all times with honesty and integrity and be ready to explain their actions and decisions to staff, pupils, parents and anyone else with a legitimate interest in the school...'</i></p> <p>Any complaints about governor behaviour should be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Any removals from the Governing Body are dealt with in accordance with <i>The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations</i>.</p> |
| 2.8 | Several governors have conflict of interests involving the after school club which has been reduced to one day in Llangedwyn school with no openness or transparency around this separate organisation also aiding pupil number decline. | The Council is not involved in the running of the after-school club. |
| 2.9 | I believe the reduction in pupil numbers of Llangedwyn school is a direct result of bad leadership by the leaders of the governing body, there is a lack of processes and procedures and inability to run a school correctly financially and the bullying culture towards anyone that questions them, including staff, governors, parents or community past and present. | Pupils/parents can apply for places at alternative schools at any time should they wish to do so. Applications from pupils attending Llangedwyn have been dealt with in accordance with the Council's admissions policy. |
| 2.10 | Poor Website does not attract parents. | The Council is not responsible for updating the school's website. |
| 2.11 | Rurals school are a key part of rural life, and the removal of a rural school starts the process of losing a rural | The Council acknowledges the role of rural schools in Powys communities. The Council has followed the |

¹ www.gov.wales/school-governors-guide-law

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| | community. Rural council taxpayers get the lowest benefit of services and education for our children in a great rural village school is the least we should get. | additional requirements associated with the 'Presumption against closure of rural schools' which are outlined in the School Organisation Code. |
| 2.12 | Complaints not dealt with by Governing body and covered up. | Any complaints relating to the school should be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy. The Council is aware that the Governing Body are dealing with complaints, and the Council is providing advice and support as appropriate. |
| 2.13 | PCC cost saving on closure is £56,400, this could be saved by restructure of staffing and budgets of the federation and or Llangedwyn School's standalone budget, a cost saving option has not been considered. | As stated in the Consultation Document that was issued: 'It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £56.4k. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of £91.0k and estimated additional transport costs of £34.6k.' Any restructure of staffing and budgets across the federation would not result in savings to the Council, as both Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School would continue to be funded as separate schools. |
| 2.14 | No consideration to involving local community or local businesses to help with fundraising for the school. | The council is not responsible for involving the local community or local businesses in helping with fundraising for the school. |
| 2.15 | Current Governors allowed the PTA to be abandoned and funds lost that were raised for the school. | The Council is not involved in the running of the school's PTA. |

Objection 3

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 3.1 | I strongly object to this course of action. | Comment noted. |

Objection 4

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 4.1 | I hereby wish to lodge my objections to the proposed closure of Llangedwyn C in W School. The closure of our village school will have a detrimental effect on our local community. This school has an integral part in village life with its close relationship with our church. | The Council recognises the school's role within the local community, and that closure of any school has an impact on the community in which it is located. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the proposal's impact on the local community, this has been updated throughout the process to reflect comments received. |
| 4.2 | The loss of such an excellent school will deny the more vulnerable pupils from a nurturing caring environment giving them the opportunity to live a full and enjoyable life. | Whilst recognising the support Llangedwyn C. in W. School has provided to vulnerable pupils, Llangedwyn is a mainstream school and does not have any specialist facilities to support vulnerable pupils compared with other mainstream schools. Pupils will still be able to 'live a full and enjoyable life' should they attend different schools. |
| 4.3 | There are many reasons why this school should remain open. In addition, the conduct of those responsible for its success needs to be considered. | Comment noted. |

Objection 5

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 5.1 | I am wholeheartedly against the closure. | Comment noted. |
| 5.2 | The school has taught children since 1815 and therefore has a long history of providing education to the children of the Tanat Valley. | The Council acknowledges the part that Llangedwyn C. in W. School has played in the history of the area. |

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| 5.3 | The school currently has low pupil numbers, but that is partly due to children being relocated to other schools due to the threat of Llangedwyn School closure. | Pupils/parents can apply for places at alternative schools at any time should they wish to do so. Applications from pupils attending Llangedwyn have been dealt with in accordance with the Council's admissions policy. |
| 5.4 | Other schools in the area are full and therefore closure of Llangedwyn School means that there will be insufficient places in schools in the area. | There are sufficient places in the local area to accommodate the 7 pupils currently attending Llangedwyn C. in W. School. |
| 5.5 | The school premises is owned by the Llangedwyn estate, and I believe that the estate has confirmed that it wishes the school to remain open, and that the school should remain as an education property into the future. | Comment noted. |
| 5.6 | The national population is rising rapidly due to immigration, and this has had profound implications for healthcare, education, transport, housing, and all other services. The relentless building in rural areas on a national basis is well known, and many are leaving town to live in the countryside. It is only a matter of time before there are more children in the Llangedwyn area. | Current projections are that pupil numbers in Powys schools will continue to decrease over the coming years. There is no current evidence of any significant increased demand for places in Llangedwyn over the coming years. |
| 5.7 | Some children attending Llangedwyn School have additional needs, and they are supported by the school admirably and it is a great advantage to have the one-to-one support that is provided there. | Whilst recognising the support Llangedwyn C. in W. School has provided to pupils with additional learning needs, Llangedwyn is a mainstream school, and does not have any specialist facilities to support vulnerable pupils compared with other mainstream schools. |
| 5.8 | Financial reasons for the closure have been ventilated, but there is a question mark over the funds apportioned to Llangedwyn School and the funds attracted for children with additional needs. | As stated in the Consultation Document: <i>'It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £56.4k. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of £91.0k and estimated additional transport costs of £34.6k.'</i> |
| 5.9 | If Llangedwyn School closed, children would have to travel further afield and that is costly, time consuming, and | Llangedwyn C. in W. School is currently not the closest school for most of the pupils that attend it. The proposal is |

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| | contrary to the need to reduce travel where possible, and to keep things local. | for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which could result in an increase in travel for some pupils, however pupils could choose to transfer to other schools. Should pupils transfer to their closest schools, it is likely that there would be a reduction in travel time. |
| 5.10 | Reports show that Estyn has no concerns with Llangedwyn School, and the school has been removed from the need for review. | The council acknowledges that Llangedwyn was removed from Estyn Review in 2021. This information was included in the Consultation Document. |
| 5.11 | I believe that the threat of Llangedwyn School closure during recent years has been detrimental to the school. | It is acknowledged that there have been discussions about the future of Llangedwyn C. in W. School for a number of years. Whilst acknowledging that this could have had an impact on pupil numbers at the school, the historical pupil numbers included in the consultation document shows that Llangedwyn pupil numbers have fluctuated from 31 in 2016 to the current number of 7 pupils. |
| 5.12 | I believe that if the school closed, this would be a further degradation of services to our rural community. | Comment noted. |

Objection 6

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 6.1 | I am absolutely appalled at the proposal of Llangedwyn school closure and believe it to be unfairly treated as long term sick leave from consecutive head teachers, a dominant board of governors from the federated school at Llanfechain, who would benefit from the closure of Llangedwyn school have brought this on the community of Llangedwyn. | The Council is proposing to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School due to the very low pupil numbers currently attending the school. |
| 6.2 | The threat of closure has exaggerated any temporary low numbers, and if this was to go a head there will be no young families wanting to come to Llangedwyn. | It is acknowledged that there have been discussions about the future of Llangedwyn C. in W. School for a number of |

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| | | <p>years. Whilst acknowledging that this could have had an impact on pupil numbers at the school, the historical pupil numbers included in the consultation document shows that Llangedwyn pupil numbers have fluctuated from 31 in 2016 to the current number of 7 pupils.</p> <p>Llangedwyn isn't currently the closest school for most of the pupils currently attending the school, which suggests that families are already choosing to send their children to alternative schools.</p> |
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Objection 7

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 7.1 | I am writing to suggest that the proposed closure of Llangedwyn school should be reversed. I have lived in the village for many years and have known of the excellence of the teaching. | Comment noted. |
| 7.2 | <p>During that time there has to a greater and sometimes lesser extent been rumours of closure and this will have had a detrimental effect on child recruitment thus hastening the councils desire for closure and making the whole procedure self-fulfilling.</p> <p>It now needs a guaranteed period with no threat of closure where parents can place their children in the school for the period of their junior education which can take place near to home and with good leadership the school would prosper and be an asset to Llangedwyn.</p> | <p>It is acknowledged that there have been discussions about the future of Llangedwyn C. in W. School for a number of years. Whilst acknowledging that this could have had an impact on pupil numbers at the school, the historical pupil numbers included in the consultation document shows that Llangedwyn pupil numbers have fluctuated from 31 in 2016 to the current number of 7 pupils.</p> <p>There is no evidence of any significant increased demand for places in Llangedwyn over the coming years.</p> |

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| 7.3 | Children taught in their own village grow up with a feeling of belonging to the community and this feeling can be carried into adult life and have a long-term beneficial effect on the whole community. | Comment noted. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the impact of the proposal on the community. |
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Objection 8

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 8.1 | I am horrified by the proposals to close this valuable community asset. The whole proposal has been rushed through with no real time or opportunity for the parents and community members to have worthwhile input into the process. Rather than a meaningful and detailed discussion with parents and the community in general there has been the minimum time that is required to push this closure through at speed, we are talking about children's futures in the short term and the future of the whole community over the long term, not something that we should be rushing through. | The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. This included consultation, which provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to let the Council know their views on the proposal. Timescales have been in accordance with the requirements of the Code. |
| 8.2 | There has been no community involvement in exploring all of the alternative opportunities including not only the 5 proposals put forward by Powys but also at least 3 other proposals for continuing education in Llangedwyn. | A range of options were considered by the Council when developing the proposal. In addition, a number of alternative options were suggested in the consultation responses. These were considered and assessed in the consultation report. |
| 8.3 | Llangedwyn CinW Primary school currently has a larger than average number of pupils with ALN which deserves special and careful consideration and consultation with the parents in any plans for closing the school or moving the pupils en bloc and this has not been given appropriate consideration. | The needs of ALN pupils have been considered throughout the process, including in the impact assessments, which have been updated throughout the process. |

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| | | <p>The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which would provide an opportunity for pupils to move 'en bloc' to an alternative school.</p> |
| 8.4 | <p>There is no definitive resolution for Llanfechain being over numbers the plan merely states 'we will talk to the governors and the school about this'. There should be a defined resolution as this is a central part of the proposal and with Llansantffraid already being over numbers the removal of places at Llangedwyn will mean that the 3 schools involved in this proposal (short, medium and long term) will have no vacancies when they are reduced down to 2.</p> | <p>As stated in the Statutory Notice published in respect of this proposal:</p> <p><i>'No measures are currently proposed to be taken to increase the number of school places available at alternative schools on consequence of the proposed discontinuance of Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School.</i></p> <p><i>However, it is recognised that should all pupils currently attending Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School transfer to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School, there could be some pressure on places at the school in the short term. If needed, the Council would discuss with the school's governing body to understand how the pupils could be accommodated.'</i></p> <p>It is correct that the Council's preferred way forward for the Llanfyllin catchment identifies longer term plans for Llanfechain C. in W. School and Llansantffraid C. in W. School, however these are unlikely to proceed for a number of years, and there are statutory processes which would need to be undertaken to achieve them. Pupil numbers at Llanfechain C. in W. School are also projected to decrease in the meantime in the coming years.</p> |

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| 8.5 | <p>There is no allowance in the plan for people moving into the area, into both new build houses or into rental properties so the estimated future pupil figures are at the very best on the low side meaning that Llanfechain will reach and pass capacity far quicker than the plan suggests.</p> | <p>Current projections are that pupil numbers in both Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School will decrease over the coming years.</p> |
| 8.6 | <p>There is no definitive plan for pupils currently at Llangedwyn to move to other schools, the proposal calls for all children to move to Llanfechain but in reality this isn't going to happen, indeed this is proved by the actions of the past few months with parents moving their children to alternative schools due to the worry of there being no places at Llanfechain.</p> <p>Llanfechain is not the nearest school to Llangedwyn, in fact Llansillin is closer and the argument that by moving to Llanfechain Powys is protecting Church in Wales places is not true as if there are no spaces at Llanfechain to accept pupils they will (as the past few months have shown) move to other non CinW schools.</p> | <p>The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School as the school is currently federated with Llangedwyn C. in W. School and would also ensure that pupils would continue to access Church in Wales provision, however parents can apply for a place at alternative schools, including Ysgol Bro Cynllaith in Llansilin, should they prefer.</p> |
| 8.7 | <p>It is a mistake to cite the preservation of Church in Wales places in the proposal. There are currently 47 plus 43 places in the 2 schools so a total of 90, if Llangedwyn closes there will only be 47 Church in Wales places meaning a loss of 43 whichever way you look at it.</p> | <p>The Council does not state that the proposal would 'preserve Church in Wales places'. However, the proposal for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School would mean that pupils currently accessing Church in Wales provision at Llangedwyn C. in W. School would continue to access Church in Wales provision. One of the reasons for the proposal as set out in the Statutory Notice is that:</p> <p><i>'Pupils would continue to access Church in Wales provision'</i></p> |
| 8.8 | <p>The budget figures included in the plan do not seem to give a realistic picture of Llangedwyn finances going forward, there does not seem to be any allowance for the</p> | <p>The information in the Consultation Document reflected the position at the time. Updated information will be included in the paper considered by Cabinet alongside this report.</p> |

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| | reduction of teaching staff that has already taken place meaning that the figures given to cabinet in order for them to make an informed decision may be completely wrong and give an overinflated view of Llangedwyn finances moving forward, there have also not been any discussions with parents or other community groups to explore future savings that could be made at the school nor looking at increasing revenue, all of this seems to show Llangedwyn finances in a much worse position that it would actually be. | |
| 8.9 | Not enough consideration has been given to the proposal to de-federate Llangedwyn from Llanfechain, nor to examine the savings that such a move would enable to be made nor the increase in revenue that could be generated by Llangedwyn being an independent school. Savings would include not having an executive head teacher (non-teaching) and instead operating under the skilled hands of an acting head teacher whilst moving forward. Increased revenue would come from increased use of the school buildings for after school and holiday clubs, something that the current regime appear to be against. | <p>‘Dissolve the Federation and allow Llangedwyn to exist as a standalone school’ was an alternative option suggested in the consultation responses received, and was listed as a possible alternative option in the consultation report.</p> <p>As stated in the consultation report:</p> <p><i>‘The proposal to federate Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School was led by the governing bodies of the two schools, and both governing bodies agreed to establish the federation. ‘The Federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales’ does allow for schools to leave federations, however neither school has done this.’</i></p> |
| 8.10 | The whole thing has been rushed through without being explored fully or correctly and that there should be an extended period of consultation to include direct conversations with the parents, prospective parents, community groups and the wider public. Members of the community would be willing to meet with the transforming education team to start to explore in depth some of the alternatives that are available, and other parents and community groups would also take up such an opportunity. | The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. This included consultation, which provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to let the Council know their views on the proposal. Timescales have been in accordance with the requirements of the Code. |

Objection 9

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 9.1 | <p>The proposed alternative provision is at Llanfechain CinW VC School. However, no evidence has been given as to how many of the current Llangedwyn pupils will in fact transfer to Llanfechain. It is very likely, given their place of residence, that pupils will transfer to a range of schools, negating the advantages of moving to a school sharing staff and governing body, and breaking friendship groups.</p> | <p>The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School as the school is currently federated with Llangedwyn C. in W. School and this would ensure that pupils would continue to access Church in Wales provision. However parents can apply for a place at alternative schools should they prefer. Given that Llangedwyn C. in W. School isn't currently the closest school for the majority of pupils attending, it is acknowledged that many of the pupils may choose to transfer to other schools, and that this could mean that pupils would transfer to different schools.</p> |
| 9.2 | <p>No evidence has been given as to how capacity at Llanfechain School will be increased to accommodate pupils transferred from Llangedwyn.</p> | <p>As stated in the Statutory Notice published in respect of this proposal:</p> <p><i>'No measures are currently proposed to be taken to increase the number of school places available at alternative schools on consequence of the proposed discontinuance of Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School.</i></p> <p><i>However, it is recognised that should all pupils currently attending Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School transfer to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School, there could be some pressure on places at the school in the short term. If needed, the Council would discuss with the school's governing body to understand how the pupils could be accommodated.'</i></p> |

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| | | Given that Llangedwyn C. in W. School is not the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school, it is likely that some pupils would choose to transfer to schools other than Llanfechain C. in W. School. |
| 9.3 | Llanfechain school's physical condition is cited by Estyn as being 'poor'. The Authority should not be proposing to introduce more pupils into a school rated 'poor' when no improvement programme has been put in place. | As stated in the Consultation Report: <i>'The Authority has a duty to maintain the building condition of all its schools. Llanfechain will be included in the Schools Major Improvements Programme as required. Work to provide additional fencing and lockable access gates is already being prioritised within the Programme.'</i> |
| 9.4 | Travel between Llangedwyn and Llanfechain is dependent on single-track roads highly vulnerable to winter weather conditions. This was recognised at the time of previous proposals to close Llangedwyn in 2011 and was a key factor in not progressing closure at that time. The current closure proposals have not adequately addressed this issue. | These comments about the roads between Llangedwyn and Llanfechain are noted. However, Llangedwyn is not currently the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school, so it is likely that very pupils would need to travel between Llangedwyn and Llanfechain. The suitability of the route would be considered when arranging any home to school transport required. |

Objection 10

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 10.1 | The proposal to close Llangedwyn CinW Primary School states under admissions ' from 1 st September 2024 pupils currently attending Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary controlled primary school will be admitted to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School' and this is a central ethos of the proposal, in fact this assumes that all parents of children currently attending Llangedwyn | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School as the school is currently federated with Llangedwyn C. in W. School and this would ensure that pupils would continue to access Church in Wales provision. However parents can apply for a place at alternative schools should they prefer. Given that Llangedwyn C. in W. School isn't currently the closest school for the majority of pupils |

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| | <p>CinW Primary school will wish to transfer their children to Llanfechain which is not true, over the past few months parents who have moved their children having been concerned by information relating to limited places at Llanfechain have in fact moved their children to other schools including one parent who moved their child to a school across the border.</p> | <p>attending, it is acknowledged that many of the pupils may choose to transfer to other schools, and that this could mean that pupils would transfer to different schools.</p> |
| 10.2 | <p>The proposal states that no measures are currently proposed to be taken to increase the number of school places available at alternative schools, with Llansantffraid already over capacity and Llanfechain at capacity this leaves no capacity for new families that move into the area or for additional children that may come to live in or around Llangedwyn thereby restricting parents choices.</p> | <p>As stated in the Statutory Notice published in respect of this proposal:</p> <p><i>‘No measures are currently proposed to be taken to increase the number of school places available at alternative schools on consequence of the proposed discontinuance of Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School.</i></p> <p><i>However, it is recognised that should all pupils currently attending Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School transfer to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School, there could be some pressure on places at the school in the short term. If needed, the Council would discuss with the school’s governing body to understand how the pupils could be accommodated.’</i></p> <p>There is no current evidence of any significant increased demand for places in Llangedwyn over the coming years. Pupil numbers at Llanfechain C. in W. School are also projected to decrease.</p> |
| 10.3 | <p>Llangedwyn school have a large percentage of children with ALN, many of whom would be considerably distressed</p> | <p>The needs of ALN pupils have been considered throughout the process, including in the impact assessments, which</p> |

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| | by being forced to travel to school on a bus, by minibus or by taxi which would have a serious detrimental effect on their education. | have been updated throughout the process. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to close the school, it would work with the school to ensure appropriate transition arrangements are made to support pupils with ALN. Parents are also able to arrange their own transport for their children. |
| 10.4 | Obviously closing the school would address the issue of low pupil numbers but so would a concerted campaign to attract new pupils to the school which could be coupled with a proactive group running an after school and holiday club for the whole area. | There is no evidence of any increased demand for places at Llangedwyn C. in W. School. |
| 10.5 | It would not increase the pupil numbers at Llanfechain as they are already at capacity. | <i>'Would increase pupil numbers at Llanfechain C. in W. School'</i> is one of the reasons for the proposal as stated on the Statutory Notice, however should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, it is acknowledged that pupils may choose to transfer to alternative schools rather than transferring to Llanfechain C. in W. School. |
| 10.6 | It may reduce the councils overall surplus capacity in primary schools but it would remove any spare capacity for the 3 (would be 2) schools in the proposal meaning that future transport cost could well be prohibitive and wipe out any proposed financial savings being projected under this proposal. The proposal is very vague in some areas meaning that projected figures cannot be relied upon and after future transport costs there may in fact be no revenue saving to the council from this proposal and there could very well be a financial cost to the council overall. | The Council is confident that there would be sufficient places in the area to accommodate all pupils, particularly given that pupil numbers at both Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School are projected to decrease. Llangedwyn C. in W. School is not currently the closest school for the majority of pupils currently attending the school, so it is possible that pupils would transfer to other schools outside the immediate Llangedwyn area. |
| 10.7 | It is true that the council would no longer need to maintain the Llangedwyn Building but they would still need to carry out the £500k backlog of maintenance required at | The Council has a duty to maintain the building condition of all its schools. The council would need to ensure that the Llanfechain building is appropriately maintained regardless of whether or not Llangedwyn C. in W. School closes. |

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| | Llanfechain which being an old building will have substantial ongoing maintenance costs into the future. | |
| 10.8 | It is not always beneficial for pupils, especially those with ALN, to attend larger schools or be part of larger groups, the experimental federation afternoons seem to prove this point with the majority of parents of children at Llangedwyn asking for their children to be excused from going to Llanfechain as their children feel isolated, picked on and sometimes segregated, this was not beneficial to the childrens well being or mental health. | <p>The Council is not required to provide a choice of schools according to size. The Welsh Government's definition of a small school is a school with 91 pupils or less. Llanfechain C. in W. School, which is the named receiving school in respect of this proposal, also meets this definition.</p> <p>The Council recognises that any school reorganisation process creates a period of uncertainty for all involved, including children. The Council is committed to supporting schools and learners, including through periods of change. An experienced member of staff from the Council will offer support to school leaders to help them manage possible changes for their learners.</p> |
| 10.9 | Pupils are not that familiar with Llanfechain school (see above) and many of them have closer connections to other schools through siblings and/or friends. | Llanfechain C. in W. School is federated with Llangedwyn C. in W. School and the Council is aware that some joint activities take place, so the expectation would be that Llangedwyn pupils have some familiarity with Llanfechain C. in W. School, its pupils and its staff. However, it is acknowledged that Llangedwyn C. in W. School is not the closest school for the majority of pupils attending, so it is possible they would have connections to other schools closer to their homes. |
| 10.10 | With Llanfechain being at capacity pupils unable to transfer may move to non-Church in Wales schools, capacity for CinW schools will disappear with the proposed closure of Llangedwyn school meaning that additional children in the future may not be able to attend a CinW school, this has been demonstrated over the past few months with parents moving their children away from Llangedwyn due to the | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which would ensure pupils currently accessing Church in Wales provision at Llangedwyn C. in W. School would be able to continue to access Church in Wales provision. However, it is acknowledged that parents may choose for their children to transfer to alternative schools, which may mean that they would no longer attend Church in Wales provision. |

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| | uncertainties have elected to send their children to non CinW schools. | |
| 10.11 | <p>Overall the regurgitated proposal to close Llangedwyn CinW Primary school seems to be a revamp of an earlier proposal without enough consideration for changes in the local area, local people and certainly without fully exploring all of the available options for alternative proposals.</p> <p>I object to the proposal to close Llangedwyn CinW Primary school as I feel that not enough research and community consultation has taken place to allow the proposal to go forward with any credibility.</p> <p>There is now a very proactive support group for Llangedwyn CinW Primary School which means that other options should be examined and evaluated before the proposal to close is moved forward.</p> | <p>The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. This included consultation, which provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to let the Council know their views on the proposal.</p> <p>A range of options were considered by the Council when developing the proposal. In addition, a number of alternative options were suggested in the consultation responses. These were considered and assessed in the consultation report.</p> |

Objection 11

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 11.1 | <p>North Powys is a rural and sparsely populated area, however more new family houses are being built in Llansantfraid where the school is full, Llanfyllin has regularly been full in the years up to now, in fact those 2 schools being full is what scuppered the plans to close Llanfechain all those years ago, the closure was agreed by cabinet, and then it was halted when it was “discovered” that there was not enough space in the 2 nearest schools to take all the pupils.</p> | <p>Information about housing developments in the area was considered as part of the Llanfyllin Catchment Review paper.</p> <p>The latest projections indicate that no significant increase in demand for places at Llangedwyn or Llanfechain is expected over the coming years.</p> |

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| 11.2 | It seems that again this process has been rushed and there has not been enough consideration given to where the children will go to school and how the children will get there. | <p>The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. Timescales have been in accordance with the requirements of the Code.</p> <p>The impact on pupils has been considered throughout. Whilst the proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, it is acknowledged that some pupils may transfer to alternative schools. Transport would be provided in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.</p> |
| 11.3 | The staff it seems have felt very much the secondary partners in the federation with Llanfechain and were not treated fairly when the announcements were made about closure. | <p>The Council notes this concern that Llangedwyn staff have felt like the secondary partners in the federation. Management of relationships across the federation is a matter for the Governing Body and the Headteacher.</p> <p>Information about the proposals for the area was shared with all schools in the area at the same time, however it is acknowledged that there were some challenges associated with the communications arrangements given that a number of schools were involved.</p> |
| 11.4 | There have been some parents who are so worried about Llanfechain being oversubscribed, that they have moved their children now, to avoid the chance of not having a place for the next academic year. | Comment noted. |
| 11.5 | The process being undertaken in the way that it has been, not consulting considerately or looking at other options, has put families and teachers under stress. | <p>The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.</p> <p>A range of options were considered by the Council when developing the proposal. In addition, a number of</p> |

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| | | <p>alternative options were suggested in the consultation responses. These were considered and assessed in the consultation report.</p> <p>The Council fully acknowledges that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty for those affected by the proposal, including families and staff.</p> |
| 11.6 | <p>The council argue that there is a falling role, which both staff and governors put down to the extended threat of closure that has been hanging over the school and all small schools in general. In responses to previous consultation staff and governors say that the process has destabilised the staff and pupils, and caused pupils to be moved to other schools already. The poor handling of the situation could be seen as a deliberate move by Powys Council to make the closure more likely.</p> | <p>It is acknowledged that there have been discussions about the future of Llangedwyn C. in W. School for a number of years. Whilst acknowledging that this could have had an impact on pupil numbers at the school, the historical pupil numbers included in the consultation document shows that Llangedwyn pupil numbers have fluctuated from 31 in 2016 to the current number of 7 pupils.</p> |
| 11.7 | <p>Wider community involvement can also bring financial benefits to the school with the buildings being used for other community activities.</p> | <p>Fundraising for individual schools is not part of the Council's role.</p> |
| 11.8 | <p>It says in the notice explaining how to object to the closure, that the children will be bussed to Llanfechain, but then says that after that specific event of the closure, school transport will be in accordance with Powys transport Policy.</p> <p>Siblings not yet old enough to be at Llangedwyn will not get the option to attend the same Primary School as their older siblings, as the nearest school to Llangedwyn would be Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant.</p> | <p>The Statutory Notice states the following in respect of Home to School Transport Arrangements:</p> <p>'Transport arrangements will be provided in accordance with the Council's Home-to-School Transport Policy. This is as follows:</p> <p><i>'Home to school transport will be provided for learners who ordinarily reside in Powys to attend their nearest suitable school or catchment school.</i></p> |

A 'catchment' school means the nearest school within a geographic area.

To be eligible for free home to school transport, the learners' nearest school or catchment school must be:

- The nearest to the learners' home address and if so,
- They are more than 2 miles from their home address for primary school (aged 4-11)'

In addition, the Council will provide transport for pupils for whom Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School is currently the closest school to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

In future, transport arrangements for any new pupils living in the area currently served by Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School would be in accordance with the Council's Home-to-School Transport Policy.'

Whilst transport to Llanfechain would be provided for those for whom Llangedwyn is currently their closest school, it is correct that in future, transport would be provided in accordance with the Home to School Transport Policy, which would mean that pupils living in Llangewdyn would be entitled to transport to '*their nearest school or catchment school*'. It is acknowledged that this could impact on any pupils currently attending the school who have younger siblings, however Llangedwyn C. in W. School is not

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| | | currently the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school. |
| 11.9 | Many of the children at Llangedwyn are there specifically because it is a small school, there are children with ALN and also social issues who thrive there in their early school experience and move on to secondary school in a caring and supported way. I believe some children have already found the shared time with Llanfechain, brought about by federating the schools, overwhelming. They would struggle even in the slightly larger Llanfechain, and are likely to require more one to one attention from teaching assistants which is likely to disrupt the current teaching regime. | Whilst recognising the support Llangedwyn C. in W. School has provided to ALN pupils over the years, Llangedwyn is a mainstream school and does not have any specialist facilities to support ALN pupils compared with other mainstream schools. |
| 11.10 | I have heard that new classrooms and/or significant building work will be needed at Llanfechain to make it suitable for more children. In this light, I would like to have detailed information about the savings that Powys believes will be made possible by this move. In my experience in education, it is not the fabric of the building that costs the money in education, it is the daily staff and transportation costs, capital verses revenue expenditure. Also Powys will not benefit from selling the building at Llangedwyn as I assume it is owned by the Church. | <p>No new classrooms and / or significant building work is currently planned at Llanfechain C. in W. School as a result of the proposal to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School.</p> <p>The Council has a duty to maintain the building condition of all its schools. The council would need to ensure that the Llanfechain building is appropriately maintained regardless of whether or not Llangedwyn C. in W. School closes.</p> <p>The Council is not expecting to realise a capital receipt from sale of the building. This is not one of the reasons for this proposal.</p> |
| 11.11 | I know Powys is having great difficulty balancing the books in education and many other areas and that savings are needed, but as previously the situation has not been properly thought through and although revenue savings may be made (although I doubt it as more teaching assistants are likely to be required in any school attended | <p>As stated in the Consultation Document:</p> <p><i>'It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £56.4k. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding</i></p> |

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| | by those from Llangedwyn) in the long run it just means more of the Powys education budget being spent on busses and feeding private bus company profits. | <i>of £91.0k and estimated additional transport costs of £34.6k.'</i> The estimated savings include estimated additional transport costs. |
| 11.12 | Long bus journeys often demotivate children and families, the population of Powys will be less well educated, which in the long run can only disadvantage Powys as a whole. | Llangedwyn is not currently the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school. Pupils already have quite lengthy journeys to get to school, which would be reduced should they attend their closest school. |
| 11.13 | Where children's education is concerned, small savings now just bring a lack of possible economic development in the county in 15-20 years, when its youth have not been given the skills to step up to the plate to start new businesses, to work in the high-tech businesses that are relocating here, or to continue family businesses. | The Council is confident that pupils would continue to be supported to develop the skills to start new business should they attend alternative schools. |
| 11.14 | Although I am not personally religious, the number of Church in Wales primary school places will be greatly reduced, which will cause some Powys residents some distress. | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which would ensure that pupils currently accessing Church in Wales provision could continue to do so. Whilst there would be a reduction in the places available, there would be sufficient places to meet the current demand, particularly given that pupil numbers at both Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School are projected to decrease. |
| 11.15 | The friends of the Llangedwyn School have become far more active recently, and have contributed to playground maintenance and school trip provision in recent months and have raised the profile of the school in the local community. | Comment noted. |
| 11.16 | I believe there is a suggestion within the school, to de-federate, moving back to the model of 2 teachers at Llangedwyn, one being part time head. In the many small | 'Dissolve the Federation and allow Llangedwyn to exist as a standalone school' was an alternative option suggested in the consultation responses received, and was listed as a possible alternative option in the consultation report. |

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| | schools I have worked in, both in Powys and Shropshire, this seems to work well. | As stated in the consultation report: <i>'The proposal to federate Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School was led by the governing bodies of the two schools, and both governing bodies agreed to establish the federation. 'The Federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales' does allow for schools to leave federations, however neither school has done this.'</i> |
| 11.17 | Small communities, like Llangedwyn, invest in their local school and its facilities, governors and Friends of the School can aid this to support their local children and families in appropriate ways. For example an after school club could be run every afternoon, that could well be a positive move and also a draw for new parents in the current climate where more and more families need to have 2 parents earning, out of school childcare is severely lacking in the wider area. | Establishing an after school at Llangedwyn C. in W. School would be a matter for the school. |

Objection 12

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 12.1 | Children are thriving at Llangedwyn and are very upset by the idea of changing schools, despite the joint activities that have been arranged with Llanfechain in recent times. | The Council recognises that any school reorganisation process creates a period of uncertainty for all involved, including children. The Council is committed to supporting schools and learners, including through periods of change, and it is also expected that school governors, staff, and parents support the children to ensure that there isn't a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. |

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| 12.2 | The school has been proactive dealing with pupils on the autistic spectrum, who have developed well in the nurturing environment provided at the school. | <p>Whilst recognising the support Llangedwyn C. in W. School has provided to ALN pupils, Llangedwyn is a mainstream school and does not have any specialist facilities to support ALN pupils compared with other mainstream schools.</p> <p>All schools are expected to cater to the needs and requirements of learners with Additional Learning Needs, while also ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and ensuring that learners are not discriminated against as per the directions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.</p> |
| 12.3 | The threat of closure and the way that it has been undertaken with staff finding out about closure through other schools in the area announcing it on social media before being informed by the council themselves is terrible. It has affected the staff personally and has especially affected my children who are sensitive to change in the stability of their school environment. | <p>The Council recognises that any school reorganisation process creates a period of uncertainty for all involved, including staff and pupils.</p> <p>Information about the proposals for the area was shared with all schools in the area at the same time, however it is acknowledged that there were some challenges associated with the communications arrangements given that a number of schools were involved.</p> |
| 12.4 | Pupils with behavioural issues really struggled at Llanfechain, as they were not equipped to deal with these issues, and I have concerns that this will happen again. I fear that if pupils have to move to Llanfechain now the progress made in Llangedwyn will be put in jeopardy and they will require more ALN support. | Whilst the proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, parents can apply for a place for their children at any school should they prefer them to attend a different school. |
| 12.5 | Llangedwyn school has always been popular in the past, especially with parents who value the small school community, and the protracted threats to close the school has caused some parents to remove their children before the closure, this has affected finances and moral at the | It is acknowledged that there have been discussions about the future of Llangedwyn C. in W. School for a number of years. Whilst acknowledging that this could have had an impact on pupil numbers at the school, the historical pupil numbers included in the consultation document shows that |

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| | school and in the local community who really value their local school. | Llangedwyn pupil numbers have fluctuated from 31 in 2016 to the current number of 7 pupils. |
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Objection 13

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 13.1 | I strongly feel the closure of Llangedwyn school would have a devastating effect on the community, village and church, as the school has strong connections with all of these. The village would become a ghost town without the school at the heart of it all. | The Council recognises the school's role within the local community, and that closure of any school has an impact on the community in which it is located. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the proposal's impact on the local community, this has been updated throughout the process to reflect comments received. |
| 13.2 | The options giving for alternative schools are not suitable for every child that attends Llangedwyn and under the impression that Llanfechain is near or full. I feel it hasn't been taken in to account that a larger school isn't always better and doesn't suit all children, their needs and their mental health and wellbeing, Llanfechain may be familiar however some don't go as it isn't suitable for them, they are unhappy going there and it is detrimental to their mental health and wellbeing. This may still be a c of w school however it would be losing the history of Llangedwyn. | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School as the school is currently federated with Llangedwyn C. in W. School and would also ensure that pupils would continue to access Church in Wales provision, however parents can apply for a place at alternative schools should they prefer. |
| 13.4 | I feel we should be given more time to build up pupil numbers and a fair chance to rejuvenate the school, I feel we haven't had any support from governors or council members to give us a fair chance to save not only our school but the community as well. | The Council notes this comment, however, there are only seven pupils currently attending Llangedwyn CiW School, and there is no evidence that there will be an increase in pupil numbers. |

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| 13.5 | The build is privately owned so wouldn't generate any extra cash for Powys and the education of the children should come before money. If we had time to increase the number this would out way the costs of the building etc. | The Council is not expecting to realise a capital receipt from sale of the building. This is not one of the reasons for this proposal. |
| 13.6 | I feel being a smaller school there is more opportunities for individual pupils to grow and have a fair chance at everything, this wouldn't be the case in a larger school. | The Council notes these comments about smaller schools. However, as stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-32, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llangedwyn C. in W. School currently has only 7 pupils, which means that it is increasingly difficult for the school to deliver education. |
| 13.7 | The extra cost of travelling to another school would not be possible as the fuel costs would be too much and we wouldn't qualify for school transport. It would also take away the availability for me to use after school clubs or breakfast clubs as the times would be much earlier start and finish so this wouldn't be an option for us either, this is something else we would lose. | As stated in the Consultation Report: <i>'The Council acknowledges that attending Llanfechain School would require additional travel for pupils for whom Llangedwyn is currently the closest school. However, Llangedwyn is not currently the closest school for the majority of the school's 7 pupils. Whilst the proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, pupils could choose to transfer to alternative schools closer to their homes, which would reduce their travel time to school.'</i> |
| 13.8 | This would have a huge impact on the village church community also as the school has my connections and events running with each other, so not only losing our school but taking these away from the community. | The Council recognises the school's role within the local community, and that closure of any school has an impact on the community in which it is located. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the proposal's impact on the local community, this has been updated throughout the process to reflect comments received. |

Objection 14

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 14.1 | I have concerns and objections for the proposed closure of Llangedwyn CW school in August 2024. My first concern is the disruption to the education of the children currently attending Llangedwyn school some of which have special educational needs. | The Council recognises that any school reorganisation process creates a period of uncertainty for all involved, including children. The Council is committed to supporting schools and learners, including through periods of change, and it is also expected that school governors, staff, and parents support the children to ensure that there isn't a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. This would include any pupils with additional learning needs. |
| 14.2 | For those of Christian faith, it important to school their children in a church school and Llangedwyn has always been exceptional for being closely involved with the local church. I don't feel that Llanfechain school will provide the Church connection as it is not a Church School. | The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which is also a Church in Wales school and would ensure that pupils currently attending Llangedwyn C. in W. School could continue to access Church in Wales provision. |
| 14.3 | Llangedwyn is the heart of the village and the whole community will be destroyed with the closure of this school. | The Council recognises the school's role within the local community, and that closure of any school has an impact on the community in which it is located. A community impact assessment has been prepared which considers the proposal's impact on the local community, this has been updated throughout the process to reflect comments received. |
| 14.4 | We do realise the pupil numbers are low however some of my other children attended when the numbers were low this is a good thing as the children get a great education and more one to one tuition and it does attract other families to the area. It would be a great shame for this beautiful Village school to close. | The Council notes these comments about smaller schools. However, as stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2022-32, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llangedwyn C. in W. School currently has only 7 |

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| | | pupils, which means that it is increasingly difficult for the school to deliver education. |
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Objection 15

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 15.1 | I make this submission against the closure of Llangedwyn C in W School to be considered within the “New code setting out the presumption against rural school closures” Kirsty Williams, Education Secretary 30/6/2017 referencing bullet point 4 “Consideration of alternatives to be a two-stage process with the proposer having to consider other alternatives that emerge during the consultation process. | The Council has followed the additional requirements associated with the ‘Presumption against closure of rural schools’ which are outlined in the School Organisation Code in respect of the proposal to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School. A further assessment of alternative options suggested during the consultation process was carried out, this is included in the consultation report. |
| 15.2 | The council have proceeded following their own closure procedure and laid out the Consultation Process to allow access for stakeholders. Whilst this sets out the process, the procedure is drawn up by the council, implemented by the council, monitored by the council but allows no independent scrutiny of the council’s initial decision. The Overview of the Consultation shows clearly the procedure is within the remit of the council but is introspective in that a consensus within the council appears to have been reached without critical reasoning or evaluation of any alternatives outside those included in the published consultation. Councillors appear to have accepted a group consensus within a predilection for school closure masked within their own consultation framework. | The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. A consultation report was prepared which outlined the comments received during the consultation period. This was considered by the Council’s Cabinet, however having considered the feedback received during the consultation and the Council’s response to the issues raised, the Cabinet decided to proceed with the process. |

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| 15.3 | <p>An informal review, i.e. parents and residents, of the reason for the low number of pupils attending Llangedwyn C. in W. School looking over the last two years would reveal a string of unique circumstances causing the drop in number on roll. The disastrous federation enterprise has brought disruption and upset to Llangedwyn pupils despite the best efforts and commitment of the teaching staff. There was a lack of leadership when the headteacher was away from Llangedwyn fulfilling her commitment to Llanfechain whilst battling with her own health, and eight children were removed from the school because of the behaviour of one pupil.</p> | <p>There are many reasons why parents decide to move their children from one school to another. Regardless of the reasons why pupil numbers at the school have decreased, there are currently only 7 pupils at Llangedwyn C. in W. School, and current projections are that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years. This is the main reason for the current proposal to close the school.</p> |
| 15.6 | <p>The effect of the perception of the children of Llangedwyn being the poor relation within the federation has not been recognised and the lone voice of the one parent governor from Llangedwyn has now been silenced by the present chair of governors removing him from the governing body.</p> | <p>The Council notes this concern that Llangedwyn children and the Llangedwyn school community have felt like the poor relation in the federation. Management of relationships across the federation is a matter for the Governing Body and the Headteacher.</p> |
| 15.7 | <p>The structure of the teaching staff is a cause for concern in that the headteacher has a non teaching role within the staff provision of the Federation. A non teaching headteacher?</p> | <p>Staffing arrangements across the Federation are the responsibility of the Governing Body.</p> |
| 15.8 | <p>Historically when Llangedwyn C. in W. School was taken out of Clwyd into Powys there were 13 pupils on roll and Powys issued a closure notice to close the school within one year. The then incumbent drew up a recovery plan which was submitted to the Welsh Office who sent their advisor to review the school at the request of the incumbent. The recovery plan was implemented and the progress monitored by the Welsh Office who then instructed Powys County Council to withdraw the closure notice. In 1997 the pupil roll had dropped to 11 due to the</p> | <p>The Council notes that pupil numbers at Llangedwyn C. in W. School have varied over the years. However there are currently only 7 pupils at the school, making Llangedwyn C. in W. School the smallest school in Powys with the highest cost per pupil. There is no evidence that there will be a significant increase in pupil numbers at the school in the future.</p> |

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| | threat of closure but then rose to 36 on roll in 1999 and further grew to 49 on roll in 2001. So is recovery to a sustainable number possible? | |
| 15.9 | Reference to alternative options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissolve the federation and let Llangedwyn stand alone. | <p>‘Dissolve the Federation and allow Llangedwyn to exist as a standalone school’ was an alternative option suggested in the consultation responses received, and was listed as a possible alternative option in the consultation report.</p> <p>As stated in the consultation report:</p> <p><i>‘The proposal to federate Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School was led by the governing bodies of the two schools, and both governing bodies agreed to establish the federation. ‘The Federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales’ does allow for schools to leave federations, however neither school has done this.’</i></p> |
| 15.10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a new governing body for Llangedwyn school who would be committed to one school. | A new governing body could only be appointed for Llangedwyn School following the dissolution of the current federation. See response to 15.9 above. |
| 15.11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave the present headteacher at Llanfechain to continue the development of that school. | The headteacher has a permanent contract as Executive Headteacher for the Federation, which includes Llangedwyn and Llanfechain schools. |
| 15.12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a dynamic deputy head with career aspirations in a Powys school who would welcome the professional development opportunity of leading a small school to recovery. A year secondment may be possible with the salary being paid from the deputy's school. | The current headteacher has a permanent contract as Executive Headteacher for the Federation, so there is no Headteacher vacancy at Llangedwyn. |
| 15.13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift the closure notice and allow an 18 month period for the school to recover. | In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, the Council’s Cabinet will consider the content of this Objection Report, and will consider whether or not to proceed with the process to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School. |

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| 15.14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw together a strategy to apply for special funding help from the Welsh Assembly to allow the council to fulfil the Welsh Assembly of its intent to fulfil the presumption against rural school closure in these unique circumstances. | <p>There is no 'special funding help' available from the Welsh Assembly to support rural schools. A 'small and rural schools grant' was available for a short time following the introduction of the 'presumption against closure of rural schools', and funding from this grant was allocated to Llangedwyn C. in W. School. However, this grant is no longer available.</p> |
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Objection 16

| Issue | Points raised | Council response |
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| 16.1 | <p>Powys County Council (PCC) stated publicly in October 2023 the timescales for the proposal to close the school. These timescales have not been adhered to and have been hastened by PCC. For instance, PCC stated the final decision would be made by the end of April 2024. We now discover that this has been moved to the end of February 2024. The process appears hurried and the closure decision pre-determined by PCC and the federated schools' leadership team as we have discovered from various FOIs received.</p> | <p>The process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. Whilst the original indicative timeline published in the consultation document was for the final decision to be made by the end of April 2024, this was only an indicative timeline, and the number of consultation responses received meant that it was possible to prepare the consultation report more quickly. The decision has not been 'pre-determined'.</p> |
| 16.2 | <p>One of the reasons for the proposed closure is the lack of pupil numbers. We have evidence which shows that parents were being persuaded to leave the school due to its closure way back in June 2023 and parents of potential new pupils dissuaded in enrolling in the school. The low pupil numbers are wholly misleading of the true picture of children who could attend this amazing school from within Llangedwyn and all of the surrounding areas.</p> | <p>There are many reasons why parents choose to move their children from one school to an alternative school. Regardless of the reasons why pupil numbers at the school have decreased, there are currently only 7 pupils at Llangedwyn C. in W. School. This is the main reason for the current proposal to close the school.</p> |

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| <p>16.3</p> | <p>PCC continue, throughout their publicity on this matter, to mention the fact that all pupils, upon closure of Llangedwyn School, would move to Llanfechain School (which is not the nearest school to Llangedwyn). This is not feasible as Llanfechain School is at 100% capacity. As an aside, Llansantffraid Primary School is currently at 110% capacity. PCC's previously stated solution to this should this situation arise is to 'talk to the governors'. This does not constitute a considered plan nor a long-term strategy. If pupils are to continue their education through the medium of Welsh and English, and they are to maintain their tutelage encased within Church in Wales values and ethea with guidance from St. Cedwyn's supportive and involved church leaders, where are they to move to and still be near to this supportive community? Should Llangedwyn School close, the 47 Church in Wales places will be irrevocably lost.</p> | <p>As stated in the Statutory Notice, the proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School. However, parents can apply for a place at any school. Given that Llangedwyn is not the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school, it is possible that many pupils would choose to transfer to different schools.</p> <p>The Council has acknowledged in the Statutory Notice that should all pupils currently attending Llangedwyn C. in W. School transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, there could be some pressure on places at Llanfechain.</p> <p>As stated in the Statutory Notice:</p> <p><i>'No measures are currently proposed to be taken to increase the number of school places available at alternative schools on consequence of the proposed discontinuance of Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School.</i></p> <p><i>However, it is recognised that should all pupils currently attending Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School transfer to Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School, there could be some pressure on places at the school in the short term. If needed, the Council would discuss with the school's governing body to understand how the pupils could be accommodated.'</i></p> <p>The proposal is for pupils to transfer to Llanfechain C. in W. School, which would ensure that pupils currently accessing</p> |
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| | | Church in Wales provision could continue to do so. Whilst there would be a reduction in the places available, there would be sufficient places to meet the current demand, particularly given that pupil numbers at both Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School are projected to decrease. |
| 16.4 | The financial data for both Llangedwyn and Llanfechain Schools, the lack of transparency of PTA financial records going back to 2019, and the absence of openness concerning Llangedwyn After School Club's monetary operations has resulted in FOLS' new Treasurer reporting these discrepancies to the Charity Commission alongside the notification of this action given to various departments within PCC. This is after weeks of investigation by the Treasurer of FOLS and his attempt to gather information from the schools' federated governorship which has resulted in a discernible lack of cooperation. FOLS, as an unregistered charity, is duty bound by charity law to report said concerns. At best, this is a potential mismanagement of Llangedwyn School's finances. At worst, it could be proven fraudulent. This should be investigated forthwith and the process to close Llangedwyn School stopped by PCC. | <p>The Council is not responsible for the PTA or the After School Club. Any issues with financial arrangements relating to the PTA or the After School Club are a matter for the Charity Commission, not the Council.</p> <p>Any investigations which are ongoing relating to the financial records of these bodies is not a reason to stop the process to close Llangedwyn C. in W. School.</p> |
| 16.5 | Llangedwyn School has educated children for almost two hundred years. Its importance is deeply felt within the community, and it is ingrained in our rural culture, ruralism being something the Welsh Government have said they wish to protect. | The Council acknowledges the role that Llangedwyn CiW School has played in the history of the village. |
| 16.6 | We would love to be given the opportunity to defederate the two schools (which PCC were clear about prior to | 'Dissolve the Federation and allow Llangedwyn to exist as a standalone school' was an alternative option suggested in |

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| | <p>federation that it would not offer them any cost savings) and allow Llangedwyn School to operate under a more accomplished leadership team supported by an incredibly involved community, its church leaders, the many business owners living in the area, and also various charity founders.</p> | <p>the consultation responses received, and was listed as a possible alternative option in the consultation report.</p> <p>As stated in the consultation report:</p> <p><i>'The proposal to federate Llangedwyn C. in W. School and Llanfechain C. in W. School was led by the governing bodies of the two schools, and both governing bodies agreed to establish the federation. 'The Federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales' does allow for schools to leave federations, however neither school has done this.'</i></p> |
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