

Pecyn Dogfennau Cyhoeddus

Cabinet

Man Cyfarfod
**Siambwr y Cyngor - Neuadd y Sir,
Llandrindod, Powys**

Dyddiad y Cyfarfod
Dydd Mawrth, 9 Tachwedd 2021

Amser y Cyfarfod
10.00 am

I gael rhagor o wybodaeth cysylltwch â
Stephen Boyd
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steve.boyd@powys.gov.uk



Neuadd Y Sir
Llandrindod
Powys
LD1 5LG

Dyddiad Cyhoeddi

Mae croeso i'r rhai sy'n cymryd rhan ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg. Os hoffech chi siarad Cymraeg yn y cyfarfod, gofynnwn i chi roi gwybod i ni erbyn hanner dydd ddau ddiwrnod cyn y cyfarfod

AGENDA

1.	YMDDIHEURIADAU
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Derbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.

2.	DATGANIADAU O DDIDDORDEB
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Derbyn unrhyw ddatganiadau o ddiddordeb gan Aelodau yn ymwneud ag eitemau i'w hystyried ar yr agenda.

3.	YSGOL YR EGLWYS YNG NGHYMRU LLANBEDR
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Ystyried adroddiad gan y Cynghorydd Sir Phyl Davies, Aelod Portffolio ar faterion Addysg ac Eiddo.
(Tudalennau 1 - 486)

4.	PENDERFYNIADAU DIRPRWYEDIG A WNAED ERS Y CYFARFOD DIWETHAF
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Nodi'r penderfyniadau dirprwyedig a gymerwyd gan Aelodau Portffolio.
(Tudalennau 487 - 488)

5.	EITEMAU WEDI'U HEITHRIO
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Mae'r Swyddog Monitro wedi penderfynu bod yr eitemau canlynol yn destun categori 3 y Rheolau Trefn Mynediad at Wybodaeth. Ei farn o ran prawf lles y cyhoedd (wedi ystyried darpariaethau Rheol 11.8, Rheolau Mynediad at Wybodaeth y Cyngor), oedd y byddai gwneud y wybodaeth hon yn gyhoeddus yn datgelu gwybodaeth ynglyn â materion ariannol neu fusnes unrhyw unigolyn penodol (gan gynnwys yr awdurdod yn cadw'r wybodaeth honno).

Roedd y ffactorau hyn yn ei farn ef yn bwysicach na diddordeb y cyhoedd wrth ddatgelu'r wybodaeth. Gofynnir i Aelodau ystyried y ffactorau hyn wrth benderfynu ar brawf lles y cyhoedd, a dylent benderfynu hyn wrth iddynt ystyried eithrio'r cyhoedd o'r rhan hon o'r cyfarfod.

6.	CYMERADWYO TALIAD I WASANAETHAU EIDDO CALON CYMRU I FODLONI GOBLYGIADAU'R CYNGOR
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Ystyried yr adroddiad cyfrinachol.

(I Ddilyn)

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

9 November 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies
Portfolio Holder for Education and Property

REPORT TITLE: Llanbedr C. in W. School

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 9th February 2021, the Council has carried out consultation on the following proposal:
- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet members of the responses received to the consultation and to determine whether or not to proceed with the statutory process to close the school.
- 1.3 The report is supported by the following appendices:
- **Appendix A** – Consultation Document
 - **Appendix B** – Consultation Report
 - **Appendix C** – Minutes of meetings with School Council, Governors and Staff
 - **Appendix D** – Updated Impact Assessments
 - **Appendix E** – Powys Schools Budget Share per Pupil 2021-22
 - **Appendix F** – Comments from the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee (To follow)

2. Background

Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys

- 2.1 On the 14th April 2020, a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was approved by the Leader via a delegated decision.
- 2.2 The Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders during two separate periods between October 2019 and March 2020. The Strategy sets out a new vision for education in Powys, 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.'

2.3 The new strategy also sets out a number of guiding principles which will underpin the transformation of education in Powys. These are as follows:

- *A world class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core*
- *Schools that are fully inclusive, with a culture of deep collaboration in order to improve learner outcomes and experience*
- *A broad choice and high quality of provision for 14 – 19 year old learners, that includes both academic and vocational provision, meeting the needs of all learners, communities and the Powys economy*
- *Welsh-medium provision that is accessible and provides a full curriculum in Welsh from Meithrin to age 19 and beyond*
- *Provision for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) that is accessible as near to home as is practicably possible, with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables every learner to meet their potential*
- *A digitally-rich schools sector that enables all learners and staff to enhance their teaching and learning experience*
- *Community-focused schools that are the central point for multi-agency services to support children, young people, families and the community*
- *Early years provision that is designed to meet the needs of all children, mindful of their particular circumstances, language requirements or any special or additional learning needs*
- *Financially and environmentally sustainable schools*
- *The highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development*

2.4 The new strategy sets out a number of Strategic Aims and Objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of the Strategic Aims of the Strategy is to *'improve learner entitlement and experience'* Within this aim, the Strategy sets out a Strategic Objective to *'rationalise primary provision'*.

2.5 On the 9th February 2021, the Council's Cabinet considered an options appraisal paper in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School, and agreed to carry out consultation on the following:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools

Background

2.6 Llanbedr C. in W. School is an English-medium Church in Wales Voluntary Aided primary school located in the village of Llanbedr in the Crickhowell catchment area in South Powys. The school primarily serves the village of Llanbedr and the surrounding area.

2.7 The challenges facing the school as outlined in the Consultation Document are:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers¹ at Llanbedr C. in W. School are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	0	4	5	6	3	12	8	4	7	49	45

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information. The school has indicated that they another 5 pupils will be starting during the 2021/22 academic year.)

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are lower than this, and the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

ii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2021-22, the school's budget share per pupil during 2021-22 was £6,010. This is higher than the Powys average. Llanbedr C. in W. School is ranked the 9th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil².

¹ Teachers Centre September 2021

² Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

Appendix E provides a summary of the Budget Share per pupil of all Powys schools 2021-22.

iii) **Combined age classes**

- The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in three classes:
 - Nursery/Reception/Year 1 - 15 pupils
 - Year 2/3 - 15 pupils
 - Year 4/5/6 - 19 pupils

Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

iv) **Leadership**

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

2.8 **Closest schools**

The nearest school for pupils currently³ attending Llanbedr C. in W. School is as follows:

- Llanbedr C. in W. School – 38.5%
- Crickhowell C.P. School – 28.8%
- Llangattock C.in W. School – 9.6%
- Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5%
- Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9%
- Deri View Primary School (Out of County) – 9.6%

If there was no school in Llanbedr, the nearest alternative schools for pupils would be as follows

- Crickhowell C.P. School – 61.5%
- Llangattock C. in W. School – 9.6%
- Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9%
- Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5%
- Deri View Primary School (Out of County) – 13.5%
- Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School (Out of County) – 1.9%

The Consultation Period

³ PLASC 2021

- 2.9 Consultation on the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School commenced on the 21st April 2021 and ended on the 23rd June 2021.
- 2.10 The consultation document was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The document was also distributed to stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code (2018). The consultation document that was issued is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.11 Consultees were asked to respond to the consultation by either completing the online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the Transforming Education Team, or by writing to the Transforming Education Team.
- 2.12 During the consultation period, virtual meetings were also held with the following:
- Staff of Llanbedr C. in W. School
 - Governors of Llanbedr C. in W. School
 - School Council of Llanbedr C. in W. School

The minutes of these meetings are attached as Appendix C, and the issues raised in the meetings are included in the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

Consultation Responses

- 2.13 113 respondents completed the consultation response form which was included in the consultation document. This included paper copies as well as responses submitted using the online response form.

In addition, 62 written responses were received from respondents including Estyn, by e-mail or post.

The written responses also included an online and paper petition to 'Save Our School Llanbedr CIW is under threat of closure and we need your help!', which received 2,119 signatures.

- 2.14 As well as responses from parents, pupils, staff and governors at Llanbedr C. in W. School and members of the local community, responses were received from the following organisations:
- Governing Body of Llanbedr C. in W. School
 - Vale of Grwyney Community Council
 - Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
 - Joint submission from Fay Jones MP and James Evans MS
 - Crickhowell Town Council
 - Governing Body of Llangattock C. in W. School
 - Powys Schools Forum

- 2.15 Estyn's response to the consultation is provided on page 43 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).
- 2.16 The consultation response form asked respondents to answer a number of questions. The findings are provided in full, starting at page 47 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

Consultation Findings

- 2.14 As part of the consultation, a consultation response form was issued, which was completed by 113 respondents. 85.0% of respondents indicated that they were associated with Llanbedr C. in W. School, 9.7% indicated that they were associated with another school and 5.3% of respondents indicated that they were not associated with any school.
- 2.17 The issues raised in the written responses to the consultation and those raised in the consultation meetings, are listed in the Consultation Report (Appendix B) from page 34 to page 43, along with the Council's response to these issues.
- 2.18 The issues raised relate to the following headings:
1. Comments about Llanbedr C. in W. School
 2. Impact on pupils
 3. Impact on parents / families
 4. Impact on early years provision
 5. Impact on protected characteristic groups
 6. Comments about Church in Wales provision
 7. Comments about housing developments in the area
 8. Comments about small / rural schools
 9. Travel implications
 10. Comments about the schools pupils might transfer to
 11. Impact on the community
 12. Issues relating to finance
 13. Comments about Council strategies
 14. Comments about Welsh Government initiatives
 15. Comments about the process
 16. Comments about the Consultation Documentation
 17. Criticism of Powys County Council
 18. Alternative Options
 19. Comments about the Impact on Welsh
 20. Comments in support of the Proposal

3 Advice

- 3.1 Based on the findings of the consultation, and further assessment of the options in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code in terms of the Presumption Against Closure of

Rural Schools, the advice of officers is that the Council should proceed with the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School by publishing a Statutory Notice.

3.2 The reasons for this are outlined below:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all the critical success factors

3.3 It is anticipated that the Statutory Notice would be published in November 2021, and that a further report, summarising any objections received, will be considered by the Council's Cabinet early in 2022.

3.4 The target date to implement the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School is 31st August 2022.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 The amount of funding provided to schools is driven by the funding formula. Any change to the formula funding provided will impact on the Council's revenue budget. Based on the current formula, it is estimated that implementation of the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around **£101,100**. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on schools' delegated funding of over £153,500 plus estimated savings on catering costs of around £9,000, reduced by estimated additional transport costs of £43,700 and a potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700.

4.2 The school had a cumulative surplus balance of £22,263 as at the 31st March 2021. The budget approved by the Governing Body for the current year shows this decreasing to £13,861 by 31st March 2022.

4.3 The Scheme for Financing Schools also states the following in section 3.7.2:

'In order to ensure effective stewardship of the resources available to schools, the Authority may impose additional restrictions on a school scheduled to close, including but not limited to:

- Restriction of expenditure to agreed plans

- Removal of powers of virement'

The Council will consider the use of these powers of intervention where appropriate.

4.4 Implementation of the proposal would require involvement from a number of service areas, including staff from the Schools Service, Finance, HR and ICT. These service areas will be kept informed of the development of the proposal throughout the statutory process.

4.5 Comments received from the Council's Schools Budget Forum state:

'The School Forum wishes to comment on the financial implications of these proposals for the overall schools' delegated budget. At our last meeting we agreed on the importance of making sure that any savings accruing from transformation proposals are retained within the overall schools' delegated budget. This is fundamental to the overall transformation programme being taken forward by the Council. One of the main tenets of the overall programme is to reduce the overall number of schools so that the existing level of funding could be shared more equitably and resolve the existing problem of some schools having insufficient resources.

There is a common sentence in each of the reports which says "Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle". This falls a long way short of guaranteeing that the savings will be retained within the overall schools' delegated budget. Essentially this means that it will be up to the Council each year to decide on whether the funding should be retained for schools or not. This approach is very worrying as it could lead to the overall schools' delegated budget being reduced as a result of the Council deciding that savings should be reinvested elsewhere. That runs very much against the overall plan to share the existing resources amongst a smaller number of schools and could result in the same problem we have now – not enough funding to run all the schools.

Against this background can you please, when reporting back to the Cabinet on the results of the consultations for each of these schools, report the concerns of the Schools' Forum as set out above and change the approach to how savings are to be treated, i.e., that they are ring fenced for use within the schools' delegated budget.'

4.6 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer): "I note the resource implications set out above and the comments submitted by the Schools Budget Forum. Education and the Transforming Education Strategy are both amongst the highest priorities for the Council and there has been significant work over the last few years to agree an appropriate level of funding in the delegated schools' budget. I acknowledge the Schools

Budget Forum's desire to have a guarantee on the savings being reinvested into the schools' delegated budget. However, given that the Council's funding is only confirmed on an annual basis, it is not appropriate to ring-fence in this way. The funding allocated to all services has to be considered collectively and the Council will prioritise its resources in order to deliver its objectives. This approach has seen investment in Education over recent years."

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal: the recommendations can be accepted from a legal point of view.
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: " I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

6. Comment from local member(s)

- 6.1 Cllr John Morris:

Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School is a vibrant, high achieving school that successfully serves its pupils and the local community and lies at the heart of this rural area.

Members you are here today to decide if there is adequate reason for the closure of this school. The over 400 pages of this report do not in my mind or the school and communities mind prove the case for closure in fact it is a poor report with many questionable and un-evidenced statements and conclusions. This is highlighted in the many responses and the scrutiny committee's report.

The cabinet often highlights that we are the most rural county in Powys so it stands to reason that we would have a higher proportion of smaller rural school than other areas of Wales. The Welsh Government clearly understands this in its policy of a presumption AGAINST the closure of small rural schools.

The poor Estyn report on our education service does not suggest that the problem lies with the number or size of small schools but highlighted the poor management of the schools service and particularly the failure to address the secondary sector.

As with other reports coming forward the arguments being put forward falls under two heading. Firstly the cost per pupil and secondly the ability of the school to give pupils a first class educational experience and deliver the new curriculum. The report on Page326 says that the council has no concerns about the education standards at the school. The school is already delivering parts of the new curriculum successfully and there is no evidence presented in the report as to why

the council consider a small school cannot successfully deliver the new curriculum. Equally your officers do not evidence how big they think a school should be in order to deliver the new curriculum. The school already has links with other schools in the area to share good practise and community involvement.

On the cost per pupil it would be expected that a small rural school would be marginally more costly and the attempt to argue this as a case for closure, as the report does, totally ignores the reality of the rural schools policy. It should be noted that recently developed new schools under the transformation policy are showing a higher cost per pupil than Llanbedr.

The school is virtually full with a low number of spare places at present, the nearest Church in Wales School (3miles away) is also virtually full and could not accommodate the numbers into the year groups required meaning that pupils would have to be split between a number of the receiving schools including lower achieving schools in Monmouthshire. Crickhowell Primary has a higher surplus capacity than Llanbedr but it also cannot accommodate pupils into some of the year groups as they are full. If pupils wish to remain in Powys the other two receiving schools are many miles away with the next nearest church in Wales School as stated in the report being 16 miles away.

A vital key element is missing here. The schools transformation policy around the Crickhowell Cluster has not yet been developed and will not be looked at until at least mid 2022. Neither has the Welsh medium provision under the WESP consultation been considered. There is a piecemeal approach here that does not make any sense and officers have failed to link their desire to close this school with any forward plan for the area. What the cabinet is being asked to do is to close this school without knowing the future demands and make up of education on the area that a review would establish.

The decision on this proposal rests firmly with the cabinet members and the future of this area's community and education provision is in your hands. Within this report there are a number of promises that the cabinet will visit the school PRIOR to making a decision. If you go ahead without this visit you will have broken promises made to the pupils, staff, governors and the community.

The Cabinet is here to serve all the residents of Powys, as I know you are aware, you will be held accountable for your actions and any substantial financial costs that will follow a decision to close from the resulting legal and ministerial challenges and proceedings.

Today you can either do what is easy or what is right and the right thing to do is to reject the proposal to move to closure as the case is unproven. The decision should at least be delayed until we understand

more fully the educational and transformational requirements within the Crickhowell Cluster.

Cllr John Morris
County Councillor for Crickhowell and the Vale of Grwyney

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 7.1 An initial impact assessment was considered by Cabinet on the 9th February 2021.
- 7.2 In addition, a range of draft impact assessments were produced as part of the consultation documentation. These included an Integrated Impact Assessment, an Equalities Impact Assessment, and a Community Impact Assessment.
- 7.3 These draft impact assessments have been updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation period, and are attached in Appendix D.

8. Recommendation

- To receive the Consultation Report in respect of closing Llanbedr C. in W. School.
- To approve the publication of a statutory notice to close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

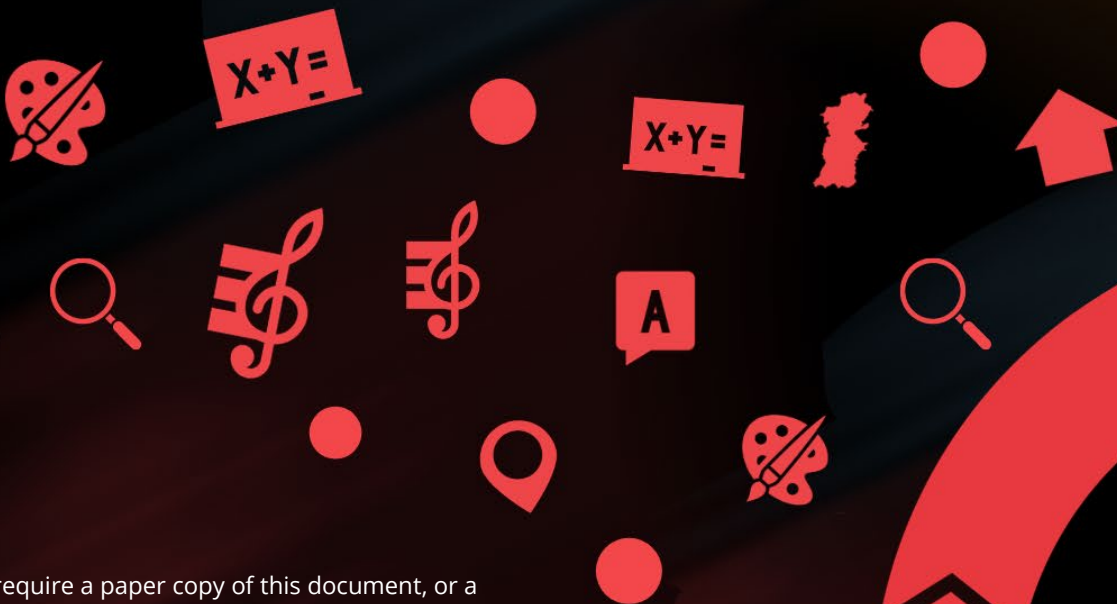
Contact Officer:	Marianne Evans
Tel:	01597 826155
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Head of Service:	Emma Palmer – Head of Transformation & Communications Lynette Lovell – Interim Chief Education Officer
Corporate Director:	Dr Caroline Turner

CABINET REPORT TEMPLATE VERSION X

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol



**Proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W.
School**
Consultation Document



If you require a paper copy of this document, or a copy of the document in a different format, please contact the Transforming Education Team on 01597 826618, or e-mail school.organisation@powys.gov.uk.

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

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

OVERVIEW

1. The Proposal

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

2. How to respond to the consultation

You can respond to this consultation by completing the online questionnaire which is available on our website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/10568/Llanbedr-Church-in-Wales-School>

A paper copy of the questionnaire is also available at the back of this document. Alternatively, you can respond in writing using the contact details below.

All responses must be received by the **23rd June 2021**.

3. Contact details

All responses should be sent to the following address:

Transforming Education Team
Powys County Council
County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.consultation@powys.gov.uk

Phone: 01597 826618

4. What will happen next

Once the consultation period has ended, a consultation report will be produced which will outline the feedback received. The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and will consider whether or not they wish to proceed with the proposals outlined in the consultation document. This is expected to happen in the spring/summer of 2021.

If the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals, a statutory notice would be published, and there would be a period of 28 days for people to submit objections. The Cabinet would then need to consider another report summarising any objections received and decide whether or not to proceed with implementation.

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

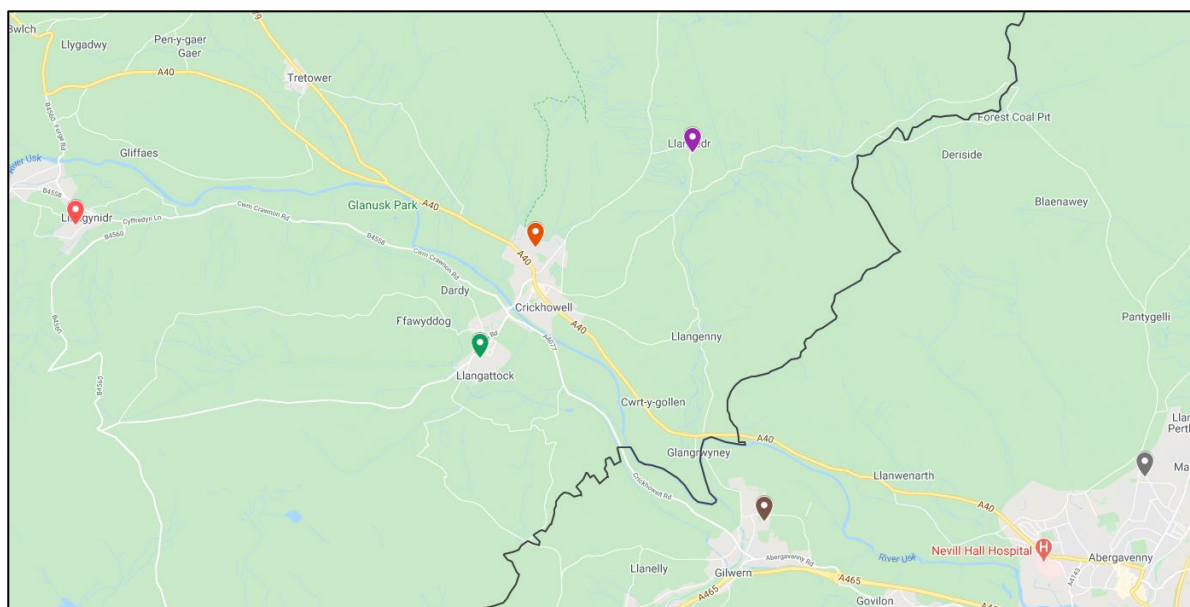
Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

1. BACKGROUND

Llanbedr C. in W. School is an English-medium Church in Wales Voluntary Aided primary school located in the village of Llanbedr in the Crickhowell catchment area in South Powys. The school primarily serves the village of Llanbedr and the surrounding area.

The following map shows the location of schools in the area:



Key: Purple – Llanbedr C. in W. School, Orange – Crickhowell C.P. School, Green – Llangattock C. in W. School, Red – Llangynidr C.P. School, Brown – Gilwern Primary School, Grey – Deri View Primary School

The following is a summary of key data relating to the school:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number	Rural School ¹
Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, Llanbedr,	Voluntary Aided Church in Wales	English-medium	5	Yes

¹ 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>)

Crickhowell, NP8 1SR	School building owned by the Diocese			
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Current pupil numbers² at the school are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

In April 2020, the Council approved a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of these aims is to ‘improve learner entitlement and experience’ and includes an objective to ‘rationalise primary provision’.

The Council has carried out an options appraisal exercise to identify a preferred option for Llanbedr C. in W. School.

The following steps have been undertaken:

- Options appraisal exercise
- Recommendation considered and agreed by the Transforming Education Programme Board

On the 9th February 2021, the Council’s Cabinet considered a report in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School, and agreed to commence consultation on the following:

‘To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools’.

² Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

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.

Whilst there has been some school reorganisation activity in Powys over recent years, the county's schools' infrastructure largely remains similar to that which was in place 20 years ago.

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:

i) High proportion of small schools

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 40% of the primary provision in the county. 21 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 4% by 2025.

iii) High number of surplus places

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there was 18% 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 school's 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 £3,127 to £7,877 in the primary sector.

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

Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In the summer of 2019, Powys Education Services were inspected by Estyn. The report published by Estyn following the inspection outlined significant concerns regarding the Council's progress on school reorganisation, and includes a recommendation to 'Ensure that the organisation of provision for non-maintained, post-16, Welsh-medium education and secondary education meets the needs of children and young people of Powys.'

Following the publication of the inspection report, 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.

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.

In order to achieve the vision and guiding principles, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of these aims is to 'improve learner entitlement and experience' and this aim includes an objective to 'rationalise primary provision'.

The current proposal in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School is in line with these priorities.

4. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANBEDR

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School:

i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers³ at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are as follows:

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. Primary School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

The Welsh Government defines a ‘small school’ as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this, and the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

ii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council’s Section 52 Budget Statement for 2020-21, the school’s budget share per pupil during 2020-21 was £5,948. This is higher than the Powys average of £4,264. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is ranked the 10th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil.⁴

iii) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with Key Stage 2 in one class and Foundation Phase in another class. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

iv) Leadership

Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

⁴ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

5. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school
2	Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School This is not a viable option as it is not possible to federate a C. in W. school with a C.P. school, therefore this option is DISCOUNTED
3	Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School
4	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites
5	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites
6	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School
7	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School
8	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site
9	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site
10	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site
11	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site
12	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

SWOT analyses have been carried out for each of these options. In addition, the options have been assessed against a number of Critical Success Factors, and the likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements was also considered. These can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C of this document.

6. PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the SWOT analyses, the assessment against the Critical Success Factors and the consideration of the likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements, the preferred option is as follows:

Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Would reduce the Council's surplus places in primary schools
- Would lead to rationalisation of the primary school estate
- Financial saving to the Council
- Meets all the Critical Success Factors

This is the basis for the current proposal on which the Council is consulting.

The proposal is further explored in the following section. The reasons why the other options considered have not been taken forward are summarised in Appendix D of this document.

PART B – THE PROPOSAL

7. OVERVIEW

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

8. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

The Council is proposing to close Llanbedr C. in W. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Would reduce the Council's surplus places in primary schools
- Would lead to rationalisation of the primary school estate
- Financial saving to the Council
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

9. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The advantages and disadvantages of the current proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School are summarised below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools- Revenue saving to the Council- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school- Additional travel costs- Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to alternative provision- Loss of provision from Llanbedr, including nursery provision- Impact on the current staff of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School- Impact on the Llanbedr community- Loss of C. in W. provision from Llanbedr

- Alternative Church in Wales provision is available in the catchment at Llangattock C. in W. School	
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10. RISKS

As with all school reorganisation proposals, there are some risks associated with the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School.

These are outlined below, along with suggested mitigating actions:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Actions
Period of uncertainty for Llanbedr C. in W. School if a statutory process is carried out and implemented which might have a negative effect on standards at the school	Medium	Medium	The Council to provide advice and support to the school and governing body to ensure that standards and performance do not deteriorate during the transition period
Uncertainty for staff whilst the process is ongoing	Medium	Medium	Engagement with staff to take place throughout the process and staff to be kept informed of developments

11. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALE

Should Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals, potential implementation timescales are as follows:

Formal Consultation	21 st April 2021 to 23 rd June 2021
Consultation Report to be published, and considered by Cabinet	September 2021

If Cabinet decide to proceed:

Publish Statutory Notice (28 days objection period)	October 2021
Objection Report to be published and considered by Cabinet	December 2021

If Cabinet approves implementation:

School closes	31 st August 2022
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PART C – LIKELY IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

12. IMPACT ON PUPILS

i) Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this would have an impact on pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, as they would need to transfer to an alternative school. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council would work closely with the current school and the alternative schools to ensure a smooth transition.

As Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative provision, additional transport would be required for pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. School is currently the closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on pupils' ability to access after-school activities, and that there could be increased travelling times to school for some pupils.

ii) Pupils attending other schools in the Crickhowell catchment

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils currently attending the school would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. This would mean that pupils would transfer to other schools in the Crickhowell catchment.

As Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative provision, the proposal could impact on pupils at the nearest alternative schools as the school would receive additional pupils. However, the total number of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School is relatively small, therefore it is not anticipated that this would have a significant impact on pupils attending other schools in the Crickhowell catchment. The numbers admitted to each school would be in line with the admissions number for each school.

iii) Pupils attending other schools not in the Crickhowell catchment

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils currently attending the school would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. Some of the pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School live in Monmouthshire, therefore it is possible that they would transfer to alternative schools in Monmouthshire.

As Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative provision, the proposal could impact on pupils at nearby

schools located in Monmouthshire as the schools could receive additional pupils. However, the total number of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W School is relatively small, therefore it is not anticipated that this would have a significant impact on pupils attending nearby schools in Monmouthshire. Pupils would need to apply to Monmouthshire for a place at schools in Monmouthshire, and pupils would be admitted in line with the admissions number for each school.

13. IMPACT ON STAFF

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close. A staff redundancy process would be necessary for staff currently employed at Llanbedr C. in W. School. This would be conducted in line with the relevant HR policies for teaching and support staff. All cleaning and catering staff that are currently employed centrally by the Council would be supported by the relevant HR policies for Council employees.

14. IMPACT ON NURSERY / EARLY YEARS PROVISION

In September 2017, the Council changed the age of admission to primary schools in Powys from “at the start of the term in which they attain their fourth birthday” to “at the start of the school year following his/her fourth birthday”. However, Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Voluntary Aided School which is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and has continued to admit nursery aged pupils to the school.

Full nursery provision is available at Llanbedr C. in W. School. Information about this provision is provided below:

Llanbedr C. in W. School

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Voluntary Aided Church in Wales school and as such is responsible for its own admission arrangements and has continued to admit nursery aged pupils to the school since the Council changed the age of admission to primary schools in Powys in September 2017. Standards of nursery education and sufficiency of accommodation are good. Good use is made of the outdoor learning area and supports pupils’ learning effectively.

Implementation of the current proposal would result in the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School, and would therefore mean that the provision for nursery aged pupils which is currently available at Llanbedr C. in W. School would no longer be available in Llanbedr. Similarly to other families across Powys, families currently accessing nursery provision at Llanbedr C. in W. School would be able to access funded early years provision, which is available at the following providers in the Llanbedr area⁵:

⁵ All information correct as of Summer Term 2021/22

Allsorts Nursery

Allsorts Nursery is a non-maintained community run setting which operates from the site of Crickhowell C.P. School. They also provide the Childcare Offer for Wales. Standards of nursery education and sufficiency of accommodation at this provider are good. The setting operates from an annex within the school and has access to an indoor and outdoor area.

There are 30 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which are currently sufficient to meet the need for early years education in the area.

Llangattock Little Sparks

Llangattock Little Sparks is a non-maintained school run setting, which operates from the site of Llangattock C. in W. School. They also provide the Childcare Offer for Wales. Standards of nursery education and sufficiency of accommodation at this provider are good. The setting has good facilities with direct access to a good sized outdoor area.

There are 16 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which currently meet the need for early years education in the area.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School, early years education provision would be available at the alternative providers listed above. Whilst there is currently some pressure on the availability of early years education places at Allsorts Community Playgroup in Crickhowell, the funded places could be increased to accommodate any additional demand, if needed.

There are early years education places available at Llangattock Little Sparks, which would also provide access to early years provision within a Church in Wales school.

It is acknowledged that the ten hours early years education available at these alternative providers is not the same full nursery provision available at Llanbedr C. in W. School, however the alternative provision which is available is in line with the provision available to other parents across Powys. It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would mean that parents currently accessing nursery provision at Llanbedr C. in W. School would need to travel further to access alternative provision.

15. IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Implementation of the proposal would result in the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School and the Governing Body of Llanbedr C. in W. School would be dissolved.

16. IMPACT ON QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

i) Standards, wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall.

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. Based on PLASC 2020 information, there are no Looked after Children or pupils for whom English is an Additional Language at Llanbedr C. in W. School. There are a number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals and a number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs, however the number of pupils belonging to these groups are small. It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to larger schools, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Llanbedr C. in W. School to alternative schools. It is possible that pupils could choose to transfer to different schools, which could have a further impact on their wellbeing. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period, to minimise any negative impact on them.

For some pupils, implementation of the preferred option could result in additional travel, which could have an impact on pupil well-being. However, alternative primary provision would be available at other schools located

within a few miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. It is not considered that the additional travel time required to alternative provision would be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to larger schools with larger cohorts of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities.

ii) Teaching and learning experiences

Quality of teaching

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council has no concerns about the quality of teaching at any of the schools located in Powys, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils within single year groups or dual year group class.

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school, which impacts on some aspects of the curriculum. Alternative Church in Wales provision is

available at Llangattock C. in W. School, ensuring that denominational provision would continue to be available to those pupils who wished to access it.

The provision of skills

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at the three schools located in Powys, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

iii) Care support and guidance

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

iv) Leadership and management

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

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to

alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

There are permanent leadership arrangements in place at Llanbedr C. in W. School, Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Llangynidr C.P. School, therefore the Council's view is that leadership and management at the alternative schools would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Llanbedr.

The alternative schools to which pupils might transfer are all larger than Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore the headteachers of these schools would have more time available to focus on leadership and management.

Professional learning

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities. Staff currently employed at Llanbedr C. in W. School would be subject to a management of change process.

Use of resources

Llanbedr C. in W. School is projecting to be in a cumulative surplus budget position over the coming years. Whilst there are no concerns about the use of resources within the school, there are concerns about the use of resources overall within the Powys schools infrastructure. As indicated on page 5 above, one of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the high proportion of small schools in the county. Llanbedr C. in W. School is among the smallest schools in the county, and the budget share per pupil at the school is higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys, and would enable the Council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

Should the preferred option be implemented pupils would transfer to larger schools, ensuring more effective use of the Council's resources.

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

Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any vulnerable pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, including any pupils with SEN.

Based on January 2020 PLASC information, 6.5% of pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School were on School Action, 2.2% of pupils were on School Action Plus, and there were 2.2% statemented pupils.

Whilst the preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to alternative schools, there is no reason to believe that the schools to which they might transfer would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Llanbedr C. in W. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with SEN, and their families.

vi) Impact on the schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in the foundation stage and each key stage, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to alternative schools, therefore Llanbedr C. in W. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

Should Llanbedr school close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. This would lead to an increase in pupil numbers at the schools to which the pupils wish to transfer. However current pupil numbers at Llanbedr School are small, and therefore the number of pupils likely to transfer to each year group is low, therefore the impact on alternative schools is not likely to have a significant impact on their ability to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and in each key stage of education.

In some schools, it is possible that an increase in pupil numbers would improve their ability to deliver the curriculum, however depending on the class structure and current breakdown of pupils, it's likely that some schools would need to make adjustments to their class structure in the short term to accommodate any additional pupils.

vii) Impact on other schools

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C. P. School, however some pupils may wish to transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School as the nearest alternative Church in Wales school. Some pupils may also live closer to Llangynidr C.P. School. A number of pupils from outside Powys also attend Llanbedr C. in W. School, should the proposal be implemented, these pupils could either transfer to alternative provision in Powys, or could attend provision nearer their homes.

Whilst it is possible that this could have some impact on the schools pupils may wish to transfer to, particularly in the short term when they receive additional pupils, the total number of pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School is relatively small, therefore it is not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on the quality and standards in education (to include standards; wellbeing and attitudes to learning; teaching and learning experiences; care support and guidance and leadership and management) at each of the schools pupils may transfer to. In some cases, it is possible that implementation of the proposal would have a positive impact on quality and standards in education at the alternative schools, as it would lead to an increase in pupil numbers and the opportunity to provide enhanced opportunities to pupils.

17. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON AVAILABILITY OF PLACES AND ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The following table shows the number of spaces available and the building condition of Powys schools providing English-medium education located within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School:

School	Capacity ⁶	Current pupil numbers ⁷	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Crickhowell C.P. School	230	184	46	20.0%	C	B/C
Llangattock C. in W. School	121	101	20	16.5%	B	A/B
Llangyndir C.P. School	147	102	45	30.6%	B	B/C

This suggests that there are sufficient places at Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School. There are also places available at Llangyndir C.P. School.

⁶ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

⁷ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

In addition, there are a number of schools within the county of Monmouthshire which are within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. The following table provides information about the number of places available in these schools:

School	Capacity ⁸	Current pupil numbers ⁹	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Deri View Primary School	330	276	54	17.4%	C	N/A
Gilwern Primary School	210	215	-5	-2.4%	C	N/A
Cantref Primary School	210	209	-30	-14.2%	C	N/A
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	77	68	9	11.7%	B	N/A
St Mary's RC Primary School	210	153	57	27.1%	C	N/A

This suggests that there are limited places available at the nearby schools located in Monmouthshire.

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

As indicated in the table in section (i) above, there is sufficient English-medium capacity within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School to accommodate the school's current and projected pupil numbers.

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school. Alternative C. in W. provision is available at Llangattock C. in W. School, which would enable pupils to access a school of the same religious character, should they wish to continue to attend a Church in Wales school.

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

⁸ Information received from Monmouthshire County Council March 2021

⁹ Information received from Monmouthshire County Council March 2021

As indicated in the table in section (i) above, there are alternative primary places available at other schools within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School. Should Llanbedr C. in W. School close, it is not considered that the length and nature of journeys for pupils to alternative provision would be excessive. This includes journeys for SEN pupils. One-way journeys to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes.

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

The latest pupil projection figures for the area suggests that total pupil numbers at Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are not expected to increase over the coming years.

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

Implementation of the proposal would mean that pupil would attend their nearest alternative school.

The latest Welsh Government School Premises Return 2020, indicates that these schools are either compliant, or partially compliant with the Equality Act 2010 with all of the schools having statutory Accessibility Plans in place.

18. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

Implementation of the preferred option would lead to an overall reduction in surplus places in the area.

ii) Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21st Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Llanbedr C. in W. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Llanbedr C. in W. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

iii) 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 transport costs which are currently estimated to be an additional £43,700 per annum as detailed in section (iv) below. 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.

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

It is estimated there would be additional transport costs of £43,700 per annum, this is based on pupil's current location and assuming the pupils will go to the next nearest school.

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

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 17 (i) above, there are sufficient places at schools located within 10 miles of Llanbedr C. in W. School to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

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

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.

vii) Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not currently forecasting a cumulative deficit budget.

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

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

ix) 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?

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not owned by the Council, therefore the Council would not receive any capital receipts following any sale of the site.

19. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

i) Impact 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 Llanbedr C. in W. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC figures from January 2020, 6.5% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School were eligible for free school meals, therefore it is likely that implementation of the proposal would impact on some pupils from economically deprived backgrounds, however the number of pupils is likely to be small.

As indicated in section 16 above, the Council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on educational attainment, including for any children from economically deprived backgrounds.

ii) Land and Buildings

Comparison of the quality of accommodation at the school from which pupils would be transferred

Information about the quality of accommodation at Llanbedr C. in W. School and other schools to which pupils may transfer is provided in Appendix A.

Information on any building works necessary to ensure that transferred children can be accommodated

No building works are necessary as there is sufficient capacity at nearby schools to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

Details of any potential transfer or disposal of land or buildings that may need to occur as a result of the proposals

Llanbedr C. in W. School is a Church in Wales school and the building is owned by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to close the school, the buildings / land currently used by the school would be transferred back to the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon who would need to determine their future use.

Is the school / schools involved 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?

Llanbedr C. in W. School is not subject to any trust which may be affected in relation to the use or disposal of land.

iii) Walking routes to school

Should the proposal be implemented, walking routes which are currently established for Llanbedr C. in W. School would no longer be required.

For those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. School is currently the closest school, additional travel would be required to access alternative provision. For these pupils, it is unlikely that walking or cycling to the alternative school would be possible. However, many of the pupils that currently attend Llanbedr C. in W. School live closer to other schools. Should they transfer to their closest school, it is possible that they would be able to walk or cycle to school.

iv) School Admissions

Should the proposal be implemented, admissions to nearest alternative schools in Powys would continue to be administered by the Council in accordance with the Council's Admissions Policy, which is available on-line at: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1158/Applying-for-a-School-Place>.

For pupils wishing to transfer to schools in Monmouthshire, this would be administered by Monmouthshire County Council in accordance with their Admissions Policy, which is available at: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place/>

v) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The proposal is to close an English-medium school. The proposal is not linked to the targets in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The proposal would not expand or reduce the availability of Welsh language provision.

20. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES

i) **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 Llanbedr C. in W. School, these are outlined in Appendix C of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School are low, and are not projected to increase above 40 over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

ii) **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**

Federation of Llanbedr C. in W. School with Llangattock C. in W. School is one of the options considered in Appendix C of this document. An assessment of this option has been carried out, which includes a summary of the weaknesses / threats associated with this option.

Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. School are very low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Becoming part of a federation with another school would not address this issue.

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

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Llanbedr C. in W. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

iv) **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 there would no longer be provision in Llanbedr. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Llanbedr community, including the loss of primary

provision from the village of Llanbedr, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

An initial community impact assessment has been carried out, with input from the school to identify the potential impact on the community. This will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received, and will be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

v) 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 eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support will depend on the needs of the parents / pupils, however this could include effective transition arrangements with the receiving school to ensure pupils transition is positive.

21. EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Draft impact assessments have been carried out in respect of the proposal. These will be updated following the consultation period to reflect any additional issues raised. The assessments are available on the Council's website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/10568/Llanbedr-Church-in-Wales-School>

A summary of the assessments are provided below:

i) Equalities impact assessment

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close, and pupils transfer to their nearest alternative school.

This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, including any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend that school, as some additional travel would be required in order to attend their nearest alternative school.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposals would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the school, there is no reason to believe that the nearest alternative schools would be unable to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils belonging to Ethnic Groups other than White British, pupils eligible for Free School Meals and Looked After Children.

ii) Impact on the community

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Llanbedr. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

PART D – CONSULTATION DETAILS

Who will we consult with?

The Council will consult with a range of stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code, which include the following:

- Parents, carers and guardians at Llanbedr C. in W. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Governors at Llanbedr C. in W. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Staff at Llanbedr C. in W. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Welsh Minister for Education
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Local Powys Councillors
- Town and Community Councils in the local area
- The prospective candidates for Member of the Senedd for Brecon and Radnorshire and prospective candidates for Members of the Senedd for the Mid & West Wales region
- The MP for Brecon and Radnorshire
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- ERW
- The prospective candidates for Police & Crime Commissioner for Dyfed Powys
- Nursery providers in the local area
- Mudiad Meithrin
- The Powys Children and Young People's Partnership

Consultation with pupils will take place in accordance with the Welsh children and young people's national participation standards¹⁰.

The consultation period

The consultation period will commence on the 21st April 2021 and will end on the 23rd June 2021.

The statutory process

Consultation on this proposal will follow the guidelines set out by the Welsh Government in the revised School Organisation Code which became operational on the 1st November 2018. The process is summarised below:

¹⁰ <https://gov.wales/children-and-young-peoples-national-participation-standards>

i) Consultation

Consultation will start on the 21st April 2021 and end on the 23rd June 2021. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a consultation report will be produced and shared with stakeholders.

It is important to note that responses made to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal, and that only objections can be registered following publication of a statutory notice.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal, or to not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

It is anticipated that the Consultation Report will be considered by the Cabinet in the autumn of 2021.

ii) Statutory notice

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices would be published after the Cabinet meeting. There would then be a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there were objections, the Council would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the Council's response to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority's determination. Only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered as objections and included in this report. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period would not be counted as objections. Should stakeholders wish their consultation responses to be considered as objections, they would need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period.

A further report would be presented to the Council's Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

It is anticipated that a final decision would be made by December 2021.

iii) Implementation

If the Council's Cabinet were to approve the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date.

How to respond to the consultation

A consultation response form is attached to this document. An online version is also available on the Council's website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/10568/Llanbedr-Church-in-Wales-School>

Alternatively, you can respond in writing.

Completed forms and other written responses should be sent to the following address:

Transforming Education Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.consultation@powys.gov.uk

All correspondence should be received by the **23rd June 2021**.

If you have any further questions about this proposal, you can contact the Transforming Education Team using the above contact details, or by phoning (01597) 826618.

APPENDIX A – KEY DATA

Key data about the affected schools is provided below:

1. Llanbedr C. in W. School

General information

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number ¹¹	Rural School? ¹²
Llanbedr C. in W. School	Voluntary Aided Church in Wales School building owned by the Diocese	English medium	5	Yes

Pupil numbers

i) Current pupil numbers¹³

	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total N-Yr 6	Total R-Yr 6
Llanbedr C in W. School	1	4	5	2	11	7	4	7	4	45	40

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

ii) Historical pupil numbers¹⁴

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanbedr C. in W. School (N – Yr 6)	39	41	40	39	43	42	46

¹¹ Powys Admissions Information and Arrangements 2021-22

¹² 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.

¹³ Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020)

¹⁴ PLASC

iii) **Projected pupil numbers¹⁵**

		Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	42	41	39	38	36
Llanbedr C. in W. School	R – Yr 6	37	37	34	33	31

(As a Voluntary Aided School, Llanbedr C. in W. School is responsible for its own admissions arrangements and admits nursery aged pupils to the school, however these pupils are not funded by the Council. Information about nursery aged pupil numbers is provided here for information)

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)¹⁶**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanbedr C. in W. School (R – Yr 6)	39	39	36	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

The following table provides information about the current capacity of Llanbedr Church in Wales school:

		Current Capacity ¹⁷	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N – Yr 6	57	45 (78.9%)	12 (21.1%)
Llanbedr C. in W. School	R – Yr 6	57	40 (70.2%)	17 (29.8%)

ii) **Building condition¹⁸**

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school.

¹⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

¹⁶ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the schools – November 2020

¹⁷ Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020

¹⁸ Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2020

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanbedr C. in W. School	B Good	B/C	Yes

Quality and standards of education

i) Estyn

The following table summarises the last Estyn inspections of the three schools:

	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
Date of Inspection	April 2014
Standards	Adequate
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Adequate
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Follow up activity	School will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor progress. (Removed from monitoring in July 2015)

ii) School Categorisation¹⁹

The latest categorisations of the school in accordance with the National School Categorisation System for 2019 are as follows:

¹⁹ 2019. Categorisations were not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19.

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity
Llanbedr C. in W. School	N/A	A	Green

Financial information

Cost per pupil²⁰

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanbedr C. in W. School	£232,000	£5,948	£14,000	£3,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A

Equalities information²¹

i) National identity

(Pupils aged 5 or over on the 31st August 2019)

	British	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	Other	Not supplied	Refused
Llanbedr C. in W. School	17.4%	10.9%	0.0%	0.0%	54.3%	4.3%	13.0%	0.0%

ii) Ethnic Group

(Pupils aged 5 or over on the 31st August 2019)

	White British	Other known ethnicity	Information not yet obtained
Llanbedr C. in W. School	82.6%	4.3%	13.0%

iii) English as an Additional Language

²⁰ Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/21

²¹ PLASC 2020

	% EAL	% EAL A/B/C
Llanbedr C. in W. School	0.0%	0.0%

iv) **Free School Meals**

	Not eligible for FSM	Eligible for FSM	% Eligible for FSM
Llanbedr C. in W. School	43	3	6.5%

v) **Looked after children**

	Looked after children
Llanbedr C. in W. School	0.0%

vi) **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

	None	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement	% ALN
Llanbedr C. in W. School	89.1%	6.5%	2.2%	2.2%	10.9%

2. Other schools that could be affected

Should the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School be implemented, pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school.

The expectation is that the number of pupils transferring to each school would be small, and therefore the impact on these schools would not be significant. However, information about schools to which pupils may transfer is provided below:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number ²²
Crickhowell C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by Powys County Council	English medium	25

²² Powys Schools – Powys County Council Admission Arrangements and Information 2021/22 / Monmouthshire Schools – Monmouthshire County Council School Admissions Policy 2021/22

Llangynidr C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by Powys County Council	English medium	21
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales School building owned by the Diocese	English medium	20
Deri View Primary School	Community Primary Maintained by Monmouthshire County Council	English medium	47
Gilwern Primary School	Community Primary Maintained by Monmouthshire County Council	English medium	30
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	Community Primary Maintained by Monmouthshire County Council	English medium	11

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers²³

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Crickhowell C.P. School	17	24	26	33	24	27	33	184
Llangynidr C.P. School	12	10	13	15	14	19	19	102
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	14	15	18	14	16	12	12	101
Deri View Primary School	36	38	38	38	41	42	43	276

²³ Powys Schools - Finance NOR – 2020 Pupil Count Day (6th November 2020) / Information received from Monmouthshire County Council March 2021

Gilwern Primary School	25	40	30	30	30	30	30	215
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	12	11	7	12	8	11	7	68

ii) **Historical pupil numbers²⁴**

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Crickhowell C.P. School	242	232	233	224	204	203	192
Llangynidr C.P. School	112	121	137	136	137	130	116
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	108	113	118	109	106	105	108
Deri View Primary School	260	264	258	253	262	256	271
Gilwern Primary School	181	180	192	198	206	203	220
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	54	47	54	57	63	68	69

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)²⁵**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Crickhowell C.P. School	177	165	160	156	143

²⁴ PLASC 2020

²⁵ Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates / Monmouthshire Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2020 & Birth Rates. These are the projected figures based on PLASC 2020 information, therefore include a projection for January 2021. PLASC 2021 information and projected pupil numbers based on PLASC 2021 are not yet available.

Llangynidr C.P. School	107	97	90	86	78
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	96	91	87	79	74
Deri View Primary School	298	305	296	302	303
Gilwern Primary School	211	203	195	195	191
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	71	65	69	59	56

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)²⁶**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Crickhowell C.P. School	184	171	164	N/A	N/A
Llangynidr C.P. School	102	92	82	N/A	N/A
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	101	106	111	N/A	N/A
Deri View Primary School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gilwern Primary School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

The following table provides information about the school's current capacity:

²⁶ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school – November 2020

	Current Capacity²⁷	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Crickhowell C.P. School	230	184 (80%)	46 (20%)
Llangynidr C.P. School	147	102 (69.4%)	45 (30.6%)
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	121	101 (83.4%)	20 (16.5%)
Deri View Primary School	330	276 (83.6%)	54 (16.4%)
Gilwern Primary School	210	215 (102.3%)	-5 (-2.3%)
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	77	68 (88.3%)	9 (11.7%)

ii) **Building condition**

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school.

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Crickhowell C.P. School	C	B/C	Yes
Llangynidr C.P. School	B	A/B	Yes
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	B	B/C	Yes
Deri View Primary School	C	C	Yes
Gilwern Primary School	C	C	Yes
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	B	B	Yes

²⁷ Powys Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2020 / Information received from Monmouthshire County Council March 2021

School			
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Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Crickhowell C.P. School
Date of Inspection	February 2020
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and Learning Experiences	Good
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Learning Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Good
Outcome	School to draw up action plan and address the recommendations from the inspection

	Llangynidr C.P. School
Date of Inspection	September 2015
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Good
Learning Experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Learning Environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving Quality	Good
Partnership Working	Good
Resource Management	Good

Outcome	School to draw up action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations
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	Llangattock C. in W. Primary School
Date of Inspection	February 2015
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Good
Learning Experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, Support and Guidance	Good
Learning Environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving Quality	Good
Partnership Working	Good
Resource Management	Good
Outcome	School to produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations

	Deri View Primary School
Date of Inspection	October 2018
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement
Outcome	School to draw up action plan and address the recommendations from the inspection. Estyn to monitor progress.

	Removed from Estyn monitoring in March 2020.
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	Gilwern Primary School
Date of Inspection	January 2014
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Adequate
Teaching	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Good
Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Good
Outcome	School to draw up action plan and address the recommendations from the inspection. Local authority to monitor progress.

	Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School
Date of Inspection	September 2015
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Good

Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Good
Outcome	School to draw up action plan and address the recommendations from the inspection.

ii) **School Categorisation²⁸**

	Standards Group	Support Capacity
Crickhowell C.P. School	N/A	Green
Llangynidr C.P. School	N/A	Green
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	N/A	Green
Deri View Primary School	N/A	Amber
Gilwern Primary School	N/A	Green
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	N/A	Green

Financial information

i) **Cost per pupil²⁹ (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2020/2021)**

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Crickhowell C.P. School	£766,000	£4,053	£64,000	£12,000
Llangynidr C.P. School	£460,000	£3,964	£44,000	£5,000
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	£416,000	£3,819	£25,000	£5,000

²⁸ 2019

²⁹ Section 52 Budget Statement 2020/2021

Deri View Primary School	£1,187,000	£3,957	£131,000	£201,000
Gilwern Primary School	£803,000	£3,650	£42,000	£75,000
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	£325,000	£4,710	£12,000	£29,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£4,264	N/A	N/A
Monmouthshire average (Primary)	N/A	£3,895	N/A	N/A

Equalities Information

i) National identity
(Pupils aged 5 or over on the 31st August 2019)

	British	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	Other	Not supplied	Refused
Crickhowell C.P. School	31.3%	11.5%	0.5%	0.0%	41.7%	2.6%	12.5%	0.0%
Llangynidr C.P. School	86.2%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	7.8%	0.0%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	63.9%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	17.6%	1.9%	14.8%	0.0%
Deri View Primary School	49.6%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	39.1%	5.2%	0.0%	1.3%
Gilwern Primary School	48.9%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	43.3%	2.2%	0.6%	0.6%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	31.0%	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%	56.9%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%

ii) Ethnic Group
(Pupils aged 5 or over on the 31st August 2019)

	White British	Other known ethnicity	Refused/Information not yet obtained
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Crickhowell C.P. School	81.8%	5.7%	12.5%
Llangynidr C.P. School	88.8%	3.4%	7.8%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	76.9%	6.5%	16.7%
Deri View Primary School	67.8%	8.3%	23.9%
Gilwern Primary School	95.6%	4.4%	0.0%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	94.8%	5.2%	0.0%

iii) **English as an Additional Language**

	% EAL	% EAL A/B/C
Crickhowell C.P. School	3.1%	1.6%
Llangynidr C.P. School	0.0%	0.0%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	0.0%	0.0%
Deri View Primary School	5.2%	5.2%
Gilwern Primary School	2.8%	1.1%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	1.7%	1.7%

iv) **Free School Meals³⁰**

³⁰ PLASC 2020

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Crickhowell C.P. School	4.7%
Llangynidr C.P. School	7.8%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	6.5%
Deri View Primary School	31.9%
Gilwern Primary School	5.9%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	7.2%

v) **Pupils in care³¹**

	Number of pupils in care
Crickhowell C.P. School	0.0%
Llangynidr C.P. School	0.0%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	1.9%
Deri View Primary School	N/A
Gilwern Primary School	N/A
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	N/A

vi) **SEN/ALN³²**

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Crickhowell C.P. School	7.8%	3.1%	0%
Llangynidr C.P. School	6.9%	12.1%	2.6%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	15.6%	8.7%	1.7%
Deri View Primary School	8.2%	7.0%	0.9%
Gilwern Primary School	5.9%	6.8%	0.9%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School	4.3%	4.3%	1.4%

³¹ PLASC 2020

³² PLASC 2020

APPENDIX B – SWOT AND CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR ANALYSIS

1. SWOT ANALYSES

SWOT analyses for each of the options identified in section 5 are provided below:

Option 1: Status Quo

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional transport costs - No requirement for a reorganisation process - No change for staff - No impact on pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would continue to be low - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration with other neighbouring schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils 	

Option 2: Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School

This is not a viable option as it is not possible to federate a C. in W. school with a C.P. school, therefore this option is **DISCOUNTED**

Option 3: Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Llanbedr pupils would continue to attend school in the same location - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanbedr would continue to be low - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still be required to maintain the Llanbedr building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice 	-
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Option 4: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Crickhowell C.P. School - Crickhowell is currently a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 5: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Llangattock C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	-
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Option 6: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location - Minimal impact on staff at Crickhowell C.P. School - Crickhowell C.P. School would retain its identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity - May not be attractive to Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 7: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would retain provision in Llanbedr - There would be no additional home to school transport costs - More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Pupils would continue to attend school at the same location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal impact on staff at Llangattock C. in W. School - Llangattock C. in W. School would retain its identity - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	-
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites - More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the new curriculum – would be difficult to provide educational opportunities which meet the requirements of the new curriculum on the Llanbedr site

Option 8: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Crickhowell C.P. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is currently a C. in W. School
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in staffing requirements at the new school - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 9: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Crickhowell C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Crickhowell C.P. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Crickhowell - Impact on the Crickhowell community - Would impact on Crickhowell staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Would not be acceptable to Crickhowell C.P. School - Both schools would lose their identities - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Crickhowell pupils - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W School
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to realise a capital receipt from sale of the Crickhowell site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Crickhowell pupils - Unlikely that the Llanbedr site would not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required - Possible tension between C.P. / C. in W. provision

Option 10: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location - Both schools are currently C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Llangattock C. in W. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible reduction in staffing requirements at the new school - Llangattock C. in W. School has recently been remodelled. It may be difficult to extend again should this be needed. - Possible loss of roles for staff at Llanbedr at the new school

Option 11: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities could be provided to the pupils - Could provide a financial saving to the Council - Would reduce surplus places - All staff would have the opportunity to apply for positions at the new school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llangattock C. in W. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School would have to transfer to a new location

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved opportunities for staff from working in a larger school - Pupils would all be taught in one location - Both schools are C. in W. Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Llangattock C. in W. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Llangattock - Impact on the Llangattock community - Would impact on Llangattock staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Llangattock pupils
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Llangattock pupils - The Llanbedr site may not be large enough to accommodate a school of the size required – a new site may be required.

Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School - Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools - Revenue saving to the Council - Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum - Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional travel costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to alternative provision - Loss of provision from Llanbedr, including nursery provision - Impact on the current staff of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School

<p>educational and extra-curricular opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative Church in Wales provision is available in the catchment at Llangattock C. in W. School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Loss of C. in W. provision from Llanbedr
Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some pupils may transfer to provision outside Powys

2. 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 2020-2030, 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 2020-2030 - Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 • 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 achievable within current legislation • The option must be operationally achievable • The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council’s forecasted revenue • The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

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 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6	Option 7	Option 8	Option 9	Option 10	Option 11	Option 12
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	?	x	?	x	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	x	✓	x	✓
4 – Potential affordability	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓
Total ✓	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	3	1	4
Total x	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	0	3	0	3	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Possible	Discount	Possible	Discount	Preferred

APPENDIX C – IMPACT OF EACH OPTION ON RURAL SCHOOLS CRITERIA

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Llanbedr C. in W. School.
Option 2: Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A
Option 3: Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School	<p>The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Llanbedr C. in W. School would continue to operate as a standalone school, however the school would be federated with Llangattock C. in W. School, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.</p> <p>Establishment of a federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a positive impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

<p>Option 4: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
<p>Option 5: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

		In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.	
Option 6: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Crickhowell C.P. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 7: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. school are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality	Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Llangattock C. in W. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

	and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.	
Option 8: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the same location, which would result in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.	There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr. However, merging with Crickhowell CP School to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbedr community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, which would aid community involvement in the new school.	Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.
Option 9: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where	There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.	Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School. As pupil numbers at Crickhowell C.P. School are significantly larger than those at Llanbedr C. in W. School, this is likely to impact on a significant number of pupils.

	<p>quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Crickhowell community as there would no longer be provision in Crickhowell. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Crickhowell community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Crickhowell is a town with a significantly larger school, it is likely that the Crickhowell community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
<p>Option 10: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the same location, which would result in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, merging with Llangattock C. in W. school to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbedr community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, which would aid community involvement in the new school.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.		
Option 11: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and could lead to an increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Llangattock community as there would no longer be provision in Llangattock. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llangattock community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Llangattock is a larger school, it is likely that the Llangattock community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools	Implementation of this option would mean that pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W.	There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to</p>

	<p>School, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School. All of these schools are currently classified as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p> <p>A number of pupils that live in Monmouthshire currently attend Llanbedr C. in W. School. For these pupils, the closest alternative provision would be Deri View Primary School which is located in Monmouthshire. This school was categorised as Amber in the latest categorisations carried out in 2019.</p>	<p>As a Church in Wales School, The Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.</p>	<p>eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>
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APPENDIX D – REASONS WHY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN TAKEN FORWARD

Option	Description	Reason for discounting
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would continue to be low - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil - Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors
3	Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil numbers at Llanbedr would continue to be low - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision - Would still be required to maintain the Llanbedr building - Would not reduce surplus places - Would not lead to a financial saving - Would not address the high budget per pupil - Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors
4	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools – would have a disproportionate impact on Crickhowell C.P. School - Crickhowell is currently a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W. - Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors
5	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Both schools would lose their identity - Would also impact on staff at Llangattock C. in W. School - Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors
6	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building

	of Crickhowell C.P. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity - May not be attractive to Crickhowell C.P. School - Significant difference in the size of the two schools - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W. School - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors
7	Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small numbers would remain at Llanbedr - Llanbedr pupils would still be taught separately - Would still need to maintain the Llanbedr building - Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would lose its identity - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors
8	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Crickhowell C.P. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is currently a C. in W. School - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors
9	Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Crickhowell C.P. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Crickhowell C.P. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Crickhowell - Impact on the Crickhowell community - Would impact on Crickhowell staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Would not be acceptable to Crickhowell C.P. School

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both schools would lose their identities - Significant investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Crickhowell pupils - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Crickhowell is a C.P. School whilst Llanbedr is a C. in W School - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors
10	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would have to transfer to a new location - Loss of provision from Llanbedr - Impact on the Llanbedr community - Would impact on Llangattock C. in W. School staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors
11	Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional travel for those pupils for whom Llangattock C. in W. School is currently the closest school - Additional transport costs - Pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School would have to transfer to a new location - Less convenient for the majority of pupils - Current Llangattock C. in W. School pupils may live closer to other schools - Loss of provision from Llangattock - Impact on the Llangattock community - Would impact on Llangattock staff as well as Llanbedr staff - Potential reduction in staffing requirements - Both schools would lose their identities - Llanbedr school is too small to accommodate the merged school - Investment would be needed in the Llanbedr site to accommodate Llangattock pupils - Does not meet the Critical Success Factors

APPENDIX E – RESPONSE FORM

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE LLANBEDR C. IN W. SCHOOL

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

A consultation document which provides more information about the proposals is available on the Council's website at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/transformingeducation>. This consultation response form gives you the opportunity to let us know your view on the Council's proposal. The response form can also be completed online – a link to the online form is available by following the link above.

The closing date for this consultation is the **23rd June 2021**. All responses must be received by this date.

For information on how the Transforming Education Team protects and uses personal information collected during consultation processes, please see the Transforming Education privacy notice, which is available via the following link:
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9803/Transforming-Education-Privacy-Notice>

Part 1 – About You

1. Please indicate how you are associated with the schools affected by this consultation:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Parent, carer or guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prospective parent, carer or guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Governor | <input type="checkbox"/> | Member of staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Member of the community | <input type="checkbox"/> | Organisation e.g. Community Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No association | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other |

If you said 'Other' or are responding on behalf of an organisation, please specify:

2. Please specify which school you are associated with:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Llanbedr C. in W. School | <input type="checkbox"/> | Another school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No association | | |

If you are associated another school, please specify which school:

3. Please provide your postcode: _____

Impact on the Welsh language

7. In your opinion, what positive or adverse effects would the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

8. How do you think the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School could be formulated or revised so that it would have positive / more positive effects, or so that it would not have adverse effects / less adverse effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

Copy of Consultation Report

9. At the end of the Consultation Period, the Council will publish a Consultation Report, summarising the issues raised in the consultation responses received and providing the Council's response to these issues.

Would you like to be informed of the publication of the consultation report?

Yes

No

If you answered 'Yes', please provide an e-mail address or postal address:

Part 3 – Equalities Information (Optional)

We want to ensure that we include all sectors of the community in our consultation, and are requesting that you provide this information to enable us to identify whether the consultation has been inclusive. However, these questions are optional.

10. How old are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34
<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64
<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-84	<input type="checkbox"/> 85+
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		

11. What is your gender?

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Fluid
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Binary	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender neutral	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

12. Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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13. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to receive free school meals?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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14. If you have school-aged children, do they have any additional learning needs?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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15. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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16. What is your ethnic group?

<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Black, African or Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Completed questionnaires should be sent to the following address, to arrive **no later than the 23rd June 2021.**

Transforming Education Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG

E-mail: school.consultation@powys.gov.uk



Closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School Consultation Report



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

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

1. OVERVIEW OF THE CONSULTATION

Powys County Council consulted on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools

The consultation took place from the 21st April 2021 to the 23rd June 2021.

i) Consultation methods

The consultation documentation was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period, and was distributed to stakeholders, as required by the School Organisation Code (2018). A separate version for pupils was also available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing an online consultation form, filling in a paper copy of the form and returning it to the Transforming Education Team at County Hall, or by e-mailing / writing to the Transforming Education Team.

Meetings were held virtually with the following:

- Staff of Llanbedr C. in W. School – 13th May 2021
- Governors of Llanbedr C. in W. School – 13th May 2021
- Llanbedr C. in W. School Council – 17th June 2021 & 23rd June 2021

ii) Responses received

A total of 113 respondents completed the consultation response form which was included in the consultation document. This included paper copies as well as responses submitted using the online response form.

In addition, 62 written responses were received from respondents, including Estyn. The response received from Estyn is provided on page 45, in-line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.

The written responses also included an online and paper petition to 'Save Our School Llanbedr CIW is under threat of closure and we need your help!', which received 2,119 signatures.

As well as responses from parents, prospective parents, members of staff and members of the community, responses were received from the following organisations:

- Governing Body of Llanbedr C. in W. School
- Vale of Grwyney Community Council
- Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
- Joint submission from Fay Jones MP and James Evans MS
- Crickhowell Town Council
- Governing Body of Llangattock C. in W. School
- Powys Schools Forum

iii) Summary of issues raised

The issues raised in the consultation responses are listed in detail in section 6 on page 49 onwards. This includes the Council's response to each issue. The following is a summary of the issues raised:

1. Comments about Llanbedr C. in W. School

1. General positive comments about the school
2. Comments about the quality of provision at the school
3. Ability to deliver the new Curriculum for Wales
4. Everyone is friends at the school
5. Comments about pupil numbers / capacity
6. Comments about the school being a small school
7. Comments about class arrangements
8. Comments about the school buildings / grounds
9. Comments about equipment available at the school
10. Comments about extra-curricular provision at the school
11. Comments about the school being a Church in Wales school
12. Comments about school staff
13. Comments about leadership at the school
14. Reference to pupils that have transferred to Llanbedr from other schools
15. Comments about the experiences of past pupils
16. Comments about the school's links with the community
17. Comments about support provided to pupils with ALN
18. Comments about military families
19. Comments about early years provision at the school
20. Comments about wraparound provision at the school
21. Comments about additional funding provided to the school

2. Impact on pupils

1. Comments about the impact on pupil well-being

2. Comments about the impact on pupils of having to move schools
3. Pupils would be separated from their friends
4. Impact on the quality of education for pupils
5. Access to extra-curricular provision
6. Impact on pupils' life chances
7. Other comments

3. Impact on parents / families

4. Impact on early years provision

5. Impact on protected characteristic groups

1. Impact on pupils with ALN
2. Other comments

6. Comments about Church in Wales provision

1. Families chose Llanbedr because it is a Church in Wales school
2. Comments about links between Llanbedr C. in W. School and the church
3. Concern that there is no alternative Church in Wales provision available
4. Comments that closure of the school would remove parental choice to choose a Church in Wales school
5. Concern about the impact on pupils from not being able to attend a Church in Wales school
6. Positive comments about Church in Wales schools / Christian ethos
7. Insufficient consideration has been given to providing access to faith-based provision
8. Other comments

7. Comments about housing developments in the area

8. Comments about small / rural schools

9. Travel implications

1. Additional travel time / distance
2. Environmental impact
3. Concern about traffic congestion
4. Queries about the Council's Home to School Transport Policy
5. Other comments

10. Comments about the schools pupils might transfer to

1. Llangattock C. in W. School
2. Crickhowell C.P. School
3. Llangynidr C.P. School
4. Out of county schools
5. Other comments

11. Impact on the community

1. General concern about the impact on the community
2. The school is the heart of the community
3. Reference to other community activities / organisations
4. Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr
5. Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school
6. Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close
7. Comments relating to community well-being
8. Other comments / queries

12. Issues relating to finance

1. Comments about the estimated savings
2. The only reason for the proposal is to save money
3. Comments about the budget share per pupil / funding formula
4. Other comments

13. Comments about Council strategies

1. Comments about the Council's Transforming Education Strategy
2. Other

14. Comments about Welsh Government initiatives

15. Comments about the process

1. Comments about consulting during the Covid pandemic
2. Comments about consultation with pupils
3. The Council should visit the school as part of the process
4. Comments about the presumption against closing rural schools
5. Queries about criteria
6. Other comments / queries

16. Comments about the consultation documentation

1. Data
2. Comments about the Strategic Context
3. Comments about the Case for Change
4. Comments about 'Why change is needed in Llanbedr?'
5. Comments about the reasons for the proposal
6. SWOTs
7. Other comments suggesting there are inaccuracies in the document
8. Comments about the impact assessments
9. Other comments about the consultation documentation

17. Criticism of Powys County Council

1. Criticism of the Council's treatment of small / rural schools
2. Criticism of staff / councillors
3. Other criticisms

18. Alternative options

1. Retain the status quo
2. Develop the provision at Llanbedr
3. Pause the consultation
4. Federation / merger options
5. Build a new all-age school in Crickhowell
6. Make changes to other schools
7. Develop Welsh-medium provision in the area
8. Support small/rural schools
9. Other suggestions

19. Comments about the impact on Welsh

1. Comments about the use of Welsh at Llanbedr School
2. Comments about the proposal's impact on Welsh
3. Suggested improvements which would have a positive impact on Welsh
4. Other comments

20. Comments in support of the proposal

2. CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

38 respondents completed the English language consultation response form, which was available online, and 0 respondents completed the Welsh language consultation response form which was available online. 75 respondents sent the consultation response form by email in English, and 0 respondent sent the consultation response form by email in Welsh.

The quantitative findings of the questionnaire are summarised below. Written comments were also provided in the consultation response forms. The issues raised in these comments are included in Section 6 of this report.

Part 1 – About you

1. Please indicate how you are associated with the schools affected by this consultation:

Response	No.	%
Parent, carer or guardian	37	32.7%
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	6	5.3%
Governor	4	3.5%
Member of staff	8	7.1%
Member of the community	24	21.2%
Organisation	2	1.8%
Pupil	24	21.2%
No association	4	3.5%
Other	4	3.5%
Not Answered	0	0.0%
Total responses	113	100.0%

2. Please specify which school you are associated with:

Response	No.	%
Llanbedr C. in W. School	96	85.0%
Another school	11	9.7%
No association with any school	6	5.3%
Not Answered	0	0.0%
Total responses	113	100.0%

3. Please provide your postcode:

Response	No.	%
Crickhowell	85	78.0%
Vale of Grwyney / Abergavenny	17	15.6%
Brecon	3	2.8%
Brynmawr / Ebbw Vale	2	1.8%

Cardigan	1	0.9%
Bath	1	0.9%
Total responses	109	100.0%

Part 3 – About you

12. How old are you?

Response	No.	%
Under 16	25	22.1%
16-23	2	1.8%
25-34	9	8.0%
35-44	23	20.4%
45-54	21	18.6%
55-64	10	8.8%
65-74	6	5.3%
75-84	5	4.4%
85+	1	0.9%
Prefer not to say	5	4.4%
Not answered	6	5.3%
Total responses	113	100.0%

13. What is your gender?

Response	No.	%
Male	35	31.0%
Female	65	57.5%
Gender Fluid	0	0.0%
Non-Binary	0	0.0%
Gender neutral	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	5	4.4%
Not answered	8	7.1%
Total responses	113	100.0%

14. Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?

Response	No.	%
Yes	28	24.8%
No	37	32.7%
Prefer not to say	41	36.3%
Not answered	7	6.2%
Total responses	113	100.0%

15. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to receive free school meals?

Response	No.	%
Yes	3	2.7%

No	55	48.7%
Prefer not to say	41	36.3%
Not answered	14	12.4%
Total responses	113	100.0%

16. If you have school-aged children, do they have any additional learning needs?

Response	No.	%
Yes	5	4.4%
No	52	46.0%
Prefer not to say	41	36.3%
Not answered	15	13.3%
Total responses	113	100.0%

17. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Response	No.	%
Yes	6	5.3%
No	87	77.0%
Prefer not to say	11	9.7%
Not answered	9	8.0%
Total responses	113	100.0%

18. What is your ethnic group?

Response	No.	%
White	74	65.5%
Asian	0	0.0%
Black, African or Caribbean	0	0.0%
Mixed	2	1.8%
Gypsy/Traveller	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	30	26.5%
Not Answered	7	6.2%
Total	113	100.0%

3. CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

Comments received from pupils are outlined below. This includes the notes of a meeting held with pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School, as well as a summary of the written responses received from pupils to the consultation exercise.

i) Meetings with the School Council of Llanbedr C. in W. School

Due meetings were held with the School Council of Llanbedr C. in W. School. An initial meeting was held on the 17th June 2021, and at the request of the pupils, a second meeting was held on the 23rd June 2021. The notes of both meetings are provided below:

17th June 2021

Officers from Powys County Council met virtually via Microsoft Teams with representatives from the School Council of Llanbedr C in W School to discuss the consultation to close Llanbedr C in W School with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

The School Council group consisted of 4 Foundation Phase pupils and 7 pupils from Key Stage 2.

A short introduction was made, explaining that Powys County Council looked after all of the schools in Powys, including Llanbedr, and that the meeting today was to talk about the plans the Council has for Llanbedr school.

Tell us about Llanbedr school. What's good about Llanbedr school?

- Small school
- Mixed years together in one class
- We all stick together and help each other, for example if a friend falls over
- We have lots of friends here
- Teachers are nice
- I love school
- We love learning in Llanbedr
- We all do teamwork and work together
- We are all like a family
- After school clubs

What kind of after school clubs do you have?

- Dragon sports
- Gardening club
- Technology club

What else do you like about the school?

- In big schools they only have one or two years in one class. Here we have more years in one class so we learn more
- The friendships
- I like learning science, English and Welsh
- In our class we have ponds with tadpoles and we have to put the water back in when it dries out
- We have puppet clubs
- Busy feet – where pupils can learn and do some fun things at the same time

What do you think about the school building – is it nice and warm?

- Yes

Have you plenty of space outside to play?

- Loads of spaces
- We have a field, yard, play area for KS1

What about school dinners? Are they nice?

- Yes

There are a lot of things that you like and that are good about the school. Is there anything you don't like about the school or that could be better in the school?

- No

Nothing at all?

- No

We're here to talk to you about some changes Powys County Council might make to Llanbedr school. The Council always has to review the schools in the county to make sure that we have the best education in the County now and in the future. We always have to review different schools, and we're wondering whether some things should change. At the moment Powys County Council is looking at Llanbedr school, and is wondering whether to close Llanbedr school, which would mean that you would have to go to a different school, instead of Llanbedr. We're here to find out what you think about that idea, and how that would affect you.

We're having a consultation where we're asking lots of people what they think – parents, staff, governors, but we especially want to know what you think as pupils of the school. No decision has yet been made and we need your views and to take that into consideration when deciding whether or not to carry on with that plan.

Does everybody understand why we are here to talk to you?

Yes

We'll ask you some questions about what you think about the idea of there being no school in Llanbedr and how would that affect you – what might be bad for you and what might be good for you. Then at the end you will be able to ask any other questions you have about the plans, and we'll answer as best we can.

What do you think about the Council's plan to close the school and how do you feel about that?

- I would be sad if the school is shut
- We do Welsh clubs so we would be 'trist' and 'crac'

What would be different for you if there was no school in Llanbedr? What would that mean to you?

- We would be sad

How many of you live in Llanbedr itself?

- Mostly everyone lives in Llanbedr, some across the road or just outside the village

If you had to go to a different school how would it affect you and your parents and your family, and what would be the changes if there was no school in Llanbedr? Would it be more difficult for you to go to school?

- It would be very sad and when we are sad our parents are sad, because they made some friends and before lockdown our parents would come over for bonfire night and there would be a stall outside the school to collect money

So it would have an impact on the school and the community?

- Yes

What do KS2 pupils think?

- It would affect our friendships as not all of us would go to the same school and we would be torn apart.

How would that make you feel?

- Very bad
- We wouldn't have the opportunities that we have here
- It would ruin the community

The school is very important to the community?

- Yes

What would be the big changes for you if there wasn't a school?

- We would have to leave early in the morning as we would have to go to a school further away
- Most of us can walk to the school now, but we wouldn't if going to another school

Are you worried about that?

- Yes

Would it have an impact on the community?

- Yes
- It would ruin it. The school is so important in the community

What would be the big changes for you if there was no school in Llanbedr?

- We would have to rush around in the morning, as we would have to travel further to different schools

Can everyone walk to the school at the moment?

- Yes – a lot of us

If you had to go to another school, you couldn't walk, you would have to go on buses or your parent would have to take you. Are you worried about that?

- Yes

Is there anybody that feels excited by going to a bigger school and meeting new people?

- No
- Not at all
- Have you ever thought about how it would affect our well being?

Yes, the Council is aware of pupil well-being, especially after this difficult Covid year. When pupils transfer to other schools, when schools close, the headteachers and staff of the school pupils would go to would work closely with you to ensure that any transition to a new school is done as well as possible and pupils are happy when they transfer. We're very keen if Llanbedr closed that that would happen, that you'd be looked after as you transfer to another school.

- But we won't be together anymore?

Are you worried about that? Do you think you need to be together? Is that important to you?

- Yes

So you are worried you won't be able to go to the same school?

- Yes

If Llanbedr school did close, and only if it did close, which school do you think you would go to?

- I wouldn't choose to go anywhere, I would stay in Llanbedr
- Llanbedr as I live across the road

If there wasn't a school in Llanbedr, where would your nearest school then be?

- Crickhowell
- Abergavenny
- Crickhowell

What else concerns you if there was no school in Llanbedr? What would it mean for the community if there was no school in Llanbedr?

- There would be no Eisteddfod which would mean that people wouldn't be able to come and see us, and people like to come to see the Eisteddfod
- People couldn't wave to us as they pass the school

- The church warden wouldn't visit any more

So you're a very visible part of the community?

- Yes

We have some questions for you.

Why did you choose our school to be closed?

The Council has to look after around 90 schools, and from time to time we have to look at how many schools we have. We were worried that Llanbedr school has low pupil numbers and is a small school. We are looking at a number of small schools at the moment. There are also other factors as well, such as the higher cost for pupils in smaller schools. We are looking at Llanbedr, but we are looking at a number of other schools as well.

You've got our numbers wrong – we have more pupils than you have said.

The numbers in our document are based on last year's information. We know that your pupil numbers have increased and you have over 50 pupils at the moment. When we bring back the report to the people in the Council that make the decision we will make sure that the figures are updated.

I live near the school. Will my friends go to the same school and how will I get there?

It would depend where parents would choose for their children to go to if Llanbedr closes and that would be a decision for each individual family. Until a decision is made about closing the school or not, we wouldn't know where your friends would go until the school closes.

As to how you would get there, then if you live 2 miles away from another school, the Council would give you free transport to the school. It could be a bus, minibus, taxi.

When did the people from Powys last visit our school?

It was probably me, Sian, who came to the school last, when I borrowed something from the school and had a chat with your headteacher. I come to the school at least three times a year, and sometimes a bit more if I have to see the governors.

But when did you last come?

The last time I came on a proper visit was before COVID, so I guess it was in the autumn term of 2019.

The Council wants to make sure that the councillors that make the decision come to visit the school before making a decision. We will arrange that, probably during the summer holidays because of COVID.

If only you have been here, why didn't you tell us anything was wrong and how can the other members of Powys close it if they haven't even been here?

What we do in the Council is that we look at all the information for the school, things like pupil numbers, standards of teaching and learning in the school and we put all the information in a document and the councillors will consider that before making a decision. But as I said the councillors will be coming out to see Llanbedr school before the next decision is made.

Why do you want to close our school as we haven't done anything wrong?

No, you haven't done anything wrong. But the Council has to look at all its schools and we have 90 schools to manage and we are worried that we have too many small schools. We want people's views on our plan to close the school. That doesn't mean that it will definitely happen. We will bring back what people have told us to the Councillors and they can read what's been said before making a decision.

Life is supposed to be a gift. If you close our school have you thought about how that will make us feel sad?

It's important that you tell us how you feel, and we can then tell the Councillors that you are feeling very sad about the plan. That will come out very clearly in the information that we give back to the Councillors.

Is money more important than my well-being?

No, what's really important is that you get a good quality education. That's the no.1 priority for the Council. We have to look at how many schools we have to make sure that pupils in the future have access to good quality education. I know you get good quality education in Llanbedr as we speak, but the Council has to look at everything, not just Llanbedr on its own.

When you were asked, you said you were looking at small schools because they cost money.

It's one of the factors. We have to look at how many pupils you have, how many pupils will be coming to the school in the future, how many classes you have and the standards. One of the issues with small schools is that there is a higher cost per pupil. So it is a factor, but it is one factor of a range of factors.

We may be small but why aren't you supporting us?

We support all the schools, be they large, small or medium. At this point we're only asking people about their views about the plans. The decision to close the school has not been made yet. We will be working with the school and supporting the school, whatever happens to Llanbedr.

How is trying to close our school supporting pupils in any way?

We have to think about the future. How many schools we have, the impact on the curriculum, what opportunities can be provided. It might not feel to you now that you are getting support, but the Council has to consider how many schools it has and its plans for the future, but we recognise that at the moment it is a difficult time for you.

Can you explain that better to the younger ones so that they can understand?

What we're saying is that we're supporting you and understand that it is a very difficult time for you, but the Council has to look at all its schools and make plans for the future. Did you understand that?

- Yes

Every child has a certain amount of money for their education and you need a certain amount of money for each year, and a certain amount of pupils to be able to afford all the people you need – headteacher, teachers, canteen staff, teaching assistants. You need classes to be of a certain size for schools to be able to afford all of the things that they need. It is very hard, but if the local authority can put their money into a school which has all the things you say that you want and all the teachers you want, they would be able to do that in fewer schools than we have now. Does that make sense?

- Yes
- But we have less teachers in our school.

Yes, you are right, you have less, but they cost more than if you were in a larger school. For example for one pupil in yr 6, it might cost for example £10,000 for that pupil in Llanbedr, but say that pupil went to a

larger school, it might only cost £2,000. And in the High School the cost might be £3,000. Does that make sense?

- Yes
- What will happen to the pond, the tadpoles, the flowers and the trees?

The school is a Church in Wales school, so the school is owned by the Church in Wales, the organisation that looks after churches, so it would be up to them to decide what to do with the school and the grounds, if Llanbedr did close. Is that clear?

- Yes
- Money is just pieces of metal. Do you want to break our friendships over pieces of metal?

Unfortunately, money is purchasing power, and sometimes we have to pool our money together. For example if you were planning to have an exciting holiday rather than a picnic in the back garden. It is not an easy decision. I could give you an example from Caerphilly, which decided that schools less than 200 pupils were too small, and schools had to join together to become very large schools of 400-500. In Powys our larger schools will still be relatively small and friendly and close. They won't be that big.

- Why are you comparing us to Caerphilly?

I'm just trying to give you an example from what other local authorities do. This isn't a decision that has been made. It's a consultation process, so your comment about human beings not being metal will be mentioned as part of the consultation. Your voices will be heard.

- What is the problem with the small schools?

As we have said there are a number of factors that mean that some schools are not viable. We haven't got the money to keep very small schools open. Schools need facilities, the age of the building and a lot of things have to be considered, but every small school can't be kept open in the future, in the long term.

- Why do you want to make us sad?

Nobody wants to make you sad. It is a difficult process to go through and it's about looking at the future of education for pupils. I'm hoping that you're not feeling too sad.

- Closing the school would make us 'trist'

It's important that what is said is passed on to the Council, so we'll put all the views of everybody together in a big report that goes back to the Councillors.

Have you heard of the Council's Cabinet, the word 'Cabinet'?

- Some have

The Council's Cabinet is a committee, like the school council, a committee of councillors who look after everything in the Council. They are the people that will make the decision about Llanbedr. It's therefore really really important that you let us know your views, that it's making you sad and your concerns. We will put that in a big report, and they can read it before making their decision.

- Do we get to see the report?

Yes. It will be a public report. Everybody will be able to see it.

- Will we be able to see it before it goes out? Can't we see it before it goes public?

No, we have to publish it on a set date. We have to follow the law. But we will have notes of this meeting which we will send to you to check. The notes of this meeting will be sent as a draft for you to check that you are happy with them. The notes are then published as part of the paperwork, that goes to the Cabinet, so that the words that you are telling us now will be able to be seen by the Cabinet.

The consultation period, where we are asking everyone what they think, ends on 23 June. Once the consultation has finished, we will start working on a report and some other steps will need to happen before a final decision is made to close the school, if that is what the Council decides to do.

When we publish the consultation report, the Cabinet will have to look at the report and decide whether they want to carry on with closing Llanbedr school or not. If they do want to carry on, we will have to publish what's called a 'Statutory Notice' which is like a poster to tell everybody that the Council intends to close the school, and there would be a further 28 day objection period for people to let us know if they don't agree.

We would then have to do another report saying what people have said during the objection period, which would go back to the Cabinet for Cabinet to make a final decision. It's quite a long process, and we're still in the early stages. No definite decision has been made. We're just asking what people think of this idea at the moment.

Thank you for all your comments today. If there is anything else we haven't covered or anything else you would like to say, you can still send them through to us before the 23rd June, so by next Wednesday.

- I have got some more questions.

If there is anything else you want to add you can send them on to us.

How many more questions have you got?

- Some of us have not asked one question yet.
- Do you really need to close Llanbedr school?

As we've said we have to look at small schools and we are looking at a number of small schools as we have explained before. But as we have said we are looking at it now, but no decision has been made. We're hearing what people think and have to say about the proposal.

- What will you gain from closing the school?

We have a lot of schools we have to look after. It would mean that pupils would be able to have good quality education and opportunities in other schools in the future.

- We've already suffered two lockdowns, please don't make us suffer any more. Tell me how you are thinking about the children at the school.

You should be supported by the school and your families. I know that it is a difficult time, but you are supported through your school.

- When children move to bigger schools they don't always get the education that they need. How can you make sure everyone has what they need as happens here?

When schools close and pupils have to transfer to other schools, the other schools work very closely with the pupils and parents to make sure that the transfer to the new school is a happy one. Bigger schools have bigger opportunities and good quality education in your area. So it would be the same for you or even better if that did happen, and we

think that the education would be the same for you and perhaps even better if that happened.

- Please don't close our school.

We hear what you are saying and we will take it back to the Councillors who will make the decision.

- It would be hard for our mums to find new schools. What would you do to help?

There is a lot of information that the Council has about all the schools in the County, as well as schools outside Powys, and that information is available to parents to look at – standards in schools, the classes they have, and we would be able to support parents to make sure that they would be able to find that information.

- Aren't you supposed to be helping schools?

Yes we have a team who work and support schools all the time.

- So why aren't you helping us then?

Support comes in different ways. I support the Headteacher and the teachers in looking after the well being of pupils and staff and the leadership and the management of the schools, and help them look at the priorities for learning, and to make sure that you have the right resources. That support will continue, and that support will be there in whatever school you go to.

It's different to the support in keeping the school open. All of us here from Powys are here to listen to what you have to say, which we will take back to the decision makers. All the decision makers will be informed by all the information that we have on the school and your views.

- When we are sad, our mum and dad and grandparents are sad. What are you going to do to make us feel happy?

Because we are now in the middle of this phase where we are listening to what people have to say, our job is to make sure that people can tell us their views honestly and we can then make sure that those views are heard by the Cabinet. So our job is to make sure that your parents, grandparents and you have the opportunity to tell the Council what you think about the plans. We have to ensure that process is carried out correctly and giving everyone a chance.

- That's the end of our questions.

Pupils were thanked for their attendance at the meeting and their honest views.

Pupils were reminded once again that they had until 23 June to submit any further comments or questions as part of the consultation process, either directly by email or with the help of their teachers.

23rd June 2021

Officers from Powys County Council met virtually via Microsoft Teams with representatives from the School Council of Llanbedr C in W School to discuss the consultation to close Llanbedr C in W School with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

This was a follow up meeting from the one held on 17th June 2021.

The School Council group consisted of the same pupils as that of the meeting of 17th June 2021, being 4 Foundation Phase pupils and 7 pupils from Key Stage 2. No teachers were present.

It was explained that if any of the pupils needed a break during the meeting, then they could say so, and the meeting could be paused at any time.

The meeting was handed over to the pupils.

One of the pupils asked if the meeting would be minuted and when will any minutes be sent out, stating that minutes from the previous meeting had not yet been sent out.

It was explained that minutes from the meeting on the 17th June would be sent out after this meeting, and minutes of this meeting would be sent out by the end of the week.

The meeting commenced with one of the pupils reciting a short Prayer.

We asked for a child friendly document which you did not provide. How can we have a meaningful consultation with you if we don't understand the document you provided? The previous meeting was very difficult to understand as you used very big words and we were rushed. You said in the last meeting that the cost for educating each pupil in Llanbedr was £10,000 but my mother says that in the consultation document it is £5,948, which is a very big difference.

We've used the same child version of the document in other consultations. The document is only one part of the consultation process. The other part is us coming to talk and explain to you the plans and hear what you think about them. That's why we didn't change the document as it is the same one that has been used and we've already used that many many times. The figure of £10,000 was used as an example, not referring to the exact actual amount. The figure in the consultation document is the correct one. £10,0000 was just used as an example to explain how the funding for schools works.

My parents chose Llanbedr school for me. Why are you telling them they might have to choose somewhere else?

The Council has to look after some 90 schools – which is a lot. We always have to look at schools and pupil numbers, standards, how well the schools are doing, costs, whether they have headteachers or not. The Council is concerned or worried about Llanbedr in particular because of the low number of pupils in the school, and that's why we are here to hear what you have to say about it.

We're nearly full.

Yes, you're nearly full because you are a small school anyway. You haven't got a large building or a lot of empty classrooms. The Welsh Government says that all schools below 91 are small schools, so we are looking at all the schools below 91 pupils. In that context Llanbedr is a small school.

Do you understand that?

Yes. But our standards are very good here and we're happy.

Standards are good, it is a very good school. Teaching and learning and leadership are all good. This aspect is a different feature of the plan to look at the size of schools, and even though you are right, and standards are good, you enjoy school and you do have a good education, but sometimes in a small school there's no chance to do extra elements like sport, school trips, and outdoor activities if there were more children in your school.

But we're going on a trip next week. We have more chances than my friends.

Your friends in other schools? That's really important information for us to make a note of.

We are going to a theme park.

Llanbedr is a Church school. How can Powys make sure that we can go to our nearest Church school?

Llanbedr is a Church school and Llangattock is a Church school, but Crickhowell is not, nor is Llangynidr. So the choice of Church school if Llanbedr school would close would be Llangattock, but the Council knows that Llangattock doesn't have enough spaces for all the children in Llanbedr, so if there was no room in Llangattock, it would be a choice for your parents whether they wanted to choose another Church school. We know that there isn't another one close by. The next one is Brecon which is far away, or Llangorse, or outside of Powys.

However, there are plenty of spaces in other schools in the Crickhowell area, but we do know that there is not enough space for everybody in Llangattock.

What do you like or what's different about Llanbedr school because it is a Church school?

It means that we can do concerts and lots of different things in the Church and the community always comes to watch and support us.

I chose a Church school. It's important to me.

That's really important as we have to take what you say back to the Council's Cabinet – that is the Committee that makes the final decision on this matter. They need to know that being in a Church school is important to you.

Do you think this is a good time to think about closing schools? We have already missed lots of school, learning and our friends for a year. Do you think of our well-being and if so what have you done to us so far?

We know it's been a very difficult time for you, and we know that this plan for closing the school is probably very worrying to you as well. In terms of well-being, from my perspective, as I said on Thursday, I need to make sure that you have the chance to put forward your views about this plan to the Council and make sure that your voices are heard. In terms of your well-being that is my job and I hope that this gives you the opportunity to make your voices heard.

The school, your teachers and headteacher are very clever and have put a lot of well-being activities in the school day, such as the school trip and outdoor classroom.

I do know from my recent visit that you have worry monsters around the school where you can tell the worry monsters how you feel, which helps a lot of pupils. Timing is always very difficult. Part of these well-being activities the school is doing with you is to help you cope with change, as change does happen, in school and outside school. Llanbedr and all schools in the Crickhowell cluster have been doing lots of well-being activities.

Why are Powys leaving it to our teachers. We feel very sad. What are you doing to comfort us?

The answer is that your teachers are doing a lot, and maybe you're not aware of all the things they are doing, the teachers have training and courses to help them as well. We can also go on courses to help our worry and anxiety too.

Your teachers know you best, so they know what's right for you, but your question is about what we have done. I can say that we as an authority have things in place to help your teachers to help you. My boss Lynette has sent an important message to schools today to give them ideas about how to help schools and children, to make sure that you are looked after and that your well-being is a top priority. That is at the top of the list. So, our job is to help your teachers help you.

Does that make sense?

Our teachers are fantastic and help us when we are stuck on maths or something.

If you close our school, what will our teachers do?

If the school did close, we have a team in Powys who look after people and jobs, and they would be looking after your teachers to ensure that what the teachers wanted to do could happen. For example, they would have discussions with your teachers and see what the teachers would want to do in the future, whether they wanted to carry on teaching somewhere else, or whether they wanted to take a different job, or stop working. They would work very very closely with them, and it would be up to that team to make sure that the needs of the teachers would be met.

They will be very sad.

Yes, people do get sad when there are changes. That's why we will help people to make sure that they make the best decisions and the choices that suit them.

Some of our teachers live further away and have schools closer to them, but they choose to drive further to come to a school they like to go to.

Yes, if the school was to close, discussions would take place to see what their options were. What they wanted to do in the future. We don't want to lose good teachers or teaching assistants. We would want to make sure that everybody's needs were met.

Does Powys think that they know what's best for us, our parents and teachers, when they haven't even met us?

We're in the middle of this consultation, which is a time when we listen to what people have to say. We have met with your teachers and governors, and we met with you last week and now, and we have published information, and we want to hear back from your parents, families and anybody in the community of Llanbedr. They can write to us, fill in the forms online, email us and then we can understand exactly what your parents, families and your community think about the plan. We've already had an enormous amount of letters and forms and a petition as well. We will look at what your families say, what you say, what the community says, in detail and putting all that has been said into a big report that will go back to the Cabinet – the committee that makes the decision.

The forms were very hard to fill in.

Were they? Why were they hard to fill in?

It took ages to try and answer the questions, because we didn't know what they meant.

We'll have to have a look at that.

There were some words and things in there that our year 3 didn't understand.

Sometimes these forms are difficult because the language is a little different to that you normally use, but your parents and teachers can help you fill in the forms and explain things to you.

Why are you thinking of upsetting our education when we love learning at Llanbedr? You can't promise that we will have the same opportunities, fun and friendship somewhere else? Why are you taking the risk with our education and well-being?

The Council has to look at the whole of the County and how many schools it has, how many small schools it has, and whether there are different or better ways of providing education in an area. The fact that you love Llanbedr is

coming through very very strongly and the fact that you love learning, and that says a lot about Llanbedr school.

What do you think about this?

We're hearing your views very strongly about Llanbedr school. We'll take that forward and your views will be included in the reports and considered as we move forward.

Can Powys think of other ways of raising or saving money?

It's not about saving money. It's about looking at everything, the pupil numbers, how many pupils will come into the school in the future, looking at the building, the standards. It's not about saving money; it's about making sure that in terms of pupils in the future that Powys can offer a good education for everybody.

In the last meeting you mentioned the costs. There's lots of other ways you can save money without closing the school.

We have saved money by having a sponsored cycle ride, we're thinking of a sponsored ride on horses across the mountain, and having lots of stands across Powys to sell things.

Fundraising events like that do raise money and can be very successful, and normally they allow schools to buy additional resources, books and games and to pay to go on trips, but very rarely will they raise enough money to do huge things for a long period of time. We're not looking necessarily just about the next term or the next year, we are looking at the next 25 years. It's a long-term plan for the future.

Most people think small schools are wonderful. What evidence does Powys have that bigger schools are better?

The standards in the school don't really link to the size of the school. It's about how well the teaching and learning happen in the school. We have large schools that are good and large schools that are not quite as good, and we have medium sized schools that are good and medium sized schools that need to improve, and we have small schools that are good and small schools that need to improve as well.

It all depends on the children and the staff, and every school is slightly different, but every school will get the appropriate support. Sometimes a larger school have more extensive grounds, a larger number of classroom bases, so new children can join the school easily because of the accommodation and there are usually more facilities or up to date things available in those schools.

We think that if you are in a larger school there are more opportunities to be part of different things, but we hear what you say, that you have the same amount of opportunities in Llanbedr as in a larger school, but in general the Council thinks, there are more opportunities in a larger school, because you are part of a larger group of children. You have larger year groups, so you are mixing more with the same age groups, and we think that's a better thing.

But you wouldn't have opportunities to have an iPad and MacBook in a bigger school. Here we have those from class 3 until high school, and I use my MacBook now.

All schools would have the same level of IT equipment. It can vary, but all schools are looking to do the same thing.

Bigger classes mean less time with teachers.

I don't think that's completely true. Even in larger classes, the teacher has to make sure that every child has the same opportunities, the same level of teaching and learning.

Even in Llanbedr, the actual number of children in each class can be quite large. For example, last year there was at least 25/26 in one class, but your teacher manages to support the different learning groups and ages very well. Most schools have teaching assistants as well, which you have.

In our school, in class 3 we have a variety of years, some children in yr 4 sometimes do yr 6 work.

Wherever you are, the teacher will make sure that every child does the very best they can. So, if your friend is the same age, they will make sure that every child in the class works to the best of their ability. That's what teachers do well.

But if we were in a bigger school, you would have your age groups, for example if you were in yr 4 work you would be doing yr 4 work, not being in yr 4 and doing yr 6 work, ready for high school.

I see your point, but actually teachers provide the right work to match the abilities and the needs of a pupil, so even if they are in yr 4, if they are doing work needed to catch up with the foundation phase, or if they need to be stretched to make sure that they can work at a higher level for the high school that happens. That's one of the jobs of school improvement people who go in and check that in schools. We can ensure you that the needs of pupils will be met, even if pupils are in a class of the same ages.

Are you all OK – do you need a break or are you happy to carry on? Is the smaller class OK? How many questions do you have left?

There are 7 questions left. The next few questions are questions we asked in the last meeting but don't think you answered very well.

Why aren't you supporting us?

So, the question is why aren't we supporting the school? My job is to make sure that this plan that we are discussing at the moment allows you the opportunity to have your voices heard. In terms of supporting the school, some of us work very closely with the school and headteacher to provide support to the school. We always support schools, pupils, teachers and governors when there is any change. We give you support through the teachers that know you best. The worry monsters is a very good idea – a worry shared is a worry solved.

The support is around you all the time, even though you can't maybe see it, and everybody helps each other when there's change, and that's when we are now doing a lot of exercises in school to build things back and to help coping with change generally in life.

The next question is one which you said in our last meeting was a good question, but you didn't answer it.

Money is just pieces of metal. Do you want to break our friendship over pieces of metal?

It's about breaking friendship groups?

Yes

That's not the purpose of what we are doing at all. We want to make sure that pupils in future can have good education. However, we do know and understand if a school closes, and again we don't know yet if the school will close, your parents will have to make difficult decision as to which school you go to, and maybe you won't all be going to the same schools in the future. We know that you are a Church school, and we know that if the school closes we know that there aren't enough spaces in Llangattock for you all to go together. So, we're not trying to break friendship groups, but trying to look at the whole of education across Powys and plan for the future.

You may not be aiming to break friendships but that's what you are doing.

That's an important point, because if our plans means that you are really really worried that our plans will break friendship groups, that's a really really important point to come back to the Cabinet so that they can understand that fully.

But if the school was to close our best friends would go to a different school and we wouldn't see each other ever again.

I know that what I say won't solve your concerns immediately, but all the schools in the Crickhowell area, Llanbedr, Llangynidr, Crickhowell and Llangattock, regularly meet together and regularly have joint events. There's lots of visits to the high school and those transition meetings always look at friendships and how you can build new friendships in new places and where there is new change, so staff will be helping you to make new friends and keep new friends when you meet again in the high school.

But some of my friends will be going to schools outside the county. You said to go to the nearest school, and their nearest school is not in Powys.

It would depend on which high school they would choose. We can't predict which school a parent would choose for you if the school closes. But we hear very very clearly what you have to say about it, and that's the important thing and we need to hear what you have to say.

Do you really need to close Llanbedr school?

The Council has to look after 90 odd schools, and we always have to look at schools with low pupil numbers and see if there are any different ways that we can offer education in different areas. At the moment no decision has been made, the only decisions made is to see what people think about the plans, so it's very important that you tell us what you think. That will then have an impact on the next decision. The next decision is very important because that's when the Councillors on the Cabinet will read everything everybody has said about the plan and then decide whether to carry on and close Llanbedr or to put everything on stop and keep Llanbedr.

Why do you want to close our school because we have everything here?

Again, we have to look at the whole of the County and how many schools we have and look at schools with low pupil numbers and the Council thinks that if you are in a larger school you will have more opportunities and better opportunities to learn with your year groups.

You've got lots and lots of brilliant things in Llanbedr, MacBooks and lovely resources, but if, and it's a big if, because we are finding out what you think, in

a larger school there would be even more resources, even more facilities and even more things available for pupils to make sure that they have everything they need to help their learning.

But we don't want any more we've got everything we need here.

That will be noted in the minutes and will go to the decision makers. You need to remember no decision has been made. That is why we are talking to you, to hear your opinions. What you are saying today is very important and we will take that back to the people that make the decision. So, it is really useful to hear your voice today.

When children move to larger schools they don't always get the help and education that they need. This could affect them in different ways. What do you think about this? How can you ensure that everyone has everything they need like they do here?

Teachers do that all the time. At the end of each year, or when pupils transfer to other schools at any time, they pass on what they call pupil information and all that information that they hold about what progress they have made and any particular needs, and all of you in Llanbedr have got a one page pupil profile about how best you learn, so all that information will not be lost and will be handed on to new teachers, or the teachers that will be working with you.

You could save money by giving less pay to people who want to close our school.

So, you're saying that we could save money by paying the Council people less? I hear that, and that we will take back. That may happen – who knows?

What will you gain from closing the school? Aren't you supposed to be helping schools?

A lot of help is provided to schools on an ongoing basis. Our role is to make sure that the process we are going through at the moment is carried out properly and that you have the opportunity to give us your views as we are doing now.

One of the support mechanisms and activities that pupils, staff, and governors have is how we manage change and how we cope with change and changes that will happen. People in our work, some of those people are deciding to have different jobs so there has been a reorganisation of jobs there and all of that is being looked at so we are all looking at having people cope with change. That's the type of support people have been having at the moment.

We have had a lengthy lockdown. Please don't make us suffer any more. Please tell me how you are going to help the children in the school.

Yes, it's been a tough year and a half, and it's been difficult for everybody – for you and your teachers, everybody in your community, so in terms of supporting the school we have mentioned that quite a bit. We are looking after your teachers and staff so that they can look after you.

That was the last of our questions.

Pupils were thanked for their attendance at the meeting and told that minutes of both of the meetings would be sent to them.

Pupils were reminded that this was the last day of the consultation and for receiving responses as part of the consultation. As well as the form, they were told that they could send any comments by email if they didn't want to use the form.

Would you like to be split up from your friends, and what would you think if Powys was thinking of doing this to you?

No, I don't think I would like to be split up from my friends. I don't think that anybody would like to be split up from their friends, but this is something the Council has to do. Every Council has to look at their schools. You've made it very very clear that splitting from your friends is worrying for you, and we'll make sure that is in the report as well.

Pupil voice in Llanbedr is strong. And your voice and your views and those points that have been raised will be minuted, and you've had two hour long meetings, and made sure your questions had been asked and asked again for clarity, so thank you. You've been very clear, and you have got a powerful voice in the school, and your time is appreciated and also your preparation for today.

Before we go, just to make sure that the minutes are correct, could you let us know who is in the room with you as we saw somebody's thumb on the screen. Have you got a teacher or somebody else in the room?

No

We saw a thumb on the screen. If there is anybody else there can you let us know and we will put their name in the minutes?

There's nobody else in the room.

Pupils were thanked again, and it was said that the Cabinet want to visit Llanbedr school to see the school before making their decision.

ii) Summary of other comments made by pupils

In addition to the meeting with the School Council, 22 consultation response forms and 46 written responses were received from pupils, as well as 1 document containing brief statements from multiple pupils.

The comments raised in these responses are included in the 'issues raised' in section 6 of this report. However, they are also summarised below:

Impact on the community

- Concern about the impact on the community from the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. School

Travel implications

- Concerns about additional travel

Comments about Llanbedr C. in W. School

- Outdoor learning provision is excellent
- Pupils enjoy attending the school
- The school has excellent teachers
- Pupils had problems at previous schools that they don't have at Llanbedr
- Breakfast club and other clubs are great
- There is excellent ICT provision at the school
- Pupil numbers are rising

Impact on pupils

- Pupils may be separated from their friends

Impact on families

- The closure would cause stress for families

Comments about schools that pupils might transfer to

- No schools in the area have enough surplus capacity to take all the pupils from Llanbedr
- Pupils do not want to go to a larger school
- Larger class sizes may mean that pupils don't get the support they need
- Concern that there will be limited club provision at other schools

Comments about the consultation process

- Criticism of the timing of the consultation
- Concern about the planning capability of Powys CC
- Concern that Powys CC is closing small rural schools

4. CONSULTATION MEETINGS WITH STAFF AND GOVERNORS

Consultation meetings were held with the staff and governors of the school.

The issues raised at these meetings are summarised below:

i) Consultation meeting with Staff of Llanbedr C. in W. School

- You say that pupils would attend larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extracurricular activities and opportunities. What evidence do you have to support this statement?
- I don't agree with what you're saying about clubs in larger schools. I've been the Deputy Head of a school with over 400 pupils and a Headteacher of over 200 pupils. In a larger school you are restricted by numbers, so you have your after school clubs but they are restricted as you can only have 20 or 30 in one club. When you've got two streams in a school, or sometimes three streams in a school, and you've got a Year 5-6 football club, for example, you can only have so many in that club so children do not have full access to all those clubs all the time.
- In larger schools, some clubs are on offer to some year groups, but they're not on offer to all year groups, so it's done on a rota basis. You may have some children that cannot be offered technology in the summer term, whereas it's then art in the autumn term and it's purely because of numbers. So you don't have extracurricular activities available to all the pupils all the time, they don't have that access. When I came to Llanbedr school, it opened my eyes to what extra curricular provision is. The scope that we have at Llanbedr School is not replicated in any of the schools in the cluster, nor is it replicated in the other schools that you've mentioned in the consultation document.
- We do 2 clubs every night, so on Monday for example, we have Puppet Club and Welsh Club. Tuesday we have Art and Craft Club, IT Club and Technology Club. I completed a community impact assessment questionnaire and in there it says all the clubs that are on offer. You may not have the staff, but the staff you do have are highly skilled staff. You've also got a huge range of community members and volunteers that come in of their own time running those clubs, you don't get that in larger schools. You don't get that community. Being a rural school, it really opened my eyes to how much the community actually support the school. All our children can attend all the clubs. We also do extracurricular activities during the daytime. The staff at Llanbedr work hard and they work extra hard in order to ensure that the children do have that provision.
- Our children have more opportunity to do more sports, the reason being that we've got small numbers, so they get thrown in at the deep end and they have experiences they wouldn't necessarily have in a larger school. I have also taught in a three-form entry 600 pupil school and a two-form entry 400 pupil school and there's nowhere near the opportunities that

children at Llanbedr have compared to those schools. We reached the national finals twice in cricket. We've reached regional finals twice in football. For a small rural school, that is quite outstanding. Pupils get opportunities to do sports they wouldn't ordinarily do – girls get to play football, cricket, rugby and netball. All pupils have an opportunity to attend a residential visit each year in Key Stage 2, taking part in things like coastering, mountain biking, kayaking, abseiling and they get the opportunity to do those things from the age of seven, from Year 3 and I've watched a Year 3 throw themselves into the sea in Pembrokeshire and you just don't get those opportunities in a larger school.

- The other statement that was made was pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum. So why do you think the six other schools are better equipped than Llanbedr Church School to meet the requirements of the new curriculum?
- At the moment we are coordinating effectively the national curriculum requirements. What's the difference between the new curriculum and the four core purposes, because that is what we're working towards? Why are the six other schools better equipped than we are?
- To embed those four core purposes you need to have that knowledge of all those areas of learning, you need that experience – you don't just want to be working on one area of learning, plus we do have the six members of staff in our school and each of us do have an area of learning, but it's about putting those areas of learning together to encompass your school vision. We have done a lot of work as staff, and we feel if anything, we're sharing what we are doing with the cluster schools. The question was how would the other schools be better equipped? We are sharing what we are doing with other schools, STEM is a very good example of what we've done in our school and how we've shared that with the cluster schools. So how are the schools therefore better equipped?
- There isn't anything in the Donaldson report or the new Curriculum for Wales that says that it can't be delivered in small schools.
- If any of you were to visit our school and come to see us as you are more than welcome to do so, you'd see that we are very well equipped, very well resourced and ready to embrace the new curriculum. The Headteacher has already mentioned that we are taking large steps towards making that commitment to the new curriculum and actually sharing really good practice within schools in our cluster so what I would like to know is how will this be improved for the pupils transferring to them. In addition, one of the schools in the proposal is out of county, so do you have a good knowledge of the standards within that school and how well will it be beneficial for the pupils moving there.
- Will education standards be improved though? Because that is what the consultation document says, it will be improved.
- Our professional development is very good at the moment and all staff have professional learning logs. The professional development is very

good and the cluster working that they have done and with other agencies is very good.

- Could I ask you to explain how closing Llanbedr means that our pupils would be more able to collaborate deeply to take on the challenges of the new curriculum? And the emphasis is on the collaboration.
- You've stated that the best interests of the learners are at the forefront of all proposals on decision making. How have you ensured that this is going to be the case for learners in Llanbedr school?
- I'd like to know what is the impact on wellbeing of this proposal amidst the current pandemic, for our pupils, their parents and us as staff. Have you even considered this? And how has this been considered? I don't particularly feel like you are considering my wellbeing or that of my colleagues. I had an email from Councillor Phyl today, which I actually found quite offensive, saying that he's considering my wellbeing.
- In the consultation document with regards to combined age classes, it says that small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes with Key Stage 2 in one and Foundation another. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small it is more difficult to ensure that all pupils are probably challenged. What evidence do you have to support that statement, which is in the consultation document?
- We're moving towards a new curriculum and as has been mentioned, it's stage, not age. Teaching a whole key stage class actually lends itself towards that. For example, this morning I had year three class pupils rounding numbers to 2 decimal places. If I was teaching a year three class, that scale wouldn't be on the table. There are opportunities within teaching whole key stage classes for children to be stretched and to be supported and scaffolded as well.
- What evidence do you have that supports that statement for our pupils at Llanbedr, the statement that you've made – what evidence have you got to support that, and we're also not in two classes, we're in three classes, we've always been in three small classes.
- What is being asked is what evidence do you have that supports that statement? Because it shouldn't be a general statement. It's in the consultation document for our school. So it should relate to what's happening in our school.
- It's down to building capacity. We know that our cluster schools also have teachers and teaching assistants in their classes. It's how you use those teaching assistants and how highly qualified they are so that they can take groups of children for literacy and numeracy. It is how effectively and efficiently your staff are used. It's about building capacity in school. It's about working with what you've got.
- There are few statements in the consultation document that seem to be general statements which are not related to our school yet it's a consultation document for Llanbedr Church in Wales School.

- Previously you've discounted a federation between Crickhowell Primary School because it's not a Church school, but yet you've listed it now as a school for our children to attend. I was just wondering why.
- If we can't federate, why are our children going to be sent to Crickhowell then? Because that's one of the schools you put down for our children to go to.
- The status of our school is a Church in Wales School so families come to us because of the Christian ethos, because we are a Church in Wales School. Then you're saying just to send them to the nearest school. Surely that dismisses that we are a Church school and that's why parents come to us. We know our parents. We know our families. They come to us because of the Christian ethos.
- Is there availability in Llangattock for our children?
- Where is the next Church in Wales School?
- On Page 9 of the Transforming Education Strategy, it states that the highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development. But how have you demonstrated this to us?

ii) Consultation meeting with Governors of Llanbedr C. in W. School

- Why have Powys proceeded with this proposal during a global pandemic? Considering the wellbeing and mental health of our children is obviously paramount, could you explain?
- Your Strategic Aim One states that the objective is to develop a network of all age schools around the 13 current Secondary schools. What are the plans for Crickhowell?
- Why are you planning to close our school now?
- Do you mean to say then that you are going to close all small schools?
- Am I not right in saying that Powys set their own funding formula, which gave more money to small schools?
- You've actually given more money to small schools, by the way you funded them, and now you're complaining that they've got more money?
- The figure you're quoting is actually incorrect because our numbers are incorrect. It doesn't actually cost £6000 per pupil, it's less, and it actually brings us down nearer to the rest of the schools to the average of primary schools.
- Normally we're used as governors to starting the meeting with a prayer, and that seemed to have somehow not happened. But just to reassure everybody, I prayed for us all quietly here, so I'm sure we can do our best. I had a nice letter from Lynette today advising me of the addendum to the consultation and the revised figures. I was actually quite surprised by that because I had understood that in your meeting with Llangattock last week, you'd agreed the capacity at Llangattock to be 117...
- I understand that although the current pupil numbers are 101, in September there will be 103. Of those 17 or 18 available places, how

many of those are in the nursery? Do you know how the pupils are spread across the year groups?

- Obviously you're aware of the obligations on the Council under the Organisational Code to guarantee places in alternative church schools if you're closing a church school. I was really pleased to see that the Transforming Education Strategy claims to be answering the call for an increase in faith schools. Given that more than half of the Llanbedr children come from outside the catchment area, it's safe to say pupils want to attend a church school. Can you actually guarantee that a reasonable proportion, or even ideally all of the Llanbedr children are going to be able to be found spaces in alternative church schools?
- Pupils won't be able to move to the same school, because there isn't another school that has the capacity to take them.
- You haven't got church places for as many as half of the pupils.
- I think I can speak on behalf of the all the governors, that we were really hoping that Councillor Phyl Davies would be with you today because he didn't appear at our meeting in January and I feel that as the Cabinet are the people who are going to be making this, from our perspective, momentous decision, we would like to be able to directly put our case in front of the person who has the portfolio for education in Powys, and although there are many disadvantages to having to conduct it over Zoom, one of the advantages I guess from a Councillor's perspective is rather than travelling down to the South of Powys, he would have been able to join us for today's session and heard directly from us about our many concerns.
- I have been writing to Cabinet members and I'm getting no response. It isn't really reassuring to us that we are actually being directly heard by the people who are the decision makers in relation to this situation. We understand the role that officers have, but the buck stops with the members who are going to make this decision and it feels like there isn't a way through for us to communicate directly with them.
- We know these schools, we've got friends whose children go to these schools. My own grandchildren go to some of these schools, so we know their classification, but we also know in detail what Llanbedr is offering. As governors we are scrutinizing the delivery of education in great detail and everything we are finding out about the delivery within Llanbedr is of a positive nature and has become more positive in the last few years. The reports from the Challenge Advisor are very positive. We are being used often as an exemplar of good practice, so we are being reassured that the education that is being delivered is of a good standard. You have to convince us before we can give up the fight. You say that these other heads are now convinced, so what are the areas that they are saying that they were wrong about? What areas are they saying that they are now benefiting from?
- Some of the areas being identified as strengths in other schools are strengths in our school already and I think there also needs to be a critique

that larger schools do not work for all pupils. Some people, maybe half a dozen or more pupils who attend Llanbedr are there because they haven't settled, and the larger schools haven't worked for them. It isn't all plus on one side, and all negative on the other. Small schools can deliver. My own children went to this school and it was exactly what they needed at that time in their life, they went on and they flew afterwards. They both went into higher education, did really well and I will always be grateful for the firm foundation both in terms of education and values that were formed at Llanbedr and the size of the school was nothing but a benefit from their perspective.

- I don't think Estyn have ever said that small schools don't work have they? Do Powys County Council feel that Estyn were recommending the closure of their small schools?
- Quite a lot of presumptions are made against Llanbedr as it's a small school in the consultation and I just wanted to know if maybe you realize you know some of the things are wrong, such as numbers on roll – you know they're actually rising, not falling. Is there anyone that can comment on that?
- Will the data in the consultation document be changed for schools in the catchment area as well?
- The things you've been saying about Llanbedr are obviously great things because it's a very, very good little school, an exemplar little school so that given that the educational standards we have are high and the fabric of our building owned by the church, not yourselves, is very good, and that we have excellent community engagement with a huge amount of parental involvement, and we have a wealth of extracurricular activities at the school, do you still maintain that with this wealth of information that our school is possibly still not viable?
- These [consultations] are going to come in waves and Crickhowell isn't going to be looked at for potentially quite a few years – so are we just a random dot on a map that you just thought potentially that's where we could go, but actually now that you've actually seen the exemplary things that we do here, is it now a point where actually we are having to fight a corner for no apparent reason, because actually we're very good at what we do?
- How can you explain the best interest for our pupils in bigger classrooms in a bigger school?
- We have some kids from large schools, and they've come to us as they didn't thrive in bigger schools. I come from a small school. I was the only one going up to high school on my own and I was fine, so it doesn't harm the kids to be in smaller schools, smaller classrooms because they all have got to help each other out so it doesn't seem to affect the kids at all.
- I just have another question, because one of the schools that you are putting forward that our children could go to already has year groups in the class of over 30 children – well over 30 children, and the other school that you are suggesting they go to also has shared year groups, they have the

same amount of classes as us, so don't have a separate class for each year group – so I don't see that you're offering our children any better educational experience, in either of those schools.

- I think a lot of concerns from parents is being a small school, there are families that go to the school, who have got quite large families and there are also friendship groups who would like to go to the same school, and not every school that you're offering can take those children in those year groups. I think you're splitting our children, and just putting them in a school that's got space, instead of giving them the choice.
- You are saying how it does come down to parental choice, of convenience and everything like that, but a lot of children that come to this school it's not at their parents' convenience – they come to this school because it is the best school for them, so this is what parents believe for our children. So, saying that it's all down to convenience and everything like that isn't quite the thing.
- The thing with that is the disruption to the pupils and the staff relationships, because they are being presumed to be scattered amongst the local areas. The local community is going to be dissolved in order to fill places at other schools. Is that fair?
- I just feel that you don't know this community. Llanbedr School is at the heart of it, and I know the rural communities are very important and I just think it seems very unfair particularly at this point in time. It feels like the pupils would be scattered rather than moved in their best interests.
- You keep saying parents will have a choice. There is not a single other school in the area that parents could get their children to anyway, never mind easily, even from a practical point of view, with journeys and distances, and if they have to have a working day themselves and that sort of thing, which is anything close to the same ethos and character and learning standard and all the rest of it that is unique to Llanbedr. So, to say that they would have a choice of other schools to send their children to is just simply untrue.
- By closing Llanbedr, you are removing that choice from parents. You are removing the choice for more than half of the children that currently choose Llanbedr to go to a church school. You are removing the choice for families who have chosen to drive across the catchment area to schools where their children thrive. We've got children who have come from other bigger schools in a wide area, and their parents have chosen to take them away from those larger schools to send them to a smaller school where they have subsequently thrived under the pastoral care and ethos and friendship groups and all the rest of it that they find in Llanbedr, and that is what you are in danger of destroying.
- Purely on procedure you talked about that ultimately the Cabinet is going to make a decision, but in order for the Cabinet to make its decision, they have to have all the correct facts and all the correct feedback that is actually relevant to making that decision. Will the group who are actually preparing the report that will go to Cabinet make a recommendation to

Cabinet, or is it just going to be the statement of facts and then allow the Cabinet to make their own decisions? Who will be making the recommendation to Cabinet?

- The track record from my experience is that usually when recommendations are made, they are usually followed, so ultimately there's a possibility that the quality of that recommendation will determine the outcome. For the Cabinet to go against the recommendation is not something that is normal. So really, the onus is not really on the Cabinet but on the people making the recommendation.
- Once the recommendations are put to the Cabinet and the Cabinet make a decision, will that be the final decision, or will there be another opportunity for the Cabinet to be challenged on that decision and perhaps put the officers who make their recommendation to answer those challenges?
- Before making a final decision, what recourse do we have to go to Welsh Government to actually challenge the Cabinet decision, which is a very, very tall order because generally speaking, Welsh Government will have to have some pretty overwhelming reasons to overrule a Cabinet decision, and I suspect it's unlikely to happen, which means it is absolutely essential that the quality of the report made by the officers is fully supportable and that there is an opportunity, subsequently, once the Cabinet makes their decision for there to be another opportunity for us to discuss the matter with Cabinet before it gets to the point where it has to be referred to Welsh Government.
- Is there an ultimate legal framework, legal opportunity to actually challenge an ultimate decision, within the Welsh Government?
- I think you've now gathered that you're likely to get some significant challenges, if this [consultation] does not go the right way.
- I would just like to ask whether we as governors get a chance to see the report before it goes to Cabinet.

5. ESTYN

Estyn's response to the consultation is provided below:

Estyn's response to the proposal by Powys County Council to close Llanbedr Church in Wales School from the 31 August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

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

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

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

Summary / Conclusion

The proposal by Powys County Council is to close Llanbedr Church in Wales School from the 31 August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

The council lays out a clear rationale for its proposal and shows how the proposal will address help to address the impact of decreasing pupil numbers and the need to reduce the council's surplus places in primary schools. The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stages in one class. The proposal argues that because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are challenged appropriately. Furthermore, the proposal identifies that as the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment and this limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school.

The proposer has consulted as widely as possible due to the current pandemic, including with children and young people, parents/carers, school staff, a wide range of interested parties and members of the public. However, there is some concern that this was done during a period when public meetings could not be held.

Estyn is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area. However, there are concerns regarding the loss of nursery provision in a rural area.

Description and benefits

Powys County Council has laid out the benefits to this proposal clearly. The proposal will address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, reduce the council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools and lead to revenue savings. Based on the January 2021 pupil numbers from Reception to Year 6 the surplus capacity of Llanbedr Church in Wales school is 39.8%. The projected pupil numbers for the school shows clearly that pupil numbers are expected to fall from 40 to 31 by January 2025. Llanbedr's budget share per pupil is higher than the Powys average and is ranked the 10th highest school in Powys by budget share per pupil. Closure of the school would reduce the number of schools in Powys and would enable the council to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all Powys learners.

The council identifies many of the disadvantages associated with the proposal. The main disadvantages for pupils include additional travel for pupils and the difficulty of attending after school activities. However, around half of the pupils that currently attend Llanbedr C. in W. School live closer to other schools. The proposal also identifies the loss of nursery education in the rural area of Llanbedr. However, it does not detail clearly enough how the authority proposes to address the lack of nursery provision in Llanbedr, as the alternative non-maintained settings listed all involve travel. Neither does the proposal offer any information on the availability of public transport to and from the village.

Since the proposal includes the closure of a rural school, the council has identified clearly the reasons for formulating the proposal in appendix C of their consultation document – impact of each option on rural schools' criteria. The council has identified twelve possible options, including maintaining the status quo, the establishment of multi-site schools, forming a federation or amalgamating schools. They have analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats along with assessing the options against several critical success factors, of all twelve options. Based on this analysis they have identified the preferred option of closing Llanbedr Church in Wales School from the 31 August 2022, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. There is capacity in all three Powys schools named as possible schools to receive the pupils of Llanbedr Church in Wales School.

The information provided in the proposal indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School,

the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the future use of the building is outside the council's jurisdiction. It would be up to the Diocese to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether facilities would remain in Llanbedr. The school is not the only remaining public building in the community, as there is a village hall located in the village. Therefore, should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place elsewhere.

The proposal identifies two possible risks to the project:

- a period of uncertainty for Llanbedr C. in W. School if a statutory process is carried out and implemented which might have a negative effect on standards at the school; and
- uncertainty for staff whilst the process is ongoing

The council suggests mitigating actions through providing advice and support to the school and governing body to ensure that standards and performance do not deteriorate during the transition period. Furthermore, the council would engage with staff throughout the process to keep them informed of developments. Should the proposal be implemented, a staff redundancy process would be necessary for staff currently employed at Llanbedr C. in W. School. This would be conducted in line with the relevant human resource (HR) policies for teaching and support staff. All cleaning and catering staff that are currently employed centrally by the council would be supported by the relevant HR policies for council employees.

The proposal acknowledges that the full implementation of the proposals would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr Church in Wales school is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on pupils' ability to access after school activities. Travel could also impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events and meetings. The proposal does not address this well. For example, it does not mention whether there is public transport to and from the village of Llanbedr and does not detail how it proposes to address travel issues related to after school activities.

The council has considered the extent to which this proposal supports the target of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). As the proposal is to close an English-medium school and for the pupils to attend other English-medium schools it is not linked to the targets in the Council's WESP. The proposals would therefore not expand or reduce the availability of Welsh language provision.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The section in the proposal on its impact on standards, wellbeing, provision and leadership in all three schools includes a suitable range of relevant detail. The proposal states that standards, wellbeing, provision and leadership in all three Powys primary schools named as possible options for the pupils of Llanbedr Church in Wales are currently good. The council's view is that all three Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School. Therefore, it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards, progress overall or the quality of teaching.

The council's view is that all three Powys schools identified in the proposal would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils within single year groups or dual year group class. Neither is it anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.

As there are permanent leadership arrangements in place at, Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School and Llangynidr C.P. School, it is the council's view is that leadership and management at the alternative schools would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Llanbedr.

The proposer has carried out an equality impact assessment of the proposal and claims reasonably that there is no reason to believe that the nearest alternative schools would be unable to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils belonging to ethnic groups other than White British, pupils eligible for free school meals and Looked After Children.

6. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD

The following tables list the issues raised during the consultation period and provide the local authority's response to these issues.

1. COMMENTS ABOUT LLANBEDR C. IN W. SCHOOL

1.1 General positive comments about the school

1.1.1	Even though Llanbedr is a small rural school, it is flourishing and successful.	The Council notes these positive comments about Llanbedr C. in W. School.
1.1.2	It has a strong teaching team, extremely supportive parents and most of all flourishing, happy, well-educated children.	As above.
1.1.3	Llanbedr CiW school is an excellent place for children to learn and develop and that the atmosphere and school spirit is first class.	As above.
1.1.4	Llanbedr School is a wonderful place, pupils love coming to school each day to learn something new and see their friends.	As above.
1.1.5	At Llanbedr School, children are truly at the centre of school life which revolves around their needs and not the convenience of the staff. Children are involved in every aspect of school life.	As above.
1.1.6	All pupils are supported individually in Llanbedr school, programmes are unique to each pupil's need. Staff undertake training to ensure they are well informed to cater for their needs.	As above.
1.1.7	Every child at the school is treated as an individual. Their strengths are recognised, allowing them to grow in confidence and ability.	As above.
1.1.8	The school is well attended, and pupils are thriving both in regards to their learning and also, especially relevant in the	As above.

	current pandemic situation, in their health and wellbeing needs.	
1.1.9	Llanbedr is a stand-out school where our children are flourishing. The school embodies what education should be about: it is nurturing, inclusive, community-focussed, digitally rich and environmentally robust.	As above.
1.1.10	Llanbedr provides an excellent, well-rounded education for all children, caring for every situation. This enables a varied learning experience with possibilities academically and with life skills and Christian values.	As above.
1.1.11	A price cannot be put on the warm and supportive environment that Llanbedr school provides to their students.	As above.
1.1.12	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School is an excellent school, where well-being of all is central to the success of the school: a place of aspiration, achievement and hope within a rural community.	As above.
1.1.13	Members of my generation have moved home, from as far afield as London, so their child can attend Llanbedr School, as the services it offers are unique. It has an identity that no other school in the region has. Being such an outstanding individually run school it helps the communities thrive by attracting younger people to the area.	As above.

1.2 Comments about the quality of provision at the school

1.2.1	By highlighting that the school is small, it seeks to imply it is a bad school because it is small. This is not supported by evidence. Its Estyn report was good and the school has shown sustained growth in pupil numbers since 2017 with a high degree of satisfaction from parents and respect for the head teacher. Its size is strength and not a weakness.	As stated in the Consultation Document, the Council recognises the strengths and qualities of Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School. Having addressed the issues raised by Estyn, the school was removed from the category of Estyn monitoring' in 2015. It is also recognised that the National School Categorisation System for 2019 (the last time that the categorisation
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		<p>exercise was undertaken) put the school in the ‘green’ support capacity, which identifies how much support a school needs. The school was also graded as B for the ‘improvement capacity’ category. The National Categorisation system has been suspended in 2020-2021 and will also remain suspended for the 2021-22 academic year to help ease the burden on schools caused by the pandemic.</p> <p>The Council also recognises that pupil numbers at the school are at their highest point for a number of years at 49 pupils, which include 4 nursery-aged pupils.</p> <p>However, the aim of the proposal is to improve entitlement and experience for all learners. As stated in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School teaches children in three classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council’s funding formula, the school’s funding per pupil is higher than the Council’s average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys’ Strategy is intended to improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil’s learning entitlement and experience.</p>
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		<p>It is clear that the Council's expenditure on children in the smallest schools is very generous, but through all of the engagements with stakeholders and the subsequent development of the Strategy to Transform Education in Powys, it is very apparent that there needs to be a vision for a stronger entitlement for all learners in Powys and equity for learners across the county. That vision, as the education professions moves towards the realisation of the new Curriculum for Wales does require the Council to pursue a transformational vision that secures an attractive entitlement and equity for all learners, professional learning for all staff and secure leadership across all schools.</p> <p>High levels of flexibility and organisation are needed in lesson planning to ensure that teaching caters for both age groups and all abilities within the class. This additional workload is a risk that the education profession needs to manage together, given the limited numbers of teachers to carry the additional roles and responsibilities in a very small school. Very small schools not only have fewer qualified teachers in school to design the curriculum, but generally the limited numbers of staff will in all probability between them have a narrower range of disciplinary-specific expertise for the learners in that school than would probably be the case in a large school. In a larger school, each member of staff can lead on a specified area where they may have an appropriate background and in which they can continue to gain growing levels</p>
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		<p>of expertise. Effective learning and teaching requires disciplinary-specific expertise which will become increasingly relevant in developing a curriculum as learners progress. Although the guidance promotes inter-disciplinary approaches, it also recognises the importance that disciplinary-specific expertise plays in such approaches.</p> <p>A significant responsibility for the Council, and others, over the coming years will be to ensure that every learner in Powys benefits from the step change that is anticipated through the changing curriculum. The Council will work with all the schools in our care, of whatever size, and will provide significant support, whilst also encouraging collaboration. However, it would be inappropriate if officers of the authority did not stress the additional demands on staff in very small schools, whilst doing all we can to facilitate the lightening of the load.</p> <p>Additionally, it is only fair that professional primary experts within the Council comment on the balance of potential risks and benefits to a child when being taught by the same person over a number of years during their primary education.</p>
1.2.2	Llanbedr CinW school is currently rated Green: 'requiring little support'	As above.
1.2.3	Estyn gave the school a clean bill of health in 2015 and no other inspections have taken place although one was scheduled for March this year.	As above..

1.2.4	The school has been at the heart of Llanbedr since 1728 and offers pupils a rewarding education, as evidenced by recent Estyn reports.	As above.
1.2.5	The school is providing quality education and is now achieving far above their last ESTYN report which now out of date and was as a result of different head / leadership team.	As above.
1.2.6	The LEA Core Visit Report states that "Staff at Llanbedr have carried out a range of innovative STEM activities over the last three years and have been instrumental in leading the Crickhowell cluster in this area of learning."	It is recognised that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary school has played a leading role in planning for the new Curriculum for Wales within the Crickhowell cluster. However, the Council remains concerned about the challenge facing very small schools during a time of significant educational changes, as outlined in 1.2.1 above.
1.2.7	The LEA core visit report says "Teaching and learning across the school is strong and the consistency of the quality of teaching is good, following an effective coaching, mentoring and shadow teaching programme embedded by the Headteacher."	The Council has no concerns about the current quality of leadership at Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School However, the Council remains concerned about the challenge for headteachers leading very small schools during a time of significant educational changes
1.2.8	The LEA School Core Visit Report states that "There is a detailed in-house tracking spreadsheet for each class with each year group identified clearly. This tracking process is used in conjunction with the school's other tracking tool INCERTS very well." "This has proved to be very effective in focusing support and intervention to pupils when they need it and linked closely to a timeframe."	As above and 1.2.5.
1.2.9	On recent reports from the LEA there are no concerns regarding mixed classes, leadership or management at Llanbedr and are full of praise.	As above.
1.2.10	The LA Core Visit Report for Llanbedr proves that the benefits of well run, well organised smaller school have distinct advantages. The after-school clubs, cross age friendship groups, in-house tracking spreadsheet for each year, inter	As above.

	school sports, have produced happy, well-educated caring pupils.	
1.2.11	It is understood the LEA Core Visit Report commended Llanbedr School for its STEM activities for which it leads the Crickhowell cluster group, thereby showing what a good school, it is.	As above.
1.2.12	The claim that larger schools provide a wider range of educational activities has no supporting evidence, and is a view or opinion, whereas the educational activities present in Llanbedr C in W school have been observed or assessed by the LEA, and given a glowing report.	As above.
1.2.13	Llanbedr Church in Wales school is, contrary to the picture painted in the document, a thriving primary school with excellent standards in both education and leadership. This is confirmed in ERW reports on recent visits to school by the LEA. What evidence does Powys have for their claims to the contrary?	As above.
1.2.14	Llanbedr school is the best school around for miles, Llanbedr school make learning fun.	The Council has no concerns about the quality of education provided at any of the alternative schools in the cluster. All the alternative schools are regarded as 'self-improving' schools, according to the latest National Categorisation in 2019. Estyn, in its response to this consultation, has concluded that 'It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area'.
1.2.15	The provision at Llanbedr is probably the best in the surrounding area.	As above.
1.2.16	Education has suffered during COVID 19 and Llanbedr was a fantastic example of online and supportive learning.	Comment noted.

1.2.17	Llanbedr in the last three years has been involved in STEM activities and have done extremely well.	Comment noted.
1.2.18	Llanbedr school appears to be quite forward thinking with its focus on things such as technology and conservation.	Comment noted.
1.2.19	Standards are high in this school. Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School is an excellent school, where well-being of all is central to the success of the school: a place of aspiration, achievement and hope within a rural community.	Comment noted.
1.2.20	This school provides excellent educational opportunities for all its children.	Comment noted.
1.2.21	Mentoring is excellent.	Comment noted.
1.2.22	Tracking and monitoring is closely monitored as pupils develop through the school. Parents have easy contact.	Comment noted.
1.2.23	In the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, we are about communities flourishing together to achieve immeasurably more than we can imagine, with our culture is one of high aspiration rooted in our Christian values, as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School demonstrates this through excellent leadership and management and a proven performance record of high standards. This is born out with visits from the Diocesan Director of Education and with regular reports and dialogue with the Challenge Advisors.	Comment noted.

1.3 Ability to deliver the new Curriculum for Wales

1.3.1	It is suggested, on page 13, that larger schools are better able to meet the requirements of the new curriculum. This is not the case in relation to Llanbedr school, as we have seen our school at the forefront of in the preparation for the implementation of the new curriculum. As the LEA Core Visit report states 'Staff at Llanbedr have carried out a range of innovative STEM activities	<p>The Council recognises that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is preparing well for the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales.</p> <p>The Council's primary specialists have been exploring how the authority can best support schools</p>
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	<p>over the last three years and have been instrumental in leading the Crickhowell cluster in this area of learning’.</p>	<p>to deliver the new curriculum for 2022. These education professionals are of the view that this will be significantly more challenging and will place significantly greater demands on teachers in very small schools. This does not mean that it would be impossible to deliver the new curriculum in these schools but it is clear that the skills required by teachers will need to be very wide ranging to support the full and effective fulfilment of the curriculum’s high ambitions.</p> <p>The new Curriculum for Wales is locally influenced and often pupil-led. All schools will design the detail of their own curriculum to suit their learners based on the four purposes and the six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE). Learners’ views about their experiences and about what, how and where they learn should be taken seriously when a curriculum is being designed. The school’s curriculum needs to be co-constructed, encouraging learners, parents, carers and the local community to understand and contribute to its development. It should also draw on a wider range of experts and stakeholders who can contribute to learning.</p> <p>The curriculum needs to be innovative and creative. Teachers, with pupils, will select the content, with no prescription on how areas should be taught, but with guidance provided nationally on a wide range of widely-recognised pedagogical principles. Additionally, planning and designing the curriculum in</p>
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		<p>schools is a teacher responsibility, not one for support staff.</p> <p>Teachers in very small schools would need to plan for a mixed age range for all Areas of Learning and Experience. In some cases, this could involve preparing for and delivering for up to four different year groups for all six AoLEs. To ensure equity for learners, leaders and teachers across Wales, there needs to be a shared understanding of learner progression, including expectations around what progression may look like and the pace at which learners progress. This shared understanding is being developed through professional learning and dialogue, as an ongoing process both within and across schools. Practitioners can share and learn from each other's understanding of progression and adapt their teaching in the light of what is learned. This will be particularly challenging in a very small school with only two teachers, for example. If a member of staff is linking up with practitioners from other schools for all 6 AoLEs and across a wide age range they would need to be away from their class for a far greater amount of time than a teacher teaching a single year group or two year groups in a class, and who also leads on behalf of the whole school on a single AoLE such as Humanities.</p> <p>Good learning and teaching challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them. This is one of the 12</p>
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		pedagogical principles in the new curriculum and all teachers need to engage effectively with research and professional development to enable them to have high expectations of all learners and develop as 'high expectation' teachers who have more positive attitudes towards learners and more effective teaching practices. This is a priority for the Council to ensure equity for all learners.
1.3.2	Llanbedr is fully able to meet the requirements of the new curriculum, staff are undergoing training alongside staff in the other schools included as possible schools for our learners. Llanbedr has already worked with children on explaining the 4 purposes and areas of learning and all staff members have a responsibility in an area of learning. If you had visited the school you would have seen a display board depicting the number of various ways the new curriculum is already being deemed demonstrated in the learning of our learners.	As above.
1.3.3	Llanbedr school is a small rural school providing excellent education, already implementing the New Curriculum.	As above.
1.3.4	Llanbedr is perfectly placed to implement the new curriculum. It has already been implemented but with a far more engaging and nurturing experience than would be received in a larger school.	As above.
1.3.5	Despite being a small rural school Llanbedr has been making good progress in delivering the new curriculum.	As above.
1.3.6	I am confident Llanbedr School is ready to proceed with the new curriculum and my child will have all the opportunities they need to attain excellent progress in their education and more importantly in their personal development and wellbeing.	As above.
1.3.7	There isn't anything in the Donaldson report or the new Curriculum for Wales that says that it can't be delivered in small schools.	As above.

1.3.8	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School is a leading light in curriculum development for all school, sharing their passion and enthusiasm for new Welsh curriculum, engaging in numerous professional learning events.	It is recognised that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary school has played a leading role in planning for the new Curriculum for Wales within the Crickhowell cluster. However, the Council remains concerned about the challenge facing very small schools during a time of significant educational changes, as outlined in 1.2.1 above.
1.3.9	Llanbedr is the leading school in the Crickhowell area in terms of implementing and delivering the new curriculum for Wales. The current head is chair of the cluster groups of the local schools and Llanbedr is currently being used as a template for good practice.	As above.
1.3.10	Our school is leading the cluster schools in our area in learning and we are more than ready for the new curriculum, and we welcome it.	As above.
1.3.11	The school throughout the Covid pandemic has been providing STEM learning, digital online learning linked HWB; providing a curriculum that reflects the aspiration of the Welsh education requirements to provide the 'Four Purposes' to support ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives, be informed citizens of Wales and the World and to be healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.	As above.

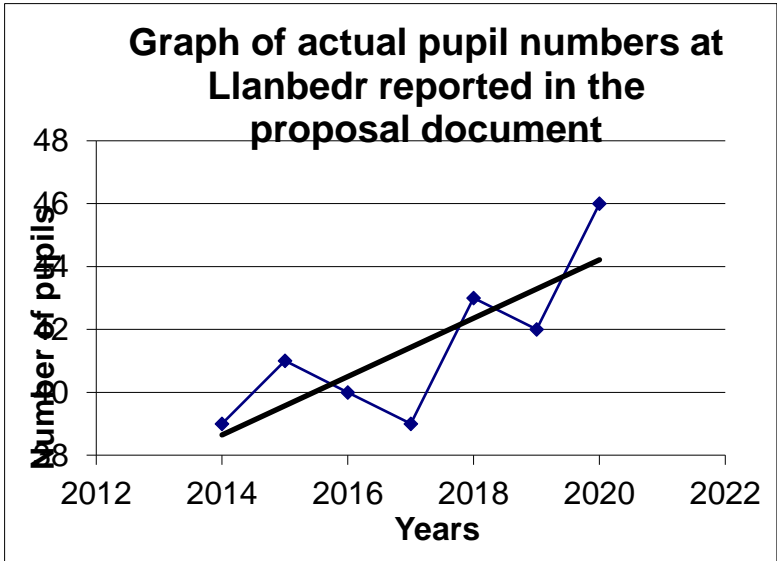
1.4 Everyone is friends at the school

1.4.1	The children of Llanbedr School have a close-knit relationship with each other, fostered by tight friendship groups which span year groups.	The Council welcomes these comments about the school.
1.4.2	This school is a whole school community. My daughter has friends in every year.	As above.
1.4.3	All the pupils are friends and enjoy playing together.	As above.

1.4.4	This week I was in conversation with parents while children of all ages played in Llanbedr's park, over the space of nearly one hour, and there was not one fight, outburst of tears, lost child or squabble, because they were all watching out for each other, playing happily together. This strong network of relationships is at risk, and would not be replicated in a larger school.	As above.
1.4.5	Outside school, I notice the older children look out for the younger ones in the playground and around the village. It is something they learn to do in school hours at Llanbedr, and this caring attitude is often missing in larger schools, where cliques tend to form especially outside school hours.	As above.
1.4.6	The children in Llanbedr are all treated as individuals and as a result become excellent pupils who are always ready to help younger members of the school	As above.
1.4.7	The pupils within the school are a close group where multiple friendships have been formed throughout the year groups. This is also reflected by the parents of pupils and demonstrates a positive, friendly and community atmosphere.	As above.
1.4.8	We are very lucky to be a family at Llanbedr School and we help each other.	As above.
1.4.9	The atmosphere is one of a large family with all the children looking out for each other – hence a longstanding “Buddy Bench”.	As above.
1.4.10	We may be small, but we are one big family.	As above.
1.4.11	The school is very family orientated, with just a small number, the school is able to offer a family approach for all of the children’s school life. The school supports the rural lifestyles, traditions, and cultures central to the area.	As above.
1.4.12	The children love going to school in Llanbedr and as parents we have never seen teacher pupil relationships before, like we have in Llanbedr. It's a great family.	As above.

1.4.13	At Llanbedr pupils feel part of a large family, they are helped by older pupils when they start, and in turn look after, help explain, coach and care for the younger ones. The whole school is based on the traditions and friendships of children, their parents and grandparents.	As above.
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1.5 Comments about pupil numbers / capacity

1.5.1	<p>The school's student population shows growth as indicated in the following diagram:</p>  <p>Graph of actual pupil numbers at Llanbedr reported in the proposal document</p>	<p>Historical pupil numbers are shown below:</p> <p><u>Llanbedr C. in W. School (N – Yr 6)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan 2014 – 39 • Jan 2015 - 41 • Jan 2016 – 40 • Jan 2017 – 39 • Jan 2018 – 43 • Jan 2019 - 42 • Jan 2020 - 46 <p>The Council recognises that the number of pupils on roll at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including nursery-aged pupils, is the highest since 2014.</p> <p>The current pupil numbers in September 2021 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N1 – 0 • N2 – 4 • R – 5 • Yr 1 – 6 • Yr 2 – 3 • Yr 3 – 12 • Yr 4 – 8
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yr 5 – 4 • Yr 6 - 7 <p>R – Year 6 (funded via delegated budget): 45 pupils N – Year 6: 49 pupils</p> <p>As a voluntary aided school, Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is responsible for its own admissions and admits nursery-aged pupils. The school has confirmed that a further 5 pupils are expected to join the school this year, increasing the number of pupils on roll to:</p> <p>Projected N – Year 6: 54</p> <p>The school's capacity is 57 which means that there are currently 8 places available.</p>
1.5.2	The number of children who wish to attend Llanbedr is on the rise because of our wonderful reputation and also the nurturing nature our children get, but you have chosen to ignore this. Why?	As above.
1.5.3	Pupil numbers at the school are currently 53, and projected to rise.	As above.
1.5.4	The number of 53 is expected to rise to capacity and more in the coming years.	As above.
1.5.5	Our school is getting bigger because lots of little ones are joining.	As above.
1.5.6	Pupil numbers at Llanbedr have been growing year on year. Planning permission has been granted by PCC for housing developments within the catchment area of this school. A substantial number of these houses are 3 bedrooms or more	The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant

	and therefore aimed at families who will need school places. This building will address the issue of surplus school places in this area of Powys without needing to close this excellent school.	increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
1.5.7	It does not make common sense or financial sense to close a school which is thriving and growing year on year. The school is situated in a rural community which is expanding in size with building developments in the school catchment area.	As above.
1.5.8	You need to consider the rising roll numbers year on year and the fact that parents of children younger than two years are registering their children, way ahead of time, to get into their preferred school of choice. Does this happen as frequently in any of the other local primary schools.	As Llanbedr is a voluntary aided Church in Wales school, it is responsible for managing its own admissions process. The Council manages the admissions process for community schools.
1.5.9	Capacity is stated as 57 so they are almost up to capacity. Why would you close a school that is almost full?	The Council recognises that the capacity of the school is 57. The challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. School are outlined in the consultation document, however, having a high number of surplus places is not one of these.
1.5.10	There is not a high number of surplus places as far as I am aware in Llanbedr School.	As above.
1.5.11	We're nearly full and soon we'll have a waiting list.	As above.
1.5.12	The school has almost reached its capacity number.	As above.
1.5.13	Although Llanbedr has a lower overall capacity at 57 the head count is currently sat at 78% capacity, which is on comparable with Crickhowell at 80% and Llangattock at 70%.	As above.

1.6 Comments about the school being a small school

1.6.1	Being in a small school gives us the opportunity to help and support those who need it incidentally in class and group learners according to stage not age.	It is the view of primary experts within the Council that mixed age classes of more than 2 years provide a challenge to teachers where they must constantly adapt their approach. As a result, a high level of
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		<p>flexibility and organisation in lesson planning is required to ensure that teaching caters for both age groups and all abilities within the class. This is an additional workload on teachers and leaders who have a range of other roles and responsibilities in a small school.</p> <p>Teachers in very small schools need to plan, implement and assess for the needs of up to four year groups within one class, and within each of those year groups plan, implement and assess for up to several ability groups, some with complex needs, thereby ensuring that the planning is differentiated for each child's needs. Larger schools have a greater level of staffing and single year group classes or a mixed year class of no more than usually 2 years.</p>
1.6.2	A small school allows each child a chance to shine both in sporting and academic situations.	As above.
1.6.3	As social restrictions have been in place during the past year, there have been reports that some children are experiencing anxiety as the population is allowed to socialise again in large groups. It could be argued that as Llanbedr CinW School offers small pupil numbers this will limit anxiety and those children who are transferred to larger schools may find it overwhelming (Tural et al, 2020).	All schools in Powys have received training specifically to guide them in supporting pupils with anxiety issues related to Covid. There is also a Hwb network for all school staff with further guidance and resources. In addition, all schools In Powys have a wellbeing lead or mental health champion who are skilled in supporting pupils' emotional needs. This is especially true of all schools in the Crickhowell cluster, who have been provided with the opportunity to undertake additional training by Trauma Informed Schools UK.

1.7 Comments about class arrangements

1.7.1	<p>I believe that a smaller class size with mixed ages comes with the following benefits: mixed age classes enable my child to access a wider range of curriculum, this helps to develop her strengths without having to wait until she moves up to the next school year. Combined age classes also teaches important social skills which will benefit her for transition to secondary school where she will be exposed to older children daily. With a smaller class size teaching staff have more opportunity to monitor the Childs learning and offer more one to one support.</p>	<p>It is the view of primary experts within the Council that mixed age classes of more than 2 years provide a challenge to teachers where they must constantly adapt their approach. As a result, a high level of flexibility and organisation in lesson planning is required to ensure that teaching caters for both age groups and all abilities within the class. This is an additional workload on teachers and leaders who have a range of other roles and responsibilities in a small school.</p> <p>Teachers in very small schools need to plan, implement and assess for the needs of up to four year groups within one class, and within each of those year groups plan, implement and assess for up to several ability groups, some with complex needs, thereby ensuring that the planning is differentiated for each child's needs. Larger schools have a greater level of staffing and single year group classes or a mixed year class of no more than usually 2 years.</p>
1.7.2	<p>Our experience of whole key stage classes is that it is working well at Llanbedr and has promoted our child's educational attainment. It works very flexibly according to the individual needs of the child. It means they can work at a higher level in literacy and a slower pace in numeracy. It also creates an environment where children from different year groups can help each other, fostering a caring and inclusive mindset in all the children.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

1.7.3	The wider age range in the classes is beneficial rather than confining learning, play and friendships to peer groups as in larger schools.	As above.
1.7.4	The combined age classes work well to challenge pupils. Pupils can fly high and be challenged beyond her year group in subject areas they are confident in and work at a slower pace in other areas when and if they need to.	As above.
1.7.5	I would question the point made in your consultation document that mixed age classes are a disadvantage having observed my children during their time at Llanbedr School.	As above.
1.7.6	There is no reason mixed age year groups impact negatively on pupils' education at Llanbedr thanks to the well-structured practices in place.	As above.
1.7.7	The emphasis on Stage of Learning as opposed to the age of the learner, is fully embracing the mixed age classes within the school.	As above.
1.7.8	The move to the new curriculum and the focus on the stage of the learner as opposed to the age of the learner, does not appear to have been considered in the document. The learners at Llanbedr enjoy learning from older peoples who raise their abilities to nurture younger pupils and increase their responsibilities. This is an invaluable opportunity for learners to have in their daily educational setting and should be embraced as exemplifying one of the full purposes of the new curriculum and creating good citizens.	As above.
1.7.9	Mixed year groups face similar challenges as large classes of the same age. You still have a wide range of abilities in both, it is how that range is managed that's important. Mixed age classes have not been viewed negatively at all in Llanbedr School's LEA Core visit reports, which report strong teaching and learning across the school with detailed in-house tracking, so any support or intervention can be actioned as needed.	As above.

1.7.10	Llanbedr is lucky to have small class sizes, meaning teachers will have the time to teach Welsh and to make sure all children get involved. Children are less scared to speak up in Welsh so they are not pressured to speak in large groups.	As above.
1.7.11	Hands on learning is easier to organise and to manage the new curriculum. Children quickly become confident with smaller class sizes.	As above.
1.7.12	Smaller classes are widely known to benefit pupils in numerous ways and should not be disregarded.	As above.
1.7.13	The curriculum they can provide is wide ranging and so much more support is offered to individual children due to smaller class sizes. I work in large schools and see that, due to large class sizes and staffing gaps they cannot offer full support to all children that need the extra support on a daily basis. There has never been any concerns on the teaching provision at Llanbedr CIW so I don't see how this can be used to say that a larger school would be better.	As above.
1.7.14	Most research carried out within the education sector advocate that classrooms should be smaller, and students should be given more opportunity to stretch their learning. Llanbedr provides this in abundance.	As above.
1.7.15	It is noted in the consultation by Powys County Council, it states that different year groups being taught in one classroom was unfavourable, however Singh et al (2014) states that psychotic episodes were noted in children who moved through different segments of 1 school such as nursery, foundation phase and juniors. It can therefore be argued that as Llanbedr CinW School limits the amount of movement through school, it is of benefit to a child, and not unfavourable. Strong relationships are therefore made with the Child's teacher, and the familiar environment offers reassurance.	As above.

1.7.16	The smaller numbers of pupils allow the teaching and support staff to quickly identify any learners requiring further support or more able children at that require increased challenge. This is fully catered for within the planning, teaching and monitoring of all pupils, alongside the differentiation of tasks that are prevalent in all classrooms.	All schools, regardless of size, are required to support, challenge and nurture all pupils to achieve their potential, and provide education tailored to the needs of the individual child.
1.7.17	The children taught at Llanbedr are treated as individuals and their individual learning needs are achieved and surpassed, with sporting achievements at County level along with countless competition winners in County wide entrants. This can only be achieved by excellent mentoring and confidence building within the Llanbedr school environment. These achievements by individuals would not have happened if they went to larger schools with bigger class numbers.	As above.
1.7.18	The smaller number of pupils in classes allows the teaching and support staff to quickly identify any learners requiring further support or more able children that require increase challenge. This is fully catered for in the planning, teaching and monitoring of all pupils, alongside the differentiation of tasks that are prevalent in all classrooms.	As above.

1.8 Comments about the school buildings / grounds

1.8.1	Llanbedr CinW School is a rural environment setting in South Powys and has at present 54 pupils in attendance. Vanaken and Dancaerts (2018), highlight in their systematic review that green space exposure has a direct link between children's mental health and educational development. Due to Llanbedr's large playing field and easy access to nature walks, this rural setting already offers an advantage to the well-being of those who choose to go there. School playgrounds are beneficial assets that play a vital and valuable role in school based health	The Council has outlined the challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. School and the condition of the learning environment is not one of these. The Consultation Document notes that the condition of the school is category B, and its suitability for teaching and learning is categorised as B/C. However, it is recognised that school buildings age and deteriorate – the Council commissioned a condition survey in 2020 that was carried out by
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	<p>education, furthermore, offering benefits to surrounding communities and their residents (Shoari et al, 2021). Recently children are spending more time indoors and as a result this has led to increased levels of screen time. The amount of physical activity has therefore decreased in the current pandemic climate having a direct impact on behavioural health (Jeffery et al, 2021), however when access to green spaces provided evidence has shown there is association with improved overall health as well as promotion in memory, attention restoration, reduction in stress and supportive social interactions (McCormick 2017). As Llanbedr CinW School is situated between the Sugar Loaf and the Black Mountains, views of green vegetation and flora is bountiful, Li and Sullivian (2016) found that when pupils were simply able to view greenery, it had a notable reduction in stress.</p>	<p>external surveyors which indicate that the condition grade of the school is now a C.</p> <p>This latest survey does not include an assessment of suitability therefore the Council has used the 2009 data in the Consultation Document.</p> <p>It is noted that the school is located in rural setting and that access to green space supports the wellbeing of children and adults alike.</p>
1.8.2	The building condition does not seem to be a concern beyond normal concerns for school buildings as far as I am aware.	As above.
1.8.3	The school grounds provide a wonderful situation for education, nestled between the Sugar loaf Mountain and Table Mountain. The area is full of geography and history together with a huge green environment for the children to explore. Their outside classrooms on site including the Church yard which is home to Yew trees over 2,000 years old, is an invaluable part of their outdoor education.	As above.
1.8.4	If you visited the school, you would meet a school family who learns in the purpose built outdoor learning environment so important to fire up children's enthusiasm and imagination; not just stuck learning in a classroom with a sterile hard outdoor environment for them.	As above.
1.8.5	The school grounds include a pond where pupils learn about frogs' lifecycles.	As above.

1.8.6	Our school is in a fantastic area, because we can walk up mountains, jump in rivers, do activities outside of our playing field, which makes us feel better and things we will remember forever.	As above.
1.8.7	We can do lots of learning outside we go on a lot of walks and trips with my friends and do fun stuff while we are learning.	As above.

1.9 Comments about equipment available at the school

1.9.1	Llanbedr School is very well equipped to support these children in their educational needs. where the great access to technology to help them with learning amongst much more that they need to learn. It's all easily accessible to every child without any issues of some having to wait for things to become available for them to be able to do their work will this be the case in a larger school?	<p>The Council notes these comments about access to technology at Llanbedr C. in W. School. There has been significant investment in digital equipment in all schools over the last two years as part of the Welsh Government Education Technology Programme. The current IT equipment available at the alternative schools in the cluster is outlined below. The schools provide</p> <p><u>Llangattock C. in W. Primary School:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 iPads • 44 chrome books/laptops approx. • 6 PCs <p><u>Crickhowell C.P. School:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 iPads • 60 chrome books • 16 think pads <p><u>Llangynidir C.P. School:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56 chrome books • 30 laptops
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 iPads
1.9.2	Llanbedr CiW School benefits from two long-standing charities: The Mary Herbert Trust and the Robert Hamer Educational Trust. It also receives considerable financial and voluntary support from the Friends of Llanbedr School, who raised £19,000 in 2019. The school consequently is unusually well equipped with IT and out-door learning facilities, and leads in STEM activities in the Crickhowell area.	The Council recognises that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School benefits from additional financial support. However, the aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners, and to provide equity across the system.
1.9.3	The literacy, numeracy and ICT skills at Llanbedr are second to none. Each pupil has access to their own iPad due to fundraising efforts by the Friends of the School. Crickhowell CP School, a bigger school with allegedly more opportunities, very recently had to publicly ask for help to purchase ICT equipment.	The Council notes that the Friends of Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School have been able to raise funds to provide IT equipment for the school and that this enables each pupil to access their own Ipads.
1.9.4	The Llanbedr classroom is much better equipped with IT for all children and the equipment is in good working order. In the previous school, children had to share iPad which meant not all children had fair access. The IT equipment was unreliable in its ability to connect to the internet and to charge. Use of IT is encouraged and supported at Llanbedr and crucially it works.	All of the alternative schools use technology to support teaching and learning, however, the Council notes that the Friends of Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School have been able to raise funds to provide IT equipment for the school and that this enables each pupil to access their own Ipads.
1.9.5	The learners all have access to IT equipment on a daily basis, we are moving towards digital competence. Would our learners be able to fully engage in a digitally rich school if they are moved?	As above.
1.9.6	Pupils get their own laptop and iPad at Llanbedr.	As above.

1.10 Comments about extra-curricular provision at the school

1.10.1	The school has a large range of after-school activities. All children have the opportunity to be included in sports and other teams.	The Council notes these comments about the range of extra-curricular activities available at the school. It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities.
1.10.2	Llanbedr provides after-school clubs which accommodate ALL the children.	As above.
1.10.4	All children in Llanbedr have access to every club which is not available in any other school in the cluster as theirs is based on numbers.	As above.
1.10.3	After school clubs are provided every day at Llanbedr and for all children. This is not the case in all schools.	<p>After-school clubs are provided at all the alternative schools. Specifically:</p> <p>Llangattock C.P. School provides extra-curricular activities and clubs after school from Monday to Thursday, and during the school day.</p> <p>Crickhowell C.P. School provides a range of extra-curricular after-school activities and clubs all week, and during the school day. A registered after-school club is available as well 5 nights a week.</p> <p>Llangynidr C.P. School has a registered after-school club which is open Monday to Thursday – the club could operate on a Friday but currently there is no demand for this session. The school also provides a range of extra-curricular activities, some during the school day.</p>

1.10.5	Learners in Llanbedr are all able to attend a different after school club every evening, I know that this is not available to other pupils in schools in the cluster, and even waiting lists are currently in place for learners to attend a favoured club. How does this provide more extra- curricular opportunities?	The Council notes these comments about the range of extra-curricular activities available at the school. It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities. Generally, larger schools have more staff available to provide a wider-range of extra-curricular opportunities.
1.10.6	The children enjoy a variety of activities both during the school day and in after school clubs which would not necessarily be available to a child travelling a further distance to other schools in the area.	As above.
1.10.7	Llanbedr offers a wide range of extracurricular activities such as gardening clubs, sports clubs and IT clubs.	As above.
1.10.8	Learners in Llanbedr are given the opportunity to attend outdoor residential trips from year 3, something that promotes independence, life skills and also fits with working with in four purposes of the new curriculum. Is there a school that learners are being offered that could match this, yet alone 'provide a wider range of opportunities'?	As above. All of the alternative schools provide opportunities for residential trips for their pupils.
1.10.9	Learners have the opportunity to represent their peers on a variety of communities including the school council, eco-council, Criw Cymraeg. Our numbers allow all pupils a position of responsibility from age 4 years, again valuable skills are acquired during these sessions.	The Council notes these comments about the activities that Llanbedr pupils take part in, and it is recognised there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school.

		However, all schools are required to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in committees and other activities, regardless of size of the school.
1.10.10	As a small school our children have the opportunity to join in many activities earlier and as a whole school, being there to support one another. Taking part in sporting events, all of KS2 join in football, hockey, cricket and cross country. Going on residential trips at a younger age.	The Council notes these comments about the activities that Llanbedr pupils take part in, and it is recognised there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all schools are required to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in sports activities and residential trips, regardless of size of the school.
1.10.11	All our children have the opportunity to compete in a wide range of sports. We have a long tradition of being outstanding in cricket and football and compete (and win) against much larger schools. In fact, being a small school gives more opportunities for sport as everyone has to join in rather than a small chosen few.	As above.
1.10.12	As a small school our children are lucky to be able to all have speaking roles in concerts, joining dances and sing solos, duets and as a whole school. Compared with larger schools where children only have a non speaking role I feel our learners have the greatest opportunities to be part of a team where everyone is valued and encouraged to try their best.	As above.
1.10.13	This is a lovely school because it's a smaller school which means we get more opportunities to do lots of different things. We can get picked to try lots of different sports and compete against other schools.	As above.
1.10.14	The children at the school are given a variety of opportunities to engage with local and national initiatives, an example is where the children investigated and supported Christian Aid:	As above.

	<p>https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjhaV0QfhJt0d7pt2xSrAf9uGD606MmUV and it can be argued that opportunities are more diverse and varied than larger schools in Powys. These numerous opportunities provided by the excellent staff at Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School, show the commitment to provide the highest quality of education in all it's senses, not just a narrow focus, but a diverse activity that enrich the lives of all the children that attend the school.</p>	
1.10.15	The school has never fallen short in providing a wealth of extracurricular activities to all of its children.	As above.
1.10.16	The children are actively engaged and enthusiastic participants in school and in competitions and events outside of school, winning recognition in a wide range of activities.	As above.
1.10.17	The school has excellent opportunities for the children to be responsible for their own discussions and consequently they feel that they have a voice, are respected and that their views are valuable.	As above.
1.10.18	To claim that attending larger schools necessarily ensures a wider range of extra-curricular activities is also wrong. Llanbedr school does well in this respect, providing such activities both during the school day and afterward, plus a breakfast club. It can do so on 5 days a week, when other schools in the area cannot.	<p>The Council notes these comments about the range of extra-curricular activities available at the school. It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities. Generally, larger schools have more staff available to provide a wider-range of extra-curricular opportunities.</p> <p>Breakfast clubs are provided at all the alternative schools in the cluster 5 days a week.</p>

1.10.19	I do not agree with the statement that pupils would have more opportunities in larger schools. The responsibilities for the pupils in Llanbedr far outweigh them. Children all have at least one committee/council responsibility. Pupils can all attend after school clubs every school evening. I am aware of at least one school that has a waiting list for some clubs.	It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities. Generally, larger schools have more staff available to provide a wider-range of extra-curricular opportunities.
1.10.20	In the first instance I would challenge the claim that 'Pupils would attend larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extracurricular opportunities.' Learners in Llanbedr are all able to attend a different after school club every evening, I know that this is not available to other pupils in schools in the cluster, and even waiting lists are currently in place for learners to attend a favoured club. How does this provide more extracurricular opportunities?	As above.
1.10.21	I don't agree with the statement that "larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities. My child has so many more opportunities than her peers in other schools. Which are larger. She is able to attend breakfast club and after school clubs every day. This is a fantastic facility. She is also a member of school committee and has been since the age of 5, providing her with life skills, responsibility, fairness, public speaking, being valued and heard.	As above.
1.10.22	Extra-curricular activities and the mass involvement of the community as a whole in clubs and other activities is something that cannot be replicated in any other local school I know of in the area. I don't just assume this but have it as fact	As above.

	after talking to friend whose children attend those other schools located nearby. (How have you come to your conclusion that extracurricular activities are in more abundance at other schools?)	
1.10.23	Children have been learning sign language for over a year.	Comment noted.

1.11 Comments about the school being a Church in Wales school

1.11.1	Llanbedr has a strong Christian ethos and very close links to the Church and Church community.	The Council notes these comments regarding the Christian ethos at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and the links with the local Church.
1.11.2	More child led as it's a Church school.	As above.
1.11.3	The school is a CinW school which nurtured (and continues to nurture) the important elements in life.	As above.
1.11.4	Children benefit from the Christian ethos of kindness and care for each other and for their community nurtured in the school. This extends out to their awareness of care for the environment developed in their superb outside spaces, awareness of landscape and characteristics as an Eco school.	As above.
1.11.5	There is a strong sense of well-being in the school, the inclusivity of all children in a school with a Christian ethos. The impact of children's religious nature and parent's choice of children's education is absolutely massive!	As above.
1.11.6	Llanbedr School is a special place, a safe place for, a place of learning, a place of nurture and of exploration where they demonstrate openness and acceptance, tolerance and forgiveness. Here, values and attitudes are formed and every individual is celebrated as unique. Llanbedr School is all of these things and develops a distinctive Christian character through learning, religious education, prayer, worship and	As above.

	action in the name of Christ that makes God's love and presence known to the world.	
1.11.7	As Llanbedr Church in Wales Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church in Wales and the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the school, which is based upon Christian values and wellbeing, will be lost with the closure of the school.	As above.
1.11.8	As a Church school it is responsive to the parents and the communities it serves, while celebrating their distinctive Christian ethos. Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School is distinctly different from other schools where the children experience Christianity as part of their moral and spiritual development, reflected throughout the curriculum.	All schools are required to teach religious education, therefore should the Council proceed with the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, pupils would continue to be taught about religion at the alternative schools they transfer to, whether they transfer to alternative C. in W. provision or an alternative C.P. school.
1.11.9	Llanbedr school is based on a Church ethos, the whole community support the various events held in Church and it is vitally important that these children continue with this type of schooling. Breaking up existing friendship groups, children being transported to different schools in different villages, some of them not Church schools is not acceptable. You have an obligation that you cannot shirk. To suggest that you transfer pupils to a large non-Church Abergavenny primary school beggar's belief. From a different background to most of their new contemporaries with no peers to support, must have a serious effect on this person's wellbeing.	<p>The proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools. However, parents are able to choose any school for their child(ren), be it a Church in Wales school or a community primary school.</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 is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.</p> <p>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.</p>

		Schools receiving pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition.
1.11.10	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Church School is a model Christian school, one in which the atmosphere has that kind of openness about it, that sense that people are worth spending time with, that people need time to grow, need loving attention. The Christian Gospel says that every person has a unique task to do, with God, and for God, whether they know it or not. It does not necessarily mean that everyone involved has to share the same theology or philosophy. It does not mean that everyone knows that they have this relationship with God and is consciously working at it. A Christian school is one in which the entire atmosphere is pervaded by a conviction that there is something mysterious, and potentially wonderful, in everybody. In the everyday running of the school, there is little difference between a Church school and a community school. However, the ethos of a school can be strongly influenced by its Christian foundation, for example the vision of a school is based upon a Biblical quote.	Comments noted.
1.11.11	The love, care and wellbeing for each other which is at the heart of the Christian faith is exemplified in the attitudes and relationships found and encouraged at Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School.	Comment noted.
1.11.12	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School is at the heart of the Church in Wales's mission, faithfully serving children and parents of all faiths and of none, providing a high-quality education of the whole child and enriching their communities. The school is very pluralistic, providing a balanced approach to education, where the children represent	Comment noted.

	the hope for the future, so investing in this wonderful and excellent school is vital.	
1.11.13	Llanbedr is a church school which embraces a multi-cultural society, teaching the children an understanding of all the religions and spiritual needs of others with a clear moral compass to guide them through life.	Comment noted.
1.11.14	Llanbedr is a church school which means you can't actually close our school because we're on church ground which means we're protected by church.	The Council is responsible for all Council-maintained schools, including Church-in-Wales schools, and it is therefore the Council's responsibility to take forward any proposals for organisational change.
1.11.15	Llanbedr provides education for children not just in Llanbedr but includes Patricio, Vale of Grwyne and Llangenny and serves as the faith school for learners in Crickhowell and beyond.	The Council is aware that more than 61% of pupils, based on PLASC 2021 data, attending Llanbedr C. in W. School live closer to other schools and choose to travel to attend Llanbedr C.in.W School

1.12 Comments about school staff

1.12.1	The school has committed, caring and professional teaching staff and strong leadership.	The Council welcomes these comments about the staff at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
1.12.2	The teachers are excellent	As above.
1.12.3	The teachers are the best.	As above.
1.12.4	The teaching in Llanbedr is good and the quality of teaching is good.	As above.
1.12.5	I love learning maths and all other kinds of subjects with the loveliest teacher in the world. They are very kind and teach us lots of things.	As above.
1.12.6	I like the teachers because they are smart and they make me smart.	As above.
1.12.7	I love to talk to one of my teachers about their obsession with Snoopy, I really enjoy that.	As above.
1.12.8	The school has a strong teaching team	As above.

1.12.9	I think the teachings assistants are excellent and know the children very well and really care for them.	As above.
1.12.10	The staff in school are more than prepared to deal with the new curriculum, and as I understand it the focus is not on stage and not age and mixed age/combined age classes should not be a concern.	As above.
1.12.11	Staff and school are well trained in the new curriculum and already confident in carrying it out, lead at times by the children.	As above.
1.12.12	The numerous opportunities provided by the excellent staff at Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School show the commitment to provide the highest quality of education in all its senses, not just a narrow focus, but a diverse activity that enrich the lives of all the children that attend the school.	As above.
1.12.13	The staff at Llanbedr school are dedicated and committed to the school, undertaking any training in the evening.	As above.
1.12.14	The school staff have a very strong bond and work together as an exceptional team, this is not found in larger schools.	As above.
1.12.15	The staff have a great relationship with each other and the governors and friends of the school.	As above.
1.12.16	The teachers are always very kind and supportive and it is obvious that they have strong relationships with the children.	As above.
1.12.17	Children enjoy a strong rapport with staff throughout the school.	As above.
1.12.18	Teachers at Llanbedr know our children's capabilities and always ensure they do not exceed their expectations or expect too much from them.	As above.
1.12.19	The teaching staff show consistent and improving quality of teaching through the year groups and key stages with mixed year groups obtaining the necessary learning of the curriculum following a strict spreadsheet which is followed for each student.	As above.

1.12.20	A school like Llanbedr offers children more teacher support. It gives a space for them to be individuals and to develop their personality and thrive.	As above.
1.12.21	Each child's individual needs are catered for by the staff at Llanbedr. This would not be the case if moved to another school.	As above.
1.12.22	Mrs Green and the class teachers have always been available to discuss any concerns. Rather than dismissing our concerns, they have listened and acted when necessary.	As above.
1.12.23	The care taken by the staff since they came back into school after lockdown has been awe-inspiring, and should be being celebrated by Powys County Council as exemplary.	As above.
1.12.24	The school has also handled a very difficult period over the last 18 months or so with great communication and care throughout.	As above.
1.12.25	The Estyn report of 4 years ago, does not give a true reflection of the staff running the school.	As above.

1.13 Comments about leadership at the school

1.13.1	The leadership from the head teacher at Llanbedr primary has been first class, our headteacher Mrs Green has a wealth of leadership experience which she has brought to the school and in a short time she has secured a very positive relationship with all pupils, parents and staff.	The Council has no concerns about the quality of leadership at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. However, as stated in the Consultation Document, the Council is concerned that whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school. It remains the case that headteachers in smaller schools have a higher teaching commitment than in larger schools, and therefore have less time available to focus on leadership. In addition, as there are less staff in the
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		school, there are less opportunities to develop leadership across the school.
1.13.2	As for Mrs Green (headteacher) I for one cannot fault her very efficient and very effective way in which she runs the school, whilst also teaching some classes to. The togetherness and strong, positive relationships that she have formed in the school between, teachers, children and parents is second to none. We can't ask for any better from her.	As above.
1.13.3	The Head teacher 'has a wealth of leadership experience' and 'offers strong leadership'.	As above.
1.13.4	Llanbedr Church school with the current headmistress has the passion and energy to take the school forward and has put into practice identifying 'what should be taught and why', how should this be taught and how can the school support the children to realise their potential by nurturing capable learners, providing an education for the individual not the mass.	As above.
1.13.5	Our head teacher Mrs Green works very closely with all to achieve the best and the LEA school Core Visit report states that.	As above.
1.13.6	The Headteacher has been commended for her excellent leadership by the LEA School Visit Report	As above.
1.13.7	The claim that Llanbedr C in W school's Headteacher cannot satisfy administrative duties because of her teaching commitments runs counter to the LEA School Core Visit Report which praises the quality of her administrative achievements.	As above.
1.13.8	The Headteacher leads the school well, and having a teaching responsibility on Foundation Phase has enabled her to have a complete and thorough knowledge of EVERY pupil. There has been no question of leadership or teaching quality to date of anything negative.	As above.
1.13.9	The headteacher at Llanbedr knows all the learners well, partly due to her teaching responsibility and also due to her high	As above.

	standard of leadership has developed positive working relationships with staff and governors. I do not acknowledge how this can be a factor in determine whether a school should be considered for a proposal to closure. How can you justify this inconsistency?	
1.13.10	The fact the headteacher also does teaching, enables them to be around the children, and not just be a desk jockey. They know and understand our children, and therefore are more able to assess their needs and requirements, which strengthens their ability to promote clear and strong procedures and policies.	As above.
1.13.11	It is nothing short of outrageous to imply that as a teaching Headteacher, Mrs Green is any less focused on leadership in this fine school. Again, I would like to draw attention to the LA Core Visit report which in no way implies that she is stretched and is instead excelling in her role. As a parent I would far rather my children have a Headteacher that actually knows and recognises each pupil. I believe it puts them at the advantage of knowing exactly what each child requires, they have first hand knowledge of what is happening in the classroom. I do not believe that there are any valid reasons to question the leadership of Llanbedr school.	As above.
1.13.12	Leadership at the school is excellent. There is a strong sense of teamwork between staff and governors. The strong leadership means that systems in the school run efficiently and effectively. The school is in a very good position to deliver the new curriculum.	As above.
1.13.13	As someone who has experience in management I tend to think that you can get a strong impression of how well managed a place is after a few visits and to my mind at least this is a very well run school with excellent leadership and values.	As above.

1.14 Reference to pupils that have transferred to Llanbedr from other schools

1.14.1	My child is thriving at Llanbedr compared with her previous school, happy and settled.	Comment noted.
1.14.2	Children at Llanbedr have come here because of many reasons including bullying at larger schools and have found sanctuary here.	Comment noted. However, there is no evidence that more bullying takes place in larger schools compared to smaller schools, and all schools are required to have anti-bullying policies in place.
1.14.3	My children had friends who were moved to the school because they weren't thriving in larger schools or bigger institutions. Isn't education about diversity of provision and putting the children first?	Comment noted. However, all schools, regardless of size, are required to meet the needs of all children of all abilities and to support and challenge them to fulfil their potential.
1.14.4	The children at Llanbedr with low self-esteem issues are those that have come from bigger schools, in some cases at the suggestion of doctors, and to watch the care with which staff nurture these children into confident, happy people is a delight to watch.	Comment noted.
1.14.5	As an all-inclusive Church in Wales school, open to all faiths and families' children regularly transfer to Llanbedr after experiencing traumatic educational experiences in larger schools with huge class sizes and crowded communal space and subsequently thrive in the family and community ethos fostered by Llanbedr school.	Comment noted. However, all schools, regardless of size, are required to meet the needs of all children of all abilities and to support and challenge them to fulfil their potential.
1.14.6	Children who have been turned away from other schools, as they don't fit into the mould/system, are listened to and understood here.	As above.
1.14.8	My child was home schooled until 2 months ago. Slightly behind in some areas, and emotionally no way able to cope with a large group. She was turned down at the other Church school, Llangattock as they couldn't offer the support and one to one focused care my daughter needed and the Head	Comment noted.

	recommended Llanbedr school. As it was smaller with gentler approach to children in their care with time for the children and less pressure.	
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1.15 Comments about the experiences of past pupils

1.15.1	Pupils that attended the school were given a great start to their education, in a learning environment that suited them well. The environment was very nurturing and they were both very happy at the school.	The Council notes these comments.
1.15.2	The pupils are happy, confident children when they leave the school and are well prepared for the transition to secondary education.	As above.
1.15.3	All pupils have reached their potential by the time they move to high school	As above.
1.15.4	There is absolutely no evidence that when children from Llanbedr school make the “transition” to the High School at the end of year 6 that they are educationally, socially or culturally disadvantaged compared to their “peers” from larger “feeder” Primary schools. The fact that year 6 pupils from Llanbedr school won the 2019 STEM 1 Schools’ Jaguar Challenge speaks for itself.	As above.
1.15.5	I was born in Brecon and grew up in Crickhowell and some of my friends attended Llanbedr primary school, they had an excellent education and managed to integrate and succeed when they later joined Crickhowell high school. In fact, one of my friends who attended Llanbedr primary school is now a maths teacher.	As above.
1.15.6	A happy time at St Peter’s prepared me for secondary school before going onto university and I would not hesitate to recommend a similar start in education to any parent.	As above.

1.15.7	The school set my son on his education path with ended up with a BSc (Hons) and he has just secured his first job. More importantly the school had a hand in shaping the well-rounded confident young man that his parents are so proud of who is making his way as a citizen of Wales and the world.	As above.
1.15.8	My children spent their very happy, primary school years at the school. It gave them a great education, a strong moral code and the ability to establish good relationships.	As above.

1.16 Comments about the school's links with the community

1.16.1	The school is a focus of activity not only for the village but for the wider Vale of Gwryne, a deeply rural area with no public transport where both young families and older people are at risk of isolation and lack of social opportunities. The school brings solutions to both, offering young parents the chance to meet, chat, share joys and concerns. Older people come to the Christmas Fayre, the Harvest Festival, Hallo'ween and Guy Fawkes, St Peter's celebration. They come into school to hear the children read, and to help in the garden. Over the last few years, we have had a successful Scarecrow Festival enjoyed by the whole community. During Lent the children prepare and serve a Lent lunch to older members of the community, and on St David's Day they took Welshcakes around the village. Children from the school take their place on the church flower rota, and when they hold their Christmas service in the church there is standing room only. Traditionally they are custodians of the ancient yew in the churchyard, which has a child-sized chair embedded in it, and the wildflowers, lizards and birdlife in the churchyard are a rich source of learning for them. The sound of the children playing drifts across the village to the	The Council has recognised within the Consultation Document and the draft Community Impact Assessment the central role that the school has in the community, and the impact should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. The Community Impact Assessment will be updated to include information gathered during the consultation.
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	bungalows where older people live, and the joy when they returned after lockdown was palpable.	
1.16.2	Extra curricular activities bring the community together. For example I provided seeds and plants for the school garden this year, and, living on my own, it is a pleasure to be able to chat with the children who passed my garden on their way home from school.	As above.
1.16.3	The school provides links to the whole community holding quiz and bingo evenings, putting on concerts, Macmillan teas, family fund days and taking part in church services.	As above.
1.16.4	Llanbedr School provides opportunities in events including shows, religious events at the church, Coffee mornings etc for often isolated members of the community to come together; Even extended family members attend events from our most local learners too our learners who live further afield.	As above.
1.16.5	The children provide villagers with lovely Harvest, Christmas and Easter services. They hold functions at school for locals – lent lunch- they make the soup out of vegetables grown in the school garden. The children raise money every year for various charities – visit care homes and deliver Welsh cakes on St David’s day.	As above.
1.16.6	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School plays a central role in village life, with numerous events taking place in conjunction with the school and the surrounding community.	As above.
1.16.7	The plays a central role in village life that reaches far beyond its educational function. It has done so much to foster intergenerational relationships in our community, mitigating against the effects of rural isolation in the elderly and collaborating with other organisations. This is, I believe, very much aligned with the principles espoused in the ground	As above.

	breaking Welsh legislation contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.	
1.16.8	The school provides a community base for the village. Lifelong friendships are formed, and young families are encouraged to set down roots and become part of the community.	As above.
1.16.9	The school provides a focal point for young families in the area and does a great deal within the community.	As above.
1.16.10	This school provides an essential service to the community, and its proximity to those who live there. This in turn supports those families who, if the school was not there would have to take children to school, which could hamper their ability to work. The school is professionally run, is a critical part of the local community.	As above.
1.16.11	The school is part of the community and are lucky to have immeasurable support which enhances the children's learning, skills and experiences in class and after school clubs - puppet, sports, gardening; sharing their experiences with the learners. Taking part in local shows and Eisteddfods, we also have close links with the church, taking part in special services on weekends and leading Harvest and Christmas services, sharing gifts collected with local residential homes.	As above.
1.16.12	A lot of the children attend the clubs held after school. Members of the community have helped with these clubs regularly over the years.	As above.
1.16.13	The school at present also supports all the residents in the village by interaction with the pupils on various occasions when members of the community are invited to events in the school and when the pupils join in other events in the village.	As above.
1.16.14	The strong sense of belonging between the school and its community is fantastic. It connects widely with the community and works greatly with the parishes too.	As above.

1.16.15	These learners at Llanbedr School have a sense of community and ownership. Research tells us that belonging to a close-knit community is vitally important in developing a child's resilience. It is also a protective factor against mental health issues and bullying. When learners have a feeling of belonging, they can breathe out and relax, and get on with the business of learning and thriving.	As above.
1.16.16	A greater involvement from the local community sees a positive effect on the children learning, social interaction and experience in fields that children in larger schools do not have. Bigger isn't better.	As above.
1.16.17	The school gate is where anything the village needs or if support is needed, the picker uppers having a quick chat, actions planned, solutions provided, not by a committee but by the villagers meeting face to face at the school gate.	As above.
1.16.18	Church visits, bonfire nights, school plays and concerts, harvest festivals, sports days and inter village sports events are all attended by the community as a whole not just by the parents and pupils.	The Council notes the strong links between the Church community and the school.
1.16.19	The community contributes to the children of the school. Congregation members from the church, before lockdown, went in weekly to deliver Open the Book sessions so that the children have a basic knowledge of Christian culture; the Rector also did weekly assemblies, and that has now resumed through Teams. The church funds the presence of a Children's worker who leads Puppet Club weekly, as well as regular Film Club and Messy Church. Another community trust has funded up-to-date IT equipment for all the children. None of this support would be extended out of the parish. Pre-lockdown, people regularly went into the school to listen to reading, lead gardening club, look after the pond, and during holidays the village keeps the gardens going until the children come back.	As above.

1.16.20	The open the book project involves members of the Llanbedr Church community bringing a curriculum of Bible stories, thoughtful pupil analysis of the story and interaction to the school on a weekly basis. This is just one of several activities at which bring the pupils and older members of the community together regularly, and community involvement with the school is vital to maintain the vibrant life of our rural community, and is something that which is increasingly missing in many rural villages these days.	As above.
1.16.21	The Church plays an active part in the life of the school. Assembly and "Open the Book" activities take place regularly. The school has displays which are kept up to date at Church, and takes part in all the Festivals, favouring Christmas, with concerts and nativity plays.	As above.
1.16.22	Children at Llanbedr Primary have built a community nature reserve in the village and frequently benefit from their connection to the church. The church provides a wonderful environment in which children are able to perform plays/concerts etc.	As above.
1.16.23	There is strong sense of belonging at this school and within the Llanbedr community. The school and church are central hubs for activities in the community.	As above.

1.17 Comments about support provided to pupils with ALN

1.17.1	Llanbedr school is often chosen by parents whose children have disabilities or additional learning needs as it is better able to provide for them and meet their needs.	The Council notes these comments about why some parents have chosen Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and the school's approach to supporting pupils with ALN.
1.17.2	Llanbedr school has been a sanctuary for a lot of children who have been unable to manage in larger school, due to mental health issues or additional learning needs. A school like	As above.

	Llanbedr means children can remain in an educational setting and also have their mental health needs met.	
1.17.3	Llanbedr School has catered in full for childrens' additional learning needs.	As above.
1.17.4	My child received a huge amount of support for his learning difficulties at Llanbedr and went on to succeed in his GCSE's and A-levels do we level which was way beyond expectations.	As above.
1.17.5	Children with Additional Learning Needs are well supported both by their teachers and their peers, in a strongly inclusive environment.	As above.
1.17.6	Emotional and mental health challenges faced by some children at Llanbedr school are met by patience, care and understanding and time where this could not be achieved in a larger setting. Children who need extra help, extra tutoring, get it here.	As above.
1.17.7	Llanbedr is the school to cater for everyone with any needs.	As above.

1.18 Comments about military families

1.18.1	Llanbedr C in W school also has a strong relationship with the local military training base at Cwrt y Gollen supporting the children moving into military accommodation to settle and carry on with their education.	Comment noted.
1.18.2	It also has a number of military families who attend the school and we are extremely concerned that this closure could contradict the Armed Forces Covenant.	Comment noted.
1.18.3	Llanbedr CIW School has welcomed military families with open arms and offered substantial mental health support to pupils during their transition. The environment the school offers to military families is outstanding.	Comment noted.

1.19 Comments about early years provision at the school

1.19.1	Llanbedr school's fantastic nursery setting is available due to it being a Voluntary Aided school to benefit those who would wish to seek out the opportunity for their young children to be welcomed into such an inclusive and nurturing Christian ethos. Being gently introduced to school life and moving up with friends into the wonderful community setting that Llanbedr provides.	The Council recognises that the school is a Voluntary Aided (V.A.) school and is responsible for its own admission arrangements, and is able to admit pupils at a younger age than non-V.A. schools.
1.19.2	After the past year with the disruption and restrictions, nursery placements are going to be exceptionally important to provide this age group with the social and first educational steps that they have been missing out during this pandemic.	As above.
1.19.3	We are lucky as a school to be able to provide learners with the opportunity to start on a part time basis the term after their third birthday. The learners are excited to come to school and be part of our family, so when they start in reception the learners have met all staff and note their way around school. Our nursery joins in Sports Day and school trips with everyone, the older learners helping and encouraging them, showing them what to do.	As above.

1.20 Comments about wraparound provision at the school

1.20.1	The breakfast club at 8am and after school clubs at Llanbedr have been great to help fit in with work arrangements.	Comment noted.
1.20.2	The school has a thriving Breakfast Club.	Comment noted.
1.20.3	Llanbedr School offers value far beyond the classroom such as the well-used Mother and Baby group 'Tots and Tiddlers'.	Comment noted.

1.21 Comments about additional funding provided to the school

1.21.1	In the 1990's the Hamer brothers – a farming family left money to the school to form a Trust Fund to help with the education of the local children over and above the budget provided by Powys CC.	The Council notes that Llanbedr C.in.W Primary School is supported financially by a Trust Fund, which supplements the funding delegated to the school through the Council's funding formula. It is the aim of the proposal to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners, and to ensure equity across the system.
1.21.2	A very active "Friends of Llanbedr School", work tirelessly for the children, raising money for "extras" and including the community in doing so.	Comment noted.
1.21.3	Llanbedr School has very strong non-educational advantages. This is helped by the third-party funding it receives from past and present parents, and pupils in one form or another.	As 1.21.3

2. IMPACT ON PUPILS

2.1 Comments about the impact on pupil well-being

2.1.1 General concerns about the impact on pupil well-being

2.1.1.1	Closure of the school will have a detrimental impact on children's well-being and mental health.	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 is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.
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		<p>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,</p> <p>Schools receiving pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition.</p>
2.1.1.2	The impact would be huge if Llanbedr CIW school were to close. I imagine all children's mental health would be affected, especially those that rely on a stable routine.	As above.
2.1.1.3	It would take a toll on pupils' social and emotional well-being.	As above.
2.1.1.4	Our children's education, mental health and well-being are being put at risk.	As above.
2.1.1.5	Since this closure proposal pupils are having nightmares that the school will be closed! You have not offered any support for the children at all! Powys County Council's 'ambitious education plan' may indeed reduce the cost per pupil in the county – but the price it will take on the children will be unquantifiable.	As above.
2.1.1.6	Children have started to have nervous issues since the school mentioned the possible closure. In breakfast club the children were discussing who was going to each school and this upset some pupils. It's definitely playing on their minds. It's awful young children to have the worry of being separated from friends and going to different schools. They are being let down by the Council.	As above.
2.1.1.7	Please listen to the grave concerns regarding the welfare of the children due to this consultation and work towards the best outcome for all children involved.	As above.
2.1.1.8	You are clearly prioritising financial considerations at the expense of children's mental wellbeing. The consultation	As above.

	process has already had a negative impact on our son's state of mind – and the distress will not go away until this ludicrous proposal is stopped.	
2.1.1.9	All that is being offered to the children of Llanbedr is the threat of change, losing a trusted learning environment, teachers and friends that they had only just managed to briefly enjoy again before this uncertainty was thrust upon them by the Council. With no benefits to balance out the distress of upheaval, I imagine this proposal and proposed option will be really damaging to the children's focus and well-being, particularly with the added pressures due to the pandemic.	As above.
2.1.1.10	I found it disgraceful how the mental health and well-being of these children has been given so little mention by the Council.	As above.
2.1.1.11	I have been left very disturbed by Powys County Council's lack of concern for the mental health and wellbeing of the children involved in this consultation. Following your repeated insistence that the children have been at the forefront of decision making I am yet to see evidence of this from the proposal.	As above.
2.1.1.12	Ask any expert in the field of child psychology, and they will explain clearly how this is detrimental to the children.	As above.
2.1.1.13	The proposal will result in harm of a child / children.	As above.
2.1.1.14	When addressing pupils' wellbeing in the consultation document, Powys County Council state any effect will be short term. The Department of Education (2021) Would dispute this claim. When discussing how the education system can be improved after COVID-19 they explain, "we anticipate a need for additional support for children, young people and their families over the coming months and possibly years as a result of or exacerbated by COVID-19". There is evidence also to show that damage to mental health as a child will have a long-term effect, lasting into adulthood.	As above.

2.1.1.15	The proposal acknowledges that there could be an impact “in the short term” on pupils' well-being, but it cannot be known how long that impact might last, in particular coming as it does so closely after a time of unsettling stress for pupils denied access for a prolonged period to their friends, their familiar teachers, their familiar routines and after-school clubs. The effects of this last year on children's mental health and well-being cannot be yet understood, and should not be further jeopardised by needless unsettling such as this proposal is causing.	As above.
2.1.1.16	Llanbedr children’s wellbeing and mental health should not be destroyed to fill spaces elsewhere!	<p>Reducing the Council’s overall surplus capacity in primary schools is only one reason for the proposal amongst many.</p> <p>As stated in the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code 2018 <i>‘It is important that funding for education is cost effective. Some spare places are necessary to enable schools to cope with fluctuations in numbers of pupils, but excessive number of unused places that could be removed mean that resources are tied up unproductively.’</i></p> <p>The Council has 13% of surplus places in its primary schools, and, in order to improve the overall cost effectiveness, it must plan and organise schools accordingly.</p>

2.1.2 Concerns about the consultation taking place during the Covid pandemic

2.1.2.1	There has already been great disruption as a result of the pandemic.	The Council recognises that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of
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		<p>uncertainty and concern for all involved, including children. However, in order to address the issues raised by Estyn regarding the organisation of its schools, it is necessary to continue with the development and consultation on proposals during the current pandemic.</p> <p>The Council is committed to supporting schools and learners, including through periods of change. An experienced member of staff from the Council is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.</p> <p>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,</p> <p>All schools receiving pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition..</p>
2.1.2.2	With uncertainty over future levels of COVID, and the upheaval and unease the children will suffer in the event of any future covid-connected closures MUST NOT be compounded by the inevitable anxiety caused to most children who face a new unknown life in a larger school.	As above.
2.1.2.3	Our children's wellbeing has already been impacted by Covid 19, they have missed their friends and peers.	As above.
2.1.2.4	Our children have already suffered over a year of disruption and separation from their friends because of the pandemic – surely a period of stability would be in their “best interests”?	As above.

2.1.2.5	The children's well-being is paramount. After struggling through two lockdowns to put them through this is diabolical.	As above.
2.1.2.6	What about the kids' well-beings? Kids mental health should always come first in a pandemic! We don't even know the effects of the pandemic yet!	As above.
2.1.2.7	The children of Llanbedr have had their lives turned upside down already due to Covid. Surely no decent human being would consider putting these children through more heartache at such a time?	As above.
2.1.2.8	These children have been through so much with the ongoing pandemic. They need stability they need routine they need to feel safe. We do not know the psychological impact this pandemic has had on the children and to put them through more trauma would be detrimental to them.	As above.
2.1.2.9	The timing of the proposal is badly organised as we are still in a pandemic. It's been hard on all children's mental health to cope with last year. All every child wanted was to return to normality and now they have uncertainty.	As above.
2.1.2.10	The impact of the last year of Covid 19 has been huge for our children. The return to school has for many of them been a massive relief - to be with friends in their community they have grown in. To take this away at this time with the closure of the school, dispersing these families is detrimental to pupils' wellbeing and belonging.	As above.
2.1.2.11	This consultation has come at a time that children have already been through a lot of change and uncertainty. This is only adding to the mental health pressure they are already under.	As above.
2.1.2.12	Our children have missed so much education during the Covid pandemic and for many it has been an extremely unsettling time. If the school were to close, they would be plunged into further uncertainty, face the stress of making new friends, meeting new teachers and adjusting to a new environment.	As above.

	That anyone can even consider imposing this on children at such a time is beyond my understanding, and is potentially dangerous.	
2.1.2.13	Following such a turbulent period in our children's education due to the pandemic, it is well documented that nothing should be distracting the staff and pupils from catching up, both academically and socially on what they have missed. This is the time for the focus to be on the children.	As above.
2.1.2.14	You will be aware of the cost to the mental health that Covid 19 is having on our children currently, and the long term effects predicted that potentially will affect their wellbeing for years to come; the mental distress that closing this school which is providing constancy, stability and a sense of belonging will have a devastating and distressing impact on not only my granddaughter's life and future but all the other children at school. So I question why are you considering destroying the lives of these children further? At a time that humanity is witnessing the devastating impact of Covid 19 on the most vulnerable in our society.	As above.
2.1.2.15	The coronavirus pandemic has had a negative impact on everyone's lives for the last 18 months but the group that has felt this impact the most is young children. They have been told to keep their distance from others, at a time when they are learning to build their first relationships. They have faced a yo-yo period of schooling with closures during the waves of the pandemic. Their mental health is at a very low point and at a time in their lives when they haven't developed the skills to be able to deal with a wide range of emotions. I'd like the Council to reflect as to how they have coped during the pandemic, equipped with the full array of coping strategies that age and experience provides. The children have dealt stoically with every challenge that has been put their way, but the Council	As above.

	have seen fit to present another challenge to the children of Llanbedr school. The Council has chosen to rip a pillar of support from these children when they need it most. Even if the outcome of the consultation is not to close the school, the stress that the Council has chosen to place on the children and their parents is unacceptable.	
2.1.2.16	How does the Council's strategy fit with supporting children affected by the school closures brought about by Covid 19 and not being able to attend school; with a particular focus on the effect on their mental health? The WAG published a document stating that we should be 'helping learners to develop a secure foundation for learning' and 'supporting learners as they continue their progress'. The children's global development would be harmed if the Council go ahead with their planned closure, with long reaching effects on the children's confidence and progressing their optimum potential in learning.	As above.
2.1.2.17	There is very little mention in the consultation document for mental health and wellbeing which the pandemic has had a detrimental impact on and the link between impaired mental health, and education.	As above.
2.1.2.18	Can the cabinet promise that my son's mental health and wellbeing will not be adversely affected, especially on the back of an extremely challenging year for all students as a result of the Coronavirus?	As above.
2.1.2.19	Jeffery et al (2021) states that there is growing evidence that mental health has been impacted negatively during the COVID-19 pandemic, Whittle et al (2020), concurs, highlighting that in Italy and Spain, two countries similarly affected as Wales, 85.7% of parents recognised a decrease in their child's emotional state. Jeffery et al (2021) found that school aged children reported feelings of sadness, loneliness as well as nervousness, however when the children were in the company	As above.

	of family, emotions of calm, happiness and safety were reported. This last key point highlighted the importance of familiar environments and familiarity amongst peers. Thus, suggesting that a change is detrimental at present and will elevate problems with children who are already suffering from increased baseline problems, (Whittle et al, 2020).	
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2.2 Comments about the impact on pupils of having to move schools

2.2.1 General concern about pupils having to move schools

2.2.1.1	Pupils may feel excluded at a new school as pupils have already formed friendship groups in other schools which would have a detrimental effect on their mental health and well-being.	<p>The Council acknowledges that children and families would need to go through a period of change, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. It also understands that this is a real concern for children, especially if friendship groups go to different schools. However, children are able to be part of friendship groups even if they attend different schools and are able to become part of new friendship groups.</p> <p>All schools that receive pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to ensure a smooth transition and help pupils settle into their new schools.</p>
2.2.1.2	Pupils would feel sad. It would be hard for them to join in a new school.	As above.
2.2.1.3	It would be hard for pupils in another school.	As above.
2.2.1.4	Pupils don't want to go to another school, they are happy and safe here.	As above.

2.2.1.5	Pupils might feel lost and sad in another school, and they may be scared.	As above.
2.2.1.6	Pupils might be shy if they have to go to a different school.	As above.
2.2.1.7	I think pupils might feel unhappy and confused. It would not be fair for them. They feel safe in our school.	As above.
2.2.1.8	If our children have to move school they would find it extremely traumatic leaving the stability of their present school environment behind.	As above.
2.2.1.9	Moving school would be extremely stressful for our children. We would not want to see them becoming withdrawn or depressed or develop low self-esteem which after speaking to several other parents whose children have moved school this has happened to.	As above.
2.2.1.10	Pupils would have to go to schools where they don't know anyone.	As above.
2.2.1.11	The detrimental effect this proposal is having on my children is very upsetting and worrying. They are worried if they have to attend another school. Will they make friends? Will they be bullied etc. and as a mother this is horrendous to listen to!	As above.
2.2.1.12	I am very concerned that there could be instances of bullying and segregation if the children have to be moved to another school with friendship groups already established.	As above.
2.2.1.13	Concern about the emotional, educational, social and well-being effects of pupils being taken from the environments where they are currently thriving, made to adjust to new schools with a noisier, unfamiliar environment, staff who were not closely aware of their particular needs.	As above.
2.2.1.14	Other teachers at other schools would be unaware of the pupils' capabilities and may try to push them beyond what they are capable of which would certainly have a negative effect on our children if they expect too much of them and we certainly don't want to see our children feeling like that at all, that is why	As above.

	Llanbedr were to close which we certainly hope is not to be the case, then we would seriously look at home schooling our children for the reasons we have already listed.	
2.2.1.15	I don't want my younger sibling to go to a different terrible school as he loves coming to school.	As above.
2.2.1.16	Children who are not happy and settled in the school environment will not learn no matter the opportunities.	As above.

2.2.2 Concern about pupils moving to larger schools

2.2.2.1	It is important to remember that not all children can adapt to a large school.	Comment noted. Support would be provided by staff in all schools to support children to settle in to new environments.
2.2.2.2	If my children were to attend a larger sized school, I feel they will not receive the same educational standards that they have at Llanbedr.	The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it <i>'is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.'</i>
2.2.2.3	In bigger schools lots of children do not get the help that they need which can then cause a lot of problems for their future.	All schools, regardless of size, are required to support, challenge and nurture all pupils to achieve their full potential, and are able to provide for the needs of their pupils. Smaller class sizes would not necessarily mean that pupils receive a more individual education as there are a number of year groups and a wider age range of pupils in the class.

2.2.2.4	I would think moving to a larger class would indeed have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by Llanbedr pupils. Less individual time with a fully qualified teacher is of course detrimental to their teaching no matter how you look at it. Studies show time and again how much children thrive in smaller classes.	As above
2.2.2.5	Children that can't manage, either emotionally, mentally or physically in a larger less child led school, will be torn apart and not supported how they need to be, in larger schools where they will just be a number.	As above.
2.2.2.6	I really can't see how putting these children into a much larger attending school/classrooms is going to benefit these children. Personally, I seriously think this will massively impact my children's education as it's less hands on due to massive class sizes.	As above.
2.2.2.7	Pupils of all ages within the school will be affected by the closure of the school due to their familiarities being taken away as well as the size and nature of surrounding schools being significantly larger.	As above.
2.2.2.8	Bigger schools lead to bigger classes, fewer teachers, less engaged children and less recognition of the individuality of each child. It is contrary to the stated aim of providing quality education for all the individuals. This proposal seeks to transfer pupils away to consolidate in larger schools, depleting these rural hubs and socially engineering the rural areas.	As above.
2.2.2.9	If you close our school our learners would be in larger classes.	As above.
2.2.2.10	Closing the school would mean pupils attending much larger classes. Young children respond better and gain confidence earlier in smaller classes.	As above.
2.2.2.11	Impact of larger classroom sizes – the current plans seem to only increase pupil numbers in a classroom – how is this transforming education for the better?	As above.

2.2.2.12	Why are you making me and other children move to bigger schools?	As above.
2.2.2.13	It is not in the best interest of our children to attend larger schools.	As above.
2.2.2.14	What is the evidence that my granddaughter will benefit from being in a bigger school?	As above.
2.2.2.15	With uncertainty over future levels of COVID, and the upheaval and unease the children will suffer in the event of any future covid-connected closures MUST NOT be compounded by the inevitable anxiety caused to most children who face a new unknown life in a larger school.	As above.

2.2.3 Comments about pupils who have moved to Llanbedr from other schools

2.2.3.1	Pupils have moved to Llanbedr from other schools due to issues at those schools. They are thriving in Llanbedr, and the thought of moving to another school is causing anxiety.	The proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools. However, parents can apply for a place for their child(ren) at any school and if some children have already moved to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School due to issues at other schools, then it would be expected that parents would consider all options open to them.
2.2.3.2	Some children would have to return to a school they have previously left due to bullying.	As above.
2.2.3.3	Pupils that have moved to Llanbedr due to issues with their nearest primary school would have to return to the schooling environment which caused them such difficulty.	As above.
2.2.3.4	Pupils have moved to Llanbedr after being the victim of bullying in a larger school, then have had to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, now the Council is trying to rip them away from Llanbedr School.	As above.

2.2.3.5	Some pupils have been moved to Llanbedr from other schools in the cluster, some at the advice of the Council itself. Why could their needs not be met at their previous school? What has changed so that they will benefit from returning to their old school in line with Powys Council's preferred option? Why was Llanbedr highlighted to be best suited to their needs rather than the proposed receiving schools?	The Council is not able to respond to this comment without knowing the exact circumstances for these pupils.
2.2.3.6	Pupils who have moved to Llanbedr don't want to have to move school again or move away from teachers they trust.	Comment noted.

2.2.4 Other comments

2.2.4.1	Why are you making me go to a different school?	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners, and the specific reasons for the proposal are outlined in the Consultation Document.
2.2.4.2	Other than relying on the receiving schools' staff, what is the Council's procedure to ensure a smooth transition to alternative schools, especially those heading out of the County?	If pupils transfer to schools in neighbouring authorities, the Council contacts the admissions team of the neighbouring authority in the first instance. Officers would then facilitate contact between the receiving school and the closing school, so that information and support could be provided to pupils and their families.
2.2.4.3	How long would it take for pupils to settle in the new schools to enable a true assessment of their needs to be considered? So many factors from the upheaval would understandably have an effect on behaviour so it would certainly take time for staff to know each child and much needed action could be delayed.	There is no set time for a pupil to adjust to a new school. It would be dependent on the child, their needs and the processes put in place to aid transition. With any school closure, the receiving school would work with the pupils to ease transition to their new school. This process has worked well to support pupils when Powys schools have closed in the past.

2.2.4.4	<p>Academic research over the last decade has found that: Displacement can have an adverse effect on a child's well-being and thus learning (DFE-RR253). This can be due to the duration of the school trip causing strain to the student who has to spend more time daily on travelling; the change of peer networks and friends may cause disruption that reflects in achievement; larger class sizes in the receiving school can also have adverse effects on performance. A factor that may well influence achievement is that displaced pupils generally come from smaller schools in rural areas. For example, studies on voluntary mobility of students consistently point to adverse effects of mobility on student outcomes (Hanushek et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2009; Booker et al., 2007). Hanushek et al. (2004) found that high pupil turnover during the school year was especially harmful. School closing policies that are mainly motivated by cost savings and not school performance mean that displaced pupils move to bigger schools, with larger class sizes. The change in distance and class size as well as disruption and other factors present in the settings of other studies. Increased class size after displacement would be expected to have a lasting negative impact on achievement (Krueger, 1997; Krueger and Whitmore, 2001).</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 is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.</p> <p>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,</p> <p>Schools receiving pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition.</p>
2.2.4.5	<p>As children have a lack of control over situations and have a higher misunderstanding than adults, research has shown that people who moved back to different schools are insecure and go on to have fewer friends than their peers who have not experienced school mobility (Plooari and Bullock, 1988). MacArthur and Higgins (2007), concur stating research shows "students [have] difficulties making friends and socially integrating into their school, [furthermore] being vulnerable to bullying; and as being academically and behaviourally at risk". In the Consultation Document by Powys County Council, it is</p>	<p>As above.</p>

	<p>noted that they do address the wellbeing of the pupils of Llanbedr CinW School, stipulating that the receiving schools would provide full support to the new students, however evidence has highlighted that schools lack time and resources to adequately ensure that transitioning pupils are well established within new school environments, (MacArthur and Higgins, 2007). Other factors that may inhibit this process are limitations due to the current climate. CAHMS admissions from schools have gone up since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, but due to staff isolating, limited face to face appointments, reduced staff numbers in the workplace, waiting lists have increased fourfold, thus delaying help for those who may struggle with the transition (Tromans et al, 2020). The Department of Education (2021), concur by addressing their concerns that there is an increased demand for support from young people and children at present.</p>	
2.2.4.6	<p>Singh et al (2014) Discuss is that the risk of suffering from schizophrenia as an adult increases with social mobility. They go on to suggest that due to the stress applied to children from moving school it has a direct impact on these psychotic episodes throughout a person's life span. Looking through the evidence presented in this report, it can be strongly argued that the closure of Llanbedr CinW School will have a detrimental impact on, not only the mental health and well-being of its pupils but will also have repercussions on them academically. The Department of Education (2021) Highlighted the two elements are intertwined together stating, "children will not engage in school if they have poor mental health, thus widening the learning gap further". it can therefore be argued that if Powys County Council were to close Llanbedr CinW School, they would be putting the pupils at a disadvantage and causing irreversible harm. Evidence has shown that children</p>	As above.

	<p>who move school have a weaker academic performance as a result, (South, Haynie & Bose, 2007) therefore disputing Powys County Council's claim that they are giving "learners the best possible start".</p>	
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2.3 Pupils would be separated from their friends

2.3.1	<p>Being forced to move from a well-structured school is harmful enough but should the Council's preferred option of scattering the children across several schools go ahead fracturing friendship groups and in some cases moving alone, which could be devastating.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges that children and families would need to go through a period of change, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. It also understands that this is a real concern for children, especially if friendship groups go to different schools. However, children are able to be part of friendship groups even if they attend different schools and are able to become part of new friendship groups.</p> <p>All schools that receive pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to ensure a smooth transition and help pupils settle into their new schools.</p> <p>The proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools. However, parents can choose any school for their child(ren) and can be admitted to any school if there's a place available for them.</p>
2.3.2	Concern that the children will be sent to separate schools.	As above.
2.3.3	Pupils will be split up from their friends. That is catastrophic.	As above.
2.3.4	If you close the school pupils would feel sad because they would miss their friends.	As above.

2.3.5	The disruption for the children would be disastrous, probably splitting siblings and friendships.	As above.
2.3.6	I am extremely concerned about this proposal and the proposed solution of splitting up the current pupil population in favour of their attendance to their nearest alternative school.	As above.
2.3.7	Pupils are upset at facing being split from friends within their year group and from elsewhere in the school.	As above.
2.3.8	Pupils would have to leave behind the strong friendships and bonds they have made at Llanbedr.	As above.
2.3.9	It's quite sad seeing the children's faces all sad because the friends and people they grew up with in school may now have gone before their eyes, having to leave to go to another school.	As above.
2.3.10	The breaking up of friendship groups for these young children is upsetting. Close family local connections are very important and Llanbedr school provides the ideal environment for these connections.	As above.
2.3.11	Splitting the children into small groups is heartless and cruel especially during this current climate.	As above.
2.3.12	Pupils are at risk of being split apart as none of the proposed other schools have spaces in all year groups.	As above.
2.3.13	This will lead to pupils being separated from their friends and dispersed far and wide to where they can find a space.	As above.
2.3.14	Children have been parted for their friends and teachers for many months and now find out they may not be together for much longer.	As above.
2.3.15	If our school is closed our learners would be split between 5 schools, separating our chosen family. A family where each learner is encouraged to flourish and grow by all in school. Friendships would be split.	As above.
2.3.16	Llanbedr children could be dispersed to up to six different schools, some out of county.	As above.

2.3.17	There is no guarantee that friends, siblings even, will be able to attend the same school.	As above.
2.3.18	No promise is made to keep siblings in the same school!	As above.
2.3.20	At the very least the children should be kept with their peers and not be separated to fill up spaces especially following all the upset and uncertainty of the last year.	As above.
2.3.19	Pupils will be upset as they won't be able to interact with their friends who will be in a different class.	As above.
2.3.20	This is such a bad thought-out idea which has no intention of putting the children's wellbeing first. Friends will be broken up, families separated, all in a time of when we need stability.	As above.
2.3.21	The poor preferred option to separate the children into several different schools would further compound the upheaval and stress.	As above.
2.3.22	If my children have to move schools, is there enough room for them to attend the same school? And attend the same school as their friends? If not, what happens then? I for one will not be having my 2 split up and put into separate schools.	There are sufficient places available at all the alternative schools in the Crickhowell cluster. However, it is acknowledged that none of the alternative schools could accommodate all of the pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
2.3.24	Pupils won't be able to move to the same school, because there isn't another school that has the capacity to take them.	As above.
2.3.25	The health and wellbeing of the learners here is splitting them up from their friends and peers and possible dispersing them to available places in other schools- how does that value the child? How does that incorporate parental choice? And how on earth does that at all fit with the 4 purposes of the new curriculum?	The Council acknowledges that children and families would need to go through a period of change, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. It also understands that this is a real concern for children, especially if friendship groups go to different schools. However, children are able to be part of friendship groups even if they attend different schools and are able to become part of new friendship groups.

		<p>All schools that receive pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to ensure a smooth transition and help pupils settle into their new schools.</p> <p>The proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools. However, parents can choose any school for their child(ren) and can be admitted to any school if there's a place available for them.</p> <p>Should Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School close, pupils would transfer to alternative schools which would be larger schools. The Council's primary experts are of the view that delivering the new Curriculum for Wales is challenging in a very small school with only two teachers, for example. In larger schools there might be a wider range of academic activities that further embed the four purposes and include more age appropriate activities due to larger numbers to make the offer more viable and more staff expertise.</p>
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2.4 Impact on the quality of education for pupils

2.4.1	Please refrain from labelling this as a move that our kids will benefit from. It's not and we are all so worried about what lies ahead. Get the educational experts in, do the research, speak to all stakeholders, and document the findings. After which it	See 1.2.1
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	will be evident that there is no viable logic or reason, educationally, for Llanbedr to close.	
2.4.2	Your proposal is certainly not going to improve the learning experience for pupils.	As above.
2.4.3	If the school closes, some pupils will be forced, not only to attend non-faith schools but also to attend schools with a lower categorisation (where is the improved learning in that situation?).	As above.
2.4.4	This move is, absolutely not for the betterment of our children's education, and so contradicts the statement from PCC that '...we need to ensure that we can give our learners the best possible start blah blah blah...'	As above.
2.4.5	I believe the council is being disingenuous when it states that the proposed closure of Llanbedr school is about improving education. There is no evidence to suggest that the 'transformation' will provide the children with a greater learning experience.	As above.
2.4.6	I would prefer my child to attend a school where I feel that they would get the best care and attention and education.	The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it ' <i>is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.</i> '
2.4.7	If my children were to attend a larger sized school, I feel they will not receive the same educational standards that they have at Llanbedr. The standards are very high at this school due to small class sizes.	As above.

2.4.8	It has not been shown that there are any benefits to be gained by Llanbedr pupils being moved to a larger school. It highlights a financial saving to Powys with the bonus of filling surplus places in other schools.	As above.
2.4.9	We are in disbelief that there remains a consideration for this to go ahead, even after such clear and concise evidence has been made that closing the school offers no educational benefit to the children.	As above.
2.4.10	How can you assure me that the education my son will receive at his alternative school will continue to offer the same level of individual attention, access to facilities and nurturing environment he currently enjoys?	As above.
2.4.11	With such outdated Estyn inspection results it cannot be confirmed if the education in receiving schools will be the same or better than what Llanbedr school is already providing. Even if they were to receive the same level of standards I don't think that is good enough to counterbalance the negative effects of being uprooted from friends and teachers.	As above.
2.4.12	There is no baseline or analysis given for how this move will result in a better education for our children. basic before and after research that shows how the children will be, educationally, in a better position after this move. Nothing provided. Nothing on paper. Nothing said. There is no documented reasoning for why this move is a better for our children.	See 1.2.1
2.4.13	At no point during this process, has there been presented the case/argument/baseline for our children receiving a better education, as a result of the closure. We are continually asking the council to provide this, debate this, provide a rebuttal, but the only thing that comes back is strategy blah blah blah...without any assurances that this will be better for the kids. Obviously, we all feel this is simply a cost saving measure	See 1.2.1

	<p>at the expense of our kids. But until that is discussed and acknowledged, we don't have a chance to address it. It is certainly disingenuous to have this presented as a move for the betterment of our children's education, and likely bordering on the premise of a lie. Talk to us about the need to save costs, and then we will take the discussion seriously. Until that time, we are all increasingly amazed and worried and frightened at how PCC are playing with the lives of our children, at such a sensitive time.</p>	
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2.5 Access to extra-curricular provision

2.5.1	<p>Concern that pupils won't be able to go to breakfast club and after school club.</p>	<p>The Council has acknowledged that should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, then it may be more difficult for some pupils to access extra-curricular activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport.</p> <p>Breakfast clubs are available at all of the alternative Powys schools and this provision would be available for all pupils once they arrive at the school. After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities are also available at the alternative schools within the cluster.</p>
2.5.2	<p>The extra-curricular clubs enjoyed by most pupils will not be available at the new school and parents will suffer from this too.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
2.5.3	<p>Will extra-curricular activities available at the alternative school equal those at Llanbedr?</p>	<p>After-school clubs are provided at all the alternative schools. Specifically:</p> <p>Llangattock C.P. School provides extra-curricular activities and clubs after school from Monday to Thursday, and during the school day.</p>

		<p>Crickhowell C.P. School provides a range of extra-curricular after-school activities and clubs all week, and during the school day. A registered after-school club is available as well 5 nights a week.</p> <p>Llangynidr C.P. School has a registered after-school club which is open Monday to Thursday – the club could operate on a Friday but currently there is no demand for this session. The school also provides a range of extra-curricular activities, some during the school day.</p>
2.5.4	<p>The after-school clubs available at Llanbedr are not available in the other primary schools on every school day and also the travel involved would preclude many of the Llanbedr children from attending.</p>	<p>As above. The Council has acknowledged that should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, then it may be more difficult for some pupils to access extra-curricular activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport.</p> <p>There would be additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school. However, all the alternative schools have pupils who rely on home-to-school transport and they are experienced in ensuring that pupils have access to extra-curricular activities, regardless of this.</p> <p>It must be noted that 61% of the pupils, based on PLASC 2021 data, attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School live closer to other schools and therefore are not eligible for free home-to-school transport to Llanbedr. This suggests that the majority of pupils are already travelling to the school and are still able to participate in after-school clubs.</p>

2.5.5	The ability for children to attend extra-curricular activities will be compromised as you acknowledge, as increased transport time to and from these activities will result in reduced attendance. This will impact on their mental health and well-being.	As above.
2.5.6	As a result of having to travel further to the schools the children risk missing out on extracurricular activities. Parents will do their best to transport children to their extracurricular activities but there are only so many hours in the day. I fear that if activities aren't on the children's doorstep, they might lose out in busy family schedules.	<p>The Council recognises that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is the nearest school for 39% of pupils currently on roll, and that these pupils' and families' experience is that these extra-curricular activities are provided very close to their homes.</p> <p>There would be additional travel for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school. However, all the alternative schools have pupils who rely on home-to-school transport and they are experienced in ensuring that pupils have access to extra-curricular activities, regardless of this.</p> <p>It must be noted that 61% of the pupils attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School, based on PLASC 2021 data, live closer to other schools and therefore are not eligible for free home-to-school transport to Llanbedr. This suggests that the majority of pupils are already travelling to the school and are still able to participate in after-school clubs.</p>
2.5.7	Impact on pupils' ability to access after-school activities would, indeed, be a likelihood, not only because of more difficult travel arrangements, but also because other schools they might attend would not have the breadth of choice of after-school activities offered at Llanbedr. Greater numbers would also mean limits on how many children could join those activities.	As above. The Council notes these comments about the range of extra-curricular activities available at the school. It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative

		schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities. Generally, larger schools have more staff available to provide a wider-range of extra-curricular opportunities.
2.5.8	If I moved to a larger school, then my children would not be able to attend after school clubs 5 days a week, as they do in Llanbedr, due to clubs being specified by numbers in larger schools.	<p>After-school clubs are provided at all the alternative schools. Specifically:</p> <p>Llangattock C.P. School provides extra-curricular activities and clubs after school from Monday to Thursday, and during the school day.</p> <p>Crickhowell C.P. School provides a range of extra-curricular after-school activities and clubs all week, and during the school day. A registered after-school club is available as well 5 nights a week.</p> <p>Llangynidr C.P. School has a registered after-school club which is open Monday to Thursday – the club could operate on a Friday but currently there is no demand for this session. The school also provides a range of extra-curricular activities, some during the school day.</p>
2.5.9	In the larger schools there are also number restrictions for after-school activities, unlike Llanbedr where morning and a variety of after-school clubs are available for all pupils and most attend each day. I believe the move could be more limiting on the pupils' social and extra-curricular activities.	Breakfast Clubs and After-school clubs are available all the alternative schools in the cluster, plus the schools provide extra-curricular activities during the school day.
2.5.10	The benefit school clubs, and community interaction has on the mental health of the children and the parents is massive.	As above.

	Mental health is a massive subject at the moment and the mental effect of closing the school will have on the children and parents as well as the others in the local community will be nothing but negative. A huge issue in itself and a reason alone not to consider Llanbedr School for closure I feel.	
2.5.11	You say that pupils would attend larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extracurricular activities and opportunities. What evidence do you have to support this statement?	Larger schools generally have more staff who are able to support a wider range of educational and extracurricular activities. Within the Crickhowell cluster area, all schools provide extra-curricular activities, including Breakfast Clubs, After-School clubs and activities. However, the Council recognises that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School offers a similar range of clubs and activities as the other larger schools in the area.

2.6 Impact on pupils' life chances

2.6.1	Think of the children's lives you will ruin when their dear school is shut down.	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and to provide equity across the system. The Council has no concerns about the standard of education and opportunities available for pupils at any of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, and this view has been supported by Estyn in its response to this consultation.
2.6.2	Closing the school won't just let down the people who are currently benefiting from education at a small rural school, but will also deny generations of children to come to this same opportunity.	As above.
2.6.3	You are taking away young children's opportunities to grow into well-educated children that could end up working for you.	As above.

2.6.4	Closure of the vibrant and popular school would be detrimental to the present pupils and their younger siblings yet to join them.	As above.
2.6.5	Closing the school won't just let down the pupils who are currently benefiting from education at a small rural school, but will also deny generations of children to come to the same opportunity.	As above.
2.6.6	The children currently attending the school have at least had the advantage of an exemplary start to their schooling. The risk of hazard this proposal casts over the wellbeing of future generations cannot yet be known.	As above.
2.6.7	While you are shutting down small schools you are also affecting the education of children in Powys. Is that what you really want?	As above.

2.7 Other comments

2.7.1	If the school is removed from the village, the children will lose all of the community support they currently experience, and lose the sense they have of place, their heritage, the importance of their community and, critically, their own sense of their own importance within that community that underpins their sense of self, of self-worth, and well-being.	The Council has recognised within the Consultation Document and the draft Community Impact Assessment the central role that the school has in the community, and the impact should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. The Community Impact Assessment will be updated to include information gathered during the consultation.
2.7.2	I think this consideration is an actual abomination of the rights of the child.	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and to provide equity across the system. The Council has no concerns about the standard of education and opportunities available for pupils at any of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, and this view has been supported by Estyn in its response to this consultation.

2.7.3	The only logical and plausible explanation ... is that it is all about money as usual. The transformation is not 'for' the children – it is at the expense of the children.	See 1.2.1
2.7.4	Powys have stated that “the best interests of the learners are at the forefront of all proposals and decision making”. As our children already have a very good and varied learning experience where they thrive and are happy, what evidence can Powys provide that closing the school and distributing the pupils across any school willing to take them, wherever that may be, is in their best interests?	See 1.2.1
2.7.5	It also appears to me from the proposal that Llanbedr children are being used to fill surplus places in other larger schools and the proposal does lead me to believe that the “best interests of children at this school were at the forefront of the decision and decision making” that lead to its creation.	<p>The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and to provide equity across the system. The Council has no concerns about the standard of education and opportunities available for pupils at any of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, and this view has been supported by Estyn in its response to this consultation.</p> <p>Reducing the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools is only one reason for the proposal amongst many.</p> <p>As stated in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 '<i>It is important that funding for education is cost effective..Some spare places are necessary to enable schools to cope with fluctuations in numbers of pupils, but excessive number of unused places that could be removed mean that resources are tied up unproductively.</i>'</p>

		The Council has 13% of surplus places in its primary schools, and, in order to improve the overall cost effectiveness, it must plan and organise schools accordingly.
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3. IMPACT ON PARENTS / FAMILIES

3.1	The after schools and breakfast clubs are invaluable to us as parents.	There are breakfast clubs and after-school activities available at all the alternative schools in the area.
3.2	I currently access breakfast club and after school club with flexible timings and at a competitive cost at Llanbedr School, if I move to a new school where times are more fixed and will cost me more money how is that fair to me? This will have an impact on my employment and also my finances	<p>Breakfast Clubs are available at all three alternative Powys schools 5 days a week, starting at 8am. The cost ranges from £2.00 to £1.50 per child per day, with concessions for those pupils eligible for free school meals. This compares with the Breakfast Club at Llanbedr which charges £1.00 per child per day and free to those on free school meals.</p> <p>The Council recognises that, should Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School close, parents and families would need to make new arrangements for their pupils to attend alternative Breakfast Clubs and after-school clubs and that there may be a financial impact due to any increased costs associated with this.</p> <p>However, it must be noted that 61% of the pupils attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School, based on PLASC 2021 data, live closer to other schools and therefore are not eligible for free home-to-school transport to Llanbedr. This suggests that the majority of pupils are already travelling to the school and are</p>

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		<p>still able to participate in after-school clubs. It is recognised that for parents and families of pupils for whom Llanbedr is their current nearest school, the impact would be greater than for the parents/families of pupils for whom Llanbedr is not currently their closest school.</p>
3.3	<p>Llanbedr is the only school in the area with after-school school activities and breakfast club five days per week, so loss of those facilities will have an adverse impact on parents' available working hours and household income.</p>	<p>The alternative schools in the cluster all have Breakfast Clubs. Llangynidr C.P. School and Crickhowell C.P. School have registered after-school clubs – in the case of Crickhowell, this meets 5 days a week and at Llangynidr, it currently meets 4 days a week as there is no demand for a Friday session.</p> <p>Llangattock C.i.W Primary School does not have a registered after-school club but provides a range of extra-curricular activities every afternoon apart from Friday.</p> <p>The Council recognises that, should Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School close, parents and families would need to make new arrangements for their pupils to attend Breakfast Clubs and after-school clubs and that there may be a financial impact due to any increased costs associated with this. It is recognised that for parents and families of pupils for whom Llanbedr is their current nearest school, the impact would be greater than for the parents/families of pupils for whom Llanbedr is not currently their closest school.</p>

3.4	<p>In rural areas such as the Vale of Gwryne there is tendency towards self-employment so households may not qualify for free school meals despite low levels of income. Families are dependant on transport to get to work, but may not have two cars. Closure of Llanbedr School therefore could make low income families vulnerable to reduced access to early years education, as transport will not be provided to alternative provision in that sector.</p>	<p>Should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, free home-to-school transport would be provided to eligible pupils (i.e.those who live more than 2 miles from their closest school) to their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Free school meals are available for all eligible pupils regardless of whether their families are in employment or self-employed.</p> <p>Parents of pupils who are currently attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School's nursery provision (N1 and N2) would be able to apply for places at alternative early years providers in the area but they would be required to make their own transport arrangements as the Council doesn't provide transport for this sector. The Council recognises that this may have a detrimental impact on those parents for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their child(ren)'s nearest school. Currently, there are 4 pupils attending N2 provision at the school and no pupils in N1.</p>
3.5	<p>It is very convenient for children living in Llanbedr whose parents don't drive to attend Llanbedr school, it would be a hassle for these families if the children had to change schools.</p>	<p>The Council recognises that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is convenient to those parents for whom the school is their nearest school. However, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, free home-to-school transport would be provided to eligible pupils (i.e.those who live more than 2 miles from their closest school) to their nearest alternative school.</p>

3.6	The closure of the school will impact on parents that enjoy the geographical ease of Llanbedr School's location.	As above.
3.7	It would also be a lot more stress and hassle for our parents and guardians.	As above.
3.8	Buying school uniform is costly, Powys CC planning to close the school would mean me having to purchase yet another set of different school uniform a year after purchasing one for Llanbedr. this is a substantial cost.	<p>If the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is agreed, it is recognised that there would be an additional cost to parents needing to buy new school uniforms.</p> <p>Funding is currently available to provide low-income families with support for uniform costs.</p>
3.9	Parental choice is paramount over other schools' inability to fill their own spaces.	<p>Parents can apply for a place for their child(ren) at any school. The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and equity for all learners and to provide equity across the system.</p> <p>Reducing the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools is only one reason for the proposal amongst many.</p> <p>As stated in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 '<i>It is important that funding for education is cost effective. Some spare places are necessary to enable schools to cope with fluctuations in numbers of pupils, but excessive number of unused places that could be removed mean that resources are tied up unproductively.</i>'</p> <p>The Council has 13% of surplus places in its primary schools, and, in order to improve the overall cost</p>

		effectiveness, it must plan and organise schools accordingly.
3.10	If children are unsettled and unhappy at school, this will have a negative impact on the whole family. No parents wishes their child to be unhappy in school.	All schools that receive pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to ensure a smooth transition and help pupils settle into their new schools.
3.11	You say parents would have a choice, however there is not a single other school in the area that parents could get their children to anyway, never mind easily, even from a practical point of view, with journeys and distances, and if they have to have a working day themselves and that sort of thing, which is anything close to the same ethos and character and learning standard that is unique to Llanbedr.	<p>Should Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School close, then eligible pupils (i.e. those that live more than 2 miles from their nearest school) would be provided with free home-to-school transport. For the majority of pupils attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School, their nearest alternative school would be Crickhowell C.P. School and the travel time and distance are not considered to be excessive. Currently, 61% of pupils attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School already live closer to other schools and are choosing to travel to attend the school anyway.</p> <p>Whilst recognising that Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is a Church school with a specific Christian ethos, the Council does not have any concerns about the quality and standards of education at any of the alternative schools.</p>

4. IMPACT ON EARLY YEARS PROVISION

4.1	Loss of access to early years provision will also have an adverse impact on parents without independent transport	The Council has recognised in the Consultation Document and draft Community Impact Assessment
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	<p>facing rural isolation, lack of public transport, lack of opportunities to socialise.</p>	<p>that closure of the school would mean the loss of provision for nursery-aged children in Llanbedr. The Community Impact Assessment will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.</p> <p>Should the Council proceed with the proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School, early years education provision would be available at the following alternative providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allsorts Nursery which operates from the site of Crickhowell C.P. School • Llangattock Little Sparks operating from Llangattock C.i.W Primary School <p>Parents of pupils who are currently attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School's nursery provision (N1 and N2) would be able to apply for places at alternative early years providers in the area but they would be required to make their own transport arrangements as the Council doesn't provide transport for this sector. The Council recognises that this may have a detrimental impact on those parents for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their child(ren)'s nearest school. Currently, there are 4 pupils attending N2 provision at the school and no pupils in N1.</p> <p>Whilst there is currently some pressure on the availability of early years education places at Allsorts Community Playgroup in Crickhowell, the funded</p>
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		<p>places could be increased to accommodate any additional demand, if needed.</p> <p>There are early years education places available at Llangattock Little Sparks, which would also provide access to early years provision within a Church in Wales school.</p>
4.2	Pre-school provision in Llanbedr will be lost if the school closes.	This is correct, however parents would be able to apply for places at early years provision as outlined in 4.1.above.
4.3	Stating that after losing the fantastic Church funded nursery provision at Llanbedr and only having a possibility to secure a nursery place of government funded hours joined to a school which may be different to older children in the family to be just in line with other parents across Powys is very frustrating.	Comment noted.
4.4	Impact on Nursery / Early Years Provision: The proposal takes no account of the potential impact closure would have on parents of pre-school children who currently attend the nursery at Llanbedr. This answers a need for parents vulnerable to isolation in a rural setting, where there is no public transport. Llanbedr School offers a chance to meet parents, grow friendships not only among the children but also among the parents. Those without independent transport, who would typically be from disadvantaged households, would not be able to find transport to the provision offered in Crickhowell and Llangattock. Llanbedr School is an easy walk from the village's recently built low-cost housing and provides an important social point for young families in the whole Vale of Gwryne catchment.	The proposal does consider the impact on early years provision in the Consultation Document and draft impact assessments – these will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.

5 IMPACT ON PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC GROUPS

5.1 Impact on pupils with ALN

5.1.1	A group of children that may be greatly affected by the closure of Llanbedr are those who fall under the additional learning needs category. It is noted in the consultation by Powys County Council that 14.9% of the pupils who attend Llanbedr CinW School have additional learning needs. Nonweiler et al (2020) found that children with ALN have experienced poor mental health outcomes over the past year and thus have showed a decrease in prosocial behaviours. Nonweiler et al (2020) goes on to advise, that to limit the effects on these children, routines and environment stay the same as much as possible, changes detrimental at present and as previously mentioned will elevate problems with children who already suffer from increased baseline problems (Whittle et al, 2020).	There is very good support across the cluster schools in the Crickhowell area for pupils' wellbeing and for the support of pupils with SEN/ALN. All schools in the cluster have an experienced ALNCo and wellbeing champion who can provide support and guidance to pupils. In addition, all schools in the Crickhowell cluster have staff trained in adverse childhood experiences, trauma informed approaches and mental health first aid. As such, any pupils with emotional or additional learning needs will be very well supported at any of the schools in the Crickhowell cluster.
5.1.2	The ALN pupils at Llanbedr have mainly transferred from local schools that could not meet their needs. They have flourished at Llanbedr. How will Powys be able to maintain this if they are removed from a safe and nurturing environment?	See above.
5.1.3	I am concerned closing Llanbedr School would have an impact upon other children at the school who have particular special needs in respect of disability and have already discovered other local schools would struggle to meet their needs. All Llanbedr children and parents need continuation of provision of schooling at Llanbedr.	It is the Council's responsibility to ensure that all schools can meet the needs of any pupils with disabilities on roll at their preferred school. Other schools in the cluster have been adapted to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities. This is addressed on a case-by-case basis.
5.1.4	Some pupils with ALN need quiet space to focus on activities and deregulate. Llangattock school is currently pushed to meet these needs. The school does not have an accessible toilet for pupils to use even though these toilets were renovated by	Llangattock CiW School is able to provide calm spaces for pupils who need to regulate. It also has an accessible toilet which has been used in the past for pupils with physical disabilities.

	Powys in 2019. ALN pupils already attending Llangattock and ALN pupils from Llanbedr will suffer most from the changes and the further pressure of what already is a restrictive environment.	
5.1.5	Asking pupils with ALN to travel a distance to school is not advisable or in their best interests.	Comment noted.
5.1.6	What will happen to pupils undergoing therapy which is connected to the school, and where the teachers are included in the therapy? Will the allocated school be able to update themselves with his progress so far, implement necessary actions and ensure his therapy is uninterrupted?	The council will provide the necessary guidance and training to ensure that these therapies can continue at other schools.

5.2 Other comments

5.2.1	This proposal has an impact on race, religion and belief as it is a CIW school.	Comment noted.
5.2.2	Religion – Llanbedr is a Church in Wales school and as far as I am aware there is no other schools that are Church in Wales that have spaces for my child. If this should be for Muslim children, would it be allowed to be closed? How is this meeting the religious needs of my child and others.	The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.
5.2.3	I would like to draw your attention to the mental effects of change on children from military families, especially during the pandemic which has brought such instability and uncertainty. Children of military service families are exposed to unique experiences, which may include; Separation from a parent, frequent moving of house, caring for a sibling or parent, taking	The Council has published a draft impact assessment as part of the consultation and this will be updated to take account of information gathered during consultation, such as this.

	<p>responsibility for the household or sudden deployment from a combat zone – all of which may impact on the way children led their lives, both now and in the future. The challenges each child or service family face are different, however, service children who face regular moves from home and school can suffer high levels of anxiety and stress, also their health and their ability to learn may be disrupted especially when their parents are deployed to armed conflicts overseas. In addition, children with additional or complex health needs may find continuity of care a problem due to regular moves and may feel isolated or find it difficult to cope without the support from the extended family or local community networks. I would now like to draw your attention to the armed forces covenant which emphasises is that the whole nation, has a moral obligation to members of the UN forces and their families, and how they should expect to be treated. For most of the armed forces community, the covenant is about removing disadvantage to ensure armed forces and their families get the same outcome as the civilian community. I strongly feel that as we have only recently relocated and chose Llanbedr CIW as our school of choice we are being unfairly treated as a military family by potentially having to further disruption to education.</p>	
5.2.4	Some people in the school are transgender, gay, lesbian and more from the LGBTQ+ community.	Comment noted.
5.2.5	The smaller numbers in Llanbedr mean it is perfectly placed to satisfy the needs of people with protected characteristics.	Comment noted.
5.2.6	Llanbedr C. in W. School is perfectly positioned to cater for people with protected characteristics.	Comment noted.
5.2.7	People of all and any characteristics need places where they can feel safe and respected. A school where they can feel safe and respected. A school with its core mission to educate can provide this.	Comment noted.

5.2.8	The impact of the proposals to close Llanbedr C in W school would be catastrophic to all children with protected characteristics.	Comment noted.
5.2.9	I would have thought that an individual care plan would need to be put in place for those people with protected characteristics to show how the Council are going to support them if deemed vulnerable.	The Council would need to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met when transitioning to alternative schools. However, there may be a need for a more individual plan if specific needs are identified related to a pupil with protected characteristics.
5.2.10	If the proposal were to go ahead then surely that would be the responsibility of the Council to ensure they do everything they can to support those individual people with the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.	As above.
5.2.11	The mental health and well-being of all, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural preferences & social background is best addressed in small (Community) settings; the "Covid pandemic" has demonstrated, beyond doubt, that its detrimental effects are mitigated by support from "close knit" communities. The adverse effect on the mental health of individuals of all ages is well documented if this support is available.	Comment noted.
5.2.12	I would consider Powys to have failed in its statutory obligations not to have considered the potential risk to some learners who choose to go to a small school for reasons of protected characteristics. This would by its nature be a very small number, but numbers are irrelevant in this instance. There are some concerns in respect to learners who have issues with anxiety, especially social anxiety and for those with special needs who require a quiet space in which to learn and are bothered by large numbers of pupils within the school estate.	The Council has carried out an equality impact assessment and published this as a draft assessment as part of the consultation documentation. This will be updated to include information gathered during the consultation.

6. COMMENTS ABOUT CHURCH IN WALES PROVISION

6.1 Families chose Llanbedr because it is a Church in Wales school

6.1.1	This is a Church in Wales school and parents chose to send their children here for that specific reason.	The Council notes these comments about families choosing Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School for its Christian ethos.
6.1.2	The schools is a Church in Wales school. The vast majority of parents have chosen to send their child to Llanbedr for the Christian ethos that it will instil in the pupils.	As above.
6.1.3	Parents have specifically chosen for their children to attend a small rural Church school.	As above.
6.1.4	Parents choose this school for its Christian ethos and family based all-inclusive beliefs.	As above.
6.1.5	Parents send their children to this school for the close connection to the Church and the support that is provided by the community	As above.
6.1.6	We chose this school because of its close links to the Church. I feel this will be lost and unmatched at other schools.	As above.
6.1.7	Llanbedr is a Church in Wales School which is important to us as parents and as members of the Church.	As above.
6.1.8	Many of the families that attend Llanbedr school do so because it is a Church in Wales VA school.	As above.
6.1.9	The reason we chose Llanbedr school for our children is because we strongly believe in a Christian education and to this effect from our children attending the school we feel and know that Llanbedr will not only shape our children academically with the up-to-date curriculum, but spiritually and culturally in the future, and that is something extremely important to us as parents and for our children.	As above.

6.1.10	As a prominent Church in Wales school, fully immersed in the local community (who are insulted and aghast at the proposal) with less than 7% extra capacity, parents are making a choice to travel to this excellent school for a family school, rebuking larger class sizes and smaller sites for a family Church ethos – smaller mixed age classes and idyllic rural surroundings.	As above.
6.1.11	Parents and carers have made a positive choice to send their children to a church school, specifically because of its emphasis on values and its inclusive ethos.	As above.

6.2 Comments about links between Llanbedr C. in W. School and the church

6.2.1	The school has fantastic community and Church links – which is fundamental to my child’s education and my choice of education in a school with a Christian ethos.	The Council notes these comments about the close links between Llanbedr C. in W. School and the local church and the concerns regarding the potential impact on the community should there be no school in Llanbedr. Whilst recognising the distinct Christian ethos of Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School, it is noted that all schools are required to teach religious education, therefore should the Council proceed with the proposal to close the school, pupils would continue to be taught about religion at the alternative schools they transfer to, whether they transfer to alternative C. in W. provision or an alternative C.P. school.
6.2.2	The well-established links with the community and Church, the inclusivity to children of all faiths should be maintained.	As above.
6.2.3	The members of Church regularly come into school to carry out delivering the message of the Church in Wales through play roles.	As above.

6.2.4	They would lose the close contact of Church and community if they are moved from Llanbedr.	As above.
6.2.5	The close ties with Llanbedr Church will be a loss to the children and their families if the school is closed.	As above.
6.2.6	Children get shown various activities throughout the year in the Church and love it. Easter, Harvest festival and of course Christmas. The local vicars have always been fantastic in supporting our children.	As above.
6.2.7	It is vital to the Church in Wales relationship to have a school here with its strong links and daily interaction.	As above.
6.2.8	We go to St Peter's Church for Christmas plays. We also get to do christening, also go in the big tree that has a big bowl in it and lots of wood life and we love our church school. Everyone loves our church school it is part of our family.	As above.

6.3 Concern that there is no alternative Church in Wales provision available

6.3.1	The alternatives that Powys are offering to our children is unacceptable. The schools recommended are not all Church schools. People chose Llanbedr for this reason.	<p>The proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools. However, parents are able to apply for a place for their child(ren) at any school and are able to attend any school if there is a place available.</p> <p>The nearest alternative schools for Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School pupils within Powys are:</p> <p>Crickhowell C.P. School Llangynidr C.P. School Llangattock C. in W. Primary School Llangors C. in W. School</p>
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		<p>The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.</p> <p>However, the Council is adhering to the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code which states the following:</p> <p><i>'with reference to the nature of the schools subject to proposals, whether the alternative school-based provision is sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same:</i></p> <p><i>a. language category as set out in "Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision" Welsh Assembly Government Information document No: 023/2007 or any successor documents; and</i></p> <p><i>b. (if relevant) designated religious character.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals should ensure that the balance of school provision reflects the balance of demand. This means that where school provision is being reduced or removed, alternative school provision of the same nature (language category or, if relevant, religious character), wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local area.</i></p>
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		<p><i>However in some areas it may not be compatible with the cost effective provision of education to continue to maintain access to schools of the same nature.'</i></p> <p>Whilst not in the immediate area, the nearest Church-in-Wales provision is at Llantilio Pertholey VC School in Abergavenny (7 miles from Llanbedr), Llangors C. in W. Primary School (11 miles) and Priory C. in W. Primary School (16 miles). If parents were unable to access a place at Llangattock C. in W. School, they would be able to apply for places at these Church-in-Wales schools. Although the Council's Home-to-School transport policy does not provide free transport to denominational schools specifically, it would be able to consider using its discretionary powers under the Learner Wales Travel Measure to provide transport – this would only be available to pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School and consideration would be on a case-by-case basis.</p>
6.3.2	Llangattock cannot accommodate the entire school population of Llanbedr and this has been acknowledged and consequently your proposal to split up the current student body to other schools will alter the religious provision that the student body receive.	As above.
6.3.3	Llanbedr is a Church in Wales school and to close it would mean that our pupils would have to attend a school that is not Church led. The other C in W school in the area is full.	As above.
6.3.4	With such limited places available in the only other Church in Wales school most children will lose their chance to stay	As above.

	educated within the wonderful Christian ethos that Llanbedr provided them. These values are so important to us, and I truly worry that our children will lose their right to be taught in a Church of Wales school.	
6.3.5	Church in Wales provision is not available in any of the other schools apart from Llangattock, but they do not have enough space for all of the Llanbedr children.	As above.
6.3.6	Pupils attending a Church in Wales school should have the choice to continue in a church school if they wish. Can Llangattock accommodate all of the children from Llanbedr should they wish to go there to continue their learning? No	As above.
6.3.7	With so few places available at Llangattock there is no guarantee that everyone who wishes to access Church in Wales provision will be able to do so.	As above.
6.3.8	The nearest Church in Wales school cannot accommodate many of the children at all. Most of their spare capacity is in the foundation phase, surely this then discriminates against parents who have already chosen a Church in Wales school for their child's education?	As above.
6.3.9	The Council acknowledges that, if the school closes there are not enough places in Llangattock Church in Wales School to accommodate all the children from Llanbedr. The availability of places there will not be determined by parental choice, but by which year groups have vacancies. Therefore, some families will be able to secure a place in a Church School, while others will be denied this opportunity. This is inequitable and divisive and seems to pay scant regard for the rights of parents and children to a religious education of their choice. I doubt that the Local Authority would even contemplate treating a different religious faith in such a discriminatory and insensitive manner.	As above.
6.3.10	The only alternative would be to transfer pupils to Llangattock Church in Wales School. However, Llangattock does not have	As above.

	the capacity to take all Llanbedr pupils. Therefore, Powys CC would be in breach of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of this decision. The council should be naïve to think that this problem will be solved by parents opting to send their children to the other feeder schools.	
6.3.11	Would the council be able to provide the whole school with a place in any other church school in the local area? I think it would be impossible to provide 50+ places in Closure any Church school.	As above.
6.3.12	I would like my children to continue learning in a Church in Wales school for many reasons. However, I am so concerned that we will be able to secure spaces in the years needed unless I look into moving them now. This is something I am just not prepared to do as they are already attending the best school for them. I cannot prepare for the future and following a negative consultation result I am doubtful we will be able to secure places at the receiving Church in Wales school next year which has left us and other parents in an impossible situation which only adds unnecessary anxiety to an already stressful process.	As above.
6.3.13	We were previously refused a place at St Mary's in Brynmawr as it is oversubscribed and is located out of catchment in Blaenau Gwent.	As above.

6.4 Comments that closure of the school would remove parental choice to choose a Church in Wales school

6.4.1	To close this school is to take away parental choices as the lack of Church in Wales facilities, provided by you in this catchment area.	The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the
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		<p>capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.</p> <p>However, the Council is adhering to the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code which states the following:</p> <p><i>'with reference to the nature of the schools subject to proposals, whether the alternative school-based provision is sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same:</i></p> <p><i>a. language category as set out in "Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision" Welsh Assembly Government Information document No: 023/2007 or any successor documents; and</i></p> <p><i>b. (if relevant) designated religious character.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals should ensure that the balance of school provision reflects the balance of demand. This means that where school provision is being reduced or removed, alternative school provision of the same nature (language category or, if relevant, religious character), wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local area. However in some areas it may not be compatible with the cost effective provision of education to continue to maintain access to schools of the same nature.'</i></p> <p>Whilst not in the immediate local area, the nearest Church-in-Wales provision is at Llantilio Pertholey</p>
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		VC School in Abergavenny (7 miles from Llanbedr), Llangorse C. in W. Primary School (11 miles) and Priory C. in W. Primary School (16 miles). If parents were unable to access a place at Llangattock C. in W. School, they would be able to apply for places at these Church-in-Wales schools. Although the Council's Home-to-School transport policy does not provide free transport to denominational schools specifically, it would be able to consider using its discretionary powers under the Learner Wales Travel Measure to provide transport – this would only be available to pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School and consideration would be on a case-by-case basis.
6.4.2	I feel that Powys are taking away a parent/children's right to choose a C in W school.	As above.
6.4.3	Children have the right to attend a Church school.	As above.
6.4.4	With reference to religion, it is important to my daughter and son in law that my granddaughter is educated in a Church of Wales school in line with their spirituality and religious belief.	As above.
6.4.5	All the parents that I have spoken to have expressed their desire, their right as a parent to choose a Church in Wales School and we, in the diocese, believe this right will be taken away from the parents and community if it is closed.	As above.
6.4.6	We have made the choice to teach our kids in a Christian ethos, moving to a new school which is not a Church in Wales school will discriminate our children to what we have decided for them.	As above.
6.4.7	I have major concerns about the lack of Church in Wales facilities that are provided by you in this catchment area.	As above.

	Therefore, to take away Llanbedr is to take away parental choice.	
6.4.8	The option to close Llanbedr school dismisses the Christian nature of the school. The option is denying children and parents the opportunity to attend a school with a distinct Christian character. There are not enough spaces in the nearest C.in W. school to accommodate the pupils from Llanbedr, removing parental preference and choice for their child to attend a Christian school.	As above.
6.4.9	By showing such little regard for a large majority of families who will be unable to access a place in a Church in Wales school if they wish to seek one out shows a concerning lack of judgement and respect of those who wish to maintain their right to attend a Church in Wales school and accessing the individual Christian ethos that has proved so beneficial to the pupils of Llanbedr.	As above.
6.4.10	The consultation suggests that only some of the children will attend a Church in Wales school and we want all the children to be educated within a Church in Wales school. This is extremely concerning situation for the diocese, and as stated earlier we are looking to grow the number of children in a Church in Wales school. We feel that it is a question of equity and the denial of the opportunity for children to attend a school that their parents choose.	As above.
6.4.11	There is little evidence in the consultation documents in relation to the desire of parents and children who want to remain in a faith school but cannot access a place. The education authority does not have a statutory obligation to achieve this, but no mention has been made regarding the need to provide faith-based education as a moral obligation in the primary sector or consideration when proposals are made to close a faith school without other provision.	As above.

6.4.12	There is not space for Llanbedr's pupils at Llangattock, and this outstanding level of education which has been chosen by parents across the catchment would not be available to as many as wish to make that choice, as they are entitled to do. The right for parents to choose the kind of education their children receive is enshrined in Articles of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.	As above.
6.4.13	Parental choice for a Church in Wales school cannot be exercised by the school as a whole if it were to close. The UN Articles relating to the child, e.g., Article 3, 12, 17 have not been adhered to by PCC.	<p>The Council has adhered to the UN Rights of the Child.</p> <p>Article 3 – Decisions must be made in the best interest of children. The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and to ensure equity across the system.</p> <p>Article 12 – Views of children must be heard and respected. The Council has consulted with pupils as part of this process. There is a duty within the School Organisation Code to ensure that the views of children are heard. A number of responses have been received from pupils.</p> <p>Article 17 – Access to reliable information. A children's version of the consultation document was published and distributed to all pupils. During the two consultation meetings with the School Council, officers continually checked with the pupils whether they understood the proposal and the officers responses to the pupils' questions.</p>
6.4.14	We feel that it is a question of equity and the denial of the opportunity for children to attend a school that their parents	As above.

	choose. Morally all the children should have the opportunity of attend a Church in Wales school.	
6.4.15	I believe the Council are either underestimating or choosing to ignore just how important it is to us that our children maintain the right to receive a Church in Wales education, within the supporting and caring environment that provides.	As above.
6.4.16	The right for children to be educated in a Church in Wales primary school is being taken away from them.	As above.
6.4.17	Morally all children should have the opportunity to attend a Church in Wales school.	As above.

6.5 Concern about the impact on pupils from not being able to attend a Church in Wales school

6.5.1	We would be extremely hesitant about sending our children to other school(s) as will Powys Council/Education Department be able to guarantee that the individual needs of our children will be met spiritually, morally, intellectually, emotionally at other schools as they are presently at Llanbedr school, whilst recognising and respecting the freedom of individuals to worship and respect a fulfilled Christian life whilst learning the morals and ethics of Christianity.	All schools are required to teach religious education, therefore should the Council proceed with the proposal to close the school, pupils would continue to be taught about religion at the alternative schools they transfer to, whether they transfer to alternative C. in W. provision or an alternative C.P. school.
6.5.2	Pupils currently attending Llanbedr C in W School would be deprived of the chance to benefit from a Church School education.	As above.
6.5.3	The impact of making children go to a school without this religious, Christian ethos would of course have a detrimental impact on learners, their families the community and the church.	As above.
6.5.4	The religious character of our school will be lost to our children if they are moved from their Church school to a non-Church school. This has not been taken into consideration by the Cabinet.	As above.

6.5.5	We have a strong belief that the Church shows a great way of life to our children.	As above.
6.5.6	We need the unique Church school experience. Our children would suffer in other schools.	As above.
6.5.7	The consultation makes no mention of what Christian support will be in place for those children who do not get a place in Llangattock.	As above.
6.5.8	I am concerned that the religious provision which Llanbedr offers is unique to the Church of Wales schools and must be retained as it has benefited my child considerably.	As above.
6.5.9	The children attend Llanbedr because it is a Church school. You cannot possibly be able to provide the Christian ethos and provision given by Llanbedr school to these children at any of the schools you have listed in the document.	As above.
6.5.10	There are very limited places at the only other local Church in Wales school and with no other options being looked at I think shows a lack of respect towards children having the right to access an education with a Christian ethos and values.	Comment noted.
6.5.11	This proposal will significantly affect my child negatively and her ability to get an education in a Church of Wales school – her previous school caused significant psychological trauma to her.	Comment noted.

6.6 Positive comments about Church in Wales schools / Christian ethos

6.6.1	A Church School is essential to provide each of our children with the opportunity to develop spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially. This environment offers an opportunity to develop a caring ethos where staff and children can experience tolerance or, justice and a sense of self worth, ultimately leading to children who respect themselves, others and their environment.	The Council notes these comments about the Christian ethos of Church in Wales schools.
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6.6.2	A Christian school is one in which the entire atmosphere is pervaded by a conviction that there is something mysterious, and potentially wonderful, in everybody. In the everyday running of the school, there is little difference between a Church school and a community school. However, the ethos of a school can be strongly influenced by its Christian foundation, for example the vision of a school is based upon a Biblical quote.	As above.
6.6.3	I'm concerned about the impact of this proposal upon families of religious faith and for those who recognise the value of a Christian education. We live and work in a society which historically had Christianity at its core, underpinning it's ethics, values, education, legal and financial institutions. Understanding our Christian heritage is to understand our societies values and its place in the world. This teaching and involvement with Christian life in the wider community is not available in a CP school in the same way.	As above.

6.7 Insufficient consideration has been given to providing access to faith-based provision

6.7.1	There seems to be a complete disregard of the fact that the school is a Church in Wales school and that parents have chosen to send their children to Llanbedr because of this.	The Council recognises that Llanbedr is a Church-in-Wales school and notes the comments that parents have chosen Llanbedr because it provides a faith provision.
6.7.2	Due consideration has not been given to the implications of closure on the opportunities for all pupils to have equally of access to an equivalent faith-based provision.	The Council has published a draft impact assessment as part of the consultation and this will be updated to take account of information gathered during consultation.
6.7.3	We wanted our child to be raised in a faith environment school. I find that wanting to be part of the Christian faith has not been	The Council recognises that Llanbedr is a Church in Wales School. The proposal is to close the school and for pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative

	taken into consideration when being offered education by the LEA.	schools. However, parents are able to apply for a place for their child(ren) at any school. The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. However, there are alternative Church-in-Wales schools available within a 16 mile radius of Llanbedr.
6.7.4	The next nearest school has already informed me that they would be unable to accept all of the potential students, should Llanbedr close. As Llanbedr is a faith school, I am concerned that there is an argument for religious discrimination.	As above.
6.7.5	The option to close Llanbedr school dismisses the Christian nature of the school. The option is denying children and parents the opportunity to attend a school with a distinct Christian character.	As above.
6.7.6	By determining children should be moved to their nearest school, PCC have dismissed both the rural and religious character of Llanbedr School. The religious character of the school is very important.	As above.
6.7.7	The lack of care and understanding shown towards the importance of providing an alternative Church in Wales place for each child is very concerning and dismissive of the values we feel are incredibly important in our children's upbringing and education.	As above.
6.7.8	Powys CC's option to move children to their nearest school blatantly disregards the religious nature of Llanbedr and is at variance with the School Organisational Code.	The Council is adhering to the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code which states the following: <i>'with reference to the nature of the schools subject to proposals, whether the alternative school-based</i>

		<p><i>provision is sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same:</i></p> <p><i>a. language category as set out in “Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision” Welsh Assembly Government Information document No: 023/2007 or any successor documents; and</i></p> <p><i>b. (if relevant) designated religious character.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals should ensure that the balance of school provision reflects the balance of demand. This means that where school provision is being reduced or removed, alternative school provision of the same nature (language category or, if relevant, religious character), wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local area. However in some areas it may not be compatible with the cost effective provision of education to continue to maintain access to schools of the same nature.’</i></p>
6.7.9	You will be aware of the obligations on the Council under the School Organisation Code to guarantee places in alternative church schools if you’re closing a church school.	As above.

6.8 Other comments

6.8.1	As Llanbedr is a Church in Wales school, by closing it down I feel greatly discriminates against the Christianity beliefs and ethos that the school provides.	Comment noted.
6.8.2	I have a concern the proposal will impact people with religious characteristics following the school closure as there are no other Church in Wales schools in the area with the capacity to	Comment noted.

	accept all the students displaced were the Llanbedr school closure to go ahead.	
6.8.3	In the diocese we are concerned about Governance, as Llanbedr is a Voluntary Aided school, where the Governing Body in Church of Wales has a Christian foundation, with Foundation governors forming a significant proportion of the governing body. They have a particular duty to ensure that the school is fulfilling the terms of the foundation and we are concerned by closing it, this will be broken, breaking the contract with the local community.	Comment noted.
6.8.4	We note that the reference to Llangattock as the only Church School in the local area but this fails to consider that Llangors is also a church school and may be able to accommodate some of the children whose parents would prefer a Church School should Llanbedr close.	Comment noted.

7. COMMENTS ABOUT HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA

7.1	With additional homes due to be built in the Glangrwyney area, there will be increased demand at Llanbedr and so the argument to close the school on attendance figures does not stand up.	<p>The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.</p> <p>Pupils from the Glangrwyney area, and specially the proposed new development of 72 houses at Cwrt y Gollen, would be closer to Crickhowell C.P. School than to Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School and therefore would only be provided with free home-to-school transport to their nearest school.</p>
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7.2	The likelihood of new houses to be built in Glangrwyney well create even greater need for primary school places in the area.	As above.
7.3	It is a fact that the population of villages is changing, older people are moving to towns to be nearer essential amenities and younger families want to move to the countryside. Furthermore, there are 72 new houses being built at Glangrwyney, more families, more children needing schooling. What an opportunity for Llanbedr school, 72 new houses in their catchment area.	The Council's planning department uses a pupil-yield ratio of .45 pupils per new house, which could lead to an estimated additional 32 pupils in the cluster based on a housing development of 72 houses. If this happens, and pupil numbers increase, then the Council would consider the impact on school capacities and any adjustments required to the schools to accommodate additional pupils.
7.4	With the development of new houses in Glangrwyne, which the consultation fails to mention, I feel there is no other option, but to keep Llanbedr school open. Glangrwyne falls under the catchment of Llanbedr, and even if parents chose to send their children to a different school in the Crickhowell area e.g Crickhowell primary, surely there needs to be spaces available. With the limits in place due to phosphate pollution, extension to current buildings are not an option.	As above. The Council would be able to make adaptations to school buildings and, as per normal practice, this would need to be within environmental legislation.
7.5	Planning has been granted for a large scale housing development in Glangrwyne, inside Llanbedr's catchment area. Were Llanbedr school to close, where would these children be educated, as any potential capacity would have been used up by reallocating the current students of Llanbedr.	As above.
7.6	There are a number of proposed building developments within the surrounding area that are physically close in proximity Llangenny /Glangrwyne), and thus well within the natural catchment of the school, and outside the natural catchment of any other schools. There is no mention of this within the documentation and as this may impact on the numbers of children at all local primary schools it may need further investigation and consideration.	As above.

7.7	I believe that if your argument to close the school is based around surplus school places then I think you should take into account and look into the projected population growth in the catchment area (the building of seventy houses on the old army camp at Cwrt Y Gollen in Glangrwyney). The steady influx of younger families.	As above.
7.8	Housing developments such as Cwrt y Gollen in the Vale of Grwyne is close to being built and is a large development. The Vale of Grwyne is part of Llanbedr catchment. As Powys CC is not the planning authority this will possibly not have been considered.	As above.
7.9	Another concern I have is spaces for children in the future, there are 70 new homes to be built in the area and there does not seem to be the school places available for the new families that will be living there. What are your plans to provide the extra places needed?	As above.
7.10	With the recent and planned Crickhowell housing developments there will be increasing pressure on Crickhowell primary school and it would seem sensible to have the necessary educational infrastructure in place to cater for increased numbers of children entering the system.	As above.
7.11	A number of the other schools are already reaching capacity owing to housing developments in the area. Llangattock for example has a new development of 17 houses, all but one 3 or 4 bedrooms.	As above.
7.12	The other schools in the area are I believe at capacity, with the planned new build housing developments in the locality where are these children meant to be educated?	As above.
7.13	You should consider the fact that new houses are in the process of being built in the area and school places will be needed. Closing this school will lessen school places.	As above.

7.14	With regards to pupil projection, a significant number of new houses have already been granted planning permission nearby in the catchment area and I'm sure that there will be more in the pipeline.	As above.
7.15	With so many houses being developed in this area, surely we'll soon need a bigger school to accommodate the new families moving to the area? If the local schools kept to local children only, and not from other counties, maybe this wouldn't be an issue.	As above.
7.16	Low-cost homes have been developed in the surrounding villages to support the school recently with an influx of younger families with children.	As above.
7.17	Please provide information about any preliminary planning applications that the Planning Department of Powys County Council or yourselves as the Cabinet know of for housing/residential development at the location of Llanbedr school or planned for the future.	This information is contained within the Brecon Beacons National Park Local Development Plan.

8. COMMENTS ABOUT SMALL / RURAL SCHOOLS

8.1	All parents prefer smaller schools. Smaller class sizes enable more 1:1 time with staff members than larger schools could provide and provide a wider range of extracurricular activities for pupils.	Whilst the Council recognises that some parents prefer smaller schools, all schools, regardless of size, are required to support, challenge and nurture all pupils to achieve their full potential, and are able to provide for the needs of their pupils. Smaller class sizes would not necessarily mean that pupils receive a more individual education as there are a number of year groups and a wider age range of pupils in the class.
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		There is no evidence either that smaller schools provide a wider range of extracurricular activities than larger schools.
8.2	Children get far more out of a small school environment than by being lumped into oversized classrooms with strangers. The community benefits greatly from the school and its pupils are happy there.	As above.
8.3	Being part of a smaller community school must be a more positive environment in which to learn/integrate into secondary education.	There is no evidence that pupils from smaller community schools integrate better into secondary education than pupils from larger schools.
8.4	Smaller numbers in a school mean more hands-on learning, resulting in greater outcomes for each child.	As above.
8.5	Pupils that struggled in larger primary schools and were lost in the large numbers have thrived in a smaller school where the teaching staff know all of their children and adapt their learning to their learning needs and style.	As above.
8.6	It is extremely disappointing that the value small schools have has been completely missed. Covid 19 has shown the positives of having small class sizes and reducing travel interactions of parents and children to the smallest geographical areas. Powys CC is undervaluing what should in fact be celebrated - they have excellent reports and are committed to high standards.	Analysis of PLASC 2021 pupil postcode data indicate that that 61% of the pupils attending the school live closer to other school, and therefore travel into Llanbedr. See 1.2.1 regarding small schools.
8.7	The proposal takes no account of the extra nurturing value of small schools where pupils really are people rather than numbers at assembly, pushing more pupils into larger schools risks losing individuals to getting lost in the system like happens in England, I thought Wales was better than that.	All schools, regardless of size or type of school, are required to support, challenge and nurture all pupils to reach their potential.
8.8	I would argue that children actually get a better education in small rural schools and that primary schools in general should be smaller. It seems that this is the case in Finland which has the best education system in the world. I don't have knowledge	Comment noted.

	of this topic but a Google search shows that the UK has the highest average class size of primary school education in Europe (26) and we know this to be detrimental to learning.	
8.9	I know there are many esteemed professionals who have achieved great things in life even after attending smaller schools than that of Llanbedr!	Comment noted.
8.10	Given that we are coming out of a pandemic, education is vital, and a small village school plays a very important role – a large school is not suitable for many children from rural families.	Comment noted.
8.11	I know for a fact that you have evidence that tells you that rural schools are well-placed for strong co-operation and collaboration and facilitate a strong sense of belonging and community. For the education system to reach the very highest standards for all, we need to draw on these rural advantages, as well as the distinct strengths of urban and valley schools. A study by Bangor University recently reported that there are: “ ..significant benefits academic, cultural and social to learners and communities through the delivery of high-quality education in small and rural schools”. This can be critical in engaging learners and families from the most disadvantaged backgrounds in rural areas and raising learner aspirations, as well as making a significant contribution to the long-term sustainability of the local community.	<p>The Council recognises the role that rural schools such as Llanbedr C.i.W Primary school have in their local communities. The draft Community Impact Assessment has already recognised the negative impact on the community should the school close. This will be updated to take account of issues raised during consultation.</p> <p>However, it remains the case that the Council is concerned about the challenge facing very small schools in delivering education at a time of significant change. The Council is also concerned about the inequity between schools in Powys currently, where some schools are funded generously whilst others are required to provide the same education provision with a much lower funding per pupil.</p>
8.12	The closure would take away a choice of an education in a smaller school with the benefits that entailed.	The Council is not required to provide a choice of schools according to size. The definition of a small school according to the Welsh Government are schools with 91 or less pupils.
8.13	Closing Llanbedr School will only serve to remove parental choice for a smaller school	As above.

8.14	I don't think our rural schools should fall victim to the lack of affordable housing provision in our communities.	Comment noted.
8.15	The Welsh Government provides extra funding for rural schools, so why are these schools being targeted?	The Welsh Government has provided funding via the Small and Rural Schools Grant to all local authorities, recognising the challenges that they face. The Council is not pursuing rural schools – instead, the Council is implementing its Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys which was developed following extensive engagement with schools and other stakeholders. One of the challenges highlighted during the process was the fact that Powys still has a high proportion of small schools. Due to the rural nature of Powys with its sparse population, these small schools tend to be located in rural areas.
8.16	I don't think Estyn have ever said that small schools don't work have they? Do Powys County Council feel that Estyn were recommending the closure of their small schools?	Estyn inspected the Council's education services in 2019 and judged that the Council's approach to school reorganisation needed to be improved. Whilst Estyn's inspection report of the Council's education services did not specifically mention the primary sector, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was developed in response to Estyn's recommendation. This was based on extensive stakeholder engagement and one of the issues raised was the lack of equity across the system and the number of small schools within the county.

9. TRAVEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Additional travel time / distance

9.1.1	There would be extended travel time.	<p>The Council recognises that there would be additional travel required for pupils who currently live closer to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. However, the Council's view is that this would not be excessive. The following outlines the nearest schools for pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School based on PLASC 2021 data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crickhowell C.P. School – 28.8% • Llanbedr C. in W. School – 38.5% • Llangattock C.in W. School – 9.6% • Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5% • Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9% • Deri View Primary School – 9.6% <p>The following outlines the nearest schools for pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School should there be no school in Llanbedr:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crickhowell C.P. School – 61.5% • Llangattock C. in W. School – 9.6% • Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9% • Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5% • Deri View Primary School – 13.5% • Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School – 1.9% of pupils <p>This shows that 61.5% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are already being transported to the school via parental transport or</p>
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		<p>private arrangements, as they are not eligible for free home-to-school transport as they live nearer to other schools.</p> <p>The average distance for all pupils attending the school is 3.3 miles, and the maximum distance is 10.8 miles.</p> <p>The average distance for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school is 1.56 miles and the maximum is 2.7 miles</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanbedr, the average distance for all pupils would be 2.4 miles, and the maximum would be 6.0 miles.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanbedr, the average distance for pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school would be 3.8m, and the maximum would be 4.49 miles.</p>
9.1.2	I live close to Llanbedr, we would have to drive 15-30 minutes to another school, that's not fair.	Free home-to-school transport would be provided to eligible pupils to their nearest alternative school i.e. if they live 2 miles or more from that school.
9.1.3	The other schools are all a long way away for pupils.	As above.
9.1.4	In the catchment area of Llanbedr school pupils coming from 'up the valley' will already be commuting a significant time on the narrow roads.	As above.
9.1.5	We already live in a rural area, where the commute to Llanbedr is more than 3 miles away, and other primary schools are even further.	As above.

9.1.6	None of the other local schools have places available which would mean children having to travel, which is unacceptable at primary age.	There are places available at all schools within the Crickhowell catchment area.
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9.2 Environmental impact

9.2.1	Concern about the carbon footprint – most of the children of Llanbedr school live within the catchment area keeping the environmental impacts of their schooling to a minimum. As a result of closing Llanbedr school, children will have to be transported extra miles each day, resulting in additional CO2 emissions as well as brake and tyre particulates into the local environment.	<p>The Council has recognised that there may be an environmental impact from additional travel in the draft Impact Assessment, however it is anticipated that this would very low. Analysis of pupil postcodes based on PLASC 2021 indicates that 61.5% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School actually live closer to other schools. As they aren't eligible for free home-to-school transport, these pupils travel to the school by private arrangement and therefore there's an environmental impact from this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crickhowell C.P. School – 28.8% • Llanbedr C. in W. School – 38.5% • Llangattock C.in W. School – 9.6% • Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5% • Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9% • Deri View Primary School – 9.6% <p>Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Llanbedr</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crickhowell C.P. School – 61.5% • Llangattock C. in W. School – 9.6% • Llangors C. in W. School – 1.9%
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llangynidr C.P. School – 11.5% • Deri View Primary School – 13.5% • Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School – 1.9% <p>The average distance for all pupils attending the school is 3.3 miles, and the maximum distance is 10.8 miles.</p> <p>The average distance for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school is 1.56 miles and the maximum is 2.7 miles</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanbedr, the average distance for all pupils would be 2.4 miles, and the maximum would be 6.0 miles.</p> <p>Should there be no school in Llanbedr, the average distance for pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school would be 3.8m, and the maximum would be 4.49 miles.</p> <p>If pupils live more than 2 miles from their nearest alternative school, they would be eligible for free home-to-school transport.</p>
9.2.2	There will be an environmental impact of this proposal which has been overlooked by PCC.	As above.
9.2.3	If I am to drive (as many parents may have to) has the environmental impact of more cars on the road been considered?	As above.

9.3 Concern about traffic congestion

9.3.1	Parking around the other cluster schools is already difficult; the roads are congested and local residents already inconvenienced during school run hours. This proposal will increase traffic congestion, parking issues and pollution in the local area.	As above.
9.3.2	We have enough problems on the roads, they are totally unsuited to such volumes of daily school vehicles, unsafe both pollution and safety wise!	As above.
9.3.3	Accessing Llangattock School would mean travelling along the main road next to the high school which is heavily congested and dangerous at peak times at. Access to the school means crossing Crickhowell Bridge, which again is heavily congested.	9.6% ¹ of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School live closer to Llangattock C. in W. Primary School. This would suggest that the impact on transport routes to Llangattock would be low.
9.3.4	The amount of cars already around Crickhowell primary are a massive problem so adding more children will result in more traffic and hazards.	As above.
9.3.5	There is only one way to cross the River Usk to Llangattock School, which is a well-known congestion point, and is periodically closed. Llangynidr bridge is too narrow for a bus, and Glangrwyney is closed due to the damaged road in Gilwern; the next upstream crossing is in Talybont, and the next downstream is in Abergavenny.	Comment noted.

9.4 Queries about the Council's Home to School Transport Policy

9.4.1	Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils. Would this only be accessed if attending the nearest receiving school? In which case restricting parental choice even further.	The Council's Home to School Transport Policy provides transport to eligible pupils to their nearest school. If a parent chooses a school that is not their nearest school, then they would be responsible for ensuring their child(ren)'s transport to school.
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¹ PLASC 2021

9.4.2	What transport arrangements would be put in place if Llanbedr did close for those pupils in remote rural areas?	As above.
9.4.3	Will transport be provided from Llanbedr to my son's allotted school as our nearest alternative is over 2 miles away?	As above.
9.4.4	Would you be providing transport to the next nearest school? Surely this would decimate any potential savings you think you may make?	As above. It is estimated that the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.

9.5 Other comments

9.5.1	Pupils who can currently walk to school would be unable to do so.	The Council acknowledges that pupils who currently walk to school in Llanbedr would no longer be able to do so. Free home-to-school transport would be available to all eligible pupils to their nearest alternative school.
9.5.2	You estimate the cost of transport to other schools to be approx. £1,000 per pupil per year for all their primary years. This means keeping Llanbedr open would be a better option, let alone the health benefits of people walking to school at present, and what about your carbon footprint? Several minibuses taking children further from their homes along country roads.	The estimated cost of transport is £43,700, which is taken into account in the estimated annual savings figure of £101,100. The Council recognises that this is an additional cost but the aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and ensure equity across the education sector in Powys.

		The Council has recognised that there may be an environmental impact from this additional travel, but it can be argued that as 61% of the current pupils already travel to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School (as they aren't eligible for free home-to-school transport because they live closer to other schools), there is already an environmental impact.
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10. COMMENTS ABOUT THE SCHOOLS PUPILS MIGHT TRANSFER TO

10.1 Llangattock C. in W. School

10.1.1	Llangattock Primary School has already indicated that they do not have spaces available for these pupils.	The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.
10.1.2	The only other option to access Church in Wales provision would be a move to Llangattock C in W school which is oversubscribed and does not appear to provide the same outstanding opportunities to learn that Llanbedr C in W school is providing.	The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it <i>'is of the opinion that</i>

		<i>the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.'</i>
10.1.3	There is no scope for expansion of Llangattock.	It would be possible to expand Llangattock C. in W. Primary School.
10.1.4	This falsehood states that there is capacity in Llangattock for 144 children. This has been previously demonstrated to the council to be categorically untrue. There is neither floor space, nor dining/assembly space, nor sanitary facilities, for that many children in Llangattock. Moreover, a temporary building there in Llangattock is nearing the end of its lifespan. If the council expects Llanbedr children to re-locate to Llangattock, extensive building work would need to be completed first.	<p>The Council recognised that there was an error in the capacity calculation in the School Premises Data Return to Welsh Government for Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and therefore rectified this information by issuing an addendum with the correct information.</p> <p>The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and that the school would not have sufficient places for all the pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.</p>
10.1.5	This would put more strain and pressure on Llangattock school which is in a totally inadequate location (not fit for purpose?) causing needless concerns and vexing residents who have the misfortune to live in its midst. Teachers' cars, hogging the street, all day every school day, with scant regard for residents parking, we have left here all of 10 to 15 minutes to return to no parking, yet the car park further up, that school car should be using is rarely used? They prefer to hog the road, so depriving ourselves (arthritic), an elderly neighbour who has had to park at lime trees before now, due to the selfish behaviour of school	Comments noted.

	cars, teachers, parents taking over the whole damn residential Street! A meeting was held on all this, what happened, we heard no more we asked that a school access Rd and school parking could be put in place somewhere up this road, giving us much needed space and fresh, clean air to breathe!	
10.1.6	There is also the issue of parking around the (Llangattock) school. The village is small and although there is a very small village car park, parking at drop off and collection has already been the subject of several complaints from local residents. The addition of a considerable number of children would exacerbates this and appropriate traffic measure and possibly further parking availability may need to be considered.	Comments noted.
10.1.7	I am concerned about traffic around the village of Llangattock, as presumably many children would be driven into school and access and parking during drop off and pick up times. This is already an issue.	Comments noted.
10.1.8	Surely Llangattock is not equipped in its village/school layout to cope with any further school, pupil numbers rising (new houses at back of yours, must have many knew local kids due to start up? Without Llanbedr added to the mix?) such big sites, the village is already proving inadequate and failing many locals by its very poor planning and layouts?	Comment noted.
10.1.9	My concern is that the numbers at Llangattock will increase resulting in overcrowded classroom, facilities such as toilets, higher teacher to pupil ratio. My child is in Y2 and in a class of nearly 30, and I cannot see how any more children could be accommodated without impacting on teaching quality.	The capacity of Llangattock C. in W. Primary school is 121 with currently 103 pupils on roll.
10.1.10	As a parent of children attending Llangattock CIW school I am very concerned about the idea of children from Llanbedr CIW school attending Llangattock. I feel that they don't have the adequate capacity or staff, along with lack of toilet facilities & dining space to accommodate this amount of children. We	As above.

	<p>chose to send our children to this school based mainly on the size of it. The fact that it would then be merged with another school is very worrying. Classes at Llangattock are already mixed year groups and at full capacity, year 1 is having to be split between 2 classes which shouldn't be happening so I can't imagine how adding more children would affect this.</p> <p>Llangattock CIW School is nowhere near big enough to accommodate this amount of children. I feel that all children would be hugely affected by this.</p>	
10.1.11	<p>Suitable on-site facilities would need to be provided for Llangattock School to be able to welcome further children. This would need to include teaching space as well as toilet space (there are currently only 9 children's toilets in the school) and larger dining/hall space.</p>	Comment noted.
10.1.12	<p>There is space within the grounds of Llangattock School to build further accommodation but again consideration would need to be given to having a sufficient amount of suitable outdoor space for the increased number of children. Should further accommodation be a viable option then any work would need to be completed without impact on the current pupils of Llangattock and to the highest standard prior to the influx of any further children to ensure that the school is fit for purpose and able to operate safely and effectively with an increased number of children.</p>	Comment noted.
10.1.13	<p>Llangattock Primary would need extensive work to provide facilities and space to provide access to more pupils. For example, the school hall and the toilet facilities are currently stretched to the maximum (10 in the whole school).</p>	Comment noted.
10.1.14	<p>Llangattock School could potentially have a large number of additional pupils wishing to attend. There would need to be additional provision made for these pupils e.g., teaching space, communal areas such as hall/dining space and additional toilet</p>	Comment noted.

	facilities. Llangattock pupils and school would potentially benefit from additional pupils providing the appropriate resources are in place before the closure of Llanbedr.	
10.1.15	<p>The current number of children on the roll at Llangattock is 103 and with applications still coming in this is likely to increase for September. This means that at the present time there is only space for a further 18 children. This number would be the maximum number the school could accommodate and even with this number we would need to ensure that in line with guidelines that class numbers in Foundation Phase remained under 30. As such there is no possibility that Llangattock could accommodate, in its current state, all 53 or even a substantial number of children from Llanbedr should the school close.</p> <p>There is space within the grounds of the school to build further accommodation but again consideration would need to be given to having a sufficient amount of suitable outdoor space for the increased number of children. Should further accommodation be a viable option then any work would need to be completed without impact on the current pupils of Llangattock and to the highest standard prior to the influx of any further children to ensure that the school is fit for purpose and able to operate safely and effectively with an increased number of children. The school is still recovering and waiting for work to be completed from the last series of works on the Year 6 classroom. It had a negative impact on many pupils' wellbeing and learning. A small community, parking around the school is currently an issue, parking at drop off and collection has already been the subject of several complaints from local residents. The addition of a considerable number of children would exacerbates this and appropriate traffic measure and possibly further parking availability may need to be considered.</p>	Comments noted.

10.1.16	Llangattock does not have the provisions to support and more pupils without there being an obvious impact on the quality of teaching and availability of extra curricular activities. Parents there are of the opinion that their class sizes are too big already.	Comment noted.
10.1.17	Should Llangattock increase in size, due to the closure of Llanbedr, the headteacher's post could potentially be a non-teaching post, or at least have a reduced teaching commitment. This would have a benefit to the whole school community and the ability of the school to develop and implement the New Curriculum for Wales. As a larger school, professional development and opportunities would be improved for staff, as the ability to work together e.g. triad working would be increased/improved.	Comment noted.
10.1.18	Of the 17 or 18 available places at Llangattock, how many are in the nursery? Do you know how the pupils are spread across the year groups?	<p>Llangattock Little Sparks is a non-maintained school run setting, which operates from the site of Llangattock C. in W. School. They also provide the Childcare Offer for Wales. Standards of nursery education and sufficiency of accommodation at this provider are good. The setting has good facilities with direct access to a good sized outdoor area. There are 16 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which currently meet the need for early years education in the area.</p> <p>Year groups in Llangattock in September 2021 are as follows:</p> <p><u>Llangattock C. in W. School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception/Year 1 - 18 pupils • Year 1/2 - 27 pupils

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 3/4 - 30 pupils • Year 5/6 – 28 pupils
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10.2 Crickhowell C.P. School

10.2.1	I do not want to go to a big school like Crickhowell.	Comment noted.
10.2.2	Crickhowell primary school already has large class sizes and could impact of all the children learning.	<p>The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it <i>'is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.'</i></p> <p>School leaders manage their class structure according to pupil numbers and the needs of pupils. The current class structure in Crickhowell C.P. School is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception – 19 pupils - Yr 1 – 22 pupils - Yr 2 – 27 pupils - Yr 3 – 26 pupils - Yr 4 – 35 pupils - Yr 5 – 29 pupils - Yr 6 – 30 pupils

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10.2.3	As a parent of a child in an already oversubscribed class in Crickhowell primary school, closing Llanbedr would not only impact the children's welfare in that school but also the surrounding schools. My child has 34 in his class and to add to that would be outrageous. The quality of the teaching would fail.	As above.
10.2.4	A teacher at Crickhowell Primary School needed to ask what a former pupil's name was to complete the paperwork for them to transfer schools. If I can provide one example to show why large classes and bigger schools are not better, this is it – no child should have a teacher who doesn't know their name.	Comment noted.
10.2.5	I need greater clarity on how exactly the closure of this school and attendance at our nearest primary, Crickhowell, would be better for my children than what they currently experience.	See 1.2.1
10.2.6	I can assure you that the teaching at Crickhowell C.P. School is below par, especially within the Foundation Phase. I have evidence from Mr. Wakely, the then Head, that his staff are not even fully trained in how to use basic ICT equipment competently. This was obtained as a result of my questioning the poor approach to home learning provided by Crickhowell during the initial lockdown in 2020. Big schools do not provide improved social and extra-curricular activities and you have no evidence to support this presumption.	The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it ' <i>is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.</i> '
10.2.7	What additional resources will be put into receiving schools as Crickhowell CP already has some large class sizes and more pupils will dilute the quality of teaching and learning?	Schools are funded in accordance with the funding formula which takes account of pupil numbers.

10.3 Llangynidr C.P. School

10.3.1	Llangynidr School was disorganised in its administration and communications with parents; it failed to listen and act on parental concerns; it failed to follow procedures putting children at risk and yet somehow, it is still a Green School. The environment, teaching and wellbeing of its staff and pupils could not be more disparate from the school Powys is seeking to close.	The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it <i>'is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.'</i>
10.3.2	I would be concerned about increased pressure on Llangynidr school. Some class sizes are already over 30 and an influx of children can only be to the detriment of the existing classes.	<p>School leaders manage their class structures in response to pupil numbers and the needs of the pupils.</p> <p>The current class structure of Llangynidr C.P. School is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception/Year 1 12/19 = 31 - Year 2/Year 3 11/15 = 26 - Year 4/Year 5 19/9 = 28 - Year 5/Year 6 8/19 = 27

10.4 Out of county schools

10.4.1	At Deri View Primary School in Abergavenny, one of the proposed receiving schools, a large proportion of outdoor space provided is tarmac or non-greenspace, thus potentially putting the children who move there at a disadvantage from their previous setting.	Comment noted.
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10.4.2	We are extremely concerned as parents that the last Estyn inspection report of Deri View primary school which is one of the schools you are proposing as an alternative for our children to attend needs improvement in three areas – standards, teaching and learning experience as well as leadership and management therefore for the reasons we have outlined in (1)-(4) under question 4 of our consultation response we will not be sending our children to Deri View as it also the only school with an amber support category (page 47 of your consultation document) and well over the 30 capacity per year school group (page 40) so it goes without saying our children would not be getting better tuition and effective learning that they presently have at Llanbedr.	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>An analysis of pupil postcodes based on PLASC 2021 data suggests that 9.6% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School at that time lived closer to an out-of-county school – Deri View Primary School. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, this would increase to 13.5%. However, parents are able to apply for a place at any school for their child(ren).</p> <p>The Council has noted in the Consultation Document the outcome of Deri View’s latest Estyn inspection and National Categorisation as being Amber. The school has also been under Estyn review, but was judged to have made sufficient progress in addressing Estyn’s recommendations, and were removed from Estyn review in March 2020.</p>
10.4.3	The proposed school (Deri View) is also up for consultation!	It is correct that Monmouthshire Council have recently consulted on a proposal to close Deri View Primary and King Henry VIII Comprehensive to make a new all-age school in Abergavenny. Consultation period ended 25.06.21 and due to be considered by Cabinet on 06.10.21.
10.4.4	Monmouthshire are also in consultation to close and will be moved into a super school on the site of King Henry VIII School so part of this proposal would be for our children to have to move again!	Monmouthshire Council have completed consultation and have agreed to publish a Statutory Notice to establish a new 3-18 all-age school in Abergavenny
10.4.5	The consultation mentions it has no concerns regarding the quality of teaching at schools in Powys, but fails to mention teaching in Monmouthshire, which is where some pupils will be sent to.	Information about the standards of education at schools in neighbouring authorities is included within the Consultation Document.

10.4.6	<p>At a Primary School in Monmouthshire which is a Pioneer School classes were being taken by teaching assistants due to the planning and paperwork that the teachers had to do. Children were disadvantaged by the size of the classes and the hard working, but under qualified, staff left to teach them what their regular teachers could not due to more bureaucratic commitments. Parents views were ignored and discouraged as it didn't fit in with the new way of thinking. As a result, parents were actively vilified behind the scenes. This is not an environment that can benefit any child.</p>	<p>Comments noted. It must be pointed out that the nursery/reception class at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is also taken by a teaching assistant, under the supervision of a teacher.</p>
10.4.7	<p>Shouldn't our Council be focusing on providing the best education possible for our children and not expect them to cross borders and be educated by another authority i.e. Monmouthshire? Your plan demonstrated that you are expecting others to educate our children; this is shameful!</p>	<p>The Council is not expecting other authorities to educate children that live in Powys as this provision is available within the Crickhowell cluster, however, the Consultation Document recognises that this is an area geographically located very close to other authorities.</p> <p>An analysis of PLASC 2021 pupil postcode data suggests that 9.6% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School at that time lived closer to an out-of-county school – Deri View Primary School. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, this would increase to 13.5%.</p>
10.4.8	<p>One of the schools in the proposal is out of county, do you have a good knowledge of the standards within that school and how it will be beneficial for the pupils moving there?</p>	<p>Some pupils that attend Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School live closer to schools outside the county, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deri View Primary School – 9.6% of pupils • Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School – 1.9% of pupils

		<p>The Consultation Document also notes a number of other schools within a ten mile radius of Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School that are located in other counties. Information about these schools, includes standards of education, are included within the Consultation Document.</p> <p>According to the latest National Categorisation data from 2019, Deri View Primary School was placed in the amber category whilst Llanfihangel Crucorney C.P. School was placed in the Green category. Deri View C.P. School has also been under Estyn review, but was judged to have made sufficient progress in addressing Estyn's recommendations, and were removed from Estyn review in March 2020.</p>
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10.5 Other comments

10.5.1	There is no space / enough space in the schools of Crickhowell or Llangattock – our children will be moving from a school which is not overburdened to a school which is overburdened which in turn will have a negative impact upon their education.	<p>The capacity of Crickhowell C.P. School is 230 and there are currently 188 pupils on roll.</p> <p>The capacity of Llangattock is 121 and there are 103 pupils on roll.</p>
10.5.2	Crickhowell and Llangattock do not have the space. My eldest child was turned away from both in 2020 due to space. I have this on record. This suggests moving children from a school that is not overburdened, to schools that are overburdened. As parents we can not understand this. This requires explaining.	As above.

10.5.3	On moving to the area I contacted all the local schools and the only one with space for my daughter (Year 3) was Llanbedr or Deri View in Abergavenny, Crickhowell CP as an example was oversubscribed in her year with a class size of 34.	As above.
10.5.4	If Llanbedr school is to be closed, then careful, accurate assessment is needed of the capacity of Crickhowell and Llangynidr to compensate; accurately measuring their actual capacity, not disingenuous or mythological or wishful thinking, as in the case of the alleged capacity of Llangattock to cater for 144 children.	School capacities are calculated in accordance with the Welsh Government's guidance document - Measuring Capacity of Schools in Wales. The Council recognises that there was an error in the Council's school capacity return to Welsh Government 2020 relating to the capacity of Llangattock C. in W. Primary School.
10.5.5	Teachers from the receiving schools will not only have the added work of addressing the transferring pupils' mental health, but they will also have extra work helping to close the educational gap caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.	There would be no additional work for teachers as they are already implementing strategies to support pupils' wellbeing and addressing their needs within their own schools. Transition will be over a period of time rather than immediately, allowing for systems to support transition to be put in place for pupils and staff.
10.5.6	You say our children would be placed into other schools, which I have on very good knowledge that parents from surrounding schools already are unhappy with the number of children in the classes and find children get lost unable to shine and have the one on one attention which all children deserve.	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and equity for all learners and to provide equity across the system. The Council has no concerns about the standard of education and opportunities available for pupils at any of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, and this view has been supported by Estyn in its response to this consultation.
10.5.7	I would like to query that seeing as a possible receiving school also has mixed classes how is this in fact ok with Powys as more pupil numbers are involved?	It is the view of primary experts within the Council that mixed age classes of more than 2 years provide a challenge to teachers where they must constantly

		<p>adapt their approach. As a result, a high level of flexibility and organisation in lesson planning is required to ensure that teaching caters for both age groups and all abilities within the class. This is an additional workload on teachers and leaders who have a range of other roles and responsibilities in a small school.</p> <p>Teachers in very small schools need to plan, implement and assess for the needs of up to four year groups within one class, and within each of those year groups plan, implement and assess for up to several ability groups, some with complex needs, thereby ensuring that the planning is differentiated for each child's needs. Larger schools have a greater level of staffing and single year group classes or a mixed year class of no more than usually 2 years.</p>
10.5.8	My fear would be that the remaining schools in the area will become oversubscribed in time or will become close to capacity in time, which will negatively affect teacher / pupil ratios and stretch the facilities that currently exist in these schools. This includes the pupils at Llanbedr who will go from great teacher / pupil ratios to being dropped into larger settings.	The Council monitors the capacity of schools on an annual basis, and if capacity needs to be increased, then the Council would take forward the appropriate action.
10.5.9	Pupils in any of the schools to which Llanbedr pupils were transferred would find their own class sizes growing, possibly beyond a comfortable size, as the extra pupils were absorbed. Pressures on play space, competition for access to team sports, opportunities to take part in activities after school would all become more competitive.	School leaders manage class structures in accordance with pupil numbers and the need of pupils.

10.5.10	I have spoken to a number of parents, teachers and governors from surrounding schools, and they say they are concerned that the influx of the pupils from Llanbedr into other local schools is a real issue for them.	<p>As stated in the Consultation Document:</p> <p><i>‘Whilst it is possible that the proposal could have some impact on the schools pupils may wish to transfer to, particularly in the short term when they receive additional pupils, the total number of pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School is relatively small, therefore it is not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on the quality and standards in education (to include standards; wellbeing and attitudes to learning; teaching and learning experiences; care support and guidance and leadership and management) at each of the schools pupils may transfer to. In some cases, it is possible that implementation of the proposal would have a positive impact on quality and standards in education at the alternative schools, as it would lead to an increase in pupil numbers and the opportunity to provide enhanced opportunities to pupils.’</i></p>
10.5.11	Two of the three larger proposed receiving schools in Powys also have teaching heads. Is that OK? How is it a negative for Llanbedr but not for Llangattock and Llangynidr? Surely as they are larger schools they would have even less ‘time to focus’?	<p>The Council has no concerns about the standard of leadership at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary or at the other primary schools in the cluster – all four have strong leadership. It would be a governing body decision as to how much leadership time is allocated to their headteacher.</p> <p>Additional pupils on roll would increase the school’s delegated budget – this would lead to an opportunity for governing bodies to release the headteacher from their teaching commitment.</p>

10.5.12	I question the section on the headteacher at Llanbedr having a significant teaching responsibility alongside her leadership role as being limiting to her leadership of the school- to find that some of the options of schools for our learners also have ahead teacher with teaching responsibilities. If the role of effective leadership is questioned for a teaching head, surely this would be the same for teaching heads in other schools.	As above.
10.5.13	The curriculum provided by Llanbedr is not implemented in all the surrounding schools, so pupils would not benefit by moving to the schools listed in the document	All schools are required to work towards implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales.
10.5.14	With regards to the impact on other schools in the Crickhowell catchment, no impact anticipated is not thorough enough for ensuring the children receive the best possible provision and I would like to see the breakdown of each school once Llanbedr pupils have been added to their nearest schools in each relevant year group to show each school's class size during the proposed September 2022 transition.	<p>The leaders of schools manage their class structures in response to pupil numbers and pupil need. The current class structures for the Crickhowell cluster schools are as follows:</p> <p><u>Llanbedr C. in W. School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery/Reception/Year 1 - 15 pupils • Year 2/3 - 15 pupils • Year 4/5/6 - 19 pupils <p><u>Crickhowell C.P. School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception - 19 pupils • Year 1 – 22 pupils • Year 2 - 27 pupils • Year 3 – 26 pupils • Year 4 – 35 pupils • Year 5 – 29 pupils • Year 6 – 30 pupils <p><u>Llangattock C. in W. School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception/Year 1 - 18 pupils

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1/2 - 27 pupils • Year 3/4 - 30 pupils • Year 5/6 – 28 pupils <p><u>Llangynidr C.P. School</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception/Year 1 - 31 pupils • Year 2/3 - 26 pupils • Year 4/5 - 28 pupils • Year 5/6 – 27 pupils
10.5.15	Take a closer look at the larger schools – not just at how little they spend on each pupil per head but look at the individual children and ask are they reaching their full potential in their 30 + class sizes?	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and equity for all learners and to provide equity across the system. The Council has no concerns about the standard of education and opportunities available for pupils at any of the alternative schools that pupils may transfer to, and this view has been supported by Estyn in its response to this consultation.
10.5.16	Will a bigger school offer the same clubs? Do they have clubs every day? If so, can all the children attend them, like in Llanbedr? I can't imagine so!	It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for all pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities, due to the pupil ratio within the school, However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities.
10.5.17	What adjustments would need to be made to the class structure at other schools and how detrimental would it be to pupils new and old?	As above.

10.5.18	Will the school he will be moved to provide breakfast club and after school activities to enable all parents to access longer hours of childcare if needed?	Breakfast clubs and after school clubs/activities are provided at all the other schools in the Crickhowell cluster.
10.5.19	Please provide information on the following for the alternative providers: The number of complaints received at each school you are proposing as an alternative to Llanbedr including bullying, favouritism etc, requests for 1:1 support that are still unresolved or are on a waiting list including how long they have been waiting for additional support.	The Council is not aware of these complaints. All complaints are confidential to individual schools, plus requests for additional support.
10.5.20	It is acknowledged that some of these schools that Powys County Council proposed to move the children to have access to similar outdoor space as Llanbedr, however due to large pupil numbers at the other schools this could hinder any benefits, as the children will have access to less personal square footage. 10 square metres of open space per pupil is the minimum recommended area by the Department of Education. Shoari et al (2021) states, "The current UK regulation set out in the School Premises Regulation (SPR, 2012) calls for "suitable outdoor space" for physical education by considering the age, number, and sex of pupils", they then go on to highlight that School green space should not be sacrificed to create more classrooms, artificial playing fields, and indoor facilities.	Comment noted. All other schools in the Crickhowell catchment have access to outdoor space, however it is acknowledged that the amount of outdoor space per pupil and the nature of the outdoor space available in each school is different.
10.5.21	Please provide information about the procedures for home schooling which is entirely legal in the UK.	https://gov.wales/pupil-inclusion-wellbeing-behaviour-and-attendance

11. IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

11.1 General concern about the impact on the community

11.1.1	The closure of the school would impact greatly on the local community.	The Council has recognised in the Consultation Document and draft Community Impact Assessment that there would be a detrimental impact on the community, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. This will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.
11.1.2	It would be a massive loss to the widespread community as well.	As above.
11.1.3	Closure of the school will impact the parishes and the community in a detrimental way.	As above.
11.1.4	Llanbedr primary school is vital to our community, and provides a strong sense of belonging, which would be destroyed should the school close.	As above.
11.1.5	The loss of the Llanbedr C in W school would be a death knell for the village of Llanbedr.	As above.
11.1.6	If the school is not part of the community, elderly people will have no association with young children. To hear the laughter during the day is heartening!	As above.
11.1.7	The negative effects that will be brought about by closing the school will be felt as much in the community as in the school itself. The consideration of closing a school like Llanbedr should never have been on the Council's radar if they understood the long reaching effects it would have as a whole on everyone involved.	As above.
11.1.8	I am deeply concerned at the scant concern that appears to have been shown by this proposal for the impact that would inevitably be felt through the community should it be pursued. By this I mean both the community within the school, and the wider community of which the school is an integral part.	As above.
11.1.9	No one on the Council seems to have thought about the repercussions on the community or on parents or the schools our children will have to move to. They haven't even thought	As above.

	about the children themselves. The closures would leave gaping holes in our communities and families, scar our villages and disadvantage not just our children but tomorrow's children and every child within the local area.	
11.1.10	The closure will have a devastating effect on the community as a whole. The very thought of it angers and saddens the whole valley community. Parents, local residents and a lot of people from outside the valley have worked tirelessly to make the school and the valley the place that it is and whilst the council acknowledge the fact that it will have a negative effect on us all, it feels as though that it is an issue that is of minor importance.	As above.
11.1.11	The closure of the School at Llanbedr C. Is an outrageous breach of council support to the community. The school must remain open to provide education and care in the community, but also to show the intent of support from the Council.	As above.
11.1.12	The school is the keystone and if you remove that then the strong community and situation we have in the valley, and also the wider area, will collapse and cause the council more problems than it will solve in the future.	As above.
11.1.13	I live in the village and work in the locality. If the school is closed that will take away one of the few remaining facilities in this settlement. The village shop closed as did the Post Office many years ago. We still have a village hall, a Pub and a Church, but the school itself is a vital component part for the life of the village.	As above.
11.1.14	Closing small thriving schools' wrecks communities, destroys community links, angers residents and voters, splits children from historic friendships and school support.	As above.
11.1.15	The cost of relocating, transporting, the effect of children's wellbeing is far more than closing a school, dismembering a community.	As above.

11.2 The school is the heart of the community

11.2.1	To close the school would take the heart out of the village and community.	The Council has recognised the central role that the school has in the community within the Consultation Document and the draft Community Impact Assessment. This will be updated to include information gathered during the consultation.
11.2.2	In Llanbedr, the school is at the very heart of our community which would be greatly diminished without it.	As above.
11.2.3	The school is a hub for the community.	As above.
11.2.4	Having grown up in this area, that fills up with wealthy retired third agers, the primary school is what gives a community its heart.	As above.
11.2.5	The school is a focal point not only for the village of Llanbedr, but also for the communities of the three parishes and the surrounding area.	As above.
11.2.6	The school is the focus of so many events for the Vale of Grwyney, that it's closure will have a negative impact on the whole community, as has been the experience at Cwmdu, which lost its village school in 2012.	As above.

11.3 Reference to other community activities / organisations

11.3.1	Without the school in the village, village hall or not, most, if not all of the activities in the village would cease, if pupils are moved to other centres, their loyalty lies elsewhere.	The Council has recognised in the Consultation Document and draft Community Impact Assessment that there would be a detrimental impact on the community, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. This will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.
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11.3.2	Events would not simply be moved to the village hall as presumed by the Council. It is the school community as a whole that organises and leads the wide variety of events for everyone to enjoy and it is the children who inspire such events and bring the community together not the building. Llanbedr school is truly at the heart of the community.	As above.
11.3.3	Withdrawal of this provision would significantly affect the local community both in the short term and longer term. The assertion that the village hall can absorb this, fundamentally mis-understands that the school acts as a focus because of the continuous and on-going activities, which the village hall cannot support.	As above.
11.3.4	Community projects are led by the pupils at Llanbedr. Parents and staff also play a major part in organising and delivering numerous projects/events that involve the local community. These events bring the community together, young and old. Working together on common purposes learning from each other, closing the school would have a significant negative effect on the social structures of the community.	As above.

11.4 Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr

11.4.1	Llanbedr CiW School exerts a pull factor into the village. Young families are drawn to move to Llanbedr because of the presence of a good, small primary school.	The Council has recognised in the Consultation Document and draft Community Impact Assessment that there would be a detrimental impact on the community, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. This will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.
11.4.2	Llanbedr will no longer attract the young families that make for a vibrant community.	As above.
11.4.3	By taking away the school it is likely to lead to the death of the community as a living village and so increase the number of	As above.

	non-residents leading to second homeowners buying up houses that become vacant due to the lack of a vibrant community life. At present there are very few houses owned or occupied by people who are not living in the village.	
11.4.4	The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) recently stated: Providing access to quality education in rural areas is crucial to meet the needs of rural youth and also to attract young families to settle in these regions. This is exactly what Llanbedr does.	As above.
11.4.5	Llanbedr C in W School is most important to the identity of our village community. A relatively recent housing development took place in Llanbedr itself with an emphasis on attracting young families. The loss of a village school will undoubtedly deal a serious blow to the achievement of a balanced age structure in our community.	As above.
11.4.6	The village would eventually just be full of old people.	As above.
11.4.7	If the school were to close the village would more than likely turn into a retirement village as it would not be as desirable for young families. The local community council helped to build a small development of affordable housing precisely to encourage young families to live in the village. Powys needs to encourage families to live and work in the local area not present difficulties and drawbacks.	As above.
11.4.8	Closing the school would mean the village having no shop, no school, no library, a pub that is hardly ever open, and due to Covid-19 very few activities at the village hall. People might want to relocate to a more vibrant location and village life will suffer. If this happens then homes may be difficult to sell and the village will slowly die.	As above.
11.4.9	The closure of the school goes beyond pure economics and would be in my opinion an attack on rural life and a step towards the creation of yet another retirement community in	As above.

	rural Wales with the associated costs to the council and taxpayer of providing services to the elderly far outweighing the costs of providing education to around 40-50 primary school children.	
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11.5 Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school

11.5.1	I am the fourth generation in my family to go here and I don't want to ruin that.	The Council notes these comments about previous generations of families that have attended the school.
11.5.2	Many of the children are fourth, possibly fifth, generations of their family to attend the school, and their awareness of their place in the valley, in the village, around the church, builds a strong sense of self and of roots within them that gives them a resilience and confidence to take out into the world with them.	As above.
11.5.3	This school has been both mine and my partners, grandparents, parents ourselves and now our children's school, that's four generations, have been through and thrived from this perfect rural school.	As above.
11.5.4	My Grandfather, his father and family before them attended the school, as well as my father in law, his sister and his two children.	As above.
11.5.5	Since 1728, for almost 300 years, the village of Llanbedr and the wider community has been served by the village school.	As above.

11.6 Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close

11.6.1	If the school closes what happens to the school building? – lies abandoned for several years before the roof tiles are stolen and it eventually crumbles?	The school building is owned by the Diocese of Brecon and Swansea, therefore the future of the building would be the responsibility of the Diocese.
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		The Diocese could propose a community asset transfer or a sale on the open market.
11.6.2	What will happen with the building in the future, what negative impact will this have on our village?	As above.
11.6.3	What are you going to do with the land when you close the school – you don't even own the land.	As above.
11.6.4	Should the school site be sold, what guarantee can be given that its intended redevelopment will be one that continues to benefit the local community?	As above.

11.7 Comments relating to community well-being

11.7.1	The proposals will only serve to put more pressure on the already delicate mental health balance of our rural communities.	The Council has recognised in the Consultation Document and draft Community Impact Assessment that there would be a detrimental impact on the community, should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close. This will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.
11.7.2	A school can and should play a dual role to support community health.	As above.
11.7.3	The council exists for the well-being of the whole community, and this action is contrary to that well-being, being as it would be undermining to community cohesion and integration. The fact that not all communities can be so well integrated and cohesive is no argument for destroying those that are.	As above.
11.7.4	The Council needs to pay particular attention to the fact that there are a number of older people resident in the village and by taking away the facility of the school as a component part of the Settlement and life in the community that will adversely affect that group of people and could even be construed as discriminating against them.	As above.

11.8 Other comments / queries

11.8.1	Will the village of Llanbedr be supported in the loss of its main source of community and employment?	The Council has many initiatives to support residents in all communities. The Mid Wales Growth Deal, for instance, is aimed at bringing in significant investment into the county.
11.8.2	Community is a powerful word. In these times it is a word that pulls people together. Communities provide hope, and schools have always played an integral role in building and supporting people of all ages – not just children.	Comment noted.
11.8.3	If local authorities can prevent change of use of a pub to a dwelling because “it is an important part of the village” and without it the village is not a village – surely the same is true (if not more so) of the village school.	Comment noted.

12 ISSUES RELATING TO FINANCE

12.1 Comments about the estimated savings

12.1.1	Why did you not include an estimate for redundancies? Or would that blow a large hole in your savings budget?	Estimated redundancy costs are not included in this costing, these costs are variable dependant on the staff made redundant and length of service with the council. Redundancy costs are one off costs whereas the estimated savings of £101,100 are annual savings.
12.1.2	I would like to see a full breakdown of savings that would follow the proposed closure once all factors are taken into consideration, not just set against travel costs. Such as the	It is estimated that the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100. This overall figure comprises a potential

	costs of extra staff that may be needed within receiving classes or any extra costs incurred for nursery placements and also the results from the balance of funding per pupil within schools that should be applied once the funding formula has been reviewed and implemented, including the recognition of the additional costs of community-focused schools.	<p>saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.</p> <p>All estimated savings are based on the school funding formula currently in place and the best information that is available at the time the estimates are calculated.</p>
12.1.3	Look at the financial savings. In the grander scheme of things, this amount is insignificant. These savings are a minor issue compared to the huge negative impact the closing of the school will have. The financial issue is a main point for closure according to the council's literature. 101,000 saving by the end of 2024? An insignificant amount to pay for all of the advantages that will come from keeping the school open.	<p>The driver for the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys is equity of educational provision, to improve learner entitlement and best learning outcomes/education, not solely to save money. However, reducing the range of funding per pupil will allow for reinvestment across the authority.</p> <p>The estimated savings set out in the consultation document are recurring savings that the Council will benefit from each year.</p>
12.1.4	The proposed budget saving in closing our schools has already been outweighed by Councillor pay rises – so at the expense of our children, what a disgrace!!	<p>It is estimated that the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100. All estimated savings are based on the school funding formula currently in place and the best information that is available at the time the estimates are calculated.</p> <p>The last pay rise for members was agreed in a cabinet report of 13th May 2021 which was a basic uplift of 1.06% on basic salary. In total this equates to around £17,000.</p>

12.1.5	Powys is the widest, largest county in Wales and has the largest number of sparsely populated villages. Thus, it is expected that Powys will have schools with large per pupil costs. The proposal only saves Powys money this year and next but at the expense of the parents and children in these schools who will have to travel to 'the nearest school'.	Free home-to-school transport is only provided to a pupils' nearest school if further than 2 miles away, therefore if a parent was to choose for their child(ren) to attend a school that isn't their nearest school, then the parent is responsible for getting the child(ren) to and from school.
12.1.6	As the school is maintained by the Church in Wales and the building belongs to the church what financial benefit will Powys gain from its closure?	The estimated savings set out in the consultation document are recurring savings that the Council will benefit from each year. This includes a saving on the funding formula to the impacted schools, catering savings and these are netted off by an additional estimated cost on transport.
12.1.7	There is no financial benefit to PCC from the potential redevelopment or sale of the school or grounds which belong to the Church in Wales.	Correct – there would be no financial benefit from the redevelopment or sale of the school or grounds as it is owned by the Church in Wales.

12.2 The only reason for the proposal is to save money

12.2.1	All about money!!! A total disgrace! This school is excelling all the time!	As stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School teaches children in three classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council's funding formula, the school's funding per pupil is higher than the Council's average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys' Strategy is intended to
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		<p>improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil's learning entitlement and experience.</p> <p>It is clear that the Council's expenditure on children in the smallest schools is very generous, but through all of the engagements with stakeholders and the subsequent development of the Strategy to Transform Education in Powys, it is very apparent that there needs to be a vision for a stronger entitlement for all learners in Powys and equity for learners across the county. That vision, as the education profession moves towards the realisation of the new Curriculum for Wales does require the Council to pursue a transformational vision that secures an attractive entitlement and equity for all learners, professional learning for all staff and secure leadership across all schools.</p>
12.2.2	So aside from filling surplus places and saving money for the council I can see no reason for this proposal for closure that is in any way for the benefit of these children or for the children in receiving schools who have to absorb them.	As above.
12.2.3	It is 100% the wrong choice you are making and a disgusting choice in trying to make cut backs and using this fantastic school as a target.	As above.
12.2.4	Why do you want to close the school? Do you just want the money? It is not fair.	As above.
12.2.5	You may be trying to save money but you are also ruining young people's schools and the community.	As above.
12.2.6	I am writing this letter to protest against your evil plans to close down our school to save money but I think you have the planning mind of a gerbil because you're going to close our	As above.

	school and waste thousands of pounds because you will lose money on more technology.	
12.2.7	You may save money and profit from closing our school but you're going to waste more money than you will save. Then you will never have enough money so you will close more small schools and you will never have any more schools to close then you will go bankrupt all by closing one school. Shame on you!	As above.

12.3 Comments about the budget share per pupil / funding formula

12.3.1	Llanbedr is an efficient and budget aware establishment working to Council funding and budget share formulas put in place by PCC. Recent changes in Primary funding are very suspicious and move drastically away from supporting small schools in the wake of closure proposals – was this PCC underhand dealings?	<p>The reason for the development of the current funding formula was to ensure that small schools were funded at a minimum level required to operate, including management time, PPA and teaching time. The formula was not created to increase funding to small schools with a view to providing a financial case to close small schools.</p> <p>The development of the current funding formula was overseen by the Formula Working Group which included several representatives from across the full range of schools in Powys, including headteachers and governors.</p>
12.3.2	The high cost per pupil cannot be used against the school seeing as it is the councils own funding formula which has created such an imbalance and worryingly has needlessly left children in larger schools funded below that of similar authorities.	As above.

12.3.3	<p>I notice that the Council would prefer to use PLASC 2019 pupil numbers from which the candidates were chosen for the first wave of school closures but chose to use the significantly higher budget share per pupil from PLASC 2020/21 which conveniently shows the excessive jump in budget caused by the recent funding formula designed by Powys. A staggering difference of very nearly £1000 increase per pupil from the PLASC 2019 formula, as admitted in the Transforming Education Strategy, has appeared to have benefitted smaller schools in Powys leaving children of larger schools funded below levels of similar authorities. This is through no fault at all of individual schools and has only been brought about through Powys County Council's management of funds. The rightly criticised funding formula, as per an enabling action for the Transforming Education Strategy is to be reviewed, including recognition of additional costs of community-focused schools. Once this has been reviewed and managed wisely, I hope pupils will receive the funding they need as soon as possible.</p>	<p>The current school funding formula was introduced in April 2019 to bring stability to the budgets of the existing schools estate, particularly the smaller schools. This has resulted in a higher budget share per pupil.</p> <p>The budget share per pupil for Llanbedr C. in W. School from 2018-19 to 2021-22 is shown in the table below:</p> <p><u>Budget share per pupil (£)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2019 – 5,352.39 • 2019-2020 – 4,983.44 • 2020-2021 – 5,948.44 • 2021-2022 – 6,010.00 <p>The development of the current funding formula was overseen by the Formula Working Group which included several representatives from across the full range of schools in Powys, including headteachers and governors. All schools are consulted about any proposed changes.</p>
12.3.4	<p>The cost per pupil figure you're quoting is incorrect because the school's numbers are incorrect. It doesn't actually cost £6000 per pupil, it's less, and it brings us nearer to the rest of the schools to the average of primary schools.</p>	<p>According to the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement, the cost per pupil at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is outlined below:</p> <p><u>2020/2021</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £5,948 • Powys Average – £4,264 <p><u>2021/2022</u></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £6,010 • Powys Average – £4,825
12.3.5	The Council's funding formula is not aligned with its neighbouring counties and application of it results in the removal of rural schools - and the move to centrist large, in personal super-schools with large class sizes. By the simple premise of stating both rural and larger schools are over and under-funded - the former because the cost allocation per pupil is too high - i.e. too few pupils and the latter because the cost allocation per pupil is too low too many pupils - This is driving this initiative. Whilst this may be the aim to engineer this by making the formula work in this manner, as a rural community this is to exclude a part of rural life. This social engineering via the backdoor is not required and is not in the interests of the community they purport to serve a formula based on pupil heads would enable the schools to be funded more appropriately.	<p>The reason for the development of the current funding formula was to ensure that small schools were funded at a minimum level required to operate, including management time, PPA and teaching time. The formula was not created to increase funding to small schools with a view to providing a financial case to close small schools.</p> <p>The development of the current funding formula was overseen by the Formula Working Group which included several representatives from across the full range of schools in Powys, including headteachers and governors.</p>
12.3.6	The Powys funding formula should be reviewed.	The Council is constantly reviewing funding formulae to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
12.3.7	I would urge you to revisit the funding formula and change it to bring it in line with the expectations of the Welsh Government.	As above.

12.4 Other comments

12.4.1	Financial pressures on the school are not an issue although for Powys it might be. This school has not been a drain on finances as far as I can see.	It is recognised that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School manages its budget well and is forecasted to be in a carried forward surplus position at the end of 2023/24.
12.4.2	If the truth of cost saving was placed on the table firmly for discussion, then at last we have a starting point that errs in honesty and reality, and we can finally get down to discussing	Savings estimates are based on the best information available at the time they are calculated and are subject to change for example due to changes in

	how we can work through these issues that are so important to us.	pupil numbers, parental choice, staff changes etc. The calculations are reviewed by a range of officers and sensitivity analysis is also carried out.
12.4.3	More worrying still is the money saved by closing Llanbedr will not ringfenced and used to support these cluster schools or even remain within the education budget. How can this be construed as an ambitious plan for our children or an improved learner offer?	Education and the Transforming Education Strategy are both amongst the highest priorities for the Council and there has been significant work over the last few years to agree an appropriate level of funding in the delegated schools' budget. Given that the Council's funding is only confirmed on an annual basis, it is not appropriate to ring-fence to either the cluster schools or to the Council's education budget. The funding allocated to all services has to be considered collectively and the Council will prioritise its resources in order to deliver its objectives. This approach has seen investment in Education over recent years.
12.4.4	Have a look closer to the top to save money - stop making cuts to the lives at the bottom.	The Council always strives to provide value for money in the delivery of its services, constantly seeking out cost savings and efficiencies, including service transformation across all service areas.
12.4.5	Keep the school open and maybe some people in Powys could get paid less money and save the money from there.	As above.
12.4.6	Could you not consider saving some money by redeploying some of your office staff – are so many highly paid staff needed? The money could be shared between children.	As above.
12.4.7	Financial savings can be achieved by not proceeding with plans to build a new “all age” school in Crickhowell.	The Council's aspiration, as stated in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, is to implement a major capital investment programme that will ensure that schools in Powys have inspiring, environmentally sustainable buildings that can provide opportunities for wider community activity,

		<p>including where possible childcare services, early years, ALN, multi-agency support and community and leisure facilities. This will also include developing a reliable, high quality digital infrastructure.</p> <p>There are no current plans to build a new all-age school in Crickhowell. The Crickhowell area will be considered in Wave 2 of the Programme (2022-2025).</p>
12.4.8	When explored in more depth it is gravely concerning that the Crickhowell area does not appear to be included in the Council's major investment plans, so our children will just be slotted into to already stretched primary schools within the area.	As above.
12.4.9	I know that you want to build another super school but you don't the money because you spent it all on the super high school in Brecon so you need to get grip and do your jobs properly and get a grip on your facts.	<p>As above.</p> <p>Significant investment in the Council's school buildings is funded in partnership between the Welsh Government and the Council via the 21st C Schools Programme – the total programme of investment is £79m in Band A (2012 – 2018) and £113m in Band B (2028 – 2024). Brecon High School was funded from Band A of the Programme.</p>
12.4.10	Schools should not and should never have been viewed as “economic units” – birth rate facilities – schools are “full” or appear empty. However, it took centuries for there to be a genuine national schooling system in England and Wales. Every brick in every school is hard won. My own experience indicates that once any public or community service is lost, it will never be resurrected. Buildings are sold, County coffers are temporarily filled, and children travel away from their homes, polluting their (beautiful) landscapes, as they do so.	Comments noted.

13 COMMENTS ABOUT COUNCIL STRATEGIES

13.1 Comments about the Council's Transforming Education Strategy

13.1.1	What Powys LA are proposing will not provide higher quality teaching and learning environments or deliver an improved learner offer for the pupils of Llanbedr.	See 1.2.1
13.1.2	Llanbedr school already provides a high-quality teaching and learning environment, why would Powys LA wish to take away from the pupils and parents of Llanbedr school?	As above.
13.1.3	The policy articulates the need to provide “high quality, inspiring education”. However, large schools cannot provide this. Under your current formula a lot of them are desperately under-funded and under-staffed.	<p>To ensure equity for learners, all education leaders and teachers (across Wales) need to have a shared understanding of learner progression, including expectations around what progression may look like and the pace at which learners progress. This shared understanding is developed through professional learning and as an ongoing process both within and across schools, of which professional dialogue is a fundamental aspect. Practitioners can share and learn from each other’s understanding of progression. This can be challenging in a small school with only two teachers, for example. In larger schools there might be a wider range of academic activities that further embed the four purposes and include more age appropriate activities due to larger numbers to make the offer more viable and more staff expertise.</p> <p>The average cost per pupil in Powys primary schools is outlined below:</p>

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		<p><u>2020/2021</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £5,948 • Powys Average – £4,264 <p><u>2021/2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £6,010 • Powys Average – £4,825
13.1.4	As stated in the proposal document keeping Llanbedr is open is within the Powys’s strategy of Transforming Education in Powys, which is reported in the proposal as “World class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core”	See 1.2.1
13.1.5	Closing an excellent school without an improved learner offer seems to fly in the face of PCC’s strategy of “World class rural education system that has learner entitlement at its core”. Why are Llanbedr children not entitled to a continuing rural education? There are no ambitious new plans for our children. On the contrary, our children will have to be squeezed into schools already struggling to cope with the financial pressures of the Powys funding formula and already struggling to cope with classroom size and capacity and schools bursting at the seams unable to expand further. This not only means our children will be in much larger classes, but also the class sizes for all Crickhowell cluster schools will increase. No parent ever in the history of schools has wished for their child to be in a large class.	Leaders agree their school structure on an annual basis with consideration to pupil numbers, the educational needs of the pupils and the available resources. Leaders also have a duty to ensure consistency in learning and teaching across the school as great teaching is the most important level schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils. Teachers and staff have different strengths and expertise and with more classes, and more members of staff, larger schools can utilise the staff’s wider skill set effectively to teach key aspects of the new curriculum, such as the six Areas of Learning and Experience.
13.1.6	In the Powys Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020 – 2030, one of the guiding principles is “a digitally rich schools sector that enables all learners and staff to enhance their learning experience”. All Llanbedr pupils have access to their own iPad or laptop and are able to develop and extend	<p>Information obtained from the schools in the cluster:</p> <p><u>Llangattock C. in W. Primary School:</u> 103 pupils on roll</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 iPads

	<p>their ICT skills from early years upwards. Can you confirm that the schools the children will have to move to can provide the same access?</p> <p>Why has Powys decided to close a school which very few of the officers or Council members involved in this decision have actually visited?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44 chrome books/laptops approx. • 6 PCs <p><u>Crickhowell C.P. School:</u> 188 pupils on roll</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 iPads • 60 chrome books • 16 think pads <p><u>Llangynidir C.P. School:</u> 112 pupils on roll</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56 chrome books • 30 laptops • 25 iPads <p>The reasons for the proposal and the challenges facing Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School are outlined in the Consultation Document. School improvement officers and the Portfolio Holder for Education have visited the school.</p>
13.1.7	<p>Another guiding principle for Powys is “Early years provision that is designed to meet the needs of all children”. As a Voluntary Aided School Llanbedr School already allow children to attend part time from their 3rd birthday and have a thriving Mums and toddlers group for the local community. This provides continuity throughout with good communication with parents and carers.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
13.1.8	<p>The provision at Llanbedr fits with Powys’ “vision of the school as hubs for wider community activities”. All our pupils are able to participate in a wide variety of community activities too numerous to list and a great number of local people visit the school to participate in events. The Friends of the School who fundraise for school raise more money in a normal school year than any of the neighbouring schools including the High</p>	<p>Comment noted. However, all of the other alternative schools participate in a wide variety of community activities too.</p>

	School. This, again, is testament to the total community commitment to the school.	
13.1.9	It is premature to propose the closure of Llanbedr School before the Council has undertaken its review of the Crickhowell area under its Strategy for Transforming Education. The current proposal does not meet the aim to 'improve learner entitlement and experience'. The eventual strategy review of the Crickhowell cluster could result in further disruption to the education of children, who will have been forced to move from Llanbedr. Such a risk is not acceptable.	Comment noted. The Crickhowell area will be reviewed in Wave 2 of the Transformation Programme (2022 – 2025)
13.1.10	The strategy also includes mention of an objective to develop a network of all age schools, however there are currently no plans proposed for the Crickhowell area. Where are learners from Llanbedr ambitious new plan?	As above.
13.1.11	I could understand a strategy to rationalise primary schools to fall into one of the new all-age schools being planned, however, Llanbedr does not come under this category and I cannot see how closure of schools outside the new all-age provision catchment areas are relevant to the Transforming Education Strategy at this point in time.	The Strategy includes a Strategic Objective to 'rationalise and reconfigure primary provision' in response to the case for change articulated during the engagement period when developing the Strategy. This can be carried out without being part of an all-age school development.
13.1.12	The claims that the closure of Llanbedr C in W school fit with a Powys strategy to provide schools based around existing secondary establishments does not hold water. If Llanbedr C in W school closes, its pupils will have to attend existing primary schools and as local Powys provision is insufficient to meet that need some will have to attend in Abergavenny. It is preposterous to suggest that Powys will meet these children's needs better through closure. Forcing children to attend schools that themselves have insufficient spaces across the year groups risks separating brothers and sisters and disadvantages parents already under pressure. This would be a grievous policy failure and a disservice to parents and pupils.	As above.

13.1.13	Powys states that it has ambitious new plans for schools in Powys that will provide high quality teaching and learning environments and the commitment to deliver an improved learner offer for the children and young people in Powys. There are no plans currently for the Crickhowell area except for the closure of an excellent primary school. Where is our “improved learner offer”? Where are the “ambitious new plans” for our children?	See 1.2.1
13.1.14	Despite repeated requests of the portfolio holder and senior education staff for an understanding of the council’s position on the catchment area of Crickhowell there is nothing within the transformation agenda for this area. Whilst one could understand that if Llanbedr was a struggling school or had very low numbers PCC may wish to go out to consultation it is inconsistent that PCC wish to pick a successful school for closure without a review and future model for the catchment area. It is educationally and financially unsound to pursue this piecemeal approach.	<p>The Crickhowell area will be reviewed in Wave 2 of the Transformation Programme (2022 – 2025).</p> <p>The Council has adopted a varied approach to reviewing schools in the county, dependent on the specific factors relating to individual schools or catchments, with a combination of area reviews or a review of individual schools. Area reviews tend to take a significant amount of time for the outcomes to be achieved, as evidenced by past area reviews e.g. Ystradgynlais, Gwernyfed, Welshpool Town, and there is an urgency to respond to Estyn’s criticism of the Council’s record in relation to school reorganisation which requires a two-pronged approach.</p>
13.1.15	I find it unfair how the transforming education strategy is used as the basis for closure when it is entirely irrelevant to the local area and these children. Why should our children's education and social life be disrupted and cut short when others in the county are provided with new schools and facilities to grow?	As stated in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School teaches children in three classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council’s funding formula, the school’s funding

		<p>per pupil is higher than the Council's average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys' Strategy is intended to improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil's learning entitlement and experience.</p> <p>It is clear that the Council's expenditure on children in the smallest schools is very generous, but through all of the engagements with stakeholders and the subsequent development of the Strategy to Transform Education in Powys, it is very apparent that there needs to be a vision for a stronger entitlement for all learners in Powys and equity for learners across the county. That vision, as the education professions moves towards the realisation of the new Curriculum for Wales does require the Council to pursue a transformational vision that secures an attractive entitlement and equity for all learners, professional learning for all staff and secure leadership across all schools.</p>
13.1.16	<p>Having read the relevant policy documents with regard to the 'Transforming Education' agenda, it seems apparent that the damning 2019 Estyn inspection specifically targeted secondary and post-16 provision in Powys. At no point in that report is there reference to small rural primary schools or any suggestion to reduce the number of primary schools. Therefore, the 'Transforming Education' policy is clearly flawed. In short, you are not addressing the issues specifically raised in that report. There has been no justification from Powys CC</p>	<p>The Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was developed as a response to Estyn's criticism of the Council. However, it was also shaped by a significant engagement exercise which developed the Case for Change. This concluded that the Council has too many small schools with concern about inequity across the sector.</p>

	whatsoever as to why closing schools such as Llanbedr fits into the wider policy.	Further information about the justification for reviewing small schools can be found at See 1.2.1
13.1.17	Powys states that they want to increase Faith schools – how does closing Llanbedr fit with this?	The Council has not stated that it wishes to increase the number of faith schools in the county.
13.1.18	“Transforming Education” is merely a slogan, attempting to distract us from the honest truth behind any rural school closure MONEY! If you were really concerned about our child’s education, then he would be attending school with his friends for the remainder of his primary education – at the most wonderful school you could ever wish to learn Llanbedr C in W primary school.	See 1.2.1
13.1.19	If PCC want to transform the education system and meet the objectives outlined in their strategy they are looking at closing the only school that is already in line with their vision – “Improve learner entitlement and experience” – Llanbedr. High quality, inspiring education – Llanbedr.	See 1.2.1.
13.1.20	Your paper advises that “Our strategy is ambitious and exciting and we believe it will give our learners the best possible start they deserve”; I invite you to come and meet my little ‘number’ where she is known by her teacher and headmistress. Where along with her friends and whole school class mates is definitely not a ‘number’ to the head teacher and staff at Llanbedr Church school; where she is already ‘Attending a school that is better equipped to meet the requirements of the new national curriculum and that is providing a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities’	Comment noted.
13.1.21	On page 9 of the Transforming Education Strategy, it states that the highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development, but how have you demonstrated this to us?	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 is

		supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.
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13.2 Other

13.2.1	PCC's own Towards 2040: The Powys well-being plan (2018) states: 'More people will move to Powys recognising it as a great place to live and raise their families boosting our school pupil numbers and community capacity school The PSB will: Actively engage with residents, communities and key stakeholders to promote, shape and deliver our vision for 2040. Children will enjoy a positive childhood experience and are ready to learn when they enter school.'	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners across Powys and to improve equity across the education system.
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14. COMMENTS ABOUT WELSH GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

14.1	The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) says: 'In this Act, any reference to a public body doing something "in accordance with the sustainable development principle" means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners across Powys and to improve equity across the education system.
14.2	Your plans for Llanbedr school do not appear to fit with the WAG future strategy for learners going forward in the WAG commitment to learner and practitioner with a focus on 'well-being and mental health' 'supporting learners to make the progress they need' as documented in June 2021.	As above.
14.3	The Welsh Government recently commented: "As a government, we believe in the principle that places matter and	Comment noted.

	<p>we are ambitious in delivering better jobs closer to home, within prosperous, healthier and secure communities. Just as we are committed to working with businesses, we will continue to work with schools, parents/carers and local authorities to give them the tools to shape successful and sustainable futures.</p> <p>Therefore, we are delivering the largest investment in our schools and colleges since the 1960s, rolling out superfast broadband and supporting rural schools to be at the heart of their communities”.</p>	
14.4	<p>In ‘The Learning Country’ (Welsh Assembly Government 2001), it states that the learner’s needs are paramount and that there is a need to reduce inequalities between area, groups and individuals. Any tentative proposals would have to satisfy the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the standard of education in the area; 2. Ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, including all the relevant elements of the curriculum for all age groups that are affected. 3. A cost effective use of public resources including transport costs, long term environmental costs, and rebuilding costs’. <p>But Plaid Cymru AM Rhun ap Iorwerth said the Welsh Government just wanted to give the "impression" that it was protecting rural schools.</p> <p>"I welcome any genuine attempts to help smaller schools, but at the same time as this code is being developed, government policy is urging moves towards larger schools, and, crucially, a code not backed by additional resource is a smokescreen," he said.</p> <p>"Welsh Government should be looking for ways to support councils in trying to find new and innovative ways of keeping schools open within their communities."</p>	<p>The Council notes these comments about Welsh Government educational strategies and recognises that schools in Powys have benefited from the Welsh Government’s Small and Rural Schools Grant over the last few years. However, concern remains about the scale of the challenge for very small schools in delivering education in a time of significant change in the sector. The Council is also concerned about inequity between schools across Powys.</p>

	<p>Ms Williams, Education Secretary said the Welsh Government was "supporting pupils and teachers" in rural areas.</p> <p>"This doesn't mean a rural school will never close, but it does mean that all options and suggestions are on the table before a decision is made," she said.</p> <p>"This might include federation with other schools or increasing the community use of school buildings to make the school more viable."</p> <p>An agreement which saw Ms Williams, as education secretary after the 2016 assembly election deliver:</p> <p>Rural education action plan with 3 main criteria:</p> <p>1.Strengthened organisation and support for rural schools. Schools and communities in different parts of Wales face different challenges as we move forward with our reforms to raise education standards and reduce the attainment gap. There are significant benefits – academic, cultural and social – to learners and communities through the delivery of high-quality education in small and rural schools¹. This can be critical in engaging learners and families from the most disadvantaged backgrounds in rural areas and raising learner aspirations, as well as making a significant contribution to the long-term sustainability of the local community. Therefore we are introducing reforms to strengthen the processes to support rural schools, accelerate school-to-school relationships, and prioritise educational leadership</p> <p>2.Supporting equity and excellence in rural schools. We know that learners, teachers and schools in rural communities can benefit from targeted support and investment which addresses specific challenges, and helps to set high expectations for all. Small and rural schools play an important role in raising standards and extending opportunities for all, and they must be supported to innovate, embed professional</p>	
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	<p>learning for staff, and recruit and retain motivated and excellent teachers. Therefore, we are providing targeted investment, prioritising leadership and development opportunities, and reforming initial teacher education.</p> <p>3.Supporting rural schools as community and educational spaces.</p> <p>As a government, we believe in the principle that places matter and we are ambitious in delivering better jobs closer to home, within prosperous, healthier and secure communities. Just as we are committed to working with businesses, we will continue to work with schools, parents/carers and local authorities to give them the tools to shape successful and sustainable futures. Therefore we are delivering the largest investment in our schools and colleges since the 1960s, rolling out superfast broadband and supporting rural schools to be at the heart of their communities.</p> <p>Hopefully, these admirable objectives, presented by Ms Williams, will not turn out to be “branches” that fuels the “bonfire” thus creating the “smokescreen” that Rhun ap Iorwerth alludes to.</p>	
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15 COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROCESS

15.1 Comments about consulting during the Covid pandemic

15.1.1	<p>It is deeply regrettable that the local authority has chosen to bring forward these plans at this time, following an incredibly difficult twelve months for all teachers, parents and pupils. The current Covid 19 restrictions prevent the local community from being able to discuss and scrutinise these plans in detail.</p>	<p>The Council recognises that any school reorganisation proposal creates a period of uncertainty and concern for local stakeholders. However, in order to address the issues raised by Estyn regarding the organisation of its schools, it is necessary to continue with the development and</p>
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		consultation on proposals during the current pandemic. The Welsh Government provided non-statutory guidance for local authorities to manage consultations during periods of lockdown. The level and detail of responses received to all recent consultations outlines that stakeholders have engaged fully in the consultations, even though there have been restrictions in place.
15.1.2	I am extremely upset that the initial consultation was undertaken in quite underhanded manners, during the pandemic when students, parents and teachers were unable to come together to fight this. That was in very poor taste from Powys.	As above.
15.1.3	Very disappointing that you should close, what is an excellent school in a rural area. I think that in doing so during "Covid" - you thought that you could "get away with it" - easier?	As above.
15.1.4	Rushing through school closures and steam rolling an ill-conceived development plan in a pandemic which scuppers community interaction is a disgusting, greed driven decision that has a detrimental effect on pupils, schools and education.	As above.
15.1.5	The decision by Powys CC to carry out a consultation in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic is highly questionable since an investigation into a matter of such grave implications for pupils and their families can only effect adversely their health and wellbeing;	As above.
15.1.6	We are currently in the middle of a pandemic as noted by the local councillor and that the timing of these proposals adds significant uncertainty at a time when all aspects of life and even life itself is uncertain. I note that the 2020 school categorisation was not performed due to Covid-19. Both parents and children are dealing with the effects of lock-down, where anxiety levels are high and uncertainty is rife. To	As above.

	introduce this proposal at this time is extremely insensitive and does not support the well-being of the children and their parents, at a time when there is so much focus on this. This should be a time when stability and safety is sought to reassure children who have been locked up and who have been separated from their friends and the ability to interact with their peers, stifling their development in this area.	
15.1.7	The timing of this consultation process beggars belief. To initiate and continue with proceedings in the middle of a global pandemic when parents, children and staff have already been exposed to challenging and stressful personal circumstances and schooling is insensitive and uncaring. I note it affords PCC certain advantages though in making it impossible for parents and teachers to meet; very difficult for parents to meet with other parents and school governors, and for bolstering PCC incomprehensible reasons to refuse to meet with parents and other interested parties. The way we are being treated in this process is nothing short of a disgrace. There has been no proper consultation or attempt to engage with parents, children and the wider community to fully understand the impact this decision will have. This merely fuels my concerns this decision is a foregone conclusion.	As above.
15.1.8	Due to the nature of the decision, I believe that a fair process should be followed, and trying to reach the decision while the pandemic is still ongoing is unfair and underhand. If the decision to close the school is not reconsidered then the process should be carried out at a time in the future when proper and fair consultation can take place. The consultation process that the Council are following might be fair in their eyes but it denies the community the chance to form a full response due to meeting restrictions in response to COVID 19.	As above.

15.1.9	The current limitation on public gatherings prevents meetings being held, where PCC could explain the contents of their proposal and the contents of their complex documents.	As above.
15.1.10	Why is there no measure on the effect of this consultation period due to the unnecessary stress and worry it is placing on pupils, staff and parents during a time when they should be focusing on correcting the fallout from the past year of lockdown? The staff are already taking great steps to ensure the effects of the past year of lockdowns and now being under consultation is not affecting the pupils. What advice and support have Powys CC been providing so far?	As above.
15.1.11	Overall, Teachers and children should not be distracted from such an important time in their educational catch up and certainly should not have this added strain and anxiety placed upon them.	As above.
15.1.12	This must be the worst possible time to put this school up for closure. The pupils' parents and staff have been under additional stress due to the pandemic and the last thing they would want is the worry of their school closing.	As above.

15.2 Comments about consultation with pupils

15.2.1	There are without doubt many reasons to keep the school open, but the primary reason should be for the benefit of the children, and they should be consulted and part of the decision making process. I'm not sure if they have been?	All pupils have been part of the consultation process, and officers met with the School Council twice on Microsoft Teams. A number of responses have been received from pupils.
15.2.2	Consultation with the children – How are you planning to do this with current restrictions? I am not happy with my child being consulted without me present or having access to the questions beforehand, I am concerned about the effect on mental health.	As above.

15.2.3	The Welsh Gov guidelines for Children's and Young People's Participation have not been adhered to. The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 have not been properly adhered to in the consultation process.	As above.
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15.3 The Council should visit the school as part of the process

15.3.1	It shocks me to think such drastic action has been taken without a visit taken to observe the work and the attitudes and opportunities of the learners at the school.	Arrangements are being made for the Cabinet to visit the school.
15.3.2	It saddens me to think such drastic action has been taken without a visit taken to observe the work and the attitude and opportunities of the learners at the school.	As above.
15.3.3	The school environment that Llanbedr provides cannot be measured on a spreadsheet, it can only be measured by experiencing the environment. I hope that the Council has observed the environment that Llanbedr offers before deciding to proceed with this consultation.	As above.
15.3.4	To fully understand what a fantastic school Llanbedr is, it has to be visited. All PCC decision makers need to visit the school before they can make an informed decision.	As above
15.3.5	No officers have visited the school.	This is incorrect. The Council's School Improvement Officer has visited the school many times.

15.4 Comments about the presumption against closing rural schools

15.4.1	We strongly feel that the proposal to close Llanbedr CinW School is not in accordance with Welsh Government or Powys County Council policy. The Welsh Government has, in statute, in Section 1.8 the Schools Organisation Code (2018) a	Section 1.8 of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code outlines the steps that proposers need to take when bringing forward proposals for rural schools.
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	<p>Presumption against the closure of rural school unless there is no alternative option. Closure is only as a last resort. There are alternative options that PCC have discounted without consultation or investigation. In not consulting on the alternatives PCC may be in breach of the code and leaves itself open to a Judicial Review.</p>	<p>It also states that this:</p> <p><i>'does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federation'.</i></p> <p>The Council has carried out these steps during the formation of the Proposal Paper that was considered by Cabinet in February.</p> <p>The assessment of all alternative options has been included within the Consultation Document, in accordance with the Code. These will be re-assessed as part of preparing this Consultation Report.</p>
15.4.2	<p>Presumption against closure - Llanbedr is a rural school, and consequently there is a presumption against its closure, as stated in the School Organisation code in 2018. This is because of the explicit recognition of the place that the school sits within the community and people it serves and its focus as a community hub.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
15.4.3	<p>The decision to consult over Llanbedr school is flawed and clearly does not satisfy the presumption against the closure of rural schools contained in the School Organisation Code.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
15.4.4	<p>Llanbedr is a Rural School and therefore its status is protected and should remain so. Our understanding is Rural Schools should not be closed on financial grounds alone. I am</p>	<p>The reasons for the proposal are outlined within the Consultation Document, and further information can be found in section See 1.2.1 of this report.</p>

	struggling to understand what other grounds PCC could possibly have.	
15.4.5	Mark Drakeford 20/5/21 “unless good reason can be produced why a school should not continue, then they should”. What good reason is there for Llanbedr to school?	As above.
15.4.6	Quoting Welsh Minister Mark Drakeford, (May 26th), in a conversation on rural schools, he states “unless good reasons can be factually produced, why a school should not continue – then they should” and that “extra funding has been provided to ensure that education can be maintained on a small scale.”	Comment noted.

15.5 Queries about criteria

15.5.1	In selecting schools for closure, Powys stipulated a range of criteria that had to be met. None of the criteria apply to Llanbedr School and therefore we maintain that the school should not have been considered for closure in the first place.	<p>The Council is reviewing all schools as part of the Transformation Programme, but there is no ‘selection criteria’ that triggers a review. In accordance with the School Organisation Code, the Council considers a number of factors when developing proposals for schools.</p> <p>The challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are outlined in the Consultation Document as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low pupil numbers - High budget share per pupil - Combined age classes - Leadership
15.5.2	A further concern is why the school has been chosen to close, what criteria were used to select this wonderful school?	As above.

15.5.3	Analysing the closure criteria that selected our school, we should not have even been selected at this point as Llanbedr school does not satisfy the selection criteria.	As above.
15.5.4	Llanbedr is a caring, thriving Christian school that doesn't satisfy the Council criteria for closing and should be removed from consultation immediately.	As above.

15.6 Other comments / queries

15.6.1	It is questionable that the correct process has been followed and likely that a legal challenge will be made. The proposals are at odds with the provisions in the Well Being of Future Generations Act and again leaves the council open to challenge.	The Council has considered the impact of the potential closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School on the well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 within the draft Integrated Impact Assessment, which will be further updated to take account of information gathered during consultation.
15.6.2	We are concerned that local communities do not feel involved in the decision-making process. Can we urge you to keep an open mind about the future of the school and the ensure that those who know Llanbedr best are able to influence its future? It is imperative that the local authority listens to local residents and takes their views into account before any decision is reached.	Cabinet will be considering the Consultation Report which includes the views of stakeholders before making any further decision on the future of the school.
15.6.3	There is no evidence of consultation with the local community through the community council or any other form of communication to help realise the importance of a school like Llanbedr and the effect its closure would have on the community.	The Council has received a response to the consultation from the Vale of Grwyney Community Council.
15.6.4	I am unhappy about being notified on the 1st of February after a rushed consultation period over Christmas during a pandemic and do not feel my views were solicited.	The consultation period was held between 21/04/2021 and 23/06/2021.

15.6.5	Despite inviting comments from interested parties prior to making the decision to consult, the documentation has not changed. I question why the timing of opening the consultation was delayed when no changes were made. I question why PCC have not taken heed of any parental concerns, school and community concerns and those raised by the Diocese in making this initial decision. The impression we are left with is one of a decision already made by the Council and it now completing this process in a flawed attempt to fulfil its statutory duty.	The Council carried out a pre-consultation exercise, in accordance with the School Organisation Code, with the Diocese of Brecon and Swansea. The Council responded to the issues raised by the Diocese and presented this report to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on the 9 th of February 2021, where Cabinet agreed to proceed to full consultation.
15.6.6	I find that this announcement came in a week identified by the Welsh Government as mental health week as incredibly badly timed.	Comment noted.
15.6.7	We are concerned to hear that the closure of the school will not be discussed in full Council.	<p>At a meeting of the full County Council held on 23rd January 2020, a motion was agreed as follows:</p> <p><i>'In view of the fact that having full Council meetings is not a legal requirement as part of the transformation of schools, and hence does not bring anything to the process, and with the importance that we make best use of staff resources and don't waste money, Council agrees to remove the requirement for full Council to meet to discuss school closure and / or mergers rather to use the other meetings and opportunities that form part of the legal processes.'</i></p> <p>All school reorganisation proposal are, however, considered by the Council's Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee prior to being considered by the Cabinet.</p>
15.6.8	This does not feel like a consultation for Llanbedr but a block consultation for closure of schools in Powys.	Each of the current school proposals are considered individually.

15.6.9	What advice and support would the Council provide the school and governing body to ensure standards and performance do not deteriorate should a statutory process be carried out?	The Council, through its School Improvement Team, continues to support and challenge all schools, even in periods of change.
15.6.10	Will those that are preparing the report that will go to Cabinet make a recommendation to Cabinet, or it just going to be a statement of facts, and then allow the Cabinet to make their own decisions? Who will be making the recommendation to Cabinet?	The Consultation Report will include a recommendation that is put forward by officers.
15.6.11	Once the recommendations area put to the Cabinet and the Cabinet make a decision, will that be the final decision, or will there be another opportunity for the Cabinet to be challenged on that decision and perhaps put the officers who make their recommendation to answer those challenges?	If Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School, then the next stage will be to publish a Statutory Notice. Objectors will then have 28 days to submit their objections. Officers will then prepare an Objection Report and Cabinet will consider this at a further meeting before making a final decision on the proposal.
15.6.12	What recourse do we have to go to Welsh Government to challenge the Cabinet decision? Is there an ultimate legal framework, a legal opportunity to actually challenge an ultimate decision, within Welsh Government?	The governing bodies of denominational schools and the Diocesan Authorities can refer a final decision on a school proposal to the Welsh Government and they must state why they disagree with the proposal.
15.6.13	Will we as governors get a chance to see the report before it goes to Cabinet?	The Consultation Report will be published on the Council's public website as part of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny agenda. Governors will be informed about its publication.

16 COMMENTS ABOUT THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION

16.1 Data

16.1.1	<p>Why have you not used the current number of pupils which attend Llanbedr CinW school even though you have been informed both in December 2019 and January 2021?</p>	<p>The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.</p> <p>The Council recognises that the number of pupils on roll at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including nursery-aged pupils, is the highest since 2014.</p> <p>The current pupil numbers in September 2021 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N1 – 0 pupils • N2 – 4 pupils • R – 5 pupils • Yr1 – 6 pupils • Yr 2 – 3 pupils • Yr 3 – 12 pupils • Yr 4 – 8 pupils • Yr 5 – 4 pupils • Yr 6 – 7 pupils <p>R – Year 6 (funded via delegated budget): 45 pupils N – Year 6: 49 pupils</p> <p>As a voluntary aided school, Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is responsible for its own admissions and admits nursery-aged pupils. The school has confirmed that a further 5 pupils are expected to join the school this year, increasing the number of pupils on roll to:</p> <p>Projected N – Year 6: 54</p>
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		The school's capacity is 57 which means that there are currently 8 places available.
16.1.2	Current pupil numbers in the school – these are incorrect. Currently there are 45 R – Y6, 54 including Nursery.	As above.
16.1.3	I understand that Powys County Council has used inaccurate data on which to base its arguments. Current figures show 52 children enrolled at the school – not the 40 that Powys County Council has claimed. I believe that there would only be room for 5 further pupils at Llanbedr C in W school to fill it completely. In turn, this renders invalid Powys County Council's assertions about the school's budget share per pupil.	As above. According to the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement, the cost per pupil at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is outlined below: <u>2020/2021</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £5,948 • Powys Average – £4,264 <u>2021/2022</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £6,010 • Powys Average – £4,825
16.1.4	The numbers in Llanbedr are currently 54 with the prospect of increasing numbers due to house building in the catchment area. With higher numbers our budget share decreases bringing it more in line with the average but as Powys sets its own formula which favours small schools, this is easily remedied.	The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
16.1.5	The predicted proposed pupil population identified in the council's proposal is for 2021 was 42. The actual number of pupils enrolled for the 2021 year as confirmed by the head teacher is 51, a significant increase against the numbers predicted and further refutation of the predictive model analysis and the decisions made upon the data. Since the submission of this document at the objection stage - the number of pupils at Llanbedr is 53. This continues the exponential growth	As above.

	illustrated in the figures. With the incorrect figures provided by Powys CC the data suggests a flourishing and expanding school.	
16.1.6	<p>The projected pupil numbers are predicted to steadily decrease. As stated earlier this makes a number of assumptions with any predictive model. These are 1. That historical factors are applicable and reflective of current and future circumstances – With the global pandemic, this assumption seems unwarranted and there is already suggestions of a baby boom, unless the predictive models include the pandemic any long-term predictions based on it are guesswork. 2. That the housing developments don't have families – the housing development incorporates a number of different number of bedrooms, attracting those families who require more than one bedroom i.e. children.</p>	<p>The School Organisation Code requires authorities to publish five year forecasts of pupil rolls, which we base on the PLASC Jan data.</p> <p>These projections are based on postcode-linked live birth data and historical cohort survival rates for individual schools. New external factors and changes that have no historical bases can not be included in forecasting models. The 2020 PLASC return shows an increase in inaccuracy from the previous 2 years. There have been many new factors making NOR predictions at primary school level difficult to built into a statistical model. However, analysis comparing the predicted figures for Jan 2020 with the actuals recorded in PLASC show that, for Powys as a whole, the model over-estimated by 9.2%. 53% of schools were no more than 5% different from their forecast NOR and 76% no more than 10% different. Housing developments aren't included within this methodology.</p> <p>However, we also include a second set of projections which are up to three year projections based on the latest information held by the Council's finance team. This data is verified with the schools during the financial surgeries.</p>
16.1.7	Use the current actual numbers on roll not the finance NOR. Llanbedr school has a capacity of 57 so would always be a	As above.

	small school. At present there are 53 pupils on site, only 7% available capacity which is 4 pupils.	
16.1.8	The surplus of places for children cited by PCC is incorrect. There is no surplus. The school currently has 53 children. With capacity for 57. That shows well managed admission in-keeping with the demand of the school. Relative to upcoming cohorts, those places will be filled and admission managed at the same rates over the coming years.	The capacity of the school is 57. Based on current pupil numbers at the school, there are 8 surplus places when including nursery-aged pupils.
16.1.9	Llanbedr Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School does not have decreasing pupil numbers and it does not have a high number of surplus places, in fact, the numbers are increasing. Also, it has a capacity for 57 pupils and, by next April, it will have 51 attending. Available capacity of 6 can hardly be considered as excessive.	The challenges faced by Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, as outlined in the Consultation Document, is that it has 'low pupil numbers' not 'decreasing pupil numbers', and excessive surplus places is not recognised as a challenge for the school.
16.1.10	I would also like to highlight the inaccuracies in pupil numbers cited both for this school and for the other local schools. The numbers relied on are outdated. An opportunity to update them for the consultation document eventually published in April 2021 after an unexplained delay was missed.	The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.
16.1.11	I am amazed at the inaccuracies in your consultation document. If you are able to advise of the incorrect Llangattock capacity why cannot you give the full Llanbedr attendance? There are 52 pupils, only 5 below capacity. If this correct figure is used, your budget figure per pupil would be comparable.	The Council recognised that there was an error in the capacity calculation in the School Premises Data Return to Welsh Government for Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and therefore rectified this information by issuing an addendum with the correct information.
16.1.12	This consultation is based on quantitative data alone which is inaccurate and cannot be relied upon. Already, the number places at Llangattock School have been vastly overstated and required correction. I've been informed the figure currently stated of 121 places is disputed by the Governors at Llangattock School who indicate 117 places. The numbers at	As above.

	Llanbedr School are inaccurate. How can we trust the numbers for Crickhowell and Llangynidr are accurate?	
16.1.13	We note the reference to the capacity of Llangattock Church in Wales School of 147 and the subsequent amendment letter stating actual capacity is 121. We (governors of Llangattock School) would therefore confirm that the figure of 121 is now correct.	As above
16.1.14	We are told there is capacity at the other schools in the area, however, have not been informed how this breaks down year group by year group or school by school.	All schools in the area have capacity, and it is a matter for the leaders of the schools to manage their year groups and class structures in response to pupil numbers and the needs of pupils.
16.1.15	PCC have consistently been mistaken in their outdated and inaccurate figures relating to capacity, pupils on roll, budget share. It makes a strong case for PCC to stop this embarrassing proposal before the community fight back with a whitewash which will highlight the disastrous timing, lack of factual data, lack of procedural evidence etc. PCC have gravely underestimated the community of Llanbedr.	The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.
16.1.16	The consultation is also using out of date information using an Estyn report from 2013, a report done prior to the new head teachers starting.	The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires proposers to include information about the impact on quality and standards in education, including information from the most recent Estyn reports for each school likely to be affected.
16.1.17	The Council is basing its decision using outdated ESTYN reports. This just highlights the Councils lack of regard for the children at this school by using outdated evidence which has been driving the closure plan for this successful school. Perhaps the Council should review their outdated information first.	As above.
16.1.18	Contrary to the Consultation Document, they are all taught in 3 classes and not 2 and the school has great leadership from the	It is acknowledged that there are three classes at Llanbedr.

	Headteacher, Mrs Green. This is confirmed by all reports from the school's Challenge Advisor.	R/N/Yr 1 – taught by a HTLA, supervised by class teacher Yr 2/3 – taught by class teacher Yr 4/5/6 – taught by headteacher
16.1.19	The table on page 24 is misleading. The number of spaces at St Mary's RC Primary School is not across all year groups, and education at a Roman Catholic school is not, of course, the same as a Church in Wales school. The only other Church in Wales school in the area is Llangatock, which does not have capacity to take Llanbedr's children.	The information on page 24 relates to the capacity of out of county schools that may be closer for some pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. This information was supplied by Monmouthshire County Council.
16.1.20	The first wave of primary schools to be put up for closure in Powys were based on the number of pupils so the data presented should be accurate and up to date.	The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.

16.2 Comments about the Strategic Context

16.2.1	This refers to the 2019 Estyn inspection of Powys Education Services as a whole, and the quote given refers to post-16 provision. This is not relevant to the closure of primary schools, certainly not closure of Llanbedr School, and the report called for no closure of primary schools.	<p>This comment refers to the section in the Consultation Document outlining why change is required in the overall education sector in Powys and goes on to summarise those issues, one of which is the need to improve post-16 provision. This is text that is within the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, and is included as standard text within all consultation document.</p> <p>However, whilst Estyn's inspection report of the Council's education services in 2019 did not specifically mention the primary sector, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys was developed in response to Estyn's recommendation</p>
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		regarding school reorganisation. This was based on extensive stakeholder engagement and one of the issues raised was the lack of equity across the system and the number of small schools within the county.
16.2.2	The new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys will have no impact on pupils currently attending Llanbedr School, as none of the work is being carried out in the Crickhowell area. The Strategic Context states that this proposal is in line with these priorities, but to close Llanbedr C in W School, ie a church school, is directly contradictory to the stated ambition to answer the call for increased faith schools.	The Council has not stated an ambition to increase the number of faith schools.

16.3 Comments about the Case for Change

16.3.1	i) High proportion of small schools, 21 with fewer than 50 pupils – this does not apply to Llanbedr	<p>The challenges faced by Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, as outlined in the Consultation Document, is that it has low pupil numbers. The statement relating to 21 schools with fewer than 50 pupils relates to Reception to Year 6 pupils – currently Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School has 49 pupils aged Reception to Year 6.</p> <p>The Welsh Government’s definition of a small school is a school with fewer than 91 pupils.</p>
16.3.2	ii) Decreasing numbers – this does not apply to Llanbedr, numbers have increased and are projected to increase with new housing development due to begin this year at Glangwryne, within the catchment, as well as in Llangattock and Crickhowell.	The challenges faced by Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, as outlined in the Consultation Document, is that it has ‘low pupil numbers’ not ‘decreasing pupil numbers’. The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a

		significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
16.3.3	The school does not have a falling roll it is practically full. This is another falsehood in the document. You have failed to mention a housing development of 72 homes within the catchment area that is due to start this autumn and the provision of affordable housing in Llanbedr village itself.	<p>The Council has not stated that decreasing pupil numbers is an issue at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The case for change outlined in the Consultation Document states: <i>'the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.'</i></p> <p>The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.</p>
16.3.4	iii) Surplus places – Llanbedr has only 3 surplus places, so this is not relevant	Comment noted.
16.3.5	iv) Building condition – not relevant as Llanbedr school is not part of Powys County Council's estate and associated maintenance costs lie with the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon	The Council is responsible for repairs and maintenance at all schools, although the Council receives a contribution from the Diocese in terms of CRAMP funding. CRAMP funding is a grant for repair and maintenance of Voluntary Aided schools from the Welsh Government. The funding is allocated in agreement between the Council and the Diocese.
16.3.6	v) If calculated using correct information then costs per pupil are not above average at Llanbedr School	<p>According to the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement, the cost per pupil at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is outlined below:</p> <p><u>2020/2021</u></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £5,948 • Powys Average – £4,264 <p><u>2021/2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanbedr C. in W. School – £6,010 • Powys Average – £4,825
16.3.7	vi) The Welsh activity in Llanbedr School, such as language classes, singing, the annual Eisteddfod, are the only Welsh language activities available to the community in the catchment, so closing the school will reduce access to Welsh medium education for the whole community.	Should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, children would still have an opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills. One of the key characteristics of the four purposes in the Curriculum for Wales is to develop ambitious, capable learners who can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English. All learners should have appropriate pathways for learning Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life.
16.3.8	vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer. This is indeed a problem for Powys but will not be resolved by closing primary education at Llanbedr.	Comment noted.
16.3.9	Viii) SEN (and ALN) provision at Llanbedr is outstanding	Comment noted.
16.3.10	ix) The historic lack of political decision making would not be resolved by closing Llanbedr School	Comment noted.
16.3.11	The flaws in your paperwork are apparent from the beginning within the 'Case for Change' section. None of the factors listed for why change is needed is relevant to Llanbedr. The budget share per pupil may be higher than the county average, however, this is squarely at the fault of Powys. The School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010 clearly advocate that funding is school based i.e. the bigger the school, the bigger the allocated budget. However, since a change to your formula	The reason for the development of the current funding formula was to ensure that small schools were funded at a minimum level required to operate, including management time, PPA and teaching time. The formula was not created to increase funding to small schools with a view to providing a financial case to close small schools.

	(approved by the Council in 2019), Powys appears to be breaching the Regulations by implementing a pupil-led funding formula. This has resulted in smaller schools being significantly overfunded as a result. When the new funding formula was announced in 2019, Kirsty Williams, the then Education Minister, had only recently provided an update to the School Organisation Code. The most significant change was, as you know, the presumption against small, rural school closures (of which Llanbedr is one as per the annex to the Code). It appears more than coincidental that the changes to the funding formula was made very shortly after the updated Code came into effect.	<p>The development of the current funding formula was overseen by the Formula Working Group which included several representatives from across the full range of schools in Powys, including headteachers and governors.</p> <p>The current school funding formula is compliant with the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010 requirement that the school funding formula allocates at least 70% of the individual schools budget based on pupil numbers.</p>
16.3.12	The financial pressures alluded to are the doing of the council. Small schools should not be put under pressure or face closure due to the fiscal incompetence of the council when trying to balance its spreadsheets. It seems that the financial reason is the sole reason for closure and, this is not adequate enough given the presumption against closure. Maybe it would be a more beneficial exercise to revisit the funding formula and adequately fund schools based on size of the school as per the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010.	<p>See 1.2.1</p> <p>The Council continually reviews all funding formulae to ensure that they remain appropriate.</p>

16.4 Comments about 'Why change is needed in Llanbedr?'

16.4.1	i) Low pupil numbers - The document uses misleading information regarding the pupil numbers, which now stand at 54. There is an implication that the numbers at Llanbedr are not growing but this is erroneous. The truth is just the opposite with the school experiencing a steady increase over the last few years. There is also no acknowledgement that planning has been granted for 72 new houses within the Vale of Grwyney. There are also several smaller housing	<p>The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and this was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.</p> <p>The information contained within the Consultation Document related to historical pupil numbers shows that pupil numbers at the school have remained steady, with a few small fluctuations, since 2014.</p>
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	<p>developments in the Crickhowell catchment which could well result in additional pupils for Llanbedr. This is not a rural area suffering from depopulation but a sought-after location. Many young families are seeking to relocate to the countryside and it would be expected that Llanbedr School could soon reach full capacity.</p>	<p>The Council recognises that the number of pupils on roll at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including nursery-aged pupils, is the highest since 2014:</p> <p>R – Year 6 (funded via delegated budget): 45 pupils N – Year 6: 49 pupils</p> <p>As a voluntary aided school, Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is responsible for its own admissions and admits nursery-aged pupils. The school has confirmed that a further 5 pupils are expected to join the school this year, increasing the number of pupils on roll to:</p> <p>Projected N – Year 6: 54</p> <p>The school’s capacity is 57 which would mean that the school would be nearing its capacity in 2021/22.</p> <p>The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.</p>
16.4.2	<p>i) Low pupil numbers. This data is incorrect. There are currently 45 R – Yr 6, and a total of 54 including nursery. This also contradicts the statement that numbers are not expected to increase, which itself takes no account of new housing being built locally – in Llangattock, Crickhowell, and 72 new houses imminently in Glangwryne, so within the catchment.</p>	<p>See previous</p>

16.4.3	ii) This assumption is incorrect, being calculated on the basis of incorrect data.	See previous
16.4.4	iii) Combined age classes - The consultation document makes the assumption that "because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged". The Council provides no evidence to back up this assertion. This generalisation about small schools is not borne out by the facts in relation to Llanbedr School. As Governors we have been very focused on ensuring that pupil differentiation is achieved throughout Key stage 2 and Foundation Phase. We are presented with data on a regular basis, which is based on in-house tracking spreadsheets for each class, with each year group identified clearly. The school also uses INCERTS to track progress. In fact, the small numbers in each class allows staff to guarantee that each child has very clear individual goals, based on tracking information, so that pupils are constantly being challenged to reach their full potential. The LEA Core Visit report states that 'teaching and learning across the school is strong' and points out that the school 'proved to be very effective in focussing support and intervention to pupils when they need it...'. The evidence, therefore indicates that this criticism of small schools cannot be applied in the case of Llanbedr.	See 1.2.1
16.4.5	iii) Combined age classes are not proven to disadvantage pupils, and it is not correct to say that this necessarily means all pupils are not appropriately challenged. It is certainly not the case at Llanbedr. The LEA School Core Visit Report states that "Teaching and learning across the school is strong and the consistency of the quality of teaching is good following an effective coaching, mentoring and shadow teaching programme embedded by the headteacher." "There is a detailed in-house tracking spreadsheet for each class with	See 1.2.1

	each year group identified clearly. This tracking process is used in conjunction with the school's other tracking tool INCERTS very well." "This has proved to be very effective in focusing support and intervention to pupils when they need it and linked closely to a timeframe."	
16.4.6	The consultation document criticises the combined classes, yet you have nothing with which to measure this against. It is a presumption for which you provide no evidence. There is no up-to-date evidence from an independent organisation such as Estyn which would provide the necessary evidence for you to make such a statement. Perhaps it is because you rely on a significantly outdated report which was undertaken when the school was under a different senior leadership team.	See 1.2.1
16.4.7	iv) Leadership - There is an implication in the Consultation Document that having a teaching head weakens the leadership of the school. Again, this is a sweeping assumption with which, as a Governor, I do not concur. The document gives no evidence to back up the assertion that this is a key challenge facing the school. All the advantages of having a teaching head are ignored and in Llanbedr's case include the fact that the headteacher has a personal knowledge of each pupil through direct experience, is providing an exemplary teaching model for the staff team, is fully involved in the implementation of each new initiative and is best placed to problem solve, in collaboration with her staff, any challenges that may arise. The LEA School Core Visit report comments positively on the quality of the leadership provided by the head at Llanbedr and has not identified her teaching commitments as any impediment to her effectiveness in fulfilling her leadership role - 'The headteacher offers strong leadership and has reviewed procedures and systems at the school efficiently and	The Council has no concerns about the quality of leadership at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. However, as stated in the Consultation Document, the Council is concerned that Whilst there is permanent leadership in place in Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the headteacher has a significant teaching commitment, which limits the time available to focus on leadership of the school. It remains the case that headteachers in smaller schools have a higher teaching commitment than in larger schools, and therefore have less time available to focus on leadership. In addition, as there are less staff in the school, there are less opportunities to develop leadership across the school.

	effectively'. Once again, a key plank of the Council's argument for closure of this school is not found to be factually accurate.	
16.4.8	iv) Llanbedr School currently has the benefit of an outstanding headteacher. The LEA School Core Visit Report states that - "The headteacher has a wealth of leadership experience which she has brought to the school and in a short time secured very positive relationships with all stakeholders. This has resulted in a strong sense of teamwork among all the staff and governors with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. The headteacher offers strong leadership and has renewed procedures and systems at the school efficiently and effectively. The consultation mentions that a teaching head is unable to focus on leadership of the school, I find this incredulous when the school core visitation reported 'strong and consistent quality of leadership in the school.'	As above.
16.4.9	Your criticism of the current headteacher being weak in terms of leadership because she teaches is extraordinary. If anything, research suggests that managers who still engage with the day-to-day activities of the organisation have a better understanding of the organisation and, therefore, are better leaders. This is common sense.	As above.
16.4.10	I am surprised and upset to see the Mrs Green's leadership cited as a reason for school closure. This is an unfounded and unfair attack on her professional reputation, and I would ask it is removed as an item for consideration in this process. As a parent, there is absolutely no evidence that Mrs Green's teaching commitments, in any way, impacts upon her leadership of the school. Mrs Green is not the only Head in the locality to be a teaching Head and the competence of other Head teachers in this regard is not being challenged. This claim should either be substantiated or removed from the record of these proceedings.	As above.

16.4.11	<p>The school cannot be blamed for the high budget share per pupil compared with other schools. This is as a direct result of PCC's funding formula which I note is not used by other council's to fund pupil places. It creates unfairness in the system as highlighted by the campaign Level the Playing Field. More info here https://www.leveltheplayingfield.wales/local-authorities/powys/school-funding-formula-powys</p>	<p>The development of the current funding formula was overseen by the Formula Working Group which included several representatives from across schools in Powys, including headteachers and governors. The reason for the development of the current funding formula was to ensure that small schools were funded at a minimum level required to operate, including management time, PPA and teaching time. The funding formula is under constant review to ensure it is fit for purpose.</p> <p>Details of budgets per pupil for all schools can be found here: https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Revenue/Delegated-School-Budgets/delegatedschoolbudgetsperpupil-by-school</p>
16.4.12	<p>The "need for change" is a local authority "need". There is no "need for change" for the learners at Llanbedr school.</p>	<p>See 1.2.1</p>

16.5 Comments about the reasons for the proposal

16.5.1	<p>Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C in W Primary School – this is not a valid argument because if counted correctly pupil numbers are not low in relation to the capacity of the school.</p>	<p>The Welsh Government's definition of a 'small school' is a school with fewer than 91 pupils. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is below this threshold and therefore it remains the case that the 'issue of low pupil numbers' would be addressed should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close.</p> <p>The current pupil numbers in September 2021 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N1 – 0 pupils • N2 – 4 pupils
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R – 5 pupils • Yr1 – 6 pupils • Yr 2 – 3 pupils • Yr 3 – 12 pupils • Yr 4 – 8 pupils • Yr 5 – 4 pupils • Yr 6 – 7 pupils <p>R – Year 6 (funded via delegated budget): 45 pupils N – Year 6: 49 pupils</p> <p>As a voluntary aided school, Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is responsible for its own admissions and admits nursery-aged pupils. The school has confirmed that a further 5 pupils are expected to join the school this year, increasing the number of pupils on roll to:</p> <p>Projected N – Year 6: 54</p> <p>The school's capacity is 57 which means that there are 8 surplus places currently available.</p>
16.5.2	The issue of low pupil numbers: - The number of pupils is stable and there is a significant increase in Nursery and Foundation Stage which will feed through.	As above.
16.5.3	Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum – not correct, Llanbedr has been trialling the new curriculum, and	The Council is aware of how Llanbedr has been leading the development of the new curriculum across the cluster.

	sharing learning from that process with staff at other schools in the cluster who are not yet using the new curriculum.	
16.5.4	Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities – not correct, Llanbedr offers a wider range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities than all the other schools, has won County and Principality level competition in sport, art and STEM contests, for example when representing Wales at the UK finals of the Jaguar Land Rover F1 Challenge in 2019. Moreover, there is no competition for places at after-school clubs so all children can take advantage of these opportunities. These clubs could not be replicated at the Village Hall with lacks the necessary facilities, outdoor spaces and indoor spaces that would be needed.	The Council notes these comments about the range of extra-curricular activities available at the school. It is acknowledged that there would be more opportunity for all pupils in a smaller school to participate in different activities, due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all the alternative schools within the cluster provide a range of extra-curricular activities and are required to ensure that all children are able to participate in these activities.
16.5.5	In the Consultation document it states that “pupils would attend larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extra curricular activities”. Can you explain the evidence for this? All our pupils can attend after school clubs at the moment on every school day – at other schools this is not possible. Also, if children go to schools much further from home how would they manage to attend after school clubs as they do now?	<p>The Council has acknowledged that should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, then it may be more difficult for some pupils to access extra-curricular activities due to reliance on home-to-school transport.</p> <p>Breakfast clubs are available at all of the alternative Powys schools and this provision would be available for all pupils once they arrive at the school.</p> <p>These schools also have pupils that rely on home-to-school transport and they are experienced in ensuring that all pupils are able to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities to enrich their experiences at those schools. Activities are provided during the school day and after school at the alternative schools within the cluster.</p>

		<p>After-school clubs are provided at all the alternative schools. Specifically:</p> <p>Llangattock C.P. School provides extra-curricular activities and clubs after school from Monday to Thursday, and during the school day.</p> <p>Crickhowell C.P. School provides a range of extra-curricular after-school activities and clubs all week, and during the school day. A registered after-school club is available as well 5 nights a week.</p> <p>Llangynidr C.P. School has a registered after-school club which is open Monday to Thursday – the club could operate on a Friday but currently there is no demand for this session. The school also provides a range of extra-curricular activities, some during the school day.</p> <p>It must also be noted that additional extra-curricular activities are also available in the area which are provided by other organisations, and children would also be able to continue to access these, even if Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School closed.</p>
16.5.6	<p>There is an assumption in the document, at page 13, that the closure of Llanbedr would offer pupils a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities. Once again these are generalisations which are not based on the evidence regarding this school. The educational experience in this school is more effectively tailored to the needs of each individual than is possible in larger classes and the wide choice of extra-curricular activities is not equalled by any other school</p>	<p>The Council recognises that smaller schools can provide opportunities for all pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities due to the pupil ratio within the school. However, all other alternative schools are required to provide pupils with extra-curricular activities.</p>

	in the Crickhowell cluster. The great strength of a smaller school is its potential to provide all pupils with experiences which, in larger provision, may be dominated by the most confident, able and talented pupils. In Llanbedr its size and inclusive ethos guarantees the chance for all children to actively participate in enriching opportunities.	
16.5.7	Would reduce the Council's surplus places in primary schools – misleading and not significant, surplus of places at Llanbedr is 3. By the Council's reckoning spare capacity at Crickhowell CP School is 46, Llangattock C in W School 43, Llangynidr C P School 45, so to close one of those would achieve this target more effectively.	If Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School was to close, it would reduce the number of surplus places across the county. The Council recognises that there are more surplus places at the other three schools in the area.
16.5.8	Council's overall surplus capacity: - it is necessary to have some "surplus capacity in order to cope with families moving into the "catchment area". 70 new houses are scheduled for completion in 2022 in Glanrwyne and small developments are identified in B.B.N.P. Plan, to cater for the influx of families moving from urban areas to rural South Powys.	Comment noted.
16.5.9	Would lead to rationalisation of the primary school estate – not valid, Llanbedr C in W School is not part of the Council's primary school estate, belonging as it does to the Church in Wales.	Whilst Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is owned by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, the responsibility for maintaining the building lies mainly with the Council. The Diocese distributes CRAMP funding from the Welsh Government which supports maintenance works in Church in Wales schools.
16.5.10	Financial saving to the Council – not proven, as the proposal is made on the basis of incorrect data. Once extra travel costs are calculated, and if calculating costs per head using correct data, added to the fact that maintenance of the building is not the Council's responsibility, financial saving would be negligible, and it has been admitted by Education staff at the Council that cost is not the issue.	Savings estimates are based on the best information available at the time they are calculated and are subject to change for example due to changes in pupil numbers, parental choice, staff changes etc. The calculations are reviewed by a range of officers and sensitivity analysis is also carried out. It is estimated that the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £101,100.

		<p>This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of over £153,500, estimated additional transport costs of £43,700, potential loss of funding for pupils that may move out of county of £17,700 and savings on catering costs of around £9,000.</p> <p>The pupil numbers used in the savings estimates were 39 pupils. It is estimated that 28 of these pupils would be eligible for free home-to-school transport to their nearest school, resulting in the estimated transport costs of £43,700. These would reduce should parents choose to send their children to a school other than their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Whilst Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is owned by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, the responsibility for maintaining the building lies mainly with the Council. The Diocese distributes CRAMP funding from the Welsh Government which supports maintenance works in Church in Wales schools.</p>
16.5.11	Revenue saving to the Council – no saving in revenue has been demonstrated.	As above.
16.5.12	Alternative Church in Wales provision is available in the catchment at Llangattock C in W School – not correct, there is not space available at Llangattock for Llanbedr pupils in most of the year groups.	<p>The Council recognised that there was an error in the capacity calculation in the School Premises Data Return to Welsh Government for Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and therefore rectified this information by issuing an addendum with the correct information.</p> <p>The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121.</p>

		There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.
16.5.13	Meets all the Critical Success Factors – not the case, the proposal does not align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education, it does not address the challenges facing education in Powys, which are not in primary provision. It does not align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education as none of that work is being carried out in the Crickhowell area. It does not align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy, in fact contradicting the claim to address the increased call for faith schools. The proposal will play no part at all in optimising the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme which is not happening within reach of Llanbedr's children.	See 1.2.1
16.5.14	The reasons set out within the consultation document around a proposed closure are not backed up by evidence and the move is not for the betterment of the children's education – there is no cogent evidence for this.	See 1.2.1
16.5.15	Powys indicate that smaller schools would have difficulty in delivering the New Curriculum. What evidence do you have for this? Our school has already embraced the four purposes of the New Curriculum in daily school life and the natural setting of the school within a rural area provides endless opportunities for the children in all areas of the New Curriculum.	See 1.2.1
16.5.16	There are a number of options presented within the document but it would appear that none of those seem to be being considered. The document therefore presents itself as a proposal rather than a consultation.	The Consultation Document provides the information related to the Council's proposal which is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School from September 2022. All the options considered are outlined within the Consultation Document, along with their assessment. These will be re-assessed as part of this Consultation Report.

16.5.17	There is no information in the consultation document which would aid the lay person in providing alternatives which would justify the above proposal. This is a major flaw in the consultation process.	The Consultation Document is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. All the options considered are outlined within the Consultation Document, along with their assessment. These will be re-assessed as part of this Consultation Report.
16.5.18	There is nothing in the consultation document to suggest alternatives other than closure for those wishing to respond to the consultation. It is difficult to give an alternative without evidence and Powys County Council have failed to provide such evidence for a clear alternative for lay person, parent or learner to suggest.	As above.
16.5.19	I do not believe the council has considered alternative options. I do not believe they wish to seek an alternative - It is evident to me that their plan is to remove rural schools and to centralise as this is more cost effective and they will progress with this, irrespective of inconvenient facts, figures and assessments indicating this is the wrong move. It is difficult to confirm when they have not engaged with myself.	As above.
16.5.20	From the press release it seems that PCC have already decided to go with option 12, (Part A, section 5, page 11). No mention of options 1-11 have been released in press.	As above.
16.5.21	Option 12 - dispersing learners to fill available spaces in a variety of schools is not viable.	Option 12 is a viable option.

16.6 SWOTs

16.6.1	In the SWOT analysis it is stated that if Llanbedr stays open Powys will still have to maintain the school building. As a Church in Wales school the Diocese is responsible for maintenance so there is little or no cost savings.	Whilst Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is owned by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, the responsibility for maintaining the building lies mainly with the Council. The Diocese distributes CRAMP
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		funding from the Welsh Government which supports maintenance works in Church in Wales schools.
16.6.2	The SWOT analysis of the potential options with regard to federation, etc. contains no substance and has clearly been put together rather hastily. The analysis is poor and always comes back to financial considerations. I assume the council must be confident that if challenged legally, a court would rule that financial pressures alone are enough to remove the presumption against closure. If I was a Cabinet member, I would not be so confident.	The analysis of alternative options considers them against a number of factors: Firstly, a SWOT analysis was undertaken, followed by an assessment against Critical Success Factors. Lastly, they were analysed against the 'rural school' factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

16.7 Other comments suggesting there are inaccuracies in the document

16.7.1	Having examined the Powys Consultation Document it seems there are a catalogue of false statements and presumptions that have been made by the Council to justify the school closure. Surely no decisions should be made without accurate facts being part of the consultation document.	The Consultation Document is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. The data sources within the Consultation Document are referenced and this was the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing.
16.7.2	Llanbedr School has highlighted the lack of clarity and the use of incorrect and misleading information in the consultation document. It is totally unacceptable that this document was released and still contain inaccurate information. This leaves PCC wide open to challenge through a Judicial Review.	As above.
16.7.3	Clearly the document is written to paint a picture of a school that is failing and not thriving. Nothing is further from the truth and for a document to be written with a bias towards closure clearly demonstrates that there is an underlying predetermination for closure which is unhealthy and unacceptable and again leaves the council open to legal challenge.	As above. The Council has no concerns about the quality of education at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.

16.7.4	I am deeply concerned at the moment of inaccuracies in the consultation document, in particular the numbers of available places at the other schools. Most of the document also seems to have been copy and pasted from other school consultation documents that leads me to believe that Powys Council really don't know Llanbedr how's the school and haven't put anything into the consultation document. There needs to be an investigation into all the inaccuracies.	It is recognised that the Council is proposing closing a number of other small schools in the county, and therefore there would be a degree of similarity between the consultation documents. However, each consultation requires consideration of specific matters related to each school, the alternative schools and local issues such as travel.
16.7.5	Very disappointed in the consultation document, it is in no way a fair representation of Llanbedr Church in Wales school. How are members of the community to make informed responses when it is filled with inaccuracies and outdated information? Full of presumptions and statements referring to small and larger schools rather than the actual schools involved. On the whole it leads me to question the judgement of those developing this proposal, their knowledge of these schools and how they are run. This is an exceptionally important decision with far reaching consequences for the children and community and to be provided with such a report to base it on is a disservice to all those that will be affected.	The Consultation Document was prepared with significant input from the school improvement team who are very familiar with the schools in the cluster.
16.7.6	Building works necessary to ensure that transferred children can be accommodated. This statement is incorrect – new lavatories would need to be installed at Llangattock.	Should Llanbedr C. in W. School close and some pupils transfer to Llangattock C. in W. School, the Council would need to assess the toileting and hand basin facilities at Llangattock C. in W. School against the expected pupil numbers at the school, taking into consideration the age and needs of the pupils, to determine if there is adequate facilities at the school or a need for additional toileting capacity.
16.7.7	Leadership and management: It is misleading to pretend that moving to larger schools would mean that headteachers would have more time to focus on leadership and management given that the headteacher at Llangattock C in W School also, like at	The Council acknowledges that the headteacher of Llangattock C.in.W School also has a teaching commitment, but as there are more staff at the school, is able to develop a distributed leadership

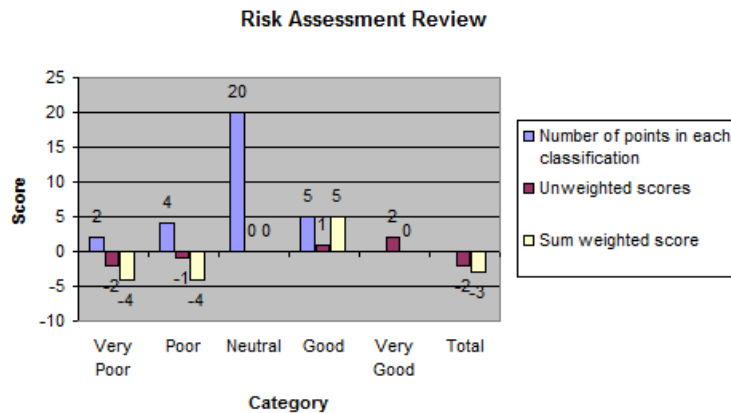
	Llanbedr, teaches, so her time is as full at that of Mrs Green at Llanbedr. What they share, though, is the advantage of fully knowing their pupils, through the teacher/pupil relationship that is so valuable, although inevitably, with a smaller number of pupils, Mrs Green probably knows her pupils better.	structure across the whole school, ensuring that all staff have full knowledge of all the pupils in their care.
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16.8 Comments about the impact assessments

16.8.1	In the councils Impact Assessment document that was published it is said the '... it is anticipated that they (other local primary schools) would provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities....' "Anticipated?" Have you not looked into this? Are you assuming this? If so, what else are the council assuming, anticipating or expecting if certain areas have not been looked into to a point where the facts are known?	The impact assessments were published as draft documents and will be updated to take account of information gathered during consultation. All the alternative schools provide extra-curricular activities.
16.8.2	I note that the Council's justification for this proposal is overwhelming from a cost saving perspective, with all points relating to savings in the risk assessment identified as "Positive" and the premise that the school is not cost effective with a higher payment per pupil. Whilst I accept this is fact, it should be considered in context of its location serving a rural community, a school is not a business and the pupils are not products and the value for money argument is not appropriate, but rather the effectiveness of the school.	Comment noted.
16.8.3	The council's risk assessment (Page 1 of the RA) provided in support of their proposal excludes the inclusion of the on-going housing developments and potential increase in number of children attending Llanbedr.	The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.

16.8.4	<p>The environmental impact has been assessed as neutral, but the proposal explicitly states that the student body in the advent of Llanbedr closure will be transported further distances to alternative schools, increasing congestion, pollution and parking at those new areas. The negative impact to those areas is not considered and is classified as neutral.</p>	<p>The Council has recognised that there may be an environmental impact from this additional travel, but it can be argued that as 61% of the current pupils already travel to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School (as they aren't eligible for free home-to-school transport because they live closer to other schools), there is already an environmental impact.</p>
16.8.5	<p>I reviewed the risk assessment submitted in support of the proposal and Figure 2 illustrates my analysis of your breakdown of the risks and its classification. I added each risk for the classification assigned to obtain the results listed in Figure 2's row "Total". An assessment in support of closure based on the premise that each risk is equal then the addition of those that are classified as positive after subtraction of those that are classified as negative should result in a positive number, with the higher the number the less of a risk. The score is -2 and indicates the risks favour the school remaining open. identifies that there are six points identified as poor and very poor against closure, with five noted in support of this assessment. Therefore, the assessment does not support closure. Further analysis identifies that there is no weighting in the assessment so that poor has the same effect as very poor. This is unusual when a differentiation in classification is specified and is inconsistent when responses are gradated. A more appropriate approach is to weight these different classifications. In Figure 2, this is provided a weighted analysis indicating that the approach is marginally in support of remaining opening indicating an overwhelming negative effect of closure of the school. Only one risk, was mitigated for health and well-being mitigated to neutral, but did not change the overall balance of the risk assessment.</p> <p>Figure 2:</p>	<p>The purpose of the impact assessments is to consider the proposal against a number of factors and not to support or justify the proposal. The draft impact assessments will be updated to include information gathered during consultation.</p> <p>The Council does not use a weighting system when carrying out risk assessments.</p>

Page of RA Weightings	Very Poor -2	Poor -1	Neutral 0	Good 1	Very Good 2
3		1	1		
4				1	
5	1				
6		2	1		
7	1				
8			3		
9			4	1	
10			5		
11			1		
12			1	1	
13			1	2	
14		1	3		
Total	2	4	20	5	
Unweighted scores	-2	-1	0	1	2
Sum weighted = -1	-4	-4	0	5	0



16.8.6

The exclusion of children’s health from the risk assessment excludes the mandatory PE they are required to do and their mental health and well-being as participants within a school.

The impact assessments were published as draft documents and will be updated to take account of information gathered during consultation.

16.8.7	Existing extra-curricular activities at Llanbedr C in W school, are outlined in PP 27-29 of “Draft Impact Assessment” and it is difficult to see how a larger school could extend this list of activities and the proposal makes no quantified suggestion. Llanbedr has performed well in the County sporting arena and the “Land Rover” project, showing that the school can more than hold its own in a wide competitive environment.	Comment noted.
16.8.8	The table on p27 of the “Draft Impact Assessment” indicates that over 50% of pupils choose to attend Llanbedr C in W school as a very positive indication that the school’s ethos is important to them.	Comment noted.
16.8.9	As a member of the community, I think section 4 pp 27-33 is most significant; the list of after school clubs and extra-curricular activities is extensive, and these clubs and activities depend on the pupils and staff who form the nucleus of each activity.	Comment noted.

16.9 Other comments about the consultation documentation

16.9.1	Need for Places and Impact on Availability of Places: The information here is incorrect, there is not a capacity for 144 pupils at Llangattock C in W School. A generous reckoning would be 120, and the spare capacity is focussed on the nursery provision, not the higher year groups Llanbedr's pupils would need.	<p>The Council recognised that there was an error in the capacity calculation in the School Premises Data Return to Welsh Government for Llangattock C. in W. Primary School and therefore rectified this information by issuing an addendum with the correct information.</p> <p>The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103 and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.</p>
16.9.2	Is there evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places? This comment is untrue. New housing is	Comment noted.

	under development in Crickhowell, Llangattock and Glangwryne. The housing in Glangwryne consists of 72 homes, and lies within the catchment of Llanbedr C in W School. It is probably that in the future greater capacity will be needed locally, and Llanbedr already has planning consent for a further classroom space. There is only very limited capacity for expansion at Llangattock.	
16.9.3	i) Effect on Surplus Places in the Area. Implementation of the proposal would lead to an overall reduction of only 3 surplus places in the area, and as new housing is built these would quickly be filled.	The Council recognises that the number of pupils on roll at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including nursery-aged pupils, is the highest since 2014.
16.9.4	ii) 21st Century Schools Investment Programme. Issues with building condition across the County's primary school estate, and better management of that estate, are not relevant to this proposal because the school building belongs to, and is maintained by, the Church in Wales.	Whilst Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is owned by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, the responsibility for maintaining the building lies mainly with the Council. The Diocese distributes CRAMP funding from the Welsh Government which supports maintenance works in Church in Wales schools.
16.9.5	There is no mention in the consultation documentation of whether a postcode analysis has been carried out on children in attendance at Llanbedr and this would be a sensible option given the rural nature of the locality to determine whether other schools may be a more viable option.	A postcode analysis of pupils' home locations has been carried out. This information is contained within the draft Community Impact Assessment.
16.9.6	The consultation document only provides reasons for closure, nothing given for reasons to remain open.	As the proposal is to close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the document therefore contain the reasons for the proposal, as required by the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.
16.9.7	There are a number of presumptions in the consultation document, there is no evidence for remaking these presumptions which paints Llanbedr school very differently to how it actually operates. Also, there are a number of generalisations made which are wholly inaccurate.	Comment noted.

16.9.8	The Council's "success factors" do not recognise the benefits of educating primary school pupils in smaller schools. On the contrary, larger schools cannot guarantee that they can meet all the needs of the "new curriculum" or that they will provide a wider range of extra-curricular activities. It is a well-known fact that when given the choice, many parents/guardians prefer to send their children to smaller schools, as they are better able to identify and cater for their child's individual needs and talents.	See 1.2.1
16.9.9	No mention is made of the house building development in Glangrwyney, within the Llanbedr C in W catchment area, and also building development areas in the Planning Authority LDP, within Llanbedr village.	The Council recognises that there are current and planned housing developments in the area but it is not expected that these would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.
16.9.10	The consultation document makes reference to the potential feeder schools being able to provide an equivalent education. How can Powys CC accurately measure this? The Estyn report for Llanbedr (as mentioned previously) is woefully out-of-date and the Welsh government's traffic light system provides nothing more than a small snapshot of the school's current performance. Therefore, how can Powys be sure that the other local schools provide an education of equivalent standard especially when one of the feeder schools across the border in Monmouthshire, Deri View, has a worse Estyn report and is also now under consultation. Will pupils be forced to move to Deri View to then have to move again when the super school is built?	<p>The Council's primary education specialists do not have any concerns with the standards of education at any of the alternative Powys schools. All the alternative schools listed were categorised as 'green' schools in the last National Categorisation in 2019.</p> <p>Deri View C.P. School in Abergavenny is the only school that received an 'amber' grading, and has been in Estyn review. However, in March 2020 Estyn judged that the school had made sufficient progress in addressing their recommendations and they were removed from Estyn review.</p> <p>Monmouthshire County Council has been consulting on plans to establish a new 3 – 18 school in Abergavenny which includes Deri View C.P. School. Should these plans come to fruition, it is likely that pupils attending Deri View at the time would</p>

		transition into a new building. However, this is a matter for Monmouthshire County Council.
16.9.11	The potential impact on pupils is ill thought through. The documentation focuses on transport issues and little comment and analysis is given to the children's mental health and wellbeing. There is no evidence to assess the impact this would have on the children's mental health and wellbeing especially on the back of the longer-term effects of Covid and lockdown. Again, I see no evidence to support your assumption that the mental effects would be short-term.	<p>The Consultation Document is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code and includes the Council's assessment of impact on those matters outlined in the Code.</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 is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for their learners.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Schools receiving pupils as a result of a school closure are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition.</p>
16.9.12	Your consultation document and reasoning is woefully inadequate and will not stand up to legal challenge.	The Consultation Document is aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.
16.9.13	The proposal to close Llanbedr Church in Wales School is one of the most flawed documents I have read in over 10 years'	As above.

	<p>experience of both practicing and lecturing law within higher education. The lack of evidence, assumptions and misrepresentations is absolutely disgusting and appalling. Powys County Council ought to be collectively ashamed for the way this decision has been processed to-date. There is little hope of this holding up to judicial scrutiny, therefore, in the interests of everyone involved and with the hope of saving political face, I would recommend the Cabinet voting to end this process at this stage.</p>	
16.9.14	<p>I wonder if the proposal has been written in the open and transparent manner required and personally I think it has fallen below a reasonable standard deserved. It reads to me as a judgement against small schools rather than the individual school consultation it should be.</p>	As above.
16.9.15	<p>There are a few statements in the consultation document that seem to be general statements which are not related to our school, yet it's a consultation document for Llanbedr Church in Wales School.</p>	<p>The consultation document does provide information which relates to Llanbedr C in W School, however all consultation documents are aligned with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, therefore there are similarities between consultation documents, particularly when there relate to similar proposals.</p>
16.9.16	<p>You've discounted a federation between Crickhowell Primary School because it's not a Church School, yet you've listed it now as a school for our children to attend. I was just wondering why.</p>	<p>Federation between Church in Wales schools and community primary schools is not possible, therefore it would not be possible to federate Llanbedr C. in W. School with Crickhowell C.P. School. Crickhowell CP School is listed in the consultation document as a school for children to attend because, if there were no school in Llanbedr, the school would be the closest school for a number of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p>

17 CRITICISM OF POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

17.1 Criticism of the Council's treatment of small / rural schools

17.1.1	It's a bit unfair that you're closing all the little schools but not the big ones.	The Council is not closing all the small schools in Powys. A number of proposals have been consulted upon since the introduction of the new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, including proposals for all-age schools, changing language category and merging large schools to create a single new build school.
17.1.2	I think you should stop closing down small schools and stop ruining young people's lives.	As above.
17.1.3	It is a real shame that Councils shut these types of schools, maybe to save money etc - with no thought for pupils, or parents who have to travel etc. Shame on you!!!	The Council has considered the impact on pupils and families within the Consultation Document and the draft impact assessments, which will be updated to take account of information gathered during consultation.
17.1.4	As a family with strong rural ties, I am disappointed, once again, that Powys County Council are forgetting their rural communities.	The aim of the proposal is to improve learner entitlement and experience for all learners and to ensure equity across the system.
17.1.5	If you keep closing small schools down you will keep affecting communities and children's education in Powys. is that the council you really are? During lockdown we have all had a hard time, this will affect people even more.	As above.
17.1.6	The only reason you want to close our school is so you can save money, while you are shutting down small school you are affecting a lot of people in Powys. is that the council you really are?	As above.

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17.1.7	The statement used here further supports my feeling that this proposal of closure is using or based on only “small school” presumptions rather than the school’s actual ability and output.	As above.
17.1.8	It’s so unfair that a great school is being persecuted because it’s small. Powys is a rural County which has rural schools. Council mismanagement should not come down on our children!	As above.

17.2 Criticism of staff / councillors

17.2.1	As parents we have asked members of the cabinet involved in this process to explain to her why it is closing. We have not received the courtesy of a reply from anyone in response to concerns we have raised.	The Portfolio Holder for Education and Property has visited the school.
17.2.2	We were hoping Cllr Phyl Davies would be able to attend the consultation meeting to hear our concerns directly, he didn’t appear at the meeting in January either.	As above.
17.2.3	I am also concerned that a member of the cabinet, is also a governor of a school that could benefit from Llanbedr School closing, surely in this situation there should be a declaration of interest from that member.	The Leader of the Council is a governor at Llangynidr C.P. School. The school’s viability will not be affected by the potential of receiving pupils from Llanbedr C. in W. School should the school close, however the Leader may decide not to take part in any Cabinet decisions related to this proposal.
17.2.4	I have been writing to Cabinet members and I’m getting no response. It isn’t really reassuring to us that we are actually being directly heard by the people who are the decision makers in relation to this situation...the buck stops with the members who are going to make this decision and it feels like there isn’t a way through for us to communicate directly with them.	The contact details of all councillors are available on the public website, and it is their responsibility to respond directly to any correspondence that they receive. However, it is anticipated that any points raised in private emails to Cabinet members will have been replicated in responses to the consultation and will be considered by Cabinet members, along with the responses to those issues.

17.2.5	Powys CC education department has a capacity issue in driving through the transformation agenda. An email from Emma Palmer, Head of Transformation, dated 5th June 2021 states that 'The team are working at full (well over) capacity at present with the amount we have on Transformation'. As this is the case I cannot have confidence that the team is adequately staffed or informed to deal with this proposal in an appropriate, efficient and educationally sound way.	Whilst the overall process of school reorganisation is managed by the central Transforming Education Team, proposals are developed collaboratively with significant input from a range of officers including the Council's education experts, finance, HR and other officers.
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17.3 Other criticisms

17.3.1	At best, all of the communication from PCC on this decision has been disingenuous, presenting this like a hard sell based on the needs of the kids, trying to appeal to the emotions and good conscious thinking of the parents. Increasingly it just feels like PCC are aware of the impact, but are lying to the community about why the school is closing.	The only decision that has been made by the Council is to proceed to consult with stakeholders, and all views are gathered into a Consultation Report that is then considered by Cabinet. The Council will also update the draft impact assessments to take account of information gathered during the consultation.
17.3.2	It seems to me that Powys Council are setting the terms of the review to suit their financial requirements rather than the wider community that they serve.	See 1.2.1
17.3.3	Stop sticking your fat noses into our school	Comment noted.
17.3.4	Powys CC handling of this has been beyond poor from poor notification and tight time-lines for the school, whilst extending the consultation period without explanation for themselves, to having inaccurate data to support their case. This is not withstanding a jaw-dropping lack of engagement with the community they were elected to serve.	Comment noted.
17.3.5	The overwhelming assessment is that PCC constantly do not adhere to facts and process – how embarrassing that will be for them!	The process is fully aligned with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.

18 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

18.1 Retain the status quo

18.1.1	Keep the school open and do what is right for everyone involved.	Comment noted.
18.1.2	Keep the school open – why change something that is wonderful?	Comment noted.
18.1.3	The Council should be considering not closing the school as a short-term measure to save money and look to the long term.	Comment noted.
18.1.4	Keep it open. Make savings elsewhere that won't affect children's mental health.	Comment noted.
18.1.5	Keeping it open! Investing if it's needed but I think this meets all the expectations already. Visit the school! Talk to the parents! See what the children who go there get from attending such a wonderful school!	Comment noted.
18.1.6	Keep it open, throw it open to the community to help fund more if funding is the problem.	Comment noted.
18.1.7	Powys could keep the school open and raise money by making a lemonade stand or something similar.	Comment noted.
18.1.8	You could not close the school and save money a different way that wouldn't make us sad.	Comment noted.
18.1.9	The school should remain open – for the strong links with the Church and community, the health and well-being of the children, staff, their parents and their families and those in the local community.	Comment noted.
18.1.10	I believe that Llanbedr CIW school should remain open in order that children can keep their friendship groups they have formed	Comment noted.

	over so many years, along with their education and small & caring school unit they have always known.	
18.1.11	I believe Option 1 is the only option. Any merging will only dilute the learning experience offered at Llanbedr school, its family and community ethos and multi age classes. The latter seems to be viewed as a negative. However, it is the complete opposite. All ages learn together at their appropriate levels, encouraging inclusive learning and peer mentoring. In my opinion, this should be the gold standard for primary aged education in all schools.	Comment noted.
18.1.12	If any consideration at all is given to children's health and well-being is given, then the school should remain open.	Comment noted.
18.1.13	Leave Llanbedr school carry on as we are we are a good school we are not getting smaller	Comment noted.
18.1.14	Llanbedr C in W school should remain open. It is highly sought for places, with a waiting list for early years provision.	Comment noted.
18.1.15	Leave this school alone! Let these kids be happy and learn without the anxiety of losing their school, teachers and most of all their friends.	Comment noted.
18.1.16	Keep the school open, so the new families moving into the new houses being built will have more options of where they would like to send their children.	Comment noted.
18.1.17	Instead of attempting to bludgeon through these proposals which will have detrimental consequences on the school and its community and cause reputational and financial damage to Powys CC, I ask you to cease this proposal for closure as your case has most definitely not been made.	Comment noted.
18.1.18	Allow the school to continue to run as it does currently where multiple funding is provided by the school itself via fundraising and school led events.	Comment noted.
18.1.19	The merits of Llanbedr School staying open vs. closing should be weighed analytically, on a quality of education basis, and	Comment noted.

	<p>the findings presented. After which, the outcome will be that the school and its staff and program should remain in situ. These findings will then provide the necessary baseline for raising the required budgets etc etc.... (don't know why I'm explaining this). At the same time, a similar analysis should take place showing the fall- out of attempting to move children to other schools (not 'neighbouring' schools, because our kids are from Llanbedr, so there no 'neighbouring' schools).</p>	
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18.2 Develop the provision at Llanbedr

18.2.1	Keep the school open and expand its provision – there is every reason to believe more school places will be required with housing being built in the locality.	Comment noted.
18.2.2	Expand the school as the other local schools do not have places available.	Comment noted.
18.2.3	There is scope to increase the school's capacity. The new housing development in Glangrwyne will make this essential.	Comment noted.
18.2.4	Invest in Llanbedr to allow more students to attend this school, as more and more houses are being built in the area and excess space for pupils will become a premium and would be lost if this school is shut and our pupils filling spaces in other schools which need to have the spaces for new intake pupils.	Comment noted.
18.2.5	Expand the school as it is currently near its maximum capacity and is a high achieving school.	Comment noted.
18.2.6	I think to possibly expand the school as it has a great outdoor space. It's an ideal setting for teaching the new curriculum and shows how good rural schools really are, instead of making it look so negative.	Comment noted.
18.2.7	Llanbedr school has planning permission in place to construct additional classroom and community space. It is a VA Church in Wales school which sets its own admission criteria.	Comment noted.

18.2.8	Far from any plan to close the school, its provision should be increased by gaining that extra classroom.	Comment noted.
18.2.9	The option that you should be looking at is to expand Llanbedr as it has amazing outdoor space, which is an ideal setting for teaching the new curriculum and in turn promotes it as an example of what a rural school can be, instead of constantly putting them in such negative light.	Comment noted.
18.2.10	The Council should be celebrating and supporting an excellent rural school that delivers everything that they are aspiring to attain in other Powys schools. There is room for expansion at Llanbedr and the outdoor space for educational purposes is more than amazing. The new curriculum supports outdoor learning and across age learning in Llanbedr is already achieving this.	Comment noted.
18.2.11	Llanbedr CIW school is the perfect green school with the best education has to offer. It is also the one that offers a lot of room and scope for the future. It has acres of land to expand the size of the school to accommodate more than Llangattock or Llangynidr School could. To offer off road parking to make it safer for parents and children as I know this is an issue with Llangynidr especially. Powys Council are looking at Llanbedr negatively when it should be expanding with more housing development. There's a need to start now and make a start on providing more placements for the area.	Comment noted.
18.2.12	On my estate in Llanbedr most families send their children to the village school, so the solution would appear to be to attract more families to move to the area and bring more pupils into the school.	Comment noted.
18.2.13	To maximise all possible usage of the school as a community resource: Weekend usage; Evening usage; Social, training and development; Mental health support (especially adolescents);	Comment noted.

	Careers info, advice and guidance centre – re training; Letting to schools across S Wales/England for weekend camps etc	
18.2.14	Use Llanbedr school as an example of how small schools can and do provide excellent education for the children of Powys. Local authority should be looking at positives not seeking to close a small rural school.	Comment noted.
18.2.15	The Council could use the school as an example of how good small school education can work.	Comment noted.
18.2.16	How about celebrating a school that provides cohesion and support in a small community, so familiar in our rural county?	Comment noted.
18.2.17	Schools like this should be promoted and used as models to develop other underperforming and less intimate learning environments.	Comment noted.
18.2.18	Llanbedr school works hard in all areas, the only positive outcome would be to leave the school open and give extra resources for the school to go on and excel even further.	Comment noted.
18.2.19	Widening the catchment area	Comment noted.
18.2.20	Instead of closure, great small rural schools like Llanbedr should be celebrated and supported for linking its children and communities, drawing in the Welsh rural life and culture into everyday education. By only focussing investment into costly Welsh-medium schools which will most likely still be out of reach to most families you dismiss the successful promotion of Welsh by great schools like Llanbedr who keep it in the everyday use of our primary children to carry forward with them.	Comment noted.

18.3 Pause the consultation

18.3.1	At the very least the Council should seriously consider the option of keeping Llanbedr school open until they can	Comment noted.
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	guarantee the Church in Wales provision can be available for all its pupils.	
18.3.2	Should it have to go ahead then the closure of Llanbedr should not be considered until provision can be made for all pupils to move together to an alternative Church in Wales school. The preferred option that Powys county council is offering is only benefitting the council and should not be allowed to take place.	Comment noted.
18.3.3	If the school is to close, a phased closure would be preferable to enable the young people attending time to make the transition to a new school.	Comment noted.
18.3.4	Keep the school open until the proposal is in line with transforming education in Powys strategy that our children are part of this ambitious plan. Where is the improved learner entitlement and experience for the children in the Crickhowell cluster?	Comment noted.
18.3.5	Llanbedr school should be kept open until the education provision in the Crickhowell area is in line with the Transforming Education Strategy for Powys. Even if the area is imagined by Powys County Council to see benefits in the future, it is wholly unfair on the current pupils who will not be benefitting at all from the moves involved right now.	Comment noted.

18.4 Federation / merger options

18.4.1	Amalgamating with another smaller school rather than fully closing.	Comment noted.
18.4.2	Council should be considering shared leadership with Llangattock C in W School. This would cut the cost dramatically. Shared curriculum planning and other benefits of having two sites. By providing two sites for learners and their families looking for a faith school this would be the ideal alternative to closure.	Comment noted.

18.4.3	I think the site should be retained even if the council opt for a merger	Comment noted.
18.4.4	Keep the school open, sharing a headteacher.	Comment noted.
18.4.5	Would resources be spread out more evenly if Llanbedr were to combine its facilities with those of a larger, local school such as Crickhowell?	Comment noted.

18.5 Build a new all-age school in Crickhowell

18.5.1	The building of a 3 to 18 Church in Wales school in Crickhowell	Comment noted.
18.5.2	Build a super school in Crickhowell so all of the primary children can start a brand new school and have a fresh start rather than making us move to worse schools.	Comment noted.

18.6 Make changes to other schools

18.6.1	Choose a different school, another school so we can stay here. Close a different school and some of those kids would come here.	Comment noted.
18.6.2	They could have closed a different school and some of those children could come here.	Comment noted.

18.7 Develop Welsh-medium provision in the area

18.7.1	An expansion in Welsh Medium education in South Powys/Crickhowell area could be achieved by investing in a "Welsh Medium Unit" in Llanbedr school, at Foundation Stage, and by "growing" it, throughout subsequent years, to year 6 and beyond.	Comment noted.
18.7.2	Keep the school open as a Welsh medium school as this is lacking in the Crickhowell area	Comment noted.

18.7.3	Help to turn Llanbedr school into a Welsh medium school.	Comment noted.
18.7.4	They could help to increase Welsh language teaching and use in the school as there are no nearby Welsh language schools.	Comment noted.

18.8 Support small/rural schools

18.8.1	Invest in small but excellent schools which have the capacity to grow and expand in the near future.	Comment noted.
18.8.2	Reconsider how small, rural schools are funded.	Comment noted.
18.8.3	The Council's Education Committee should adopt a more "radical" approach and move towards smaller primary schools, that can forge strong links with the local communities. The village school is a vital and integral part of the local "network" that all ages benefit from.	Comment noted.

18.9 Other suggestions

18.9.1	Has the council considered making Llanbedr school an infant school? Maybe pairing it with Llangattock or Crickhowell - so they have a middle school. The location, grounds and facilities at Llanbedr are an invaluable source and excellent for forest school provision. It seems such a precious resource for it to be left empty.	The Council, like many other authorities across Wales, is moving away from separate infant and junior schools to provide a seamless education between key stages in the primary sector.
18.9.2	Consider asking the Church to assist more since it is a C of W school. Consider that the buildings and other assets are in good condition and so need less upkeep in comparison to other non-assisted schools. Consider the cost benefit to the community rather than just Powys bank account!	Comment noted.

19 COMMENTS ABOUT THE IMPACT ON WELSH

19.1 Comments about the use of Welsh at Llanbedr School

19.1.1	The Welsh language is not used much in the area however all Welsh I did learn at Llanbedr has been used through my life and provided with the confidence to speak Welsh to my friends and family.	Comment noted.
19.1.2	I believe that there is very little Welsh culture available locally, so it's very important that the children are able to access it where they can. As a thriving rural school, Llanbedr provides this in many forms, such schools should be celebrated and would be such a loss	Should Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School close, children would still have an opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills. One of the key characteristics of the four purposes in the Curriculum for Wales is to develop ambitious, capable learners who can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English. All learners should have appropriate pathways for learning Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life. All Powys schools are well supported with excellent resources from the Swyddogion y Gymraeg Team to enable teachers to teach Welsh effectively. Opportunities to use Welsh within and beyond the classroom (including on digital platforms) support learners to use Welsh confidently and appreciate its usefulness to communication in a bilingual Wales and again all Powys schools are effectively supported with rich resources from the Swyddogion y Gymraeg Team. Schools, through effective pupil voice forums, known as the 'Cryw Cymraeg' plan a range of activities to increase the use of Welsh outside the classroom. Facilitating the use of Welsh, through planned linguistic progression in every phase of education from ages 3 to16, and as

		<p>part of a whole-school approach, offers opportunities for all learners to develop bilingually and this is a key priority for all schools in Wales.</p> <p>All the alternative schools named in the Consultation Document have signed up to the Siarter Iaith – ‘Cymraeg Campus’, and Llanbedr and Llangattock CiW are working towards the bronze award, whilst Crickhowell C.P. School and Llangynidr have already achieved the bronze award.</p>
19.1.3	The school already incorporates the Welsh language into its everyday school time. They hold an annual Eisteddfod which encourages the local community to attend and compete in which is very well supported. This in turn encourages the more or less non- Welsh speaking community to learn more about Welsh and Welsh culture.	As above.
19.1.4	Children use the Welsh language daily in school. When saying ‘prayer’. When letting teachers know if they have a packed or are having a school lunch. And they also have a Welsh language speaking club.	As above.
19.1.5	Our learners’ voice is at the forefront of school and is evident in our Criw Cymraeg committee. Learners enjoy learning about our Welsh culture and heritage. We have a strong Welsh Ethos.	As above.
19.1.6	The children of Llanbedr C in W use the Welsh language on a daily basis when giving prayers at morning and afternoon times, when informing the teachers if they are dinners or packed lunch, as well as having a Welsh speaking club “Criw Cymraeg”, where they learn Welsh songs and rhymes. To lose this would be a great detriment to the children of Llanbedr.	As above.
19.1.7	At Llanbedr my children are rewarded with a wealth of Welsh culture. Taking part in such examples as Criw Cymraeg and	As above.

	Helpwr heddiw which have really helped their understanding and progression in the Welsh language, gaining confidence in day-to-day practice. Welsh culture and tradition is celebrated at every chance and the school even hosts an Eisteddfod for everyone in the wider community to take part in.	
19.1.8	The Welsh identity and confidence in the Welsh language is strong in the children of Llanbedr school. The Council group Criw Cymraeg gives numerous opportunities for the children to put forward thoughts and ideas, thereby giving a sense of responsibility for their Welsh heritage. The school must remain open for this to continue.	As above.
19.1.9	Helpwr Heddiw is an excellent example where all children have their turn to take part in daily tasks. This is met with such gusto by my daughter and her friends, they enjoy the responsibility of each job and it certainly encourages their confidence and progression in the Welsh language.	As above.
19.1.10	The Welsh language is used in many fun, engaging ways day to day in work and play and seems to be progressing all the time.	As above.
19.1.11	Children use the Welsh language and learn about Welsh culture on a daily basis. Rural communities are at the very heart of what it means to be Welsh.	As above.
19.1.12	The children use Welsh in school and enjoy using it every day. This promotes the Welsh language to their parents and carers who are then encouraged to learn Welsh themselves.	As above.
19.1.13	Overall, in Powys approximately 20% of the population speak Welsh. And coming from a family which the first language is Welsh, this is very important to us. I was very pleased to see Mrs Davies who speaks Welsh fluently teaching our children wonderfully.	As above.
19.1.14	At present there are very few fluent Welsh speakers living in the village, but the use of the Welsh language in the school is	As above.

	proving to be an effective conduit to introduce use of the Welsh language to the rest of the community.	
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19.2 Comments about the proposal's impact on Welsh

19.2.1 The proposal would have a negative impact on the Welsh language

19.2.1.1	It would have adverse effects as Llanbedr school encourages Welsh to be spoken daily and teaches Welsh to the pupils.	As 19.1.1
19.2.1.2	I believe it will have a negative impact upon the usage of Welsh as all the children of the school are learning Welsh and this will be lost in the community.	As above.
19.2.1.3	Children would have less opportunity to use Welsh language, because Criw Cymraeg is an important part of the school. Children take pride in the development of the Welsh language. This would be lost in a larger school.	As above.
19.2.1.4	The only way the Welsh language will be taught properly - is with these smaller Schools. Not the large schools!	As above.
19.2.1.5	There would be less opportunities for the Welsh language to be celebrated and shared. As a school we hold concerts, fun days, Eisteddfods where the Welsh language is embedded in the celebration and children can be heard using incidental Welsh. If you close our school this would be lost and no Welsh would be heard by many in Llanbedr. We have a strong Welsh ethos in school.	As above.
19.2.1.6	Thriving rural schools such as Llanbedr provide an open door into Welsh culture, closure would definitely have an adverse impact on the participation of Welsh culture and tradition in the local community as well as on the pupils.	As above.
19.2.1.7	Without the school there would be very little Welsh in the community.	As above.

19.2.1.8	If the school were to go, the Welsh language would not be heard in the village at all.	As above.
19.2.1.9	The Welsh language is used more in a rural farming community of Powys and being a Church in Wales school, closing the school would have a detrimental effect.	As above.
19.2.1.10	There would be less opportunities for the Welsh language to be celebrated and shared. As a school we had concerts, fun days, eisteddfods where the Welsh language is embedded in the celebration and children can be heard using incidental Welsh. If you close our school this would be lost, and no Welsh would be heard by in Llanbedr. We have a strong Welsh ethos in school.	As above.
19.2.1.11	Without the school the use of Welsh language and the development of the language in the population of the village will diminish very substantially and possibly, apart from use in the Church on occasions.	As above.
19.2.1.12	A school immersed in Welsh history and culture since 1728, closing this rural school will have an adverse effect on Welsh language and amputate pupils' exposure to daily and annual Welsh events.	As above.
19.2.1.13	Llanbedr C in W school is working hard to provide a balanced Welsh language learner environment in line with the other Primary education providers in the area so that the children are not disadvantaged in their ability to use the Welsh language as they progress through their education. However there appears to be little concrete evidence to that Powys supports a comprehensive Welsh medium education as they progress in their educational careers. Therefore it is my opinion that any setbacks due to the closure of Llanbedr C in W school would impact on the progression of learning the Welsh language as the individual child will be endeavouring to make new	As above.

	relationships and maintain the basic educational standards required across the curriculum.	
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19.2.2 The proposal would not have an impact on the Welsh language

19.2.2.1	The children will still have the opportunity to speak the Welsh language in school wherever they are.	The Council agrees with this comment.
19.2.2.2	There are no benefits or drawbacks to the teaching/learning of Welsh whether the school remains open or closes.	Comment noted.
19.2.2.3	No impact or change as it is an English medium school which is comparable to the surrounding schools.	Comment noted.

19.3 Suggested improvements which would have a positive impact on Welsh

19.3.1	The Welsh language could be used more in school and also Welsh language classes set up for parents.	Comment noted.
19.3.2	Let Llanbedr use Welsh more in its teaching etc to encourage use in the community	Comment noted.
19.3.3	Focus on bringing more Welsh into the community through the local school.	Comment noted.
19.3.4	Focus on bringing more Welsh to more pupils in every school and even parents too, rather than just concentrating on costly Welsh-medium provision which even with huge investment would still most likely be unavailable to most families.	Comment noted.

19.4 Other comments

19.4.1	Re Welsh language questions – Welsh provision is not a factor within this consultation. The school provides Welsh opportunities as a second language in line with the other	Comment noted.
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	potential feeder schools. Therefore, this should not form part of your decision-making process.	
19.4.2	I think that we need to address the problem for the children rather than worrying about the Welsh language which is used everyday at school but this is not a Welsh-medium school.	Comment noted.

20. COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSAL

20.1	The needs of all students would be better served by a larger school with specialist provision on hand.	Comment noted.
20.2	The school is close enough to bigger schools in the cluster and I would question if it cost effective or fair to keep small schools open when there is another alternative school nearby.	Comment noted.
20.3	I believe that when a child reaches Key Stage 2 they need to be in a larger school. I believe they would benefit socially and educationally.	Comment noted.
20.4	Fully understand that the closure would enable the County to better manage its finances, and recognise that the pupils would get as good an education elsewhere. It is clear that pupils are already travelling to the school from outside the catchment area and so travelling to another school was not a major factor.	Comment noted.
20.5	Our education system is severely under-funded across the UK. The cost of running Llanbedr School per pupil will be far greater than that of a larger school. This results in larger schools indirectly subsidising smaller schools. With a perfectly good school in Crickhowell, just two miles away the funds could be better split between other providers should it close. From the point of view of delivering quality education I also do not believe that a school with so few pupils, with teachers delivering to multiple age groups at once, can meet their academic and social needs adequately.	Comment noted.

7. FURTHER ASESMENT AND CONCLUSION

The School Organisation Code includes some additional steps to be undertaken in respect of the consultation report for proposals relating to the closure of rural schools. This section addresses these requirements.

7.1 Further assessment of the proposal and alternatives

Following consultation, the Council has carried out a further assessment of the proposal and the alternatives identified in the proposal paper on the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the likely impact on the community and the likely effect of different travelling arrangements.

The revised assessments, which take account of further information that has come forward through the consultation or otherwise, are provided in the table below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
Option 1: Status Quo – continue as a standalone school	There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to attend the current provision at Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.	There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Llanbedr C. in W. School. 61% ² of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School live closer to other schools and are therefore not eligible for free home-to-school transport. These pupils are transported to the

² PLASC 2021

			school by parents or other private arrangements.
Option 2: Federation with Crickhowell C.P. School	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A	Discounted – N/A
Option 3: Federation with Llangattock C. in W. School	<p>The impact on quality and standards would be minimal. Llanbedr C. in W. School would continue to operate as a standalone school, however the school would be federated with Llangattock C. in W. School, meaning that one joint governing body would be responsible for both schools. There would also be the potential for shared leadership across the two schools.</p> <p>Establishment of a federation could lead to opportunities to share staff / resources across the federation, which would have a positive impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the federated governing body.</p> <p>There would be an opportunity for parents to continue to access Church-in-Wales provision and benefit from the close links between the Church and schools, delivering education with a Christian ethos.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

<p>Option 4: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on two sites</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p> <p>Consideration would need to be given to the status of the new merged school. It could be established as a community primary school or as a Church-in-Wales school. If it was to be established as a community primary school, then there would be reduced access to Church-in-Wales provision in the Crickhowell cluster. However, if it was to be established as a</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
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		Church-in-Wales school, then there would be increased access to Church-in-Wales provision in the cluster.	
Option 5: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on two sites	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make up of the new governing body.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the much larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p> <p>There would be an opportunity for parents to continue to access Church-in-Wales provision and benefit from the close links between the Church and schools,</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>

		delivering education with a Christian ethos.	
Option 6: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Crickhowell C.P. School	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	<p>Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Crickhowell C.P. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Crickhowell site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p> <p>There would be reduced access to Church-in-Wales provision in the Crickhowell cluster.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
Option 7: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, retain the site as part of Llangattock C. in W. School	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. school are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019, therefore it is anticipated that implementation of this option	Provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr. However, the site would be managed by the current governing body of Llangattock C. in W. School, therefore there could be a perceived reduction in community	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>However, some additional travel may be required between schools</p>

	would mean that pupils would attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.	<p>involvement in management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the Llangattock site as the larger site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Llanbedr site.</p> <p>There would be an opportunity for parents to continue to access Church-in-Wales provision and benefit from the close links between the Church and schools, delivering education with a Christian ethos.</p>	in order to access activities and events.
Option 8: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Crickhowell site	Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>The proposal would have a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr. Many comments received during the consultation period emphasise the importance of the school within the local</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order</p>

	<p>same location, which would result in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.</p>	<p>community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close. Concern has also been expressed that closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village.</p> <p>It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr, and as the school is a small school, all pupils are able to take part in all activities. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would</p>	<p>to access school activities / events.</p>
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		need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.	
Option 9: Merge with Crickhowell C.P. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Crickhowell C.P. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and would lead to a significant increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Crickhowell community as there would no longer be provision in Crickhowell. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Crickhowell community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Crickhowell is a town with a significantly larger school, it is likely that the Crickhowell community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Crickhowell C.P. School. As pupil numbers at Crickhowell C.P. School are significantly larger than those at Llanbedr C. in W. School, this is likely to impact on a significant number of pupils.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

		<p>Consideration would need to be given to the status of the new merged school. It could be established as a community primary school or as a Church-in-Wales school. If it was to be established as a community primary school, then there would be reduced access to Church-in-Wales provision in the Crickhowell cluster. However, if it was to be established as a Church-in-Wales school, then there would be increased access to Church-in-Wales provision in the cluster.</p>	
<p>Option 10: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llangattock site</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision. This option would result in all pupils attending school in the same location, which would result</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>However, merging with Llangattock C. in W. school to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llanbedr community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school, which would aid community involvement in the new school.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

	<p>in further benefits to pupils currently attending Llanbedr School through being part of larger cohorts of pupils.</p>	<p>There would be a reduction in the availability of Church-in-Wales school places if the capacity of Llangattock C. in W. Primary school remained as current.</p>	
<p>Option 11: Merge with Llangattock C. in W. School to establish a new school on the Llanbedr site</p>	<p>Both Llanbedr C. in W. School and Llangattock C. in W. School are currently categorised as Green schools based on the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. Therefore in general, it is anticipated that merging the two schools to establish a new school would result in a school where quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p> <p>However, this option would result in all pupils attending the Llanbedr site. The Llanbedr site would not be suitable to accommodate all pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School and Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore overall, this option would have a negative impact on quality and standards.</p>	<p>There would be a positive impact on the Llanbedr community as this option would retain provision in Llanbedr and could lead to an increase in pupil numbers, safeguarding provision in the village for the future.</p> <p>However, there would be a negative impact on the Llangattock community as there would no longer be provision in Llangattock. Whilst merging the two schools to establish a new school would provide opportunities for the Llangattock community to be involved in the process of establishing the new school to aid community involvement in the new school, however as Llangattock is a larger school, it is likely that the Llangattock community would consider this option to be disproportionate.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llangattock C. in W. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p>

<p>Option 12: Close Llanbedr C. in W. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools</p>	<p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School.</p> <p>The Council's view is that all three of the alternative Powys schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Llanbedr C. in W. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. Estyn, in its response to the consultation, has stated that it <i>'is of the opinion that the current proposal is likely to at least maintain the education provision for pupils in the area.'</i></p> <p>A number of pupils that live in Monmouthshire currently attend</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr.</p> <p>The proposal would have a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr. Many comments received during the consultation period emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close. Concern has also been expressed that closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>Implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc</p> <p>However, the majority of pupils attending Llanbedr C.in W. School already travel to the school by private arrangements as they aren't eligible for free home-to-school transport because they live closer to other schools.</p>
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	<p>Llanbedr C. in W. School. For these pupils, the closest alternative provision would be Deri View Primary School which is located in Monmouthshire. This school was categorised as Amber in the latest categorisations carried out in 2019. The school has also been under Estyn review, but was judged to have made sufficient progress in addressing Estyn's recommendations, and were removed from Estyn review in March 2020.</p>	<p>It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr, and as the school is a small school, all pupils are able to take part in all activities. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Llanbedr. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School</p>	
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		<p>building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p>	
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7.2 Further reasonable alternatives

The other alternatives which were suggested in the consultation responses received are outlined in section 18 of the 'issues raised in the consultation period' section of this report, including the Council's response to these alternatives. These are as follows:

- 18.1 Retain the status quo**
- 18.2 Develop the provision at Llanbedr**
- 18.3 Pause the consultation**
- 18.4 Federation / merger options**
- 18.5 Build new all-age school in Crickhowell**
- 18.6 Make changes to other schools**
- 18.7 Develop Welsh-medium provision in the area**
- 18.8 Support small/rural schools**
- 18.9 Other suggestions**

- 18.1, 18.2 and 18.3 are included within Option 1 – Status Quo in the above table and are therefore not subject to a separate assessment.
- 18.4 Federation/merger options. These options have been included within the original options in the table above, and are therefore not subject to a separate assessment.
- 18.5 Build new all-age school in Crickhowell – this will be subject to a further assessment. For the purposes of this exercise, it is assumed that the new all-age school in Crickhowell would include all the cluster schools and pupils would transfer to the new all-age school in Crickhowell.
- 18.6 Make changes to other schools. Making changes to other schools is not considered a reasonable alternative to address the challenges faced by Llanbedr C. in W. School and therefore this will not be subject to a separate assessment.
- 18.7 Develop Welsh-medium provision in the area – this will be subject to a further assessment as a ‘reasonable alternative’.
- 18.8 Support small/rural schools. The challenges facing small schools are outlined within the Consultation Report and do not address the challenges facing education in the county, where the high number of small schools has been raised as a concern in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, and therefore this will not be subject to a separate assessment.
- 18.9 Other suggestions – these include developing an infant school at Llanbedr with Llangattock and Crickhowell providing junior school provision. This moves away from the Council’s plans to reduce the number of transition points in a child’s education by developing all-through primary provision. The other suggestion included seeking additional support from the Diocese. Whilst the Diocese provides support in terms of repair and maintenance funding via the Welsh Government, the Council is responsible for funding all schools. Therefore, based on these reasons, neither of these options will be subject to a separate assessment.

The reasonable alternatives that will be subject to further consideration against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code for rural schools are:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
<p>18.5 Build new all-age school in Crickhowell</p>	<p>This option would create a large critical mass of primary aged pupils in one establishment, which would enable pupils to be taught in single year classes. This would provide an opportunity for teachers to focus on developing their learners appropriately.</p> <p>Effective teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils. In smaller schools pupils can have the same teacher for up to 4 years and if there are gaps or weaknesses in the disciplinary-specific expertise, the provision can impact on pupil outcomes.</p> <p>Teachers in small schools would need to plan for a mixed age range for all Areas of learning and experience which can be up to four year groups. To ensure equity for learners, leaders and teachers (across Wales) need to have a shared understanding of learner progression, including expectations around what</p>	<p>There would be a detrimental impact on the communities in the villages of Llanbedr, Llangattock and Llangynidir, as there would be no provision in these villages.</p> <p>Consideration would need to be given to the status of the new all-age school. It could be established as a community school or as a Church-in-Wales school. If it was to be established as a community school, then there would be reduced access to Church-in-Wales provision in the Crickhowell cluster. However, if it was to be established as a Church-in-Wales school, then there would be increased access to Church-in-Wales provision in the cluster but reduced access to non-denominational provision.</p>	<p>There would be additional travel required for those pupils currently accessing primary provision in Llanbedr, Llangattock and Llangynidr, as there would be no provision in these villages.</p>

	<p>progression may look like and the pace at which learners progress. This shared understanding is developed through professional learning and as an ongoing process both within and across schools, of which professional dialogue is a fundamental aspect. Practitioners can share and learn from each other's understanding of progression. This can be challenging in a small school with only two teachers, for example.</p> <p>It is therefore likely that the impact on quality and standards would be at least as good as current.</p> <p>The learning environment would be in a new purpose-built setting, which would support pupils and staff's wellbeing.</p>		
<p>18.6 Develop Welsh-medium provision at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary 	<p>Given that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is currently an English-medium school with no experience of providing immersive Welsh-medium education at all, it is likely that there would initially be a negative impact on quality and standards of education.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p>	<p>There would be no additional travel required. Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Llanbedr C. in W. site.</p>

<p>School – open a new Welsh-medium school in Llanbedr on a phased basis</p>	<p>It is unclear whether staff at the school have the appropriate language skills to deliver the curriculum through the medium of Welsh. If they don't have the necessary skills and experience of teaching through the medium of Welsh, then this could have a negative impact on quality and standards of education.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary. School – open a new dual-stream school in Llanbedr 	<p>Given that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary. School is currently an English-medium school with no experience of providing immersive Welsh-medium education at all, it is likely that there would be a negative impact on quality and standards of education.</p> <p>It is unclear whether staff at the school have the appropriate language skills to deliver the curriculum through the medium of Welsh. If they don't have the necessary skills and experience of teaching through the medium of Welsh, then this could have a negative impact on quality and standards of education.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Llanbedr.</p>	<p>There would be no additional travel required. Pupils would continue to attend school on the current Llanbedr site.</p>

	A very small two class school would be impacted by a further split into streams. This would increase the challenge for teachers to deliver education.		
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7.3 Conclusion

The Council has considered the issues raised in the consultation exercise and has also carried out a further assessment of the proposal, the original options and alternative options identified during the consultation with consideration of the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the likely impact on the community and the likely effect of different travelling arrangements. The Council's view is that none of the original options or the alternative options address all of the challenges facing Llanbedr C. in W. School which are

- Low pupil numbers
- High budget per pupil
- Combined age classes
- Leadership

As outlined in the Consultation Document, the reasons for the proposal are as follows:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Would reduce the Council's surplus places in primary schools
- Would lead to rationalisation of the primary school estate
- Financial saving to the Council

- Meets all the Critical Success Factors

The reasons for this conclusion is that implementation of the proposal will ensure improved management of the Powys schools estate, ensuring that the best possible educational opportunities can be provided to pupils living in the Llanbedr and wider area and across Powys in the future. As stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School teaches children in three classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council's funding formula, the school's funding per pupil is higher than the Council's average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys' Strategy is intended to improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil's learning entitlement and experience.

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwiadol

Appendix C – Minutes of meetings with Staff, Governors and School Council

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Consultation meeting with Staff of Llanbedr C. In W. School

13th May 2021

Present

Staff:

Linda Green, Headteacher

Jo Davies, Teacher

Gavin John, Teacher

Louise Edwards, LSA

Lisa Lewis, LSA

Officers:

Geraint Rees, Strategic Lead for Education

Lynette Lovell, Interim Chief Education Officer

Marianne Evans, Service Manager Schools Transformation

Eurig Towns, Service Manager for School Improvement

Sarah Christoforou, HR Business Manager (Schools)

Mari Thomas, Interim Schools Finance Manager

Sarah Astley, Strategic Programme Manager, Transforming Education

Geraint Rees welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Powys County Council officers attending the meeting.

It was explained that there would be a brief presentation with an opportunity for discussion, comments, and questions to the officers afterwards. Geraint Rees explained that the meeting would be recorded, for minuting purposes but the recording would be deleted once the minutes had been completed.

Marianne Evans gave a Powerpoint presentation and explained that in February 2021, Powys Cabinet gave approval to proceed with a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The consultation commenced on 21 April 2021 and has been extended until 23 June 2021.

The importance of the consultation process as a way for people to make their views known was emphasised.

The specific proposal is:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

Geraint Rees explained that an addendum to the consultation documents had been published this week, which provided an updated capacity figure for Llangattock School, and the consultation period has been extended.

Staff were then given the opportunity to ask any questions or to make any comments in relation to the matter.

Headteacher: Can I ask Marianne if responses delivered to the school can be sent in the blue bag to County Hall?

Marianne Evans: That will be no problem.

Headteacher: I just want to make it aware that staff will be mainly submitting their views about the proposal in writing, and therefore we do not want to reiterate the points that will be made in our written submissions, but in this meeting we would just like to clarify certain matters. In the same way, the governors also have a few questions and we don't want them to cross over with the points they will make in their meeting.

We have a few questions in this meeting for information purposes. These are based around press releases which have gone out and the consultation document, in which there are inaccuracies.

Geraint Rees: Could I just come back to you quickly? You are saying that there are inaccuracies in the document, but they're not going to be raised tonight, is that what you're saying?

Headteacher: We've got governors afterwards and we don't want to crossover, and we've also made written responses, but there's a few more things that we want to put in our responses, but we just need a bit more information.

Geraint Rees: OK that's fine.

Headteacher: The first question is, you say that pupils would attend larger schools which could provide a wider range of educational and extracurricular activities and opportunities. What evidence do you have to support this statement?

Geraint Rees: The issue around size relates to the number of possibilities that become open for learners in schools where if there are 12 girls in the same school year or likewise boys or even mixed teams then they are able to play in age appropriate teams and develop their skills in that way, or groups that are large enough to hold a significant choir. There is a whole range of things that happen in small schools, but actually there's a greater number of staff in larger schools to be able to provide leadership around different kinds of activities as well.

That's not to say that people in small schools don't make the most heroic efforts to make that provision, they do, but usually there are further opportunities available in an effective large school. I'm using the word effective importantly there because just being larger doesn't make it necessarily any better, it needs to be well run for that to happen.

Headteacher: And it works both ways, an effective small school.

Geraint Rees: Indeed, effective smaller schools end up offering more than a small school that might not be effective, we appreciate that. But the opportunities are generally wider in the larger schools simply because of learners of a similar age in those schools who can take part in activities that are of particular interest. Also I know that an increasing number of activities are not gender specific but some activities traditionally have been, and it provides pupils with an opportunity to coalesce around the groups that they're in to take part in activities like that. Lynette's only experience was as a pupil herself in a small rural school.

Lynette Lovell: In general terms in a larger school there are more opportunities for such things as Geraint has said. You've got a larger number of staff who can share the workload for the new curriculum and things like that. You've got more subject areas. When you look at the extracurricular, what you find in a larger school is that activities can be shared out so that you've got staff who can take one club a week, or one extracurricular, which could be at lunchtime or after school or whatever, so it is shared out and you've got a wider skillset generally to ensure you've got that sort of breadth and there isn't just a weight on a couple of people's shoulders, so there are more opportunities. As Geraint said, I did go to a small school myself, and didn't have the opportunity to be part of larger school productions, larger school team games. All of the things that are more difficult to offer in smaller rural schools. I know many children have them outside of school in separate clubs. In general though it is about the range of skills you have as a larger staff, the sharing of the workload and also the opportunities to further the skill base of the staff. However as Geraint said, it is also about effective leadership in those schools to lead the teaching and learning, but in general there are more opportunities for learners.

Eurig Towns: I think you and Geraint have covered a lot of the reasons why we would put that as a reason there. In a smaller school you have a smaller number of staff, you know they're taking on all those responsibilities and you know that is nothing against the staff at Llanbedr, because I know how much they do give the pupils – over and above what they do in the class. But obviously you want to ensure that there is an even spread of distribution of the support they can give, rather than having a few people doing it. If you had a larger staff, you could share that responsibility more, but again, that is not against anything that you are doing at the school, it is just the number of opportunities that could be available with a larger staff.

Headteacher: Thank you for your comments, I don't agree with what you're saying about clubs in larger schools. I've been the Deputy Head of a school with over 400 pupils and a Headteacher of over 200 pupils. In a larger school you are restricted by numbers, so you have your after school clubs but they are restricted as you can only have 20 or 30 in one club. When you've got two streams in a school, or sometimes three streams in a school, and you've got a Year 5-6 football club, for example, you can only have so many in that club so children do not have full access to all those clubs all the time.

You also have the fact that some clubs are on offer to some year groups, but they're not on offer to all year groups, so it's done on a rota basis. You may have some children that cannot be offered technology in the summer term, whereas it's then art in the autumn term and it's purely because of numbers. So you don't have extracurricular activities available to all the pupils all the time, they don't have that access. When I came to Llanbedr school, it opened my eyes to what extra curricular provision is. The scope that we have at Llanbedr School is not replicated in any of the schools in the cluster, nor is it replicated in the other schools that you've mentioned in the consultation document.

We do 2 clubs every night, so on Monday for example, we have Puppet Club and Welsh Club. Tuesday we have Art and Craft Club, IT Club and Technology Club. I completed a community impact assessment questionnaire and in there it says all the clubs that are on offer. You may not have the staff, but the staff you do have are highly skilled staff. You've also got a huge range of community members and volunteers that come in of their own time running those clubs, you don't get that in larger schools. You don't get that community. Being a rural school, it really opened my eyes to how much the community actually support the school. All our children can attend all the clubs. We also do extracurricular activities during the daytime. And yes, the staff at Llanbedr work hard and they work extra hard in order to ensure that the children do have that provision. And as far as the sports are concerned, I would just like to bring staff here about the success that our children have.

Staff: I disagree with the point made about the opportunities as well. It's quite the opposite actually. Our children have more opportunity to do more sports, the reason being that we've got small numbers, so they get thrown in at the deep end and they have experiences they wouldn't necessarily have in a larger school. I have also taught in a three-form entry 600 pupil school and a two-form entry 400 pupil school and there's nowhere near the opportunities that children at Llanbedr have compared to those schools. You know, just an example is we reached the national finals twice in cricket. We've reached regional finals twice in football. For a small rural school, that is quite outstanding. Pupils get opportunities to do sports they wouldn't ordinarily do – girls get to play football, cricket, rugby and netball. All pupils have an opportunity to attend a residential visit each year in Key Stage 2, taking part in things like coasteering, mountain biking, kayaking, abseiling and they get the opportunity to do those things from the age of seven, from Year 3 and I've watched a Year 3 throw

themselves into the sea in Pembrokeshire and you just don't get those opportunities in a larger school.

Geraint Rees: Your points are well articulated and I think it does come back to something I said earlier which is it's around the quality of a school. A larger school might not do that, but a larger school might do that. It depends on essentially what the staff are prepared to throw in, so we acknowledge that, but it's still a fact that the greater the number of staff in the school, the greater the range of skills at their disposal to be able to use, but you may be in that privileged position of having a small body of staff who are able to turn their hands to a wide range of activities, which is a real benefit to the school. So points made and noted.

Headteacher: I'll go on to the next question. The other statement that was made was pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum. So why do you think the six other schools are better equipped than Llanbedr Church School to meet the requirements of the new curriculum?

Geraint Rees: The question around that is about the scale of change. Even for schools that have developed over the last decade quite significantly, the new curriculum does bring with it new challenges and new opportunities. Much of this is down to what exactly can be done for learners in cross age classes, mixed aged classes, in terms of introducing the six areas of learning and experience and the whole range of skills behind them. I'm not a primary specialist and I would be wise to defer to colleagues who are, but it is a question of how do we go through managing that change over the coming years, including what sort of capital equipment do we need, as in educational equipment, in order to support the new curriculum and how that's best delivered across schools as well.

Lynette Lovell: I've just read your Core Visit reports today and I know that you have been working on the four purposes and I know that you've been working as a school on the areas of learning and experience, and that you've been doing a lot of cluster work around all of that to ensure that as a cluster you've been jointly working on that. The new curriculum is going to be a huge change although schools like yourselves have been preparing for that. The biggest change for me is that I remember the time pre-national curriculum and I think that for many of us staff now and teachers, this is the biggest reform since the National Curriculum and there is a lot of work around devising the curriculum, the areas of learning experience. For me, in the smaller schools you've got a smaller number of staff who have got to work on six areas of learning and experience, whereas perhaps in the larger schools you've got those people that take that curriculum area. My own teaching experiences was taking one subject area and not everything. I know that you have been working effectively as a cluster to develop and share that experience within the Crickhowell cluster. But I do think in in general terms, the workload for devising and preparing for the new curriculum, with less people to do it, ensuring you've got that coverage, is a huge undertaking in smaller schools, as it's such a massive curriculum reform.

Headteacher: But why is that? Why is there such a difference? Because at the moment we are coordinating effectively the national curriculum requirements. What's the difference between the new curriculum and the four core purposes, because that is what we're working towards? Why are the six other schools better equipped than we are?

Lynette Lovell: I think in terms of what you said about that we've currently got the national curriculum and it is very prescribed, it's very knowledge based. In terms of the other schools in the cluster, I know you've been working effectively together. They have possibly more staff that can look at those areas of learning and experience, rather than in a smaller school where you have got the weight on a couple of members of staff for all that preparation.

When the national curriculum came in first of all, we even had programmes of work that we could work through. The new curriculum is about ensuring the curriculum is right for the school, and it is a lot of work for the staff. So I think in a larger school it is that ability to be able to share that workload. But I'm not saying that you haven't done work as a cluster, I know you have. I know you're the lead headteacher for the cluster, and I know from your Core Visit reports that you've been working on the four purposes and the areas of learning and experience, but in general terms, I think the bigger the staff you've got in terms of the new curriculum, the better.

Headteacher: So I would say that's more of an opinion, because to embed those four core purposes you need to have that knowledge of all those areas of learning, you need that experience – you don't just want to be working on one area of learning, plus we do have the six members of staff in our school and each of us do have an area of learning, but it's about putting those areas of learning together to encompass your school vision. We have done a lot of work as staff, and we feel if anything, we're sharing what we are doing with the cluster schools. The question was how would the other schools be better equipped? We are sharing what we are doing with other schools, STEM is a very good example of what we've done in our school and how we've shared that with the cluster schools. So how are the schools therefore be better equipped?

Lynette Lovell: I think we are confident that within the cluster, all the schools are good schools. Eurig do you want to come in here and explain where the other schools in the cluster are, in relation to the new curriculum and in terms of providing that provision.

Eurig Towns: We understand that all the schools in the cluster have got a very strong working relationship and all the work you've done together has been a collective, and you've cooperated on that. Each school is strong and they have strengths, and many have different strengths which is good as it contributes to that. It is our view that going forward, which is about what you said about embedding the curriculum, we want to ensure that we have schools that are strong and can embed

the curriculum and we're just looking at it from the point of view that you are going to need the number of people, you are going to need the expertise going forward. If you're in a smaller school it is more difficult to have that because you have less people to share it around.

You're fortunate as you have said about the six members of staff, each leading on an area. You're also teaching across four year groups in the classes as well, or three year groups in the foundation phase, so that is an added pressure as well. So you're looking at other schools who don't necessarily have four year groups across one class or three year groups across the foundation phase. That is where we are coming from in that respect

Headteacher: But there isn't anything in the Donaldson report or the new Curriculum for Wales that says that it can't be delivered in small schools.

Geraint Rees: Absolutely not. However I think everybody acknowledges that the wider the age range that you teach and the fewer the number of colleagues in a school, the more challenging it will be to embrace the breadth of it and to deliver it. It doesn't mean it can't be done, it's a question of how sustainable is the effort that will be needed over the coming years to be able to do it. I think that the collegiality that you are showing across schools is a massive benefit. Schools that are not doing that, I don't know how they will survive the move entirely into the new curriculum if they're working as islands, even if they're moderately sized.

The benefit of being part of a larger group is clearly something you are already getting benefit from. But the question of how do we then configure schools to be equipped fully and to have a range of staff that are working in them that are able to get on with it? The position that's been made is that there are generally benefits. We're not talking even about large schools here, we are just talking about larger schools than some of our schools like Llanbedr which is a small school and is supported as a small school financially, as you know from the budget allocation per learner. But there may be benefits for our future planning to be configured differently in each of the areas.

Schools are often placed in villages where they were back in the 1880s after the Foster Education Act of 1870. We've got quite a legacy of schools that were placed in villages where accessibility and travel times and everything else meant that large workforces on rural farms made for viable but close schools, close to where people live. That's become more challenging now in rural Wales with the population changed from having farms with 14-15 different people involved, they've now become far more singular in terms of employment. Also the ability to travel two to three miles in 10 minutes rather than in an hour and a half has changed.

The change being proposed here is around concentrating learners and staff in fewer numbers of schools with the benefits that we've outlined. We do understand the arguments you're presenting to say that these are not necessarily benefits and we

have to say there are not necessarily benefits when a school is being very well run, you are managing to make up for many things that actually may be harder for you where you are, but that's all we're saying is in general this would apply in terms of the new curriculum – where there is a larger body of staff, it should be far easier to implement and the range of skills that a larger body of staff has is generally wider as well, but not always because you may be exceptional in terms of quality.

Headteacher: So this statement is just in general terms from the meetings of the Transforming Education team?

Can we move on to the next question.

Staff: If any of you were to visit our school and come to see us as you are more than welcome to do so, you'd see that we are very well equipped, very well resourced and ready to embrace the new curriculum. The Headteacher has already mentioned that we are taking large steps towards making that commitment to the new curriculum and actually sharing really good practice within schools in our cluster so what I would like to know is how will this be improved for the pupils transferring to them. In addition, one of the schools in the proposal is out of county, so do you have a good knowledge of the standards within that school and how well will it be beneficial for the pupils moving there.

Eurig Towns: We have confidence in the schools in the Powys cluster and your catchment area that the standard of education that is taking place inside those schools is of a sufficient standard that pupils would not be disadvantaged by moving to those.

Staff: Will it be improved though? Because that is what it says, it will be improved.

Eurig Towns: You have a high standard of education at the school already because as you know, we don't classify schools now, but you know we do place a high value on what you do at the school. The alternatives are of an equal value to what you're having there now, which is a high standard.

Staff: So it's not necessarily going to be improved for the pupils who move to these other settings?

Eurig Towns: They wouldn't be disadvantaged by moving to other settings.

Geraint Rees: And that links with the issue that as the curriculum changes and much else changes, there are opportunities hopefully that those other settings will hopefully be well placed to do that, including well placed to offer staff professional development – that is sometimes easier in settings where people can specialise and develop a range of skills. The amount of work you have to do where you are at the moment, to cover the range of school years in each teachers' care...

Headteacher: Our professional development is very good at the moment and all staff have professional learning logs. The professional development is very good and the cluster working that they have done and with other agencies is very good.

Staff: Could I ask you to explain how closing Llanbedr means that our pupils would be more able to collaborate deeply to take on the challenges of the new curriculum? And the emphasis is on the collaboration.

Geraint Rees: That's often linked to the ability to work with people of the same age and at a similar point of personal development. It's important to say that the new curriculum is not an age defined curriculum. There will be no key stages in it which is important to acknowledge.

Headteacher: Which is why mixed age groups are very good.

Geraint Rees: We also know from the development of children and a range of things associated with child development that there are some benefits as well of collaborating with people close to your own age as there are benefits of working with children of different ages. With the depth of the new curriculum, I think people would generally be saying that large numbers of pupils of a similar age working together poses a different range of challenges.

For more able learners, they are likely to be in a setting where there are similar aged learners who are stretching them as well, so there is a whole range of issues around collaboration. Again, we're back to if a school is doing well, pupils do well. If a school is not doing well, then there are some things that may actually be beneficial. And as Eurig said, the schools in the area where you are located all well thought of and that is helpful, but they would be in more age specific classes and able to develop their learning in a slightly different way. You may argue that it loses something else, but it would gain something.

Staff: But the new curriculum is all about stage, not age.

Geraint Rees: Yes, that's correct. In fact, some of the local schools you have are not big enough to have year group by themselves and will have mixed age classes as well. The question is of the extent of mixed age that's linked to the size of a school.

A school of 50 learners has a larger range of age ranges in each class than, say, a school of 150 learners. So there is a difference, but it's still not to the position where one form of entry school of 210 has essentially an age class for each year group. Some of the schools that you have in the area are not at that scale either, but they are at a different scale from the one that Llanbedr operates at the moment, acknowledging that you've also experienced growth recently as well.

Staff: You've stated that the best interests of the learners are at the forefront of all proposals on decision making. How have you ensured that this is going to be the case for learners in Llanbedr school?

Geraint Rees: The issue around learners is an issue of equity across the whole local authority. It is important to us that people have strong opportunities wherever they are, and that is something that we wouldn't wish to bring forward a proposal that reduces opportunities.

Lynette Lovell: The interest of learners is definitely at the heart of what we are doing. As Geraint said, we are looking at it across the whole of Powys, but in terms of you, or your children specifically at Llanbedr, part of what we'll do as part of this consultation process is to take very seriously what your learners say in regards to this consultation. So, we will listen, there will be a consultation with learners so that we can hear directly from your learners, their thoughts and views, as part of the consultation process. It is a very important part of the process for us to take their interests and concerns forward in the process.

Staff: I'd like to know what is the impact on wellbeing of this proposal amidst the current pandemic, for our pupils, their parents and us as staff. Have you even considered this? And how has this been considered?

Geraint Rees: There's been significant consideration, not just in Powys, but across Wales about the appropriateness of consulting on change during the pandemic. There has been extensive discussions between ourselves and Welsh Government and Welsh Government have issued slight amendments to the guidance around consultation in order to facilitate it during a pandemic.

One of the key issues is that whatever needed to be done in a time when there wasn't a pandemic hasn't gone away. In terms of needing to bring forward organization of schools that is able to deliver the range of things that we want to deliver, including in many cases capital investment as well, that hasn't gone away, nor has the 21st Century School's programme where Welsh Government is upgrading the facilities of schools, including the IT available for learners across schools as well.

So in considering it, we did ask the question, should we go ahead and consult, or should we wait until the pandemic is over and nationally local authorities have determined to go ahead with it, because to lose two or maybe three years of development of the school estate to ensure that learners are in schools that are fit for purpose, and secondly where the spend on learners is more equitable. You'll be aware at the moment that in Powys, in some schools we spend more or less £7000 on a learner. In other schools we spend £3500 on a learner. There's quite a variation in spend and the ambition is, and we're clear about it, that we need to work towards having equity. We need to ensure that we spend well on all our learners and to miss three years of moving ahead at this point would probably be quite a retrograde step.

It's already caused Powys significant problems in the past, that it hasn't gone through change processes and a further couple of years or three years of not planning to move on would just store up some of those problems even further.

In terms of where we are, then we've had to look at the way we consult in order to make sure we reach the people who need to be reached. The level of responses at consultation has actually been very high and the fact that we're not doing meetings in school halls has not affected the contribution that people are making to the dialogue and the points that people raise.

Then we're onto the issues around wellbeing. Staff wellbeing is critical to all of this, because whatever happens at the end of a consultation, the school is there, the learners are there and the staff are working. We realize that this does put pressure on people. There's no avoiding that, but we are seeking to make sure that we can provide that level of care for staff and support.

Staff: Are you doing that at the minute though? I don't particularly feel like you are considering my wellbeing or that of my colleagues. I had an email from Councillor Phyl today, which I actually found quite offensive, saying that he's considering my wellbeing.

Geraint Rees: I think you'll find that in the main, teachers and staff at schools would have been pleased to have an affirmation from him around the commitment.

Inevitably the proposal to change the school so fundamentally is one that is challenging. I'll hand over to Sarah as there is a range of things that would happen should the decision go ahead and Sarah Christoforou from our HR service will be able to advise on this important aspect.

Sarah Christoforou: Just to say that we do understand this is an anxious time. I think I did contact your Headteacher a couple of months ago to ask whether you wanted any pre kind of meetings to discuss anything and we're always there if you feel that you want some additional time or to talk through some of the questions you might have.

What we don't want is people storing up questions for further on in the process, because I know there are lots of what ifs about how it could affect you. We're really happy to provide some additional support or to come down and talk to you as a HR service, not as part of the full transformation panel, and talk you through that. And I can be in touch with your Headteacher and let her have information on what support there is there.

We are aware that it does affect people's anxiety levels. Any change does, but we are very prepared to come down and support you with that. We've also involved trade unions in lots of discussions and they're very well aware of these proposals and also available to support as well. So if you're not feeling just at the moment that

that support is there, then I'll take that away from the meeting. I'll be in touch after this meeting with your Headteacher so that we can see what we can do to support you.

Staff: What about the children and the parents?

Geraint Rees: I'll come back on the children. I will say though, I know Sarah has been into some schools where there have been 1:1's with members of staff around change, so that service has been offered and is offered ongoing.

In terms of children, we are left with either we don't approach change or we do approach change. The evidence is that children are remarkably resilient to change normally, and there are new schools that pop up all over Wales. The area between Talgarth and Hay-on-Wye went from 11 to 5 schools. The area down south near Ystradgynlais in the authority I think went from 12 to 4 schools. They went through significant changes, and what the teachers and headteachers report back is that the children are remarkably buoyant. They take things in their stride, and get on with the change in as much as when a child moves house for example, there's a change of school that goes with it, and within weeks things move on.

That's not to say we should take it for granted, and we don't, but there is a question here that the climate that is set by adults is probably the single biggest impact on children during a change process of any kind, whether it's domestic or school, and I think that's the huge challenge and the one we need to support you with should this go ahead. How would that happen? What are the things that can be done in school to ease it? What are the things to avoid and we will soon have a dedicated member of staff to provide support with Headteachers, to work alongside Headteachers through change processes. Whether or not a decision to go ahead with this proposal happens or not depends on the outcome of the consultation, but should it happen, there will be that support in place to try and network across and make sure that the planning works well for wellbeing as much as it does for the nuts and bolts of changing schools. But we're in consultation mode at the moment rather than anything else, but we'd be mindful of the need for that if it happens.

It may or may not satisfy the question you answered, but it is something that is emerging with this as we go through change.

Staff: In the consultation document with regards to combined age classes, it says that small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes with Key Stage 2 in one and Foundation another. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small it is more difficult to ensure that all pupils are probably challenged. What evidence do you have to support that statement, which is in the consultation document?

Geraint Rees: I think you'll find that's a position taken through a whole range of tried and tested historical research that's been used around schools that it's only ever

offset by exceptional and outstanding teachers. That's the thing that can make the difference, and I think you may be arguing the case through the headteacher. That's what you've got, but in the main cross age teaching makes it more challenging to have personalized stretching for every learner because of the very nature of it. But I'll call on Lynette or Eurig if they want to comment from the primary perspective. This is something that is widely accepted as providing additional challenge for teachers.

Eurig Towns: Yes I'm happy to come in on that Geraint.

Staff: Before you come in, can I just say with regards to that we're moving towards a new curriculum and as has been mentioned, it's stage, not age. Teaching a whole key stage class actually lends itself towards that. For example, this morning I had year three class pupils rounding numbers to 2 decimal places. If I was teaching a year three class, that scale wouldn't be on the table. There are opportunities within teaching whole key stage classes for children to be stretched and to be supported and scaffolded as well.

Geraint Rees: That's fair enough. I think that goes back to when I said, you know, the one thing that offsets it is exceptional teaching or excellent teaching, and I think we have to take your word for that.

Headteacher: I think the question is what evidence do you have that supports that statement for our pupils at Llanbedr, the statement that you've made – what evidence have you got to support that, and we're also not in two classes, we're in three classes.

Geraint Rees: Were you in two classes prior to the recent growth in numbers?

Headteacher: No, no, we've always been in three small classes.

Geraint Rees: So the average number of learners per classes is 17?

Headteacher: It's small, yes.

Geraint Rees: Fine, I won't say anything more on that, but you know it's part of the consultation.

Headteacher: What is being asked is what evidence do you have that supports that statement? Because it shouldn't be a general statement. It's in the consultation document for our school. So it should relate to what's happening in our school.

Geraint Rees: Well, I think you'd have to say that for any setting, the mixed age classes do pose additional challenges. It is a fact that is articulated frequently, including by teacher unions around the extent of challenge that is faced in smaller schools. That's why the funding that you receive is significantly higher per learner than it would be in other schools in order to try and make sure that they do have a

teacher, and where necessary, teaching assistant to work with them as well, in order to try and offset some of the challenges that you otherwise would have.

It's only a statement of general fact. Whether or not it applies in each instance in a school is a matter that I think we have to hand it to you to take a view, and I think you are taking a view on that, but it's only offset by the fact that your classes are in groups of 17, which is, you know, quite a considerable deviation from what would ordinarily happen across Wales for learners. So the local authority through the funding helps offset that level of what would otherwise be perceived as disadvantage.

Linda Green: No, it's high quality teaching and learning and effective planning.

Staff: So is it a general statement and it doesn't apply to Llanbedr school? There is no evidence for that?

Geraint Rees: No, what we're saying is that the class sizes that are funded for the school help to make it as possible for you to be able to operate without disadvantaging learners through being in such mixed age classes, but it is a significant additional cost that the local authority has put into the budget to make that possible. If you were to be on the average class size of, say, 27 or 28, you extend the age range further in your school, but the local authority has a position on this for many years to try and make sure that it minimizes the numbers where there is an age split the way that you have. So an acknowledgement that it's more challenging is the fact that the budget is given to you to try and make it as operable as possible.

Headteacher: But it's down to building capacity. We know that our cluster schools also have teachers and teaching assistants in their classes. It's how you use those teaching assistants and how highly qualified they are so that they can take groups of children for literacy and numeracy. It is how effectively and efficiently your staff are used.

Geraint Rees: That's a key part of it as well.

Headteacher: It's about building capacity in school. It's about working with what you've got.

Geraint Rees: It's not just about the quantum that you have, it is how you use it as well and which is why I think you're being acknowledged as a school that has made good progress over recent years by deploying things wisely.

Headteacher: It's just that there are few statements in the consultation document that seem to be general statements which are not related to our school yet it's a consultation document for Llanbedr Church in Wales School.

Staff: Previously you've discounted a federation between Crickhowell Primary School because it's not a Church school, but yet you've listed it now as a school for our children to attend. I was just wondering why.

Geraint Rees: I'll ask Marianne to come in in a minute but there are issues of legalities that come into these things as well as anything else.

Marianne Evans: Quite simply, you can't legally federate a Community Primary School and a school with Church in Wales status, so that's why that was discounted. So you could federate with Llangattock, for example because they are a Church in Wales School, or Crickhowell could federate with Llangynidr because they are both community primary schools. That's the reason why.

Staff: If we can't federate, why are our children going to be sent to Crickhowell then? Because that's one of the schools you put down for our children to go to.

Marianne Evans: What we're saying is people can transfer to their closest alternative school, so we're not naming a school. So until the time that parents would make their choice, should the proposal to close Llanbedr go through, once we know what happens, parents would then make a decision about where they would want their children to go so that could be any school and they could choose whichever school. So if there's a place in that school, then there would be accepted into that school.

Headteacher: But the status of our school is a Church in Wales School so families come to us because of the Christian ethos, because we are a Church in Wales School. Then you're saying just to send them to the nearest school. Surely that dismisses that we are a Church school and that's why parents come to us.

Marianne Evans: Parents come to schools for variety of reasons, don't they?

Headteacher: But we know our parents. We know our families. They come to us because of the Christian ethos.

Marianne Evans: And if they wanted access to church places, then there's availability in Llangattock.

Headteacher: So there is availability in Llangattock for our children?

Marianne Evans: There are spaces at Llangattock, but not for the numbers that you have in the whole school, but actually in terms of the local authority and what we are required to do, we are required to consider church places as part of the overall allocation, but actually within the Crickhowell cluster there's over 100 spare places and we know from past experience when schools close, parents don't automatically all choose the same school, and that's been the pattern everywhere. So with that in

mind, that's why we said pupils would transfer to alternative schools. It would be a choice for the parents.

Headteacher: Where is the next Church in Wales School?

Marianne Evans: Priory in Brecon, or Llangorse would be the closest school in Powys.

Headteacher: Ok thank you.

Staff: On Page 9 of the Transforming Education Strategy it states that the highest priority is given to staff wellbeing and professional development. But how have you demonstrated this to us?

Geraint Rees: We're going through a processes of transformation, including a recruitment round going on at the moment to ensure that we have people to lead across the local authority on key areas to do with the new curriculum – with Welsh, digital learning, there's a whole range of things there, and part of our transformation isn't just the fabric of buildings, it's actually going through change processes and about the way we work across the local authority as well, including developing further the model of working in 13 localities, your locality being Crickhowell. We will do all we can over the coming years to encourage deepening any collaboration across all secondaries and across all our primaries to make sure that we support that, and that will be the way of working.

We've also got a range of emerging programmes for improving teaching across the authority as well and leadership development, so there's a whole range of things as part of the transforming education plan. It's not just a matter of reorganizing schools, it's a matter of reorganizing the service as well and collaborating with others to deepen the professional development available for people.

Headteacher: Are there any more questions from staff while the officers are here? Can I just thank the officers for coming here this evening just to answer our questions. Thank you for your time.

Geraint Rees: Thank you. Thank you for the consideration beforehand as well, and the professionalism of coming at this entirely from the angle of learners and wellbeing and quality of education. We do realize that this isn't an easy place for any of you, but we will see what happens next in terms of process and we hugely appreciate the time you have given this and that you give to our learners week in week out.

There will be very careful consideration of all comments and responses received, and a consultation report will be prepared that will reflect everything raised tonight and elsewhere in order to make sure that there's a balanced response and that will

be considered by the Cabinet to make sure that they are as fully informed as possible so as to be able to make a decision.

Consultation meeting with Governors of Llanbedr C. In W. School

13th May 2021

Present

Governors:

Elaine Lusted, Chair of Governors
Malcolm Thomas, Vice Chair of Governors
Linda Green, Headteacher
Gavin John, Teacher Governor
Annabelle Elletson
Dean Christy
Anne Rees
Donna Jones
Dawn Powell
Jenny Parry

Officers:

Geraint Rees, Strategic Lead for Education
Lynette Lovell, Interim Chief Education Officer, Schools Service
Marianne Evans, Service Manager Schools Transformation
Eurig Towns, Service Manager for School Improvement
Sarah Christoforou, HR Business Manager (Schools)
Mari Thomas, Interim Schools Finance Manager
Sarah Astley, Strategic Programme Manager, Transforming Education

Others:

John Meredith, Diocese of Swansea and Brecon

Geraint Rees welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Powys County Council officers attending the meeting.

It was explained that there would be a brief presentation with an opportunity for discussion, comments, and questions to the officers afterwards. Geraint Rees explained that the meeting would be recorded, for minuting purposes but the recording would be deleted once the minutes had been completed.

Marianne Evans gave a Powerpoint presentation and explained that in February 2021, Powys Cabinet gave approval to proceed with a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The consultation commenced on 21 April 2021 and has been extended until 23 June 2021.

The importance of the consultation process as a way for people to make their views known was emphasised.

The specific proposal is:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from 31st August 2022, with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

Geraint Rees explained that an addendum to the consultation documents had been published this week, which provided an updated capacity figure for Llangattock School, and the consultation period has been extended.

Governors were then given the opportunity to ask any questions or to make any comments in relation to the matter.

Governor: Can I start off with just a question from me? I really want to know why Powys have proceeded with this proposal during a global pandemic. Considering the wellbeing and mental health of our children is obviously paramount, could you explain?

Geraint Rees: This was given significant consideration as to whether we should proceed with consultations, and this has been something that has been discussed with other local authorities as well. We are in particularly challenging times. Welsh Government gave it consideration as well and at the beginning of the pandemic, we were wondering whether they would actually have a moratorium on consultations or how they would wish to proceed. The lack of clarity around how long this pandemic might last has probably been a big influence on saying there are some things that probably need to proceed despite the circumstances we're in.

Welsh Government issued slightly revised guidance in order to support the process. There are also funding arrangements around 21st century schools, which is the capital programme for school fabric and digital learning. That has carried on, and the expectation is that if local authorities do proceed with consultation, that they're mindful of these things.

Powys has had quite a significant backlog of under investment in schools over an extended period of time. That's the unavoidable truth for Powys. There are areas where primary schools have been through significant change, such as the area between Brecon and Hay-on-wye. The area down near Ystradgynlais where they've gone from a dozen schools down to four in the Ystradgynlais area. But it's not been a consistent process of investment in schools in order to make sure that Powys has a sustainable school estate.

Estyn's inspection in 2019 raised serious concerns about the organization of schools and school places, and around the deployment of budgets, and you'll be very aware that there's a significant inequity around the distribution of budgets across schools.

Some of our learners, we contribute the best part of £7000 for their learning whilst other learners are down to just around the £3500 mark and the decision to carry on with the consultation was to make sure that (a) we didn't miss the investment that was available and (b) to retain the momentum that was emerging through the dialogue with the schools community, including chairs of governors, about the need to do something significant to bring the Powys schools estate into the 21st century that was all agreed before the pandemic. We held events for Chairs that some of you may remember and for headteachers, and there was a strong feeling, including from the trade unions, that if Powys didn't nail it this time, then what did it say about the authority. The pandemic has cut across it, as you say, and we are working to do all we can to proceed but with ensuring the widest engagement possible and that's coming through in terms of the figures – people are engaging with us, but we are aware that it is challenging times and we need to put and we are putting support to work alongside headteachers to manage the change, and they'll be working with chairs of governors I guess as well. So that's the situation. We're not oblivious to it, but it was a challenging decision.

Governor: Following on from that, your Strategic Aim One states that the objective is to develop a network of all age schools around the 13 current Secondary schools. What are the plans for Crickhowell? At the moment it doesn't seem as though Crickhowell is included, but what are the plans for Crickhowell?

Geraint Rees: I'll turn to Marianne who I think probably can talk you through the approach we're taking.

Marianne Evans: Thank you. All catchments will be looked at over the next few years. We've already looked at a couple of catchments, Llanfyllin in the north in particular and Llanfair Caereinion in terms of an all-age school as well. We have to chunk up the work, so we've called them waves. Wave one is where we are at the moment. Crickhowell will come into future waves, so every catchment will be looked at. In terms of plans for the Crickhowell catchment it's difficult to say because we haven't even started any work around it.

Governor: So why are you closing planning to close our school now?

Marianne Evans: The other aim underneath that Strategic Aim One, is establishing all through schools but also rationalizing and reconfiguring primary provision. We're taking a two-pronged approach because one of the key issues that came out in the engagement before the strategy was approved, was the fact that Powys as a whole has too many small schools and that came through very, very clearly. Welsh Government and Estyn were very clear about that as well.

So, we are taking a two-pronged approach. We are looking at the smaller schools, and Llanbedr isn't the only school being looked at. We've got proposals currently for other schools and will have other proposals in the autumn term. If we wait until we do a whole catchment review, it could take years, and in order to get investment to

support these catchments in terms of the all-age proposals, that could take a long time as well. We know what we have currently in our capital programme, and we haven't got the funding yet to roll out the all-age model throughout the County, so it's going to take time. However, there is pressure on us to address the current school infrastructure and that's why we're looking at the smaller schools as well as taking forward further proposals around all-age. I hope that explains it.

Governor: So, do you mean to say then that you are going to close all small schools?

Marianne Evans: We're reviewing all small schools, either individually or as part of catchments. In some areas, we have to look at an area in its entirety as some small schools need to be there because of their geographic locations in far flung places, or there are language issues. So, in terms of are we going to close small schools, I wouldn't say we are going to close all small schools, but we will be reviewing all small schools. Is that fair Geraint?

Geraint Rees: It probably is. I mean, that's the expectation that we at least do that review and there may be different solutions in different places, and some of that will rely on the proximity of a school to a neighbouring school, the availability of surplus places in an area, the quality of buildings, and the need for investment – a whole range of things that come into play, and the depth of rurality probably is something that Powys has to be mindful of as well in terms of population sparsity or density. So, all of those are in the frame, and as you know there are proposals already, as we've been consulting for a few months now around a range of small schools and there'll be more consultation.

The issue around equity is a significant driver. The Powys allocation of funding for the delegated schools budget across all schools is around what you would expect an authority to be spending. The actual funding available for delivering education leaves a good number of our schools hugely stretched because the funding that's available is being spread across so many schools, and some of our secondary schools are amongst the lowest funded in Wales, because the maintenance of the significant estate is actually putting pressure on it. The Council has annually given an uplift to its schools' delegated budget but actually the problem is running more quickly than the resolution of the problem that we have. Other authorities around Wales have been through change more extensively over the last 20 years, because since 1997 there has been a significant amount of money available for developing the school estate. Powys may have been able to take advantage of more than has been taken advantage of over the years is probably a reasonable thing to be saying, and that's why Estyn called time at its inspection, to say you need to sort out a whole range of areas, and that's why this strategy is in place. Mari are you able to exemplify anything around that funding and the inequity and the differences from learner to learner across the local authority?

Mari Thomas: Yes, in terms of average budgeted spend per pupil, I think for Llanbedr it is just over £6,000 per pupil, but some of our larger primary schools, such as Ysgol Dyffryn y Glowyr in Ystradgynlais, are only receiving about £3,390 per pupil – so there's a significant difference in that level. The other thing that's come to the fore lately is that in terms of funding per pupil for primary schools, we have the highest funding level of the nine rural authorities, whereas for secondary schools we're the ninth of the nine, so we're the lowest of the nine rural authorities. So clearly there is need for some rebalancing I think around that.

Governor: Am I not right in saying it Powys set their own funding formula?

Mari Thomas: Yes, in consultation with all the schools, yes.

Governor: Which gave more money to small schools?

Mari Thomas: We did, indeed, set up a formula, I think it's about two or three years ago now, which was needed to stabilize the system.

Governor: So, you've actually given more money to small schools, by the way you funded them, and now you're complaining that they've got more money?

Geraint Rees: No, I think the issue is that if you have the schools, you have to sustain them, and a small school like Llanbedr needs the £6000 funding in order to be able to offer what it does offer. The question is how long can an authority maintain that, whilst the rest of Wales is moving with new capital stock and reconfiguring schools incrementally rather than in rushes, and this is part of what's being attempted now, to have a strategy that people are clear about and know why it's there and will lead to greater equity across the board. That's only part of the message, because there's no ambition here to make any savings from education, the ambition would be that whatever is spent in education will continue to be spent, but there may be at the end of this journey fewer schools, and therefore the average spend in each of those remaining schools rises. So that's only part of the narrative that we have, but we have to be honest about the need for equity across schools.

Governor: I mean the figure you're quoting is actually incorrect because our numbers are incorrect. So, it doesn't actually cost £6000 per pupil, it's less, and it actually brings us down nearer to the rest of the schools to the average of primary schools.

Marianne Evans: Just to say that the figure in the document is based on last year's data. Now we recognise that your pupil numbers have increased since the document is published. Mari, I will look to you, the annual return to Welsh Government around the cost per pupil takes place in the middle of the summer, so we would be updating this one from the figure here. It will be an updated figure that goes forward.

Mari Thomas: Yes.

Governor: Can I first of all, just before I ask my question, just apologize because normally we're used as governors to starting the meeting with a prayer, and that seemed to have somehow not happened. But just to reassure everybody, I prayed for us all quietly here, so I'm sure we can do our best.

I had a nice letter from Lynette today advising me of the addendum to the consultation and the revised figures. I was actually quite surprised by that because I had understood that in your meeting with Llangattock last week, you'd agreed the capacity at Llangattock to be 117...

Marianne Evans: No, 121.

Governor: Well, whatever. I understand that although the current pupil numbers are 101, in September there will be 103. So, can you just tell me – this isn't my question, but it informs the question. Of those 17 or 18 available places, how many of those are in the nursery?

Marianne Evans: Those are the figures for the school. We don't take account of the of the numbers in the early years provision. So, the capacity figure of 121 doesn't include the early years.

Governor: Right, OK, but do you know how they are spread across the year groups?

Marianne Evans: We do, but I haven't got that information to hand now but I could find this out for you.

Governor: Well, I mean, obviously it's fairly crucial. My substantive question is, obviously you're aware of the obligations on the Council under the Organisational Code to guarantee places in alternative church schools if you're closing a church school. I was really pleased to see that the Transforming Education Strategy claims to be answering the call for an increase in faith schools.

What I'm wondering, is given that more than half of the Llanbedr children come from outside the catchment area, it's safe to say pupils want to attend a church school. Can you actually guarantee that a reasonable proportion, or even ideally all of the Llanbedr children are going to be able to be found spaces in alternative church schools?

Marianne Evans: We know that spaces are available in Llangattock, on the data that we have, based on the figures today, 20 places. But that isn't sufficient for all the pupils in Llanbedr. To take you back to the School Organisation Code, it says that local authorities should consider the availability of church places, where provision is being reduced or removed. Alternative school provision of the same nature, wherever possible, should remain available and accessible to pupils in the local

area. But it also states, however, that in some areas it may not be compatible with the cost-effective provision of education to continue to maintain access without the same provision. So, when you say the words “guarantee”, the local authority isn't required to guarantee church places in an area – just to make that clear.

There are church places available in Llangattock, not enough for everybody, but the other thing we know from previous school organisation proposals, is that if a decision is made to close the school, parents choose other schools, they don't all go en masse to the same school. Parents choose schools for different reasons, and I think it's reasonable to assume that in the case of this proposal, then parents would act the same. Once a decision has been made, they would consider the best place to put their child, so until that time it's difficult to even estimate how many pupils would transfer into any school.

Governor: Well, obviously they're not going to be able to move them to the same school, because there isn't another school that has the capacity to take them.

Marianne Evans: There are over 100 places in the in the Crickhowell catchment, available for pupils.

Governor: Not in church schools.

Marianne Evans: No, but as I said, we're not required to guarantee church places, but there are places available.

Governor: Well, you haven't got church places for as many as half of them.

Marianne Evans: As I've said, it's not a requirement that we guarantee church places.

Governor: I think I can speak on behalf of the all the governors, that we were really hoping that Councillor Phyl Davies would be would be with you today because he didn't appear at our meeting in January and I feel that as the Cabinet are the people who are going to be making this, from our perspective, momentous decision, that we would like to be able to directly put our case in front of the person who has the portfolio for education in Powys, and although there are many disadvantages to having to conduct it over Zoom, one of the advantages I guess from a Councillor's perspective is rather than travelling down to the South of Powys, he would have been able to join us for today's session and heard directly from us about our many concerns.

This isn't my question. This is an observation, and that observation gets strengthened by the fact that I have been writing to Cabinet members and I'm getting no response. I won't go into this in any more detail, but you know, it's subject of a complaint that I have made, and this isn't really reassuring to us that we are actually being directly heard by the people who are the decision makers in relation to this

situation. We understand the role that officers have, but the buck stops with the members who are going to make this decision and it feels like you know there isn't a way through for us to communicate directly with them. That's not a question, it's an observation.

Geraint Rees: Could I respond to the observation before you come to the question. An appointment has been made for the Cabinet to visit the school next week and that will involve Councillor Phyl Davies. You'll be aware that the very nature of local government, elected members are generally, other than the retired ones, holding down jobs as well and for all Councillor Phyl's efforts to be at almost everything that goes on in the authority, this is the first time that I've known him genuinely unable to be somewhere because of his other obligations, but he will receive the recording of this meeting and as well will be visiting Llanbedr next week, or the Cabinet will be visiting and we need to make arrangements to for how that can happen safely.

Governor: That doesn't reassure me I'm afraid, particularly as he didn't join us in January. We all have work as well, and we are doing this and the situation that our governors are in has meant that we are spending hours every week on this now and it's a cause that we are completely committed to and we expect others to be taking this as seriously as we are, and when I write to Councillor Phyl Davies and I get no response, that does not reassure me. I would have asked him this question and it relates to his overarching press release about the strategy.

He says, and it is a very laudable aim, that the strategy is aiming to deliver change that will benefit **all** learners and that this change is in the best interests of learners and this is at the forefront of the decision-making. Now, it won't be a surprise to you to know that we feel sceptical about this in relation to the pupils that we're concerned with in Llanbedr. The question I would have wanted to ask Councillor Davies, is how exactly will closing Llanbedr school benefit our pupils? What's the advantage to them?

Geraint Rees: We've had the Headteachers in the Ystradgynlais area and the ones in the area around Hay-on-Wye during all the engagements that we've had with them around the transformation strategy, all saying that they would have been sceptical prior to the reorganisation in their own areas. They would have been sceptical of the intended outcome that was at that time mentioned by the local authority.

Each of them would be keen now to say that that change has been a significant one for the better, including some of them who are working with Headteachers who are going through change process at the moment because of the belief that actually it is worth it for the learners. Now to convince anybody that is in the thick of it that it's of direct benefit immediately is particularly challenging and the view you express is a very common one around school organisational change. However, there's quite a lot of feedback that we are receiving, that some of them would have wished that they would have gone with the change rather than object to it when the proposals were on the table for them. Across Wales, there's been significant investment in the

reorganisation of schools over 20 years and rarely do people say we wish we hadn't done it. It's actually quite the opposite, including from families whose children then are part of different school arrangements, different configurations, and get different kinds of education.

Now, as it happens, Llanbedr is a school that is punching above its weight. It's performing well as a school and that then quite rightly, leads to the question you're asking. However, there are good schools around you in the Crickhowell area, it is an area that is blessed with strength in its primary and secondary sector.

Governor: I think we know these schools Geraint, we've got friends whose children go to these schools. My own grandchildren go to some of these schools, so we know their classification, but we also know in detail what Llanbedr is offering. As governors we are scrutinizing the delivery of education in great detail and everything we are finding out about the delivery within Llanbedr is of a positive nature and has become more positive in the last few years.

The reports from the Challenge Advisor are very positive. We are being used often as an exemplar of good practice, so we are being reassured that the education that is being delivered is of a good standard. You have to convince us before we can give up the fight. You have to convince us. You say that these other heads are now convinced, so what are the areas that they are saying that they were wrong about? What areas are they saying that they are now benefiting from?

Geraint Rees: Well, the sorts of conversations we have are around the benefit of a larger number of staff to carry the burden of curriculum development, the wider opportunities available with greater numbers of learners of a similar age to have some benefits from extracurricular activities. The staff earlier on were mentioning the commitment and the strength of those activities in Llanbedr, so it's not as if it's not on offer. There is a question around the possibilities then, for developing people throughout their careers with responsibilities that match the experience that a member of staff would have, the leadership development opportunities, all of those issues are ones they regularly raise that become part of a school with a greater number of staff than they previously had, because in the Hay area it went from ten to four schools and in Ystradgynlais from twelve to five.

So, it's proportionately quite a change in numbers which they feel has strengthened them as a community of schools. One of the things we had a discussion earlier on was the strength of Llanbedr as part of the network of schools in the Crickhowell area, working collectively, and that's already in place, but that's often a benefit from organizational change, that people end up working together who previously wouldn't have.

It may not be the case this time, but there's a range of benefits, and one of the other benefits is in terms of the deployment of support staff where you're able to deploy people differently because you have a greater number of support staff, and they can

be deployed flexibly in a range of situations and acquire expertise in the range of additional learning needs specialism. But there's a whole range of things that greater numbers will allow. That's not to say it can't happen in smaller schools, but the effort it takes in the quality of leadership is a real challenge, but the meeting earlier on was compelling in terms of the staff commitment and the leadership commitment to being the kind of school that you talk about. So, we're under no illusions about that.

Governor: I think to balance what you're saying, and I mean some of the areas that the heads are identifying – we would actually say yeah, OK, that is a strength in our school already and I think there also needs to be a critique that larger schools do not work for all pupils and in fact some people, maybe half a dozen or more pupils who attend Llanbedr are there because they haven't settled, and the larger schools haven't worked for them. It isn't all plus on one side, and all negative on the other. Small schools can deliver. My own children went to this school and it was exactly what they needed at that time in their life, they went on and they flew afterwards. They both went into higher education, did really well and I will always be grateful for the firm foundation both in terms of education and values that were formed at Llanbedr and the size of the school was nothing but a benefit from their perspective.

Governor: I would just like to mention as well, I don't think Estyn have ever said that small schools don't work have they?

Geraint Rees: Not at all, and quite the opposite. Many of our small schools have outstanding inspection reports from Estyn. There's a little bit of a challenge there for local authorities because very often they comment on the strength of community, the quality of relationships, and then when they inspect the local authority, they throw the challenge around equity in terms of the distribution of funding across schools. So, there's sometimes quite a challenging position that they take. But no, you're right to say that you probably would be quite pushed to find a direct link between the quality of education provision as Estyn deem it and the sizes of schools. However, there's a whole range of other things that they would comment on that sometimes are helpful with scale.

Governor: So, do, you feel that Powys County Council feel that Estyn were recommending the closure of their small schools?

Geraint Rees: Well, Estyn were unequivocal in that the management of the finances in the school estate doesn't achieve equity across the board and the spend by the local authority is a perfectly reasonable spend – there's not a problem with the quantum that's allocated, but its distribution is causing difficulties. The inspection reports commented on the need to resolve the challenge of Post 16 learning in Powys, and that's partly linked to the organization of schools and budgets. Mari will exemplify what the spend on secondary and primary is like in Powys, but in order to be able to maintain the extensive number of small primary schools, it's essentially taking money from what would have been the secondary system in order to do that, which then is leaving us with quite a challenging lack of choice between 14 and 19

for learners, so these were mentioned in the inspection along with the challenge and the delivery of additional learning needs and the coordination of additional learning needs, which is a further challenge by having so many different schools with people with heavy classroom commitment and ALN management commitment, which in a large school you might actually be able to have an additional learning needs coordinator who has quite a bit of time in order to be able to manage that agenda. So, there's a whole range of things they criticize about Powys that are not directly linked to small schools, and nobody would be foolish enough to say small schools are the problem, but it is a challenge to maintain the estate that we have and to attract leaders in general. You are very fortunate as a small school to have somebody the calibre of Mrs Green, but that's not universally the case in terms of recruiting leaders into small schools, which is sometimes very challenging.

There's a whole range of things there, so it would be foolish to see it as a small school against the world issue. That would be an oversimplification of it, but it is part of the mix that Powys needs to resolve so it has a sustainable school community that can see learners through with choice and quality to the age of 18 or 19, and currently there's a significant piece of work to be done around all of it.

Governor: Quite a lot of presumptions are made against Llanbedr as it's a small school in the consultation and I just wanted to know if maybe you realize you know some of the things are wrong, such as numbers on roll – you know they're actually rising, not falling. Is there anyone that can comment on that?

Marianne Evans: At the time of writing the numbers were based on the PLASC 2020 return and for the projections, two sets of data, one based on PLASC and one based on the finance projections were used. We know you've already increased to 52 currently. When the consultation report comes back to Cabinet, all the data will be updated because we had PLASC for 2020, but we haven't had PLASC 2021 yet because of Covid. I'm not sure if that would be with us in time, but we will make sure that the data is updated to reflect your numbers on roll and then how that changes the surplus capacity figure or how that changes anything else. But as I said, the numbers were at a point in time.

Governor: Will they also be changed for schools in the catchment area as well?

Marianne Evans: Yes, any data or changes to pupil numbers, yes we will be updating them.

Governor: The things you've been saying about Llanbedr are obviously great things because it's a very, very good little school, an exemplar little school so that given that the educational standards we have are high and the fabric of our building owned by the church, not yourselves, is very good, and that we have excellent community engagement with a huge amount of parental involvement, and we have a wealth of extracurricular activities at the school, do you still maintain that with this wealth of information that our school is possibly still not viable?

Geraint Rees: In response to that, it's not a question of viability. You can make anything viable. It's a question of addressing the overall school estate in Powys to try and configure something that is sustainable and allows for continued development and investment in the learners and their entitlement to a new curriculum. Also, that the range of experiences, and I know to repeat what you said, we're already saying that the staff that you have are working very hard to overcome some of the challenges they have through being a small school and that is admirable and is a real tribute to them.

So, what we're saying is we're looking at transformation as a Powys wide activity. There will be reports coming to Cabinet around Post 16 in the very near future which is all across Powys. There's a whole range of things that we need to tackle. The additional learning needs agenda is part of a new strategy to try and improve the support available to our most vulnerable learners. None of these stand apart. They're all part of trying to ensure that we have a model that can work into the long term and secure investment into schools. Supporting the digitalization of learning as well and the wellbeing of learners is key to all of it, despite the challenges we currently face in the current climate. It is an overall strategy. It's up to the Cabinet how they would wish that to work through, and therefore as officers we've got a whole range of proposals that we're consulting on in this way and they will take a decision one by one on these to see how it stacks up in terms of getting Powys over a period of 5-10 years, maybe even longer, to a point where somebody can say we've now got a school estate that does what it needs to do across the board so that that is the challenge.

Governor: That's nice. I like that answer, but like Marianne said, these are going to come in waves and Crickhowell isn't going to be looked at for potentially quite a few years – so are we just a random dot on a map that you just thought potentially that's where we could go, but actually now that you've actually seen the exemplary things that we do here, is it now a point where actually we are having to fight a corner for no apparent reason, because actually we're very good at what we do?

Marianne Evans: All the issues that you raise and all the information that you send to us about the Community Impact and the additional services and clubs and everything that you provide – all the information about the impact on the Community should there not be a school in Llanbedr, and all the added value work that you do, all of that is heard and will be included in the Consultation Report that then goes back to Cabinet – going back to the decision makers. Cabinet would be the decision makers here and that information about your school, how it's doing now, all that information will be there within the Consultation Report and as I said earlier, that Consultation Report is absolutely key now to the next stage, when Cabinet makes the decision. Nothing is being hidden anywhere, everything around the school and your passion, the staff's passion about the school will come through in the Consultation Report.

Geraint Rees: It is the responsibility of the officers to deliver that honestly and transparently. It's non-negotiable, really.

Governor: Thank you Marianne, and if you decide to withdraw your consultation there will be no hard feelings from Llanbedr and you are most welcome for a cup of tea at any time.

Geraint Rees: We appreciate the generosity of spirit. I don't know if it extended to me, but I did hear that Marianne was invited!

Marianne Evans: OK, I'll take you up on it!

Governor: We will have to see who works hardest on our behalf. Thank you very much.

Governor: How can you explain the best interest for our pupils in bigger classrooms in a bigger school?

Geraint Rees: I think there's a couple of things here, I'll call in Lynette in a moment - it's an issue around the whole of the local authority. The question was asked earlier on and the average class size, I understand is 17 in Llanbedr at the moment. That's quite unusual across Wales and would be quite unusual in England as well, but that's what's required in order to support Llanbedr to be able to maintain a viable education provision, given the numbers, in order not to have too many cross-year groups. But the issue is to do with across the board and what is reasonable for all learners in Powys and how do we give everybody a fair crack of the whip, and that's why this proposal is partly on the table, in order to try and develop that equity. Lynette, you'll have experience of having been a pupil in a small school in Powys.

Lynette Lovell: Yes, I was a pupil in a small school in Powys, and then as a teacher, I've been a teacher in a large school so in response to the question there, in larger classrooms with more children, and we've talked about it earlier with the staff. the key to anything it is the quality of teaching and learning and we know you've mentioned that about Llanbedr.

In general terms, a class that is larger may sometimes provide more opportunities, but what it does do from my own experience is you've got perhaps less of the year group span in those classes. So, you may have a straight Year 6 class of 30. You may have a mixed, but it's usually mixed for two-year groups in a larger school, so that's where you've got the opportunities to be developing skills within those age ranges. It is more difficult planning for the full age range of children in a key stage, and I'm not saying that that isn't happening in Llanbedr, I'm just saying in general terms, the workload, particularly for teachers, when they've got the full key stage compared to perhaps one year group or two, even though the class is 30, when it comes to differentiation, it's when you've got a year six class, generally differentiation is three ways. However, you could have the full range as well, I appreciate that, and

you look at individual pupil need. But in a school of classes of 30, perhaps one year group or two, the teacher workload for planning can be easier.

Governor: We have some kids from large schools, and they've come to us as they didn't thrive in bigger schools. I come from a small school. I was the only one going up to high school on my own and I was fine, so it doesn't harm the kids to be in smaller schools, smaller classrooms because they all have got to help each other out so it doesn't seem to affect the kids at all.

Lynette Lovell: Your experience was exactly the same as mine, as a pupil going to secondary school – the only pupil from the school. What I will say is the same is true of a large class in a large school where children are together, and go up together, there's absolutely no problem with it that way as well. I take on board the fact that you say you've had children come to Llanbedr from larger schools coming to a smaller school and are thriving, and that it is good, but I would say that there are different children, in certain aspects, thriving in larger schools too. For me, it is about the quality of teaching and learning, no matter what size the school is and that is the key factor for me that enables pupils to thrive. The ethos of the school is important, you've already talked about this at Llanbedr, but that's important for large schools too. From my own experience as a headteacher, that ethos of care is very important. So, it really is about the quality of teaching and learning in a class of 30 where children can all thrive in that environment too.

Geraint Rees: Could I just say something as well about scale, and I think it is quite important because we're talking about large and small schools. A single form of entry school will have 210 learners – that's 30 in each year group, plus these days, a nursery on top of that. A two form of entry then has 420 plus a nursery again, and there are three form of entry schools around Wales where they will have 630 plus a nursery, and sometimes those nurseries are 150 or 200 learners as well.

When we talk about larger schools in this context in Powys, we are talking about, and you will have seen the size of the schools that we have in Llangynidr and Llangattock in Crickhowell, and they're not massive schools. So, when we talk about larger schools we're not talking about larger schools as they would be in an urban area. They are still relatively small schools, but they are larger than the experience that children would have in Llanbedr obviously, but I just need to make that clear because there are proposals around Wales, in some authorities, for three form of entry primary schools, which would be 630 plus a nursery – but we're not in that domain at all. I just need to stress that.

Governor: I just have another question, because one of the schools that you are putting forward that our children could go to already has year groups in the class of over 30 children – well over 30 children, and the other school that you are suggesting they go to also has shared year groups, they have the same amount of classes as us, so don't have a separate class for each year group – so I don't see

that you're offering our children any better educational experience, in either of those schools.

Geraint Rees: Do you want to come back in there Marianne on the matter of numbers? I mean, the organisation of those schools is a matter for them. But the capacity must be there because we're talking about over 100 surplus places in the Crickhowell catchment primary – so the way they're configured still leaves quite a significant amount of capacity in the area.

Marianne Evans: Again, it's down to what the choice of the parents is if a decision is made to close Llanbedr. Then whichever schools receive children from Llanbedr, that governing body and the head of those schools would need to look at the class structure and accommodate those pupils as and when. So, the numbers now, yes we know numbers in year groups, there may be over 30 in in some, but until we know what happens and what the decisions of parents are it's hard to know how that would impact every year group. Lynette do you agree?

Lynette Lovell: Yes, I agree, Marianne. I think the issue is that there are lots of ways of structuring a primary school, and you have to balance. You have some year groups that are perhaps over 30. You have some that are 20 or even looking at your numbers, although they are from PLASC 2020, I think you have a bit of a bulk there in year two and year three with the numbers that are in the consultation document, so you do have that issue as a Headteacher every year to look at how you're going to structure your classes going forward. You mentioned that there are some schools on the list there that don't have single year groups. But as Geraint said earlier, even our largest school in Powys is around 300, and in actual fact we don't have the schools that have got the two form entry, but there are ways of organizing the school, so if you've got a year group of 32 and a year group of 27 or something like that, you can mix the classes, and some of our primary schools, the larger ones, do go with a 5/6 year group. Now of course it is a split year group, and some of them do 5/6 5/6 5/6. That is a split year group, but it isn't the range of a full key stage, so there are different ways of organizing it accordingly, and that's what headteachers do to make sure they've got that sort of even split, even though your group numbers may fluctuate, and you do it too here, obviously because you've got a fluctuation in some of your groups as well.

Governor: I think a lot of concerns from parents is being a small school, there are families that go to the school, who have got quite large families and there are also friendship groups who would like to go to the same school, and not every school that you're offering can take those children in those year groups. I think you're splitting our children, and just putting them in a school that's got space, instead of giving them the choice.

Geraint Rees: Why don't I just come in there as somebody who's worked in various authorities around transformation. When a school closes, families then make their choices, and there's a whole range of things that come into play, and I've never

known the population of a school all wishing to decamp to a single other option. It usually brings with it a whole range of things around convenience, parents' workplace, childcare support that's available, cousins. There's a whole range of things that come into play, and I think we'd reasonably have to expect that to happen here.

What Marianne was saying earlier is that we have in excess of 100 surplus places in neighbouring schools, and we have about 50 learners who would need to seek a place. So, there's a fair bit of flexibility in the system. The assurance of a place in a denominational school is not a guarantee as was pointed out earlier on, but due consideration needs to be given to it, and that is clearly something we are considering in our discussion with the diocesan staff. We are looking at how church education can develop across the whole of Powys and there will inevitably be some gaps, and as was pointed out earlier, the numbers available in Llangattock do not match the numbers currently in Llanbedr, but it may not be that all those parents would seek that in any case, but they may – we'd have to see how that works out.

Governor: You are saying how it does come down to parental choice, of convenience and everything like that, but a lot of children that come to this school it's not at their parents' convenience – they come to this school because it is the best school for them, so this is what parents believe for our children. So, saying that it's all down to convenience and everything like that isn't quite the thing.

Geraint Rees: Should the decision go ahead, and Llanbedr is no longer there, there is a range of factors that parents will take into account when considering where their child might go. I wasn't saying it about Llanbedr per se, it was about what happens next potentially.

Governor: The thing with that is the disruption to the pupils and the staff relationships, because they are being presumed to be scattered amongst the local areas. The local community is going to be dissolved in order to fill places at other schools. Is that fair?

Geraint Rees: I think that's a strong statement. I think that needs to be on the record as it will be there quoted verbatim. Thank you. Point strongly made.

Governor: I'm sorry, I just feel that you don't know this community. Llanbedr School is at the heart of it, and I know the rural communities are very important and I just think it seems very unfair particularly at this point in time. It feels like the pupils would be scattered rather than moved in their best interests.

Geraint Rees: Point noted, I think is the best thing to say at this point.

Governor: You keep saying parents will have a choice. There is not a single other school in the area that parents could get their children to anyway, never mind easily, even from a practical point of view, with journeys and distances, and if they have to

have a working day themselves and that sort of thing, which is anything close to the same ethos and character and learning standard and all the rest of it that is unique to Llanbedr. So, to say that they would have a choice of other schools to send their children to is just simply untrue.

Geraint Rees: Can I ask how would you propose it should work then if it's not a matter for parents? Is there is there another way we could do that?

Governor: No, my point is that by closing Llanbedr, you are removing that choice from parents. You are removing the choice for more than half of the children that currently choose Llanbedr to go to a church school. You are removing the choice for families who have chosen to drive across the catchment area to schools where their children thrive. We've got children who have come from other bigger schools in a wide area, and their parents have chosen to take them away from those larger schools to send them to a smaller school where they have subsequently thrived under the pastoral care and ethos and friendship groups and all the rest of it that they find in Llanbedr, and that is what you are in danger of destroying.

Geraint Rees: Point clearly made and understood.

Governor: A couple of points on procedure, because everything I've just heard I fully endorse and what has been said I couldn't support more, but purely on procedure you talked about that ultimately the Cabinet is going to make a decision, but in order for the Cabinet to make its decision, they have to have all the correct facts and all the correct feedback that is actually relevant to making that decision. Will the group who are actually preparing the report that will go to Cabinet make a recommendation to Cabinet, or is it just going to be the statement of facts and then allow the Cabinet to make their own decisions? First question. I have another one.

Geraint Rees: I'll turn over to Marianne on this one.

Marianne Evans: Yes there would be a recommendation. The consultation report is prepared, and the Cabinet report that goes with it would have a recommendation.

Governor: And who will be making that recommendation?

Marianne Evans: Officers will be making the recommendation, then Cabinet then have the chance to either agree with it or disagree with it.

Governor: The track record from my experience is that usually when recommendations are made, they are usually followed, so ultimately there's a possibility that the quality of that recommendation will determine the outcome. For the Cabinet to go against the recommendation is not something that is normal. So really, the onus is not really on the Cabinet but on the people making the recommendation.

Marianne Evans: That's an interesting point. I think we have in the past been in similar situations, considering small schools. We have then analysed the issues raised and we have come to the conclusion as officers that there's an issue that means that a proposal cannot go forward, so we recommend to Cabinet that a proposal is either modified or it's abandoned. So, our analysis of the issues raised is actually very, very important, and on the basis of that, officers will make a judgment about the recommendation, and it is a very honest and open and transparent process. It's never done in a way to get to a conclusion, we're not pre-empting the conclusion. If there are issues that are so significant that have come through, then our advice would be, maybe take account of that issue.

Governor: It boils down to the quality of the recommendation and the extent to which that recommendation could be fully supported. So that brings me to my second question and my second question is, once those recommendations are put to the Cabinet and the Cabinet make a decision, will that be the final decision, or will there be another opportunity for the Cabinet to be challenged on that decision and perhaps put the officers who make their recommendation to answer those challenges?

Marianne Evans: So, if the proposal goes forward, then a Statutory Notice will be published, and there will be a 28 day objection period for anybody to object to the proposal. So, there's another decision point, and that objection period is an important one as well, because when Cabinet then receives those objections, they can then consider if there's anything that's come to light that they hadn't considered during the consultation, then obviously it's a second chance to consider the issues. There's a third point as well, which relates to a Church in Wales School. If Cabinet make the final decision, governors of a Church in Wales Schools can refer that to Welsh Government, stating why they disagree with the recommendation. That's something that only Church in Wales schools have, Community Primaries do not have that next step.

Governor: You've actually answered my subsequent question – before making a final decision, what recourse do we have to go to Welsh Government to actually challenge the Cabinet decision, which is a very, very tall order because generally speaking, Welsh Government will have to have some pretty overwhelming reasons to overrule a Cabinet decision, and I suspect it's unlikely to happen, which means it is absolutely essential that the quality of the report made by the officers is fully supportable and that there is an opportunity, subsequently, once the Cabinet makes their decision for there to be another opportunity for us to discuss the matter with Cabinet before it gets to the point where it has to be referred to Welsh Government.

Geraint Rees: Can I come back on one point that along the journey as well, which is the Council has a Scrutiny function. The Scrutiny function largely consists of opposition politicians and some community specialists as well, and they can actually scrutinize proposals that go to Cabinet, including coming to a view as to whether the recommendation from officers is sufficiently substantiated by the evidence that is

presented. Therefore, that can happen before it even goes to Cabinet, and when it goes to Cabinet then it goes with the report from Scrutiny or it can happen after Cabinet take a decision, as part of the Statutory Notice period, they can actually call it in to take a view of that. So, there's a significant number of gateways that hold officers to account for being honest, transparent, accurate and all range of other things. That in a sense becomes the public guarantee that Marianne and team and myself don't abuse our position as officers.

Governor: I never suggested that.

Geraint Rees: No, I understand that, but it's the reason why they're there to make sure that honesty is there.

Governor: Is there an ultimate legal framework, legal opportunity to actually challenge an ultimate decision, within the Welsh Government?

Geraint Rees: There is for Church schools, so you can actually refer it to Welsh Government for consideration and there have been some very challenging views, coming back to local authorities over the years from that.

Governor: I think you've now gathered that you're likely to get some significant challenges, if this does not go the right way.

Geraint Rees: We are under no illusion as to the need for this to be done with real propriety and professionalism.

Governor: I would just like to ask whether we as governors get a chance to see the report before it goes to Cabinet.

Marianne Evans: Yes, we have to publish the report so everybody would have a copy of the report to scrutinize before Cabinet.

Can I just add one other thing just for a point of information? Estyn is actually a statutory consultee during any school reorganization process. So, Estyn's response to the proposal, would also be published as part of the Consultation Report. Estyn is therefore scrutinizing the proposal as well.

Geraint Rees: We are very thankful to people for the quality and the detail and the thoughtfulness that's gone into this. We do realize how significant this is for your school and its community – we are under no illusions, and we hope that we've responded as you would have hoped for.

Governor: Are you saying we are coming to the end now?

Geraint Rees: Well, I think we probably would need to at this point. Obviously the channels are open for written communication quite extensively.

Governor: We probably have a few more questions we will put in writing for you.

Geraint Rees: Are you content to do that?

Governor: Yes.

Governor: Just to say, if we do that will we actually get an answer?

Marianne Evans: Yes, if you send it into school.consultation@powys.gov.uk. If you copy me in to my own email, then will I make sure that a response is given.

Geraint Rees: We do see several emails a day that Marianne composes, so there is heavy engagement.

Geraint Rees: I thank you very much on behalf of our group of officers of the Council. Thank you not just for this evening, but for your ongoing commitment to the school. We do realize the significance of the meeting we've just held. Thank you very much. And sorry we didn't start with a prayer, but I will leave that to you as a school community. If you would wish us to drop out for you to have a moment's reflection or prayer that's absolutely fine by us.

Governor: Do you want me to close the meeting with a prayer Geraint, while you're still here?

Geraint Rees: I think you can feel free to do so, yes.

Governor: Dear Lord Our Father,

We thank you for this opportunity that we've had, to exchange views, to gather information, to seek response, and we pray for your blessing, as we all go forward in this process and we remember that our main concern, in all of our hearts, is the welfare of the children of Llanbedr School.

We thank you and ask your blessing.

Amen.

A meeting with the School Council of Llanbedr Church in Wales School

17th June 2021 – Held virtually on Microsoft Teams

Present: Marianne Evans, Sarah Astley, Sian Fielding, Huw Rowlands – Powys County Council

Officers from Powys County Council met virtually via Microsoft Teams with representatives from the School Council of Llanbedr C in W School to discuss the consultation to close Llanbedr C in W School with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

The School Council group consisted of 4 Foundation Phase pupils and 7 pupils from Key Stage 2.

A short introduction was made, explaining that Powys County Council looked after all of the schools in Powys, including Llanbedr, and that the meeting today was to talk about the plans the Council has for Llanbedr school.

Tell us about Llanbedr school. What's good about Llanbedr school?

- Small school
- Mixed years together in one class
- We all stick together and help each other, for example if a friend falls over
- We have lots of friends here
- Teachers are nice
- I love school
- We love learning in Llanbedr
- We all do teamwork and work together
- We are all like a family
- After school clubs

What kind of after school clubs do you have?

- Dragon sports
- Gardening club
- Technology club

What else do you like about the school?

- In big schools they only have one or two years in one class. Here we have more years in one class so we learn more
- The friendships
- I like learning science, English and Welsh
- In our class we have ponds with tadpoles and we have to put the water back in when it dries out

- We have puppet clubs
- Busy feet – where pupils can learn and do some fun things at the same time

What do you think about the school building – is it nice and warm?

- Yes

Have you plenty of space outside to play?

- Loads of spaces
- We have a field, yard, play area for KS1

What about school dinners? Are they nice?

- Yes

There are a lot of things that you like and that are good about the school. Is there anything you don't like about the school or that could be better in the school?

- No

Nothing at all?

- No

We're here to talk to you about some changes Powys County Council might make to Llanbedr school. The Council always has to review the schools in the county to make sure that we have the best education in the County now and in the future. We always have to review different schools, and we're wondering whether some things should change. At the moment Powys County Council is looking at Llanbedr school, and is wondering whether to close Llanbedr school, which would mean that you would have to go to a different school, instead of Llanbedr. We're here to find out what you think about that idea, and how that would affect you.

We're having a consultation where we're asking lots of people what they think – parents, staff, governors, but we especially want to know what you think as pupils of the school. No decision has yet been made and we need your views and to take that into consideration when deciding whether or not to carry on with that plan.

Does everybody understand why we are here to talk to you?

- Yes

We'll ask you some questions about what you think about the idea of there being no school in Llanbedr and how would that affect you – what might be bad for you and

what might be good for you. Then at the end you will be able to ask any other questions you have about the plans, and we'll answer as best we can.

What do you think about the Council's plan to close the school and how do you feel about that?

- I would be sad if the school is shut
- We do Welsh clubs so we would be 'trist' and 'crac'

What would be different for you if there was no school in Llanbedr? What would that mean to you?

- We would be sad

How many of you live in Llanbedr itself?

- Mostly everyone lives in Llanbedr, some across the road or just outside the village

If you had to go to a different school how would it affect you and your parents and your family, and what would be the changes if there was no school in Llanbedr? Would it be more difficult for you to go to school?

- It would be very sad and when we are sad our parents are sad, because they made some friends and before lockdown our parents would come over for bonfire night and there would be a stall outside the school to collect money

So it would have an impact on the school and the community?

- Yes

What do KS2 pupils think?

- It would affect our friendships as not all of us would go to the same school and we would be torn apart.

How would that make you feel?

- Very bad
- We wouldn't have the opportunities that we have here
- It would ruin the community

The school is very important to the community?

- Yes

What would be the big changes for you if there wasn't a school?

- We would have to leave early in the morning as we would have to go to a school further away
- Most of us can walk to the school now, but we wouldn't if going to another school

Are you worried about that?

- Yes

Would it have an impact on the community?

- Yes
- It would ruin it. The school is so important in the community

What would be the big changes for you if there was no school in Llanbedr?

- We would have to rush around in the morning, as we would have to travel further to different schools

Can everyone walk to the school at the moment?

- Yes – a lot of us

If you had to go to another school, you couldn't walk, you would have to go on buses or your parent would have to take you. Are you worried about that?

- Yes

Is there anybody that feels excited by going to a bigger school and meeting new people?

- No
- Not at all
- Have you ever thought about how it would affect our well being?

Yes, the Council is aware of pupil well-being, especially after this difficult Covid year. When pupils transfer to other schools, when schools close, the headteachers and staff of the school pupils would go to would work closely with you to ensure that any transition to a new school is done as well as possible and pupils are happy when they transfer. We're very keen if Llanbedr closed that that would happen, that you'd be looked after as you transfer to another school.

- But we won't be together anymore?

Are you worried about that? Do you think you need to be together? Is that important to you?

- Yes

So you are worried you won't be able to go to the same school?

- Yes

If Llanbedr school did close, and only if it did close, which school do you think you would go to?

- I wouldn't choose to go anywhere, I would stay in Llanbedr
- Llanbedr as I live across the road

If there wasn't a school in Llanbedr, where would your nearest school then be?

- Crickhowell
- Abergavenny
- Crickhowell

What else concerns you if there was no school in Llanbedr? What would it mean for the community if there was no school in Llanbedr?

- There would be no Eisteddfod which would mean that people wouldn't be able to come and see us, and people like to come to see the Eisteddfod
- People couldn't wave to us as they pass the school
- The church warden wouldn't visit any more

So you're a very visible part of the community?

- Yes

We have some questions for you.

Why did you choose our school to be closed?

The Council has to look after around 90 schools, and from time to time we have to look at how many schools we have. We were worried that Llanbedr school has low pupil numbers and is a small school. We are looking at a number of small schools at the moment. There are also other factors as well, such as the higher cost for pupils in smaller schools. We are looking at Llanbedr, but we are looking at a number of other schools as well.

You've got our numbers wrong – we have more pupils than you have said.

The numbers in our document are based on last year's information. We know that your pupil numbers have increased and you have over 50 pupils at the moment. When we bring back the report to the people in the Council that make the decision we will make sure that the figures are updated.

I live near the school. Will my friends go to the same school and how will I get there?

It would depend where parents would choose for their children to go to if Llanbedr closes and that would be a decision for each individual family. Until a decision is made about closing the school or not, we wouldn't know where your friends would go until the school closes.

As to how you would get there, then if you live 2 miles away from another school, the Council would give you free transport to the school. It could be a bus, minibus, taxi.

When did the people from Powys last visit our school?

It was probably me, Sian, who came to the school last, when I borrowed something from the school and had a chat with your headteacher. I come to the school at least three times a year, and sometimes a bit more if I have to see the governors.

But when did you last come?

The last time I came on a proper visit was before COVID, so I guess it was in the autumn term of 2019.

The Council wants to make sure that the councillors that make the decision come to visit the school before making a decision. We will arrange that, probably during the summer holidays because of COVID.

If only you have been here, why didn't you tell us anything was wrong and how can the other members of Powys close it if they haven't even been here?

What we do in the Council is that we look at all the information for the school, things like pupil numbers, standards of teaching and learning in the school and we put all the information in a document and the councillors will consider that before making a decision. But as I said the councillors will be coming out to see Llanbedr school before the next decision is made.

Why do you want to close our school as we haven't done anything wrong?

No, you haven't done anything wrong. But the Council has to look at all its schools and we have 90 schools to manage and we are worried that we have

too many small schools. We want people's views on our plan to close the school. That doesn't mean that it will definitely happen. We will bring back what people have told us to the Councillors and they can read what's been said before making a decision.

Life is supposed to be a gift. If you close our school have you thought about how that will make us feel sad?

It's important that you tell us how you feel, and we can then tell the Councillors that you are feeling very sad about the plan. That will come out very clearly in the information that we give back to the Councillors.

Is money more important than my well-being?

No, what's really important is that you get a good quality education. That's the no.1 priority for the Council. We have to look at how many schools we have to make sure that pupils in the future have access to good quality education. I know you get good quality education in Llanbedr as we speak, but the Council has to look at everything, not just Llanbedr on its own.

When you were asked, you said you were looking at small schools because they cost money.

It's one of the factors. We have to look at how many pupils you have, how many pupils will be coming to the school in the future, how many classes you have and the standards. One of the issues with small schools is that there is a higher cost per pupil. So it is a factor, but it is one factor of a range of factors.

We may be small but why aren't you supporting us?

We support all the schools, be they large, small or medium. At this point we're only asking people about their views about the plans. The decision to close the school has not been made yet. We will be working with the school and supporting the school, whatever happens to Llanbedr.

How is trying to close our school supporting pupils in any way?

We have to think about the future. How many schools we have, the impact on the curriculum, what opportunities can be provided. It might not feel to you now that you are getting support, but the Council has to consider how many schools it has and its plans for the future, but we recognise that at the moment it is a difficult time for you.

Can you explain that better to the younger ones so that they can understand?

What we're saying is that we're supporting you and understand that it is a very difficult time for you, but the Council has to look at all its schools and make plans for the future. Did you understand that?

- Yes

Every child has a certain amount of money for their education and you need a certain amount of money for each year, and a certain amount of pupils to be able to afford all the people you need – headteacher, teachers, canteen staff, teaching assistants. You need classes to be of a certain size for schools to be able to afford all of the things that they need. It is very hard, but if the local authority can put their money into a school which has all the things you say that you want and all the teachers you want, they would be able to do that in fewer schools than we have now. Does that make sense?

- Yes
- But we have less teachers in our school.

Yes, you are right, you have less, but they cost more than if you were in a larger school. For example for one pupil in yr 6, it might cost for example £10,000 for that pupil in Llanbedr, but say that pupil went to a larger school, it might only cost £2,000. And in the High School the cost might be £3,000. Does that make sense?

- Yes
- What will happen to the pond, the tadpoles, the flowers and the trees?

The school is a Church in Wales school, so the school is owned by the Church in Wales, the organisation that looks after churches, so it would be up to them to decide what to do with the school and the grounds, if Llanbedr did close. Is that clear?

- Yes
- Money is just pieces of metal. Do you want to break our friendships over pieces of metal?

Unfortunately, money is purchasing power, and sometimes we have to pool our money together. For example if you were planning to have an exciting holiday rather than a picnic in the back garden. It is not an easy decision. I could give you an example from Caerphilly, which decided that schools less than 200 pupils were too small, and schools had to join together to become very large schools of 400-500. In Powys our larger schools will still be relatively small and friendly and close. They won't be that big.

- Why are you comparing us to Caerphilly?

I'm just trying to give you an example from what other local authorities do. This isn't a decision that has been made. It's a consultation process, so your comment about human beings not being metal will be mentioned as part of the consultation. Your voices will be heard.

- What is the problem with the small schools?

As we have said there are a number of factors that mean that some schools are not viable. We haven't got the money to keep very small schools open. Schools need facilities, the age of the building and a lot of things have to be considered, but every small school can't be kept open in the future, in the long term.

- Why do you want to make us sad?

Nobody wants to make you sad. It is a difficult process to go through and it's about looking at the future of education for pupils. I'm hoping that you're not feeling too sad.

- Closing the school would make us 'trist'

It's important that what is said is passed on to the Council, so we'll put all the views of everybody together in a big report that goes back to the Councillors.

Have you heard of the Council's Cabinet, the word 'Cabinet'?

- Some have

The Council's Cabinet is a committee, like the school council, a committee of councillors who look after everything in the Council. They are the people that will make the decision about Llanbedr. It's therefore really really important that you let us know your views, that it's making you sad and your concerns. We will put that in a big report, and they can read it before making their decision.

- Do we get to see the report?

Yes. It will be a public report. Everybody will be able to see it.

- Will we be able to see it before it goes out? Can't we see it before it goes public?

No, we have to publish it on a set date. We have to follow the law. But we will have notes of this meeting which we will send to you to check. The notes of this meeting will be sent as a draft for you to check that you are happy with them. The notes are then published as part of the paperwork, that goes to the

Cabinet, so that the words that you are telling us now will be able to be seen by the Cabinet.

The consultation period, where we are asking everyone what they think, ends on 23 June. Once the consultation has finished, we will start working on a report and some other steps will need to happen before a final decision is made to close the school, if that is what the Council decides to do.

When we publish the consultation report, the Cabinet will have to look at the report and decide whether they want to carry on with closing Llanbedr school or not. If they do want to carry on, we will have to publish what's called a 'Statutory Notice' which is like a poster to tell everybody that the Council intends to close the school, and there would be a further 28 day objection period for people to let us know if they don't agree.

We would then have to do another report saying what people have said during the objection period, which would go back to the Cabinet for Cabinet to make a final decision. It's quite a long process, and we're still in the early stages. No definite decision has been made. We're just asking what people think of this idea at the moment.

Thank you for all your comments today. If there is anything else we haven't covered or anything else you would like to say, you can still send them through to us before the 23rd June, so by next Wednesday.

- I have got some more questions.

If there is anything else you want to add you can send them on to us.

How many more questions have you got?

- Some of us have not asked one question yet.
- Do you really need to close Llanbedr school?

As we've said we have to look at small schools and we are looking at a number of small schools as we have explained before. But as we have said we are looking at it now, but no decision has been made. We're hearing what people think and have to say about the proposal.

- What will you gain from closing the school?

We have a lot of schools we have to look after. It would mean that pupils would be able to have good quality education and opportunities in other schools in the future.

- We've already suffered two lockdowns, please don't make us suffer any more. Tell me how you are thinking about the children at the school.

You should be supported by the school and your families. I know that it is a difficult time, but you are supported through your school.

- When children move to bigger schools they don't always get the education that they need. How can you make sure everyone has what they need as happens here?

When schools close and pupils have to transfer to other schools, the other schools work very closely with the pupils and parents to make sure that the transfer to the new school is a happy one. Bigger schools have bigger opportunities and good quality education in your area. So it would be the same for you or even better if that did happen, and we think that the education would be the same for you and perhaps even better if that happened.

- Please don't close our school.

We hear what you are saying and we will take it back to the Councillors who will make the decision.

- It would be hard for our mums to find new schools. What would you do to help?

There is a lot of information that the Council has about all the schools in the County, as well as schools outside Powys, and that information is available to parents to look at – standards in schools, the classes they have, and we would be able to support parents to make sure that they would be able to find that information.

- Aren't you supposed to be helping schools?

Yes we have a team who work and support schools all the time.

- So why aren't you helping us then?

Support comes in different ways. I support the Headteacher and the teachers in looking after the well being of pupils and staff and the leadership and the management of the schools, and help them look at the priorities for learning, and to make sure that you have the right resources. That support will continue, and that support will be there in whatever school you go to.

It's different to the support in keeping the school open. All of us here from Powys are here to listen to what you have to say, which we will take back to

the decision makers. All the decision makers will be informed by all the information that we have on the school and your views.

- When we are sad, our mum and dad and grandparents are sad. What are you going to do to make us feel happy?

Because we are now in the middle of this phase where we are listening to what people have to say, our job is to make sure that people can tell us their views honestly and we can then make sure that those views are heard by the Cabinet. So our job is to make sure that your parents, grandparents and you have the opportunity to tell the Council what you think about the plans. We have to ensure that process is carried out correctly and giving everyone a chance.

- That's the end of our questions.

Pupils were thanked for their attendance at the meeting and their honest views.

Pupils were reminded once again that they had until 23 June to submit any further comments or questions as part of the consultation process, either directly by email or with the help of their teachers.

A meeting with the School Council of Llanbedr Church in Wales School

23rd June 2021 – Held virtually on Microsoft Teams

Present: Marianne Evans, Sarah Astley, Sian Fielding, Anwen Orrells, Huw Rowlands – Powys County Council

Officers from Powys County Council met virtually via Microsoft Teams with representatives from the School Council of Llanbedr C in W School to discuss the consultation to close Llanbedr C in W School with pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools.

This was a follow up meeting from the one held on 17th June 2021.

The School Council group consisted of the same pupils as that of the meeting of 17th June 2021, being 4 Foundation Phase pupils and 7 pupils from Key Stage 2. No teachers were present.

It was explained that if any of the pupils needed a break during the meeting, then they could say so, and the meeting could be paused at any time.

The meeting was handed over to the pupils.

One of the pupils asked if the meeting would be minuted and when will any minutes be sent out, stating that minutes from the previous meeting had not yet been sent out.

It was explained that minutes from the meeting on the 17th June would be sent out after this meeting, and minutes of this meeting would be sent out by the end of the week.

The meeting commenced with one of the pupils reciting a short Prayer.

We asked for a child friendly document which you did not provide. How can we have a meaningful consultation with you if we don't understand the document you provided? The previous meeting was very difficult to understand as you used very big words and we were rushed. You said in the last meeting that the cost for educating each pupil in Llanbedr was £10,000 but my mother says that in the consultation document it is £5,948, which is a very big difference.

We've used the same child version of the document in other consultations. The document is only one part of the consultation process. The other part is us coming to talk and explain to you the plans and hear what you think about them. That's why we didn't change the document as it is the same one that has been used and we've already used that many many times.

The figure of £10,000 was used as an example, not referring to the exact actual amount. The figure in the consultation document is the correct one. £10,0000 was just used as an example to explain how the funding for schools works.

My parents chose Llanbedr school for me. Why are you telling them they might have to choose somewhere else?

The Council has to look after some 90 schools – which is a lot. We always have to look at schools and pupil numbers, standards, how well the schools are doing, costs, whether they have headteachers or not. The Council is concerned or worried about Llanbedr in particular because of the low number of pupils in the school, and that's why we are here to hear what you have to say about it.

We're nearly full.

Yes, you're nearly full because you are a small school anyway. You haven't got a large building or a lot of empty classrooms. The Welsh Government says that all schools below 91 are small schools, so we are looking at all the schools below 91 pupils. In that context Llanbedr is a small school.

Do you understand that?

Yes. But our standards are very good here and we're happy.

Standards are good, it is a very good school. Teaching and learning and leadership are all good. This aspect is a different feature of the plan to look at the size of schools, and even though you are right, and standards are good, you enjoy school and you do have a good education, but sometimes in a small school there's no chance to do extra elements like sport, school trips, and outdoor activities if there were more children in your school.

But we're going on a trip next week. We have more chances than my friends.

Your friends in other schools? That's really important information for us to make a note of.

We are going to a theme park.

Llanbedr is a Church school. How can Powys make sure that we can go to our nearest Church school?

Llanbedr is a Church school and Llangatock is a Church school, but Crickhowell is not, nor is Llangynidr. So the choice of Church school if Llanbedr school would close would be Llangatock, but the Council knows that Llangatock doesn't have enough spaces for all the children in Llanbedr, so if there was no room in Llangatock, it would be a choice for your parents whether they wanted to choose another Church

school. We know that there isn't another one close by. The next one is Brecon which is far away, or Llangorse, or outside of Powys.

However, there are plenty of spaces in other schools in the Crickhowell area, but we do know that there is not enough space for everybody in Llangattock.

What do you like or what's different about Llanbedr school because it is a Church school?

It means that we can do concerts and lots of different things in the Church and the community always comes to watch and support us.

I chose a Church school. It's important to me.

That's really important as we have to take what you say back to the Council's Cabinet – that is the Committee that makes the final decision on this matter. They need to know that being in a Church school is important to you.

Do you think this is a good time to think about closing schools? We have already missed lots of school, learning and our friends for a year. Do you think of our well-being and if so what have you done to us so far?

We know it's been a very difficult time for you, and we know that this plan for closing the school is probably very worrying to you as well. In terms of well-being, from my perspective, as I said on Thursday, I need to make sure that you have the chance to put forward your views about this plan to the Council and make sure that your voices are heard. In terms of your well-being that is my job and I hope that this gives you the opportunity to make your voices heard.

The school, your teachers and headteacher are very clever and have put a lot of well-being activities in the school day, such as the school trip and outdoor classroom.

I do know from my recent visit that you have worry monsters around the school where you can tell the worry monsters how you feel, which helps a lot of pupils. Timing is always very difficult. Part of these well-being activities the school is doing with you is to help you cope with change, as change does happen, in school and outside school. Llanbedr and all schools in the Crickhowell cluster have been doing lots of well-being activities.

Why are Powys leaving it to our teachers. We feel very sad. What are you doing to comfort us?

The answer is that your teachers are doing a lot, and maybe you're not aware of all the things they are doing, the teachers have training and courses to help them as well. We can also go on courses to help our worry and anxiety too.

Your teachers know you best, so they know what's right for you, but your question is about what we have done. I can say that we as an authority have things in place to help your teachers to help you. My boss Lynette has sent an important message to schools today to give them ideas about how to help schools and children, to make sure that you are looked after and that your well-being is a top priority. That is at the top of the list. So, our job is to help your teachers help you.

Does that make sense?

Our teachers are fantastic and help us when we are stuck on maths or something.

If you close our school, what will our teachers do?

If the school did close, we have a team in Powys who look after people and jobs, and they would be looking after your teachers to ensure that what the teachers wanted to do could happen. For example, they would have discussions with your teachers and see what the teachers would want to do in the future, whether they wanted to carry on teaching somewhere else, or whether they wanted to take a different job, or stop working. They would work very very closely with them, and it would be up to that team to make sure that the needs of the teachers would be met.

They will be very sad.

Yes, people do get sad when there are changes. That's why we will help people to make sure that they make the best decisions and the choices that suit them.

Some of our teachers live further away and have schools closer to them, but they choose to drive further to come to a school they like to go to.

Yes, if the school was to close, discussions would take place to see what their options were. What they wanted to do in the future. We don't want to lose good teachers or teaching assistants. We would want to make sure that everybody's needs were met.

Does Powys think that they know what's best for us, our parents and teachers, when they haven't even met us?

We're in the middle of this consultation, which is a time when we listen to what people have to say. We have met with your teachers and governors, and we met with you last week and now, and we have published information, and we want to hear back from your parents, families and anybody in the community of Llanbedr. They can write to us, fill in the forms online, email us and then we can understand exactly what your parents, families and your community think about the plan. We've already had an enormous amount of letters and forms and a petition as well. We will

look at what your families say, what you say, what the community says, in detail and putting all that has been said into a big report that will go back to the Cabinet – the committee that makes the decision.

The forms were very hard to fill in.

Were they? Why were they hard to fill in?

It took ages to try and answer the questions, because we didn't know what they meant.

We'll have to have a look at that.

There were some words and things in there that our year 3 didn't understand.

Sometimes these forms are difficult because the language is a little different to that you normally use, but your parents and teachers can help you fill in the forms and explain things to you.

Why are you thinking of upsetting our education when we love learning at Llanbedr? You can't promise that we will have the same opportunities, fun and friendship somewhere else? Why are you taking the risk with our education and well-being?

The Council has to look at the whole of the County and how many schools it has, how many small schools it has, and whether there are different or better ways of providing education in an area. The fact that you love Llanbedr is coming through very very strongly and the fact that you love learning, and that says a lot about Llanbedr school.

What do you think about this?

We're hearing your views very strongly about Llanbedr school. We'll take that forward and your views will be included in the reports and considered as we move forward.

Can Powys think of other ways of raising or saving money?

It's not about saving money. It's about looking at everything, the pupil numbers, how many pupils will come into the school in the future, looking at the building, the standards. It's not about saving money; it's about making sure that in terms of pupils in the future that Powys can offer a good education for everybody.

In the last meeting you mentioned the costs. There's lots of other ways you can save money without closing the school.

We have saved money by having a sponsored cycle ride, we're thinking of a sponsored ride on horses across the mountain, and having lots of stands across Powys to sell things.

Fundraising events like that do raise money and can be very successful, and normally they allow schools to buy additional resources, books and games and to pay to go on trips, but very rarely will they raise enough money to do huge things for a long period of time. We're not looking necessarily just about the next term or the next year, we are looking at the next 25 years. It's a long-term plan for the future.

Most people think small schools are wonderful. What evidence does Powys have that bigger schools are better?

The standards in the school don't really link to the size of the school. It's about how well the teaching and learning happen in the school. We have large schools that are good and large schools that are not quite as good, and we have medium sized schools that are good and medium sized schools that need to improve, and we have small schools that are good and small schools that need to improve as well.

It all depends on the children and the staff, and every school is slightly different, but every school will get the appropriate support. Sometimes a larger school have more extensive grounds, a larger number of classroom bases, so new children can join the school easily because of the accommodation and there are usually more facilities or up to date things available in those schools.

We think that if you are in a larger school there are more opportunities to be part of different things, but we hear what you say, that you have the same amount of opportunities in Llanbedr as in a larger school, but in general the Council thinks, there are more opportunities in a larger school, because you are part of a larger group of children. You have larger year groups, so you are mixing more with the same age groups, and we think that's a better thing.

But you wouldn't have opportunities to have an iPad and MacBook in a bigger school. Here we have those from class 3 until high school, and I use my MacBook now.

All schools would have the same level of IT equipment. It can vary, but all schools are looking to do the same thing.

Bigger classes mean less time with teachers.

I don't think that's completely true. Even in larger classes, the teacher has to make sure that every child has the same opportunities, the same level of teaching and learning.

Even in Llanbedr, the actual number of children in each class can be quite large. For example, last year there was at least 25/26 in one class, but your teacher manages

to support the different learning groups and ages very well. Most schools have teaching assistants as well, which you have.

In our school, in class 3 we have a variety of years, some children in yr 4 sometimes do yr 6 work.

Wherever you are, the teacher will make sure that every child does the very best they can. So, if your friend is the same age, they will make sure that every child in the class works to the best of their ability. That's what teachers do well.

But if we were in a bigger school, you would have your age groups, for example if you were in yr 4 work you would be doing yr 4 work, not being in yr 4 and doing yr 6 work, ready for high school.

I see your point, but actually teachers provide the right work to match the abilities and the needs of a pupil, so even if they are in yr 4, if they are doing work needed to catch up with the foundation phase, or if they need to be stretched to make sure that they can work at a higher level for the high school that happens. That's one of the jobs of school improvement people who go in and check that in schools. We can ensure you that the needs of pupils will be met, even if pupils are in a class of the same ages.

Are you all OK – do you need a break or are you happy to carry on? Is the smaller class OK? How many questions do you have left?

There are 7 questions left.

The next few questions are questions we asked in the last meeting but don't think you answered very well.

Why aren't you supporting us?

So, the question is why aren't we supporting the school? My job is to make sure that this plan that we are discussing at the moment allows you the opportunity to have your voices heard. In terms of supporting the school, some of us work very closely with the school and headteacher to provide support to the school. We always support schools, pupils, teachers and governors when there is any change. We give you support through the teachers that know you best. The worry monsters is a very good idea – a worry shared is a worry solved.

The support is around you all the time, even though you can't maybe see it, and everybody helps each other when there's change, and that's when we are now doing a lot of exercises in school to build things back and to help coping with change generally in life.

The next question is one which you said in our last meeting was a good question, but you didn't answer it.

Money is just pieces of metal. Do you want to break our friendship over pieces of metal?

It's about breaking friendship groups?

Yes

That's not the purpose of what we are doing at all. We want to make sure that pupils in future can have good education. However, we do know and understand if a school closes, and again we don't know yet if the school will close, your parents will have to make difficult decision as to which school you go to, and maybe you won't all be going to the same schools in the future. We know that you are a Church school, and we know that if the school closes we know that there aren't enough spaces in Llangattock for you all to go together. So, we're not trying to break friendship groups, but trying to look at the whole of education across Powys and plan for the future.

You may not be aiming to break friendships but that's what you are doing.

That's an important point, because if our plans means that you are really really worried that our plans will break friendship groups, that's a really really important point to come back to the Cabinet so that they can understand that fully.

But if the school was to close our best friends would go to a different school and we wouldn't see each other ever again.

I know that what I say won't solve your concerns immediately, but all the schools in the Crickhowell area, Llanbedr, Llangynidr, Crickhowell and Llangattock, regularly meet together and regularly have joint events. There's lots of visits to the high school and those transition meetings always look at friendships and how you can build new friendships in new places and where there is new change, so staff will be helping you to make new friends and keep new friends when you meet again in the high school.

But some of my friends will be going to schools outside the county. You said to go to the nearest school, and their nearest school is not in Powys.

It would depend on which high school they would choose. We can't predict which school a parent would choose for you if the school closes. But we hear very very clearly what you have to say about it, and that's the important thing and we need to hear what you have to say.

Do you really need to close Llanbedr school?

The Council has to look after 90 odd schools, and we always have to look at schools with low pupil numbers and see if there are any different ways that we can offer education in different areas. At the moment no decision has been made, the only decisions made is to see what people think about the plans, so it's very important that you tell us what you think. That will then have an impact on the next decision. The next decision is very important because that's when the Councillors on the Cabinet will read everything everybody has said about the plan and then decide whether to carry on and close Llanbedr or to put everything on stop and keep Llanbedr.

Why do you want to close our school because we have everything here?

Again, we have to look at the whole of the County and how many schools we have and look at schools with low pupil numbers and the Council thinks that if you are in a larger school you will have more opportunities and better opportunities to learn with your year groups.

You've got lots and lots of brilliant things in Llanbedr, MacBooks and lovely resources, but if, and it's a big if, because we are finding out what you think, in a larger school there would be even more resources, even more facilities and even more things available for pupils to make sure that they have everything they need to help their learning.

But we don't want any more we've got everything we need here.

That will be noted in the minutes and will go to the decision makers. You need to remember no decision has been made. That is why we are talking to you, to hear your opinions. What you are saying today is very important and we will take that back to the people that make the decision. So, it is really useful to hear your voice today.

When children move to larger schools they don't always get the help and education that they need. This could affect them in different ways. What do you think about this? How can you ensure that everyone has everything they need like they do here?

Teachers do that all the time. At the end of each year, or when pupils transfer to other schools at any time, they pass on what they call pupil information and all that information that they hold about what progress they have made and any particular needs, and all of you in Llanbedr have got a one page pupil profile about how best you learn, so all that information will not be lost and will be handed on to new teachers, or the teachers that will be working with you.

You could save money by giving less pay to people who want to close our school.

So, you're saying that we could save money by paying the Council people less? I hear that, and that we will take back. That may happen – who knows?

What will you gain from closing the school? Aren't you supposed to be helping schools?

A lot of help is provided to schools on an ongoing basis. Our role is to make sure that the process we are going through at the moment is carried out properly and that you have the opportunity to give us your views as we are doing now.

One of the support mechanisms and activities that pupils, staff, and governors have is how we manage change and how we cope with change and changes that will happen. People in our work, some of those people are deciding to have different jobs so there has been a reorganisation of jobs there and all of that is being looked at so we are all looking at having people cope with change. That's the type of support people have been having at the moment.

We have had a lengthy lockdown. Please don't make us suffer any more. Please tell me how you are going to help the children in the school.

Yes, it's been a tough year and a half, and it's been difficult for everybody – for you and your teachers, everybody in your community, so in terms of supporting the school we have mentioned that quite a bit. We are looking after your teachers and staff so that they can look after you.

That was the last of our questions.

Pupils were thanked for their attendance at the meeting and told that minutes of both of the meetings would be sent to them.

Pupils were reminded that this was the last day of the consultation and for receiving responses as part of the consultation. As well as the form, they were told that they could send any comments by email if they didn't want to use the form.

Would you like to be split up from your friends, and what would you think if Powys was thinking of doing this to you?

No, I don't think I would like to be split up from my friends. I don't think that anybody would like to be split up from their friends, but this is something the Council has to do. Every Council has to look at their schools. You've made it very very clear that splitting from your friends is worrying for you, and we'll make sure that is in the report as well.

Pupil voice in Llanbedr is strong. And your voice and your views and those points that have been raised will be minuted, and you've had two hour long meetings, and made sure your questions had been asked and asked again for clarity, so thank you.

You've been very clear, and you have got a powerful voice in the school, and your time is appreciated and also your preparation for today.

Before we go, just to make sure that the minutes are correct, could you let us know who is in the room with you as we saw somebody's thumb on the screen. Have you got a teacher or somebody else in the room?

No

We saw a thumb on the screen and if there. If there anybody else there let us know and we will put their name in the minutes?

There's nobody else in the room.

Pupils were thanked again, and it was said that the Cabinet want to visit Llanbedr school to see the school before making their decision.

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol



Proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School

Updated Impact Assessments

Updated October 2021

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Proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School

Impact Assessments

1. Introduction

Powys County Council has consulted on a proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

In line with the Council's policy, an Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out which incorporates the Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management.

In addition, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) requires local authorities to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment in relation to all school reorganisation proposals. For proposals which affect teaching through the medium of Welsh, local authorities are also required to carry out a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

These impact assessments were provided in draft form during the consultation period and have been updated following the consultation. The Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out based on the latest PLASC information available. The Community Impact Assessment has been carried out with input from the affected school.

2. Integrated Impact Assessment

The Impact Assessment (IA) below incorporates Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management, supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

Service Area	Schools Service	Head of Service	Emma Palmer/Lynette Lovell	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Phyl Davies
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Proposal
To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

Outline Summary / Description of Proposal
In February 2021, the Council’s Cabinet approved carrying out consultation on the following proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

1. Version Control (services should consider the impact assessment early in the development process and continually evaluate)

Version	Author	Date
1	Transforming Education Programme Officer	January 2021
2	Service Manager Schools Transformation	January 2021
3	Service Manager Schools Transformation	November 2021

2. Profile of savings delivery (if applicable)

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL

£	£	£58,975	£42,125	£	£101,000
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3. Consultation requirements

Consultation Requirement	Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation
Public consultation required	Consultation was carried out on the proposal to close Llanbedr CiW Primary School in accordance with the requirement of the School Organisation Code.

4. Impact on Other Service Areas

Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health & Safety and Corporate Parenting?) PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY	
Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Highways, Transportation and Recycling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing and Community Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal and Democratic Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Property, Planning and Public Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transformation and Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce and OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data Protection Impact Assessment	

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Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ✓ No

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ✓ No

If you have answered yes to either of the above you will be required to complete, as a minimum, the screening questions on the data protection impact assessment.

For further advice please contact the Data Compliance Team.

4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)

Powys

North

Mid

South

Brecon

Builth and Llanwrtyd

Crickhowell

Hay and Talgarth

Knighton and Presteigne

Llandrindod and Rhayader

Llanfair Caereinion

Llanfyllin

Llanidloes

Machynlleth

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Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How does your proposal impact on Vision 2025?

Council's Well-being Objective	How does the proposal impact on this Well-being Objective?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
The Economy We will develop a vibrant economy	<p>Implementation of the proposal would have an impact on employment opportunities in Llanbedr as there would no longer be a school in the village.</p> <p>It is also possible that closure of the school and possible loss of families from Llanbedr could impact on local businesses in Llanbedr and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area.</p> <p>Comments received during consultation suggested that the loss of a school in the village of Llanbedr would have a negative impact on parents for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is their nearest school. In particular, concerns were raised about parents needing to access early years provision elsewhere in the</p>	<p>Poor</p>		<p>Poor</p>

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	cluster and having to travel further to ensure access to extra-curricular activities/after-school clubs, and that this would have a financial impact on these families. However, the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School live closer to other schools which should be more convenient for them to access provision if they chose to attend their nearest school.			
Health and Care We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment	No impact	Neutral		
Learning and skills We will strengthen learning and skills	As stated in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-30, the Council faces a challenge due to the high proportion of small schools in the county and the lack of equity amongst schools. Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School teaches children in three classes of mixed aged groups. With such low pupil numbers, the teacher-pupil ratio is notably different to many other schools in the area, and due to the Council's funding formula, the school's funding per pupil is higher than the Council's average. This does not provide equity across the education system - teachers in larger schools are required to provide the same education as smaller schools for less funding per pupil. Powys' Strategy is intended to improve equity across the education system and to ensure an improvement for every pupil's learning entitlement and experience.	Good		

	<p>It is the Council’s view, as confirmed by its education specialists, that delivering the new curriculum will be significantly more challenging and place greater demands on teachers in very small schools. This does not mean that it would be impossible to deliver the curriculum in these schools, but it is clear that the skills required by teachers will need to be very wide ranging to support the full and effective fulfilment of the curriculum’s high ambitions.</p> <p>Implementation of this option would mean that pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, the closest alternative school would be Crickhowell C.P. School, however some pupils would live closer to other schools, including Llangattock C. in W. Primary School, Llangynidr C.P. School and two out of county schools – Deri View C.P. School and Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P. School in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School was in the green support category based on the 2019 categorisations. All the other alternative Powys schools were also identified as green schools, therefore the Council has no concerns in relation to quality and standards at any of these schools, and the Council’s view is that provision for pupils would be at least equivalent to the current provision. The overall aim of the proposal is to improve learning opportunities for pupils.</p>			
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	<p>Deri View C.P. School in Abergavenny, however, had an amber rating as part of the National Categorisation in 2019. This school is the closest alternative school for 13.5% of pupils.</p> <p>Monmouthshire County Council, however, are currently reorganising schools in Abergavenny and have consulted on a proposal to establish a new 3 – 18 school in the town, which would include Deri View C.P. School.</p> <p>Concerns were raised during the consultation period that the quality of provision in the alternative schools would not be as good as the quality of provision at Llanbedr C. in W.. Primary School. The Council is of the view that all the alternative schools are self-improving schools and provide education to a standard that is equitable. Estyn’s response to the consultation stated that ‘The proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.’</p>			
<p>Residents and Communities</p> <p>We will support our residents and communities</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any community facilities or activities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building’s future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would be continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>

	<p>requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the loss of nursery provision from the area and parents would need to access early years provision elsewhere in the cluster. Transport to these alternative early years providers was raised as an issue for those not able to access their own transport, as there is no public transport in the area.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concern about the impact on the community • The school is the heart of the community • Reference to other community activities/organisations • Closure of the school that people would not want to live in Llanbedr • Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school • Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close • Comments relating to community wellbeing • Other comments/queries <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.</p>			
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

Consultation responses

6. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p>A prosperous Wales:</p> <p>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and proportionately across Powys schools, ensuring better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Should Llanbedr C. in W. School close, all the alternative schools are prepared to deliver the new, innovative curriculum for Wales from September 2022. This should lead to developing a skilled and well-educated population.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		
<p>A resilient Wales:</p> <p>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School for whom this is their closest school. Additional home-to-school transport would be required. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to</p>	<p>Poor</p>		

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	<p>transport pupils to their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Currently, a high proportion of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are transported by private arrangement as the school is not their closest school. This means that additional transport is currently being used to transport pupils to the school, which would not be required if pupils transferred to their nearest alternative schools.</p>			
<p>A healthier Wales:</p> <p>A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p> <p>Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017:</p> <p>Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, with pupils transferring to alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.</p> <p>A significant number of comments were received during the consultation about the impact on pupil well-being due to the consultation taking place during the current pandemic, creating an additional pressure on their well-being during a difficult time.</p>	Poor	<p>An experienced member of staff from the Council is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for pupils. The Council would also expect pupils to be fully supported by their teachers and other staff at the school during any period of uncertainty, to minimise the impact on their well-being.</p> <p>Support will be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. The receiving school would work closely with the closing school during the transition to identify and address areas of concern amongst pupils and families. The headteacher of the receiving school would be able to meet with families to discuss concerns, and there would be opportunities for families to visit the receiving schools and meet teachers and other pupils.</p> <p>Process to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff and other stakeholders.</p>	Neutral

<p>A Wales of cohesive communities:</p> <p>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore there would be a potential loss of any community facilities or activities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the loss of nursery provision from the area and parents would need to access early years provision elsewhere in the cluster. Transport to these alternative early years providers was raised as an issue for those not able to access their own transport, as there is no public transport in the area.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concern about the impact on the community • The school is the heart of the community • Reference to other community activities/organisations • Closure of the school that people would not want to live in Llanbedr 	Very Poor	<p>As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>	Very Poor
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school • Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close • Comments relating to community wellbeing • Other comments/queries <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.</p>			
<p>A globally responsible Wales: A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> <p>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</p> <p>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.</p>	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>The Council has carried out consultation on the proposal, which included consultation with pupils affected by the proposal, ensuring that all affected by the plans have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	Neutral		

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	<p>Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>Comments were received during the consultation which suggested that pupils would not have access to the same opportunities to use Welsh in the alternative schools compared with their current experience at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. All the other alternative Powys schools are taking part in the Siarter Iaith initiative. Llanbedr and Llangattock C. in W. Schools are currently working towards the bronze award, and Crickhowell C.P School and Llangynidr C.P. School have already achieved the bronze award.</p>	Neutral		
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	<p>Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>See additional comments above.</p>	Neutral		

<p><i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i></p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. It is likely that pupils would transfer to larger schools, and it is anticipated that being part of a larger school would result in additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art and other extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>The comments received during the consultation period suggest that there a number of extra-curricular activities happening at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including Breakfast Club and after school clubs 5 days a week. The comments received also suggest that due to the size of the school, pupils have more oppourtunities to take part in extra-curricular activities and whole school activities than in larger schools. However, all the other alternative schools provide a range of extra-curricular activities. There is also the availability of extra-curricular activities within the Crickhowell catchment area which are delivered by other organisations.</p> <p>The Council has acknowledged that it may be difficult for some pupils to access after school activities due to reliance on home to school transport, however the alternative schools also have pupils that rely on home to school transport, and they are experienced in ensuring that all pupils are able to take part in activities.</p> <p>It must also be noted that 61% of pupils currently attending the school live closer to other schools</p>	Neutral		
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	and are therefore reliant on private transport arrangements to access after school activities – this suggests that parents would still be able to access these activities or clubs at alternative schools.			
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A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Llanbedr C.P School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities. Comments received during the consultation period expressed concern about the impact on pupils with ALN if they had to move to different schools. The Council's view is that pupils with	Neutral		

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	<p>additional learning needs would be fully supported at any of the alternative schools.</p> <p>There is very good support across the cluster schools in the Crickhowell area for pupils' wellbeing and for the support of pupils with SEN/ALN. All schools in the cluster have an experienced ALNCo and wellbeing champion who can provide support and guidance to pupils. In addition, all schools in the Crickhowell cluster have staff trained in adverse childhood experiences, trauma informed approaches and mental health first aid. As such, any pupils with emotional or additional learning needs will be very well supported at any of the schools in the Crickhowell cluster.</p>			
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	The proposal would impact on LGBTQ+ pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups due to their race. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		
<i>Religion or belief</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, regardless of their religion or belief.	Neutral	Whilst the Council's Home-to-School transport policy does not provide free transport to denominational schools specifically, it would be able to consider using its discretionary powers under the Learner Wales Travel Measure to provide transport – this	

	<p>Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is a church school. There is alternative Church in Wales provision available in the catchment at Llangattock C. in W. School for pupils wishing to continue to access denominational provision, however concerns were raised during the consultation period there are not sufficient places available at Llangattock C. in W. School for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School.</p> <p>The Council recognises that there are a limited number of places available at Llangattock C. in W. School and that there would not be sufficient places for all pupils attending Llanbedr CiW School. The number on roll at Llangattock in September 2021 is 103, and the capacity of the school is 121. There are places available for nursery-aged children at Little Sparks in Llangattock.</p> <p>Whilst not in the immediate area, there is also Church-in-Wales provision at Llantilio Pertholey VC School in Abergavenny (7 miles from Llanbedr), Llangors C. in W. Primary School (11 miles) and Priory C. in W. Primary School (16 miles). If parents were unable to access a place at Llangattock C. in W. School, they would be able to apply for places at these Church-in-Wales schools.</p> <p>Concern was also expressed during the consultation period that the Council's Home to School Transport Policy does not provide transport to denominational provision.</p>		<p>would only be available to pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School and consideration would be on a case-by-case basis.</p>	
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Sex	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.	Neutral		
Sexual Orientation	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		
Pregnancy and Maternity	No impact.	Neutral		
Socio-economic duty	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including any eligible for Free School Meals. PLASC 2020 information shows that 3 pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School were eligible for Free School Meals, and these pupils would continue to receive free school meals at any alternative school that they would transfer to.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Llanbedr. This would mean that pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School would need to travel to their nearest alternative provision. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	Poor		

	Comments received during the consultation suggested that the loss of a school in the village of Llanbedr would have a negative impact on parents for whom Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is their nearest school. In particular, concerns were raised about parents needing to access early years provision elsewhere in the cluster and having to travel further to ensure access to extra-curricular activities/after-school clubs, and that this would have a financial impact on these families. However, the majority of pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School live closer to other schools which should be more convenient for them to access provision if they chose to attend their nearest school.			
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Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements

Consultation responses

7. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
Long Term: Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise	Pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School are low and are not expected to increase	Good		

<i>the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</i>	significantly over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.			
Collaboration: <i>Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.</i>	Full consultation has been carried out, which gave all interested parties an opportunity to give their views. This included an opportunity to suggest any alternative solutions for the catchment.	Neutral		
Involvement (including Communication and Engagement): <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> Unpaid Carers: <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This provided an opportunity for all interested parties to give their views on the proposal. A Consultation Report has been prepared which outlines the issues raised in the consultation responses, and this will be considered by Cabinet when determining how to proceed. Concerns were raised during the consultation period about the consultation taking place during the pandemic, and that this meant that some members of the community were unable to give their views. However, a significant number of responses were received to the consultation which does not support this view.	Good		
Prevention: <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i> Safeguarding:	The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and proportionately across Powys schools, ensuring	Good		

<p><i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i></p>	<p>better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>All schools are required to have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.</p>			
<p>Integration: <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>No impact.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		
<p>Powys County Council Workforce:</p> <p>What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School as there would no longer be a school in Llanbedr, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process.</p> <p>Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process was supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR), and included a consultation meeting with staff, which ensured that they had an opportunity to give their views.</p> <p>A member of the HR team met with the staff informally at the start of the process.</p>	<p>Poor</p>		
<p>Payroll: How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils</p>	<p>Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		

Single Status Terms and Conditions?				
Welsh Language impact on staff	Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff.	Neutral		
Apprenticeships: Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		

Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements
Consultation responses

8. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

Communities	How does the proposal impact on residents and community?	<u>IMPACT</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> See impact definitions in guidance document	Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement
Llanbedr	There would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in the area, and therefore potential loss of any	Major	As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and	Major	

	<p>community facilities or activities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the loss of nursery provision from the area and parents would need to access early years provision elsewhere in the cluster. Transport to these alternative early years providers was raised as an issue for those not able to access their own transport, as there is no public transport in the area.</p> <p>Numerous concerns about the proposal's impact on the community were raised during the consultation, these included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concern about the impact on the community • The school is the heart of the community • Reference to other community activities/organisations • Closure of the school that people would not want to live in Llanbedr 		<p>therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr</p> <p>There is a village hall in Llanbedr which would be continue to be available. Community events could be held here.</p>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school • Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close • Comments relating to community wellbeing • Other comments/queries <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has also been updated to reflect comments made during the consultation.</p>				
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
Period of uncertainty for Llanbedr C. in W. School if a statutory process is carried out and implemented which might have a negative effect on standards at the school	Medium	The Council to provide advice and support to the school and governing body to ensure that standards and performance do not deteriorate during the transition period	Medium
Uncertainty for staff whilst the process is ongoing	Medium	Engagement with staff to take place throughout the process and staff to be kept informed of developments	Medium

Negative impact on pupils wellbeing which has already been affected due to the pandemic.	High	An experienced member of staff from the Council is supporting school leaders effectively to help them manage possible changes for pupils. The Council would also expect pupils to be fully supported by their teachers and other staff at the school during any period of uncertainty, to minimise the impact on their well-being.	Medium
Parents unable to access alternative Church-in-Wales school places	High	The nearest Church -in-Wales schools within Powys are Llangattock C. in W. Primary School, Llangors C. in W. Primary School and Priory C. in W. Primary School. Whilst the Council's Home-to-School transport policy does not provide free transport to denominational schools specifically, it would be able to consider using its discretionary powers under the Learner Wales Travel Measure to provide transport – this would only be available to pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School and consideration would be on a case-by-case basis.	Medium/High

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners. However, whilst this impact assessment has identified some positive aspects, in particular relating to learning and skills and ensuring the best strategic management of the Powys schools estate, the assessment has also identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the community of Llanbedr due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the associated additional travel requirements for pupils. Lack of access to sufficient Church in Wales school places is also noted as a negative issue, along with the impact on general well-being, particularly due to the consultation having taken place during the pandemic.

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Full consultation has been carried out on the proposal. The impact assessment has been updated to reflect the feedback received.

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?

The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.

Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.

This impact assessment will be reviewed at each stage of the process

13. Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Impact Assessment Lead:	Sarah Astley		
Head of Service:	Emma Palmer/Lynette Lovell		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Phyl Davies		

14. Governance

Decision to be made by	Cabinet	Date required	09/11/ 2021
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3. Equality Impact Assessment

Powys County Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



Proposal	To close Llanbedr C. in W. School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools
Service Area	Schools Service
Date of Assessment	November 2021
Lead Person undertaking the assessment	SA
Relevant Head of Service who has agreed this assessment	LL

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

1. AIM or PURPOSE

In February 2021, the Council's Cabinet approved carrying out consultation on the following proposal:

- To close Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School from the 31st August 2022, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

2. OBJECTIVES

Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.

The Council is proposing to close Llanbedr C. in W. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES

i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?

The benefits of the proposal are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council

- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Would reduce the Council's surplus places in primary schools
- Would lead to rationalisation of the primary school estate
- Financial saving to the Council

4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE

How does this change proposal relate to Vision 2025?

Learning and Skills is one of the four priorities outlined in Corporate Improvement Plan 2020-25: Vision 2025. Within this priority, the Plan includes a commitment to 'Improve our schools infrastructure'.

5. DATA USED

5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment?

Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.

Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	
Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	
Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics.	
Wider research reports and findings.	
Relevant service based Equality Impact Assessment.	

5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?

No ✓

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Quantitative

Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics.

Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.

Key questions:

- i)** Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?
- ii)** How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?

PLASC 2021

Based on the information provided in the school's PLASC return for 2021, the following pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School belong to the protected characteristic groups:

- Free school meals: 9.6% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals.
- ALN: 32.7% of pupils have special educational needs. Of these, 13.5% of pupils are on School Action, 17.3% of pupils are on School Action Plus and 1.9% of pupils have statements.
- Disabilities: 32.7% of pupils have additional learning needs.
- English as an Additional Language: 0% of pupils are identified as EAL pupils.
- Ethnicity: The ethnic group of 96.2% of pupils in the school is White British. 3.8% of pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British.
- Looked after Children: 0.0% of pupils are looked after.

This information shows that a proportion of pupils that belong to the protected characteristic groups will be affected by this proposal. In particular:

- 9.6% of pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is lower than the Powys average for primary schools (13.5%)
- 32.7% of pupils at Llanbedr C. in W. School have additional learning needs. This is higher than the Powys average for primary schools (19.2%)

	<p>The proposal to close Llanbedr C. in W. School would impact on all pupils currently attending the school, including those pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups.</p>
<p><u>6.2 Qualitative</u> Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns. Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <p>i) Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</p> <p>iii) What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</p> <p>iv) What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</p>	<p>Full consultation has been carried out on the proposal relating to Llanbedr C. in W. School, which included consultation with pupils at the affected school. This provided qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and any additional impact on pupils that belong to protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>The following comments were received about the proposal's potential impact on the protected characteristic groups:</p> <p>4. Impact on pupils with ALN</p> <p>5. Other comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on religion and belief as it is a Church in Wales School - Impact on military families attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School due to potential further disruption to their education. - Impact on LGBTQ+

7. EqIA RESULT

Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.

The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 10]	
The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality. [Proceed to question 8]	✓
The proposal presents significant impact on equality [Proceed to question 8]	

8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected? ii) Will people on low incomes be affected? iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) attending the school would be affected by the proposal. However, the proportion of pupils with ALN at the school is lower than the Powys average. Comments received during the consultation expressed concern about the impact on pupils with ALN if they had to move to different schools.</p> <p>The protected characteristic group of ‘religion and belief’ is also affected, as the school is a Church in Wales school. Although there are Church in Wales places available in the cluster at Llangattock C. in W. Primary School, these are not sufficient for all the pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Other Church in Wales schools are available in neighbouring catchment areas and out of county, but additional travel would be required to attend these schools. Whilst recognising that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School has a distinct Christian ethos, all schools are required to teach religious education.</p> <p>Comments were also received expressing concern about the proposal’s impact on military families who currently attend the school.</p>
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	<p>ii) 9.6% of pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is lower than the Powys average.</p> <p>Comments were received during the consultation period about the potential negative impact on low income parents/families if there was no nursery provision available in Llanbedr, and that they would have to travel further to access early years provision elsewhere in the cluster, which could have a financial impact on them. This was also an area of concern for parents/families who would have to travel further to access extra-curricular provision/after-school clubs.</p> <p>iii) Llanbedr C. in W. School is an English medium school - therefore the proposal will not directly affect Welsh speakers.</p>
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9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

<p>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?</p> <p>ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?</p>	<p>Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School, including any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend that school, as for those pupils for whom Llanbedr C. in W.. Primary School is currently the closest school, some additional travel would be required in order to attend their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the school, there is no reason to believe that the nearest alternative schools would be unable to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils belonging to Ethnic Groups other than White British, transgender pupils, pupils eligible for</p>
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<p>iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>Free School Meals and Looked After Children. The number of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School C.P. School is small.</p> <p>The protected characteristic group most affected by the proposal would be pupils with ALN. However, the Council's view is that pupils with additional learning needs would be fully supported at any of the alternative schools. There is very good support across the Crickhowell cluster for pupils with ALN.</p> <p>As Llanbedr C. in W. is a Church in Wales school, the protected characteristic of 'religion and belief' would also be affected by the proposal. There aren't sufficient alternative Church in Wales places in the cluster to provide places for all pupils that currently attend Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School. Whilst recognising that Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School has a distinct religious ethos, all schools are required to teach religious education, therefore should the Council proceed with the proposal to close the school, pupils would continue to be taught about religion at the alternative schools. The nearest alternative Church-in-Wales schools within Powys are Llangattock C. in W. Primary School, Llangors C. in W. Primary School and Priory C. in W. Primary School. Whilst the Council's Home-to-School transport policy does not provide free transport to denominational schools specifically, it would be able to consider using its discretionary powers under the Learner Wales Travel Measure to provide transport – this would only be available to pupils currently attending Llanbedr C. in W. School and consideration would be on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Concern has also been expressed about the potential disruption to military families currently attending the school. The Council recognises that all school reorganisation processes create a period of uncertainty for all families, and recognises that this could be increased in military families due to the nature of military life. Should Llanbedr C.P. School close, then all schools receiving pupils</p>
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	<p>as a result are expected to work with the closing school, the pupils and their families to provide full support to pupils to ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p>The proposal does not require modification to reduce or remove the impact on protected characteristic groups.</p>
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9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?

<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not: Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</p>
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6. Community Impact Assessment – Llanbedr C. in W. School

i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The closest provider for pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School in January 2020 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Llanbedr C. in W. School	48.8%
Crickhowell C.P. School	24.4%
Llangynidr C.P. School	14.6%
Llangattock C. in W. School	4.9%
Deri View Primary School (Out of County)	7.3%

This suggests that 48.8% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 51.2% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

Updated information – PLASC 2021

The closest provider for pupils attending Llanbedr C. in W. School on the PLASC counting date 2021 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Llanbedr C. in W. School	38.5%
Crickhowell C.P. School	28.8%
Llangynidr C.P. School	11.5%
Llangattock C. in W. School	9.6%
Deri View Primary School (Out of County)	9.6%
Llangors C. in W. School	1.9%

This suggests that 38.5% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 61.5% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school

The school provides the following after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities including the following:

- Puppet Club
- Welsh Club
- Art and Craft Club
- IT and Technology Club
- Gardening Club
- Cookery Club
- Dragon Sports Club
- Storytelling
- STEM Club
- Charity Club
- Show Ground Categories Club
- Recorder and Music Club
- Drama Club
- House Teams Challenges
- Mandarin
- School Council
- Eco Club
- Criw Cymraeg

Whilst some of these clubs are run by staff and governors, some are assisted by older pupils from Crickhowell High School. Many of the clubs are shared with the community. The gardens, ponds and vegetable plots are attended by community members in evening, holidays and during the school week.

iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

- Tots and Tiddlers Support Group
- Friends of the School and Community Group
- Raven Drama
- Puppet Soup Company
- Faith in Family

- Messy Church
- Family Film Club
- Breakfast Club
- A new library was opened in the school in 2018

iv) Other use by the community of the school building

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- Fell running
- Puppetry and Theatre Crafts Club
- Community Environmental projects
- Charity Bingo and Beetle Drive events
- Auction events
- Pond and garden development
- Vegetable plots and community engagement events

The school also acts a meeting hub for the three parishes of Llanbedr, Patricio and Llangenny which includes Lent lunches, Harvest festival and Easter which are prepared and served by the pupils.

v) Other links between the school and the community

- Community Annual Eisteddfod
- Community Harvest Festival
- Community Scarecrow Festival
- Christmas Fayre
- Easter Parade
- Summer Fayre
- Lantern Parade
- Christingle

The opportunities offered by the school for children in the community benefit the whole community. The school also has a highly effective Friends of the School group who work raising funds for the school, charity and community projects.

vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools and there would no longer be a school in Llanbedr.

It is acknowledged that there would be a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr, as there would be no provision in the village, and therefore a potential loss of community facilities associated with the school.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain available to the community in Llanbedr.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category

Should the proposal be implemented, Llanbedr C. in W. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative Powys schools would be Crickhowell C.P. School, Llangynidr C.P. School and Llangattock C. in W. School.

The closest alternative school for the pupils that were attending Llanbedr C. in W. School according to PLASC 2021 is as follows:

	Pupils' closest alternative school should there be no school in Llanbedr
Crickhowell C.P. School	61.5%
Deri View Primary School	13.5%
Llangynidr C.P School	11.5%
Llangattock C. in W. Primary School	9.6%
Llangors C. in W. School	1.9%
Llanvihangel Crucorney C.P School	1.9%

Travelling distances for all pupils attending Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School (PLASC 2021):

Current average travelling distance to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School	Average travelling distance to alternative provision, if there was no school in Llanbedr
3.3mi	2.4mi

Current maximum travelling distance to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School	Maximum travelling distance to alternative provision, if there was no school in Llanbedr
10.8mi	6mi

Travelling distances for pupils for whom Llanbedr C.i.W Primary School is their closest school:

Average travelling distance to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School	Average travelling distance to alternative provision, if there was no school in Llanbedr
1.56mi	2.7mi

Maximum travelling distance to Llanbedr C. in W. Primary School	Maximum travelling distance to alternative provision, if there was no school in Llanbedr
3.8mi	4.49mi

Home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport which is in operation at that time. Whilst free transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

viii) 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 eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues

- At present, public transport is not a requirement for pupils to attend school, as although some may live further than walking distance by road, there are many cross country and short cycle stretches that families use.
- Many families who attend the school are able to travel safely across the country routes within their journey from home to school. The school has an access gate from the yard to an adjoining field which avoids the roads and is better for the environment.
- If the school was to close, pupils would need transport to attend their alternative schools which would therefore not promote walking to school as there are no safe walking or safe cycle routes.

x) Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Llanbedr C. in W. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services and activities are provided by the school, including some facilities which could be attractive to families and which increase the attractiveness of the community to potential young families. It is also suggested that recent housing developments actively targeted this group due to the proximity with the school.

Should there be no school in Llanbedr, it is likely that there would be an impact on the other associated facilities available in the village, which could have an impact on families with school-age children, and which could encourage these families to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of services are provided in the school, and it is regularly used as a village meeting place. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

Information received from the school suggests that a wide range of events take place in the community events and activities take place in the school, as indicated in sections (iii), (iv) and (v) above.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

In addition, as a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

It is possible that the loss of the school, and subsequently the loss of families from Llanbedr could have some impact on local business in Llanbedr and the surrounding area should there be less people in the area. Information received from the school suggests that the possible loss of the school would also have an impact on the rural lifestyle, traditions and culture which are central to the area. Implementation of the proposal could eventually lead to a reduction in employment opportunities in the village of Llanbedr.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

As indicated in section (viii) above, should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.

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

The information received from the school indicates that there is currently extensive use of the Llanbedr building, and significant links between the school and the local community. It is therefore likely that the proposal to remove school provision from the village of Llanbedr would have a significant effect on the local community.

As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would remain in Llanbedr.

There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

xi) Issues raised during the consultation period

A number of comments were received during the consultation period which related to the proposal's impact on the community.

These comments are listed in full in the consultation report produced in respect of this proposal, along with the Council's response to the points raised, and are also summarised below:

- **Travel implications**

- Additional travel time / distance
- Environmental impact
- Concern about traffic congestion
- Queries about the Council's Home to School Transport Policy

- **Comments about Church in Wales provision**

- Families chose Llanbedr because it is a church school
- Comments about links between Llanbedr C. in W. School and the church
- Concern that there is no alternative Church in Wales provision available
- Comments that closure of the school would remove parental choice to choose a Church in Wales school

- Concern about the impact on pupils from not being able to attend a Church in Wales school
- Positive comments about Church in Wales schools / Christian ethos
- Insufficient consideration has been given to providing access to faith-based provision

- Impact on the community

- General concern about the impact on the community
- The school is the heart of the community
- Reference to other community activities / organisations
- Closure of the school would mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr
- Reference to previous generations of families that have attended the school
- Queries about what would happen to the school building should the school close
- Comments relating to community well-being

xii) Conclusion

The proposal would have a significant impact on the community of Llanbedr as there would be no provision in Llanbedr. Many comments received during the consultation period emphasise the importance of the school within the local community and the benefits of being part of a close community on the development of pupils. It is also recognised that there are strong links between the school, being a C. in W. school and the local church, and how this contributes to pupils' development, and that this would be lost should the school close. Concern has also been expressed that closure of the school could mean that people would not want to live in Llanbedr in the future, and could lead to a reduction in community activity in the village.

It is clear that a wide range of extra curricular activities are available to pupils at Llanbedr, and as the school is a small school, all pupils are able to take part in all activities. Should there be no school in Llanbedr, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that at least a similar range of activities would be available for pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, this would mean that there would be no school provision in the village of Llanbedr. The information provided above indicates that there is currently extensive community use of the Llanbedr building, and extensive links between the school and the local community. As a Church in Wales School, the Llanbedr School building is owned by the Diocese, therefore the Diocese would need to determine the building's future use, and therefore whether or not facilities would

remain in Llanbedr. There is a village hall located in Llanbedr, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could take place at the hall.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Llanbedr is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy which is in operation at that time, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol

School	Number of pupils	Individual schools budget per pupil (£)	Rank
Ysgol Bro Cynllaith	24	£ 8,412.46	1
Llangedwyn Primary School	22	£ 8,379.68	2
Castle Caereinion C. in W.	23	£ 7,979.61	3
Churchstoke C.P. School	36	£ 6,932.25	4
Irfon Valley C.P. School	36	£ 6,863.69	5
Llandinam C.P. School	34	£ 6,845.53	6
Gladestry C. in W. School	35	£ 6,564.66	7
Ysgol Cwm Banwy	38	£ 6,189.08	8
Llanbedr C. in W. (Aided) School	39	£ 6,010.00	9
Brynhafren C.P. School	42	£ 5,802.60	10
Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant C.P. School	73	£ 5,775.53	11
Llanfihangel Rhydithon C.P.	37	£ 5,690.84	12
Radnor Valley C.P. School	46	£ 5,603.02	13
Maesyrrhandir C.P. School	100	£ 5,553.56	14
Franksbridge C.P. School	42	£ 5,550.05	15
Ysgol Dolafon	49	£ 5,541.94	16
Ladywell Green Nurs. & Inf. School	38	£ 5,534.95	17
Llanfechain C. in W. School	43	£ 5,499.26	18
Ysgol Pontrobert	42	£ 5,349.31	19
Llandysilio C. in W. School	62	£ 5,324.92	20
Ysgol Llanbrynmair	61	£ 5,295.95	21
St Mary's R.C. (A) School	63	£ 5,280.59	22
Ysgol Gynradd Carno	46	£ 5,209.96	23
Caersws C.P. School	56	£ 5,064.77	24
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	109	£ 5,056.74	25
St. Michael's C. in W. School	91	£ 4,926.12	26
Mount Street C.P. Infants	104	£ 4,889.17	27
Abermule Primary School	64	£ 4,885.31	28
Ysgol Golwg y Cwm	160	£ 4,880.45	29
Llanbister C.P. School	61	£ 4,838.75	30
Llangynidr C.P. School	102	£ 4,739.59	31
Ysgol Rhiw Bechan	135	£ 4,721.70	32
Leighton C.P. School	71	£ 4,721.23	33
Forden C. in W. School	68	£ 4,677.65	34
Clyro C. in W. School	78	£ 4,664.67	35
Ysgol Glantwymyn	73	£ 4,529.67	36
Llangattock C. in W. School	101	£ 4,529.15	37
Treowen C.P. School	121	£ 4,517.25	38
Cradoc C.P. School	95	£ 4,486.05	39
Ysgol y Mynydd Du	104	£ 4,458.96	40
Presteigne C.P. School	162	£ 4,455.91	41
Crossgates C.P. School	131	£ 4,439.23	42
Ysgol y Cribarth	113	£ 4,400.12	43
Ysgol Gymraeg y Trallwng	81	£ 4,372.36	44
Builth Wells C.P. School	193	£ 4,357.62	45
Carreghafa C.P. School	93	£ 4,303.12	46
Hafren C.P. Junior School	57	£ 4,290.62	47
Ardleen C.P. School	96	£ 4,258.10	48
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	160	£ 4,246.07	49
Llansantffraid C. in W.A. School	103	£ 4,236.50	50
Hay on Wye C.P. School	158	£ 4,225.09	51
Buttington Trewern C.P. School	152	£ 4,213.44	52
Llandrindod Wells C. in W. School	208	£ 4,180.24	53
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	100	£ 4,160.67	54
Ysgol Bro Tawe	187	£ 4,153.18	55
Crickhowell C.P. School	184	£ 4,139.14	56
Rhayader C. in W. School	203	£ 4,138.13	57
Archdeacon Griffiths C. in W. Primary School	131	£ 4,110.12	58
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	110	£ 4,065.54	59
Sennybridge C.P. School	138	£ 4,060.02	60
Welshpool C. in W. Primary School	233	£ 4,044.15	61
Priory C. in W. School	145	£ 4,030.67	62
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	134	£ 4,024.70	63
Llangors V.P. School	139	£ 3,988.65	64
Ysgol Y Bannau	114	£ 3,982.34	65
Ysgol Meifod	81	£ 3,978.28	66
Llanfair Caereinion C.P.	161	£ 3,973.51	67
Knighton C. in W. School	175	£ 3,959.79	68
Berriew C.P. School	85	£ 3,920.59	69
Montgomery C. in W. School	90	£ 3,890.29	70
Mount Street C.P. Junior	161	£ 3,876.89	71
Llandrindod Wells C.P. School	204	£ 3,860.50	72
Llanfaes C.P. School	199	£ 3,858.24	73
Ysgol Pennant	82	£ 3,847.23	74
Guisfield C.P. School	137	£ 3,846.20	75
Llanidloes C.P. School	280	£ 3,763.81	76
Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr	329	£ 3,491.18	77
Penygloddfa C.P. School	303	£ 3,473.20	78
Primary Total	8,436	£ 4,616.63	

Powys Primary Schools

Schools Budget Per Pupil

2021-2022

Source: StatsWales (Delegated School Budgets by school)

Powys Average

£ 4,616.63

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol

20 October	Portfolio Holder for Environment	Transforming Towns – Results of Survey Approved the undertaking of design work to develop proposals for permanent measures within Brecon, Crickhowell and Newtown and to undertake further consultation with the public. Agreed not to progress any measures within Hay on Wye following the lack of support from the consultation
22 October	Leader Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance and Regulatory Services	Approved the Council's Response to the Welsh Government Consultation – Shaping Wales's Future (National Indicators and Milestones)
28 October	Portfolio Holder for Environment	Approved a seasonal working pattern pilot in HTR and gave delegated authority to the Head of Service for Highways Transport & Recycling to determine any modifications that arising from the pilot and the management of change consultation.
28 October	Portfolio Holder for Education and Property	Approved the appointment of school governors.

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwiadol