

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

7 March 2019

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Myfanwy Alexander
Portfolio Holder for Learning and Welsh Language**

SUBJECT: Llanfyllin All-through School

REPORT FOR: Discussion by Full Council

1. Summary

1.1 On the 13th July 2016, the County Council debated a motion proposing that Full Council should meet to discuss recommendations relating to Primary and Secondary School proposals prior to a decision being taken by Cabinet, and resolved the following:

‘That Full Council meets to discuss recommendations relating to Primary and Secondary School proposals that are affected by the Council’s Transformation Policy and Schools Reorganisation Policy 2015, to inform the Cabinet of Council’s views prior to any decision being taken by Cabinet.’

1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the responses received to the recent consultation carried out in respect of establishing an all-through school in Llanfyllin, and to enable members to discuss the recommendations relating to establishing a new all-through school in Llanfyllin, to inform the Cabinet prior to a decision being taken by Cabinet, in accordance with the motion outlined in 1.1 above.

1.3 Further to the decision made by Cabinet on the 18th September 2018, the Council has carried out consultation on the following proposals:

- To close Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School
- To establish a new bilingual all-through school for pupils aged 4-18 on the current sites of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School

1.4 Subject to any views expressed by Full Council, it is proposed that Cabinet will consider the Consultation Report in respect of establishing an all-through school in Llanfyllin, and determine whether or not to proceed with the proposal through the publication of a statutory notice, on the 12th March 2019. The current proposed recommendation to be considered by Cabinet is as follows:

“To approve the publication of a statutory notice to close both Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School from the 31st August 2020, and

open a new bilingual all-through school for pupils aged 4-18 on the sites currently occupied by Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School from the 1st September 2020.'

1.3 This report is supported by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** – Consultation Document
- **Appendix B** – Consultation Report
- **Appendix C** – Minutes of meetings with Staff, Governors and School Councils
- **Appendix D** – Updated Impact Assessments

2. Proposal

Background

The Consultation Period

2.1 On the 18th September 2018, Cabinet considered a report relating to establish an All-through School in Llanfyllin. At this meeting, Cabinet determined the following:

'To commence consultation in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code on the amalgamation of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School, by closing Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School and opening a new all-through school on the current school sites. The target date is to close the two schools on the 31st August 2020 and to open the new all-through school on the 1st September 2020.'

2.2 Consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools and establish a new all-through school commenced on the 27th November 2018 and ended on the 31st January 2019.

2.3 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 (2013). The consultation document that was issued is attached as Appendix A.

2.4 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 School Transformation Team, or by writing to the School Transformation Team.

2.5 During the consultation period, meetings were also held with the following:

- Staff of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School
- Governors of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School
- School council of Llanfyllin C.P. School

- School council of Llanfyllin High 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).

- 2.6 In addition, two drop in sessions were held during the consultation period, to give people the opportunity to discuss the proposals with officers and county councillors. One session was held in Llanfyllin C.P. School and the second was held in Llanfyllin High School.

Consultation Responses

- 2.7 76 respondents completed the consultation response form which was included in the consultation document, including paper copies and responses submitted using the online response form. In addition, 4 other written responses were received.
- 2.8 The consultation response form asked respondents to answer a number of questions. The findings are provided in full on pages 5 and 6 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).
- 2.9 The written responses received included a response by Estyn, which is provided on page 15 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

Consultation Findings

- 2.10 As part of the consultation, a consultation response form was issued, which was completed by 76 respondents. 38% of respondents indicated that they were associated with Llanfyllin C.P. School, 55% indicated that they were associated with Llanfyllin High School, and 17% of respondents indicated that they were associated with another feeder school in the Llanfyllin catchment.
- 2.11 The consultation response form asked respondents whether or not they agreed with the proposal to establish a new all-through school in Llanfyllin. The findings are outlined in the full on pages 5-6 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B), and are also provided below:

3. *Do you agree with the current proposal to establish a new all-through school in Llanfyllin?*

Yes	40	63%
No	18	29%
Don't know	5	8%
Total responses	63	

4. *Do you think that the Council should be considering any other options for Llanfyllin instead of the proposal to establish a new all-through school?*

Yes	19	31%
No	28	45%
Don't know	15	24%
Total responses	62	

2.12 Written comments were also provided in the consultation response form. These comments, as well as issues raised in written responses and those raised in the consultation meetings, are listed in the Consultation Report (Appendix B) from page 18 onwards, along with the Council's response to these issues. The issues raised relate to the following headings:

1. General comments in support of the proposal
2. General comments not in support of the proposal
3. Issues relating to the impact on pupils
4. Issues relating to the impact on staff
5. Queries regarding the impact on feeder schools
6. Comments regarding the Welsh language / Welsh-medium provision
7. Financial queries
8. Need for investment in buildings
9. Issues relating to post-16 provision
10. Comments about Llanfyllin High School
11. Reference to Council policies / priorities
12. All-through School Model
13. Comments about the Consultation Documentation
14. Other options
15. Other queries

2.13 The findings of the consultation, as summarised in 2.11 above, suggest that the respondents' preferred option is to proceed with the proposal to establish a new all-through school in Llanfyllin.

The Proposal

2.14 Based on the findings of the consultation, the current proposal to Cabinet is as follows:

- i) To receive the Consultation Report in respect of establishing an all-through school in Llanfyllin.
- ii) To approve the publication of a Statutory Notice proposing the following:
 - To close Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School
 - To establish a new bilingual all-through school for pupils aged 4-18 on the current sites of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School

- 2.15 The Consultation Document issued in respect of this proposal stated the following:

‘The Council is currently carrying out a review of its fair funding formula, which is expected to be implemented from the 2019/20 financial year

As the outcome of the review of the fair funding formula is currently unknown, it is not possible to estimate what the financial impact would be. However, the new school would be expected to operate within the budget allocated to it based on the new fair funding formula.’

- 2.16 Details of the funding allocations under the new funding formula have not yet been released, however as indicated above, should the Council proceed with establishing a new all-through school in Llanfyllin, the school would be funded in accordance with the new funding formula, and the new school would be expected to operate within the budget allocated to it. The new school’s curriculum and staffing structure would be the responsibility of the temporary governing body, and the curriculum and staffing structure set by the temporary governing body would be expected to be within the budget available to the new school.
- 2.17 In line with the Council’s Scheme for Financing Schools, should either school be in a deficit budget position on closure of the school, the deficit is written off.
- 2.18 It is anticipated that Statutory Notices will be published before the end of March 2019, and that a further report, summarising any objections received, will be considered by the Council’s Cabinet before the end of the academic year.
- 2.19 The target would be for the new school to open in September 2020.

3. Options Considered / Available

- 3.1 A number of options were considered in respect of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School. These are outlined in the consultation document in respect of this proposal (Appendix A).
- 3.2 A number of other options were suggested during the consultation. These are outlined in the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 4.1 As outlined in section 2 above, the outcome of the consultation exercise carried out suggests that the preferred option is to amalgamate Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School and to establish a new all-through school on the current sites of the two schools.

4.2 Therefore, the preferred choice is to proceed with amalgamating Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School, and to establish a new all-through school on the current sites of the two schools.

4.3 The reasons for this are as follows:

- To provide a more sustainable model for delivering primary and secondary Welsh-medium and English-medium education in Llanfyllin
- To enable education in Llanfyllin to be provided more efficiently
- To provide robust leadership to pupils in all phases of education
- To improve the quality of education to pupils in all phases of education
- To provide seamless progression through each key stage of education
- The outcome of the consultation carried out suggested that this is the preferred option.

5. Impact Assessment

5.1 Is an impact assessment required? Yes

5.2 If yes is it attached? Yes

A range of draft impact assessments were produced as part of the consultation documentation. These included a Single Integrated Impact Assessment, an Equalities Impact Assessment, a Community Impact Assessment and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

These draft impact assessments have been updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation period, and are attached in Appendix D.

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

6.1 Learning and Skills is one of the four priorities outlined in Vision 2025: Our Corporate Improvement Plan 2018-23. Within this priority, the Plan includes a commitment to 'Improve our schools infrastructure'. In order to achieve this, 'we will implement our new School Organisation Policy and Delivery Plan to develop a more efficient schools network, with a greater focus on working in partnership with schools and the communities they serve.'

7. Local Member(s)

7.1

8. Other Front Line Services

Does the recommendation impact on other services run by the Council or on behalf of the Council? Yes

9. **Communications**

Have Communications seen a copy of this report? Yes

Have they made a comment? 'The report is of public interest and requires news release and appropriate social media action to publicise the outcome.'

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

10.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view

10.2 Finance: The all-through school model would provide opportunity for the school to work more effectively and efficiently as one school. Finance and Schools Service would continue to work closely with the schools to ensure the financial position of both schools is maintained within the requirements of the Scheme for Financing Schools.

Upon implementation of the All Through School the existing balances for each school would cease, and the balance would be retained / met by the authority. The current projected balance for March 2019 is Llanfyllin CP School = £4k, Llanfyllin High School = (£93k). The all-through school would be funded in line with the new formula as two separate schools except for following adjustments; Remove the minimum 0.2 Management time capacity (primary formula), and the ALNCo as one school.

11. **Scrutiny**

Has this report been scrutinised? No

12. **Statutory Officers**

12.1 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) commented as follows: "I note the legal comments and have nothing to add to the report."

The Head of Financial Services (Deputy Section 151 Officer) notes the comments of finance. It is critical that both schools manage their budget within the requirements of the scheme up to the point of the All-through School opening, to limit the impact of any remaining deficit on the Council.

13. **Members' Interests**

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

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
To discuss the proposed recommendation to Cabinet in respect of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School as set out in paragraph 1.4 of this report, to enable Cabinet to take the views expressed by Council into account when making a decision	To inform the Cabinet of Council's views prior to a decision being taken by Cabinet.

Relevant Policy (ies):	School Organisation Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	Cllr Lucy Roberts – Llandrinio Cllr Arwel Jones – Llandysilio Cllr Emyr Jones – Llanfihangel Cllr Peter Lewis – Llanfyllin Cllr Aled Davies – Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant / Llanfyllin Cllr Gwynfor Thomas – Llansanffraid Cllr Bryn Davies – Llanwddyn
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Marianne Evans
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	End of March 2019

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Background Papers used to prepare Report: