

Appendix C - Minutes of meetings with Staff, Governors and School Councils

	Page
1. Meeting with staff of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School	2
2. Meeting with governors of Llanfyllin C.P. School and School and Llanfyllin High School	10
3. Meeting with School Council of Llanfyllin C.P. School	19
4. Meeting with School Council of Llanfyllin High School	22

1. Meeting with staff of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School

Consultation meeting with staff of Llanfyllin CP School and Llanfyllin High School

17th December 2018

Present

Staff:

Llanfyllin CP School:

Ann Davies
Beth E. Jones
Bethan Jones
Emma Richardson
Elin Roberts
Martin Roberts
Rhian Tomlinson

Llanfyllin High School:

Jean Brown	Dewi Owen
Sally Browne	Rob Parry
Jennifer Hughes	Ann Roberts
Carys Jones	Kirsten Roberts
Ceri Jones	Mel Roberts
Rachel Jones	Lindsey Watson
Rhiannon Molyneux-Tyrer	Lauren Williams
Brenda Morris	

(The number of staff in attendance at the meeting was greater than the number listed below, therefore it is likely that not all staff present signed the attendance sheet)

Officers:

Dr Alec Clarke, Head of Learning
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager School Transformation
Richard Waggett, Schools Finance Manager
Catherine Cottle, HR Business Partner
Sarah Astley, Programme Manager, School Transformation

Dr Alec Clark welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained that he was representing the Challenge Advisors, who were attending training today and therefore unable to attend, and also Ian Budd, Director of Education, who is unavailable.

Alec thanked everyone for coming, and explained that this meeting is an opportunity for staff to ask any questions about the process, and what might happen.

Marianne explained that consultation on a proposal to merge Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School started at the end of November, and will continue until the 31st January 2019. This meeting with staff will be followed by a meeting with governors, then 2 drop in sessions will be held in January for anybody who wants to attend. Views can also be submitted via the online questionnaire or in writing. At the end of the consultation period, the team will pull together the responses, and will produce a consultation report which includes the issues raised and the council's response to them. The consultation report will be presented to full council, probably in March, then to Cabinet, who will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal. The next stage of the process would be to publish a statutory notice, and there would be 28 days for people to submit objections. Then a report will be produced outlining the objections received, and there will be a final decision making point when Cabinet will make a decision on whether or not to implement. If they approve this, we would then move into the implementation phase.

Catherine Cottle explained that she had produced a flowchart summarising the process for staff, from where we are now to where we hope to get to if the process goes ahead. Some staff will have been involved in the restructure process before, and will know that consultation takes place as part of those processes. However, this isn't that sort of consultation. If the proposal were to go ahead, that sort of consultation would happen later on. This current stage is the public consultation stage, which is to get feedback from everyone involved as to whether the proposal is a good idea or not. We want to hear what you think about these plans, because you are the experts – you are educating the children. The purpose of this meeting is to get your feedback as professionals on whether this is a good thing for the school or not.

Marianne invited questions on the proposal.

Question: Do you envisage this happening from September this year?

Catherine Cottle – the expectation is that the new school would be implemented from September 2020 not September 2019. It takes a long time to go through the various processes. The temporary governing body, who would be responsible for the staffing processes, can only be formed once a final decision has been made, and time would then be needed to go through the staffing processes.

Question: How much do you see the staffing changing? Have you got an idea of how many staff will be needed?

Richard Waggett – the purpose of the proposal is not a cost saving exercise. However, it is likely that you will be able to realise some efficiencies as you come together.

Alec Clark – there is a change in terms of children aged 10-14 years under the new curriculum. The new curriculum will affect pupils of those ages in particular, so there is an opportunity to use staff to their strengths in that age range. In terms of the financial impact, we will have a new funding formula, which will be auditable and within what the Welsh Government expects. Going forward, it should be easier for governing bodies to work within this formula. However, this is not a cost saving exercise. In terms of the staffing structure of the new school, this would be determined by the temporary governing body.

Question: There has been talk in the past about a new build, and possible 21st Century Schools funding. Is there a possibility of money coming to help with the schools coming together?

Marianne Evans – In the consultation document, we say that the all-through school can happen here without any building work and without spending money on the buildings. However, that is not to say that there would be no investment here in the future. As part of our 21st Century Schools programme, we rank schools on their condition – Llanfyllin High School and Llanfyllin Primary School are both not in the best of conditions, particularly the primary school, so we would want to help to facilitate the development of an all-through school by putting money in to improve the stock. With all-through schools, we do think they work better when the whole school is on one site. So in the future, we would be looking at how to make an all-through school work more effectively, with some shared resources and shared areas.

There is no money allocated for this yet – to access funding, we would have to make a case to Welsh Government for 21st Century Schools funding. 21st Century Schools is part funded by Welsh Government and part funded by Powys County Council. Currently, funding is available until 2025-6, and at the moment Welsh Government want to continue with this programme beyond that. However, a lot is changing politically.

If we wanted to go forward with capital investment in Llanfyllin, we would want to bring in our property colleagues to look at what would be needed, by commissioning some early feasibility work. This isn't a guarantee of funding, however the schools in Llanfyllin do meet the criteria in terms of the condition of the buildings – particularly the primary school.

Alec Clark – With a £10 million build, we would also need Councillors within Powys to agree to a spend of £3.5 million. It's no secret that Powys has a financial problem, so your local politicians would need to support this and make a case. What you have done by coming to us to move forward with merging the two schools is a good thing – it's better when these things grow organically rather than being forced on schools. You tick a lot of boxes in terms of population numbers, Welsh language, rurality.

Marianne Evans – when we are looking at which capital projects to fund, we look at a number of things, including condition, sufficiency, sustainability and also health and safety. We have talked before about issues with the openness of the campus. Also the other criteria is whether the project is linked to any school organisation proposals. So you are meeting many criteria.

Dewi Owen (Headteacher – Llanfyllin High School) – We have had a meeting with Dave Thompson on the openness of the campus, however we are still waiting for barriers to be installed – we have now had to pay for this ourselves. I am concerned about how long it would take for the feasibility etc to happen – I would like some reassurance that the feasibility work would happen quickly.

Marianne Evans – The plan is that the feasibilities happen soon – in the new year. The schools in Llanfyllin are number one on the list of schools to be remodelled.

Question: The catering staff at Llanfyllin High School are currently employed by the school, not by Powys Catering. Would we have to go back to Powys Catering?

Catherine Cottle – That would be a decision for the temporary governing body. In most schools in Powys, catering staff are employed by Powys Catering. The temporary governing body would need to look at the pros and cons of each solution. What is the arrangement for the primary school?

A response was received that the catering staff at the primary school are employed by Powys Catering, and that Llanfyllin High School is the only school where catering isn't provided by Powys Catering.

Catherine Cottle – In that case, this is probably something the temporary governing body would want to look at fairly quickly, and a decision would need to be made as to what model best meets the needs of the school going forward.

Alec Clark – there is nothing stop to the staff continuing to be employed by the school rather than Powys Catering. However, that is a decision for the Temporary Governing Body – they will still be able to make their own arrangements as Llanfyllin High School do currently if they choose to do so.

Catherine Cottle – If I was you, I would start to think about what the benefits are to the school of having the staff employed by the school rather than Powys Catering, so that when someone asks, you have a list. The same for the primary school – if you think it's better to be part of the central Powys Catering, you can also start to think about why.

Question: A lot of staff are wondering about job security – will jobs be ringfenced as part of the process or not?

Catherine Cottle – That would be a decision for the temporary governing body. There are regulations regarding appointments of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher – these make it very clear that schools that are part of any reorganisation process can elect to either ringfence or advertise nationally for head and deputy roles. There is nothing in the regulations about all other staff. However, my experience of managing transformation in schools is that the authority is accepting to a degree that a Governing Body may want to test the market nationally for a Headteacher and Deputy, but the local authority would be very much encouraging the temporary governing body to ringfence the rest of the posts to existing staff. One reason for this is that it makes good business sense – you are experienced staff who know the pupils, the area etc. Why would anyone want to unsettle that? There would be concern from the local authority and from Trade Union representatives if posts weren't ringfenced.

Question: LSAs are employed on temporary contracts, which only become permanent after 2 years. Would we lose this security when moving to the new school?

Catherine Cottle – No you wouldn't. Your contract is with Powys County Council, and your contract would continue to be with Powys County Council, so all of the continuous service would still count.

Alec Clark – the continuous service would still count if you moved to any local authority school, even if the school wasn't in Powys. Although you would be taking a new role, the continuous service would continue.

Question: Could LSAs be put on a short term contract?

Catherine Cottle – No. If you're on a permanent contract now, this would continue. The only situation I can think of where you could be offered a short term contract would be a situation where you were unsuccessful in securing employment in the new school initially when ringfencing for jobs was being carried out, and someone who was successful was going on maternity leave. You could then be offered this short term maternity cover post rather than redundancy. But even then, you would still be entitled to redundancy based on your full continuous service at the end of the fixed term period. There is no proposal to make everyone redundant and give everyone short term contracts.

Alec Clark – We're not in an area where it's that easy to recruit. It would be very foolish to suggest starting again from scratch, as you may not get enough people to fill the posts.

Question: Are secondary teachers likely to be teaching primary pupils and vice versa?

Alec Clark – In the all-through schools I know of, this happens to some extent. If I was headteacher of an all-through school, I can't see why this wouldn't happen. There is a lot of crossover, particularly between years 4 to 8. But this isn't something I would want to force on a headteacher anywhere – it is a decision for the head / governing body to make. Having said that, I know of primary staff who could successfully transfer to teach secondary aged pupils and vice versa. I wouldn't expect a Headteacher to totally rule this out, however I also wouldn't expect a Foundation Phase teacher to be teaching Year 11 any time soon.

Catherine Cottle – When we met in the summer, there was discussion about maybe years 5 and 6 having the opportunity to use some of the specialist secondary facilities e.g. science labs – to share resources in the best way for everyone.

Marianne Evans – There is a lot of good practice out there that you can go out and look at – to learn from existing all-through schools. There is a list of all-through schools in the consultation document. We have had discussions with many of these. There is a Wales All-through Schools Forum which we have attended. There are a number of different models within All-through schools, and a lot of talking to each other and learning from each other. We already have one all-through school in Powys, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen in Machynlleth. When the school was established, the majority of secondary staff stayed in secondary and vice versa. However, as time has gone on, there is more overlap now, with some secondary teachers teaching in the primary phase and vice versa. For example, the assistant head in charge of the primary phase is a former secondary teacher and former head of 6th form. There are cross phase leadership roles, e.g. ALNCo, Leader of Literacy etc.

If the proposal for Llanfyllin goes forward, I would suggest going to visit some of the schools that are already operating as all-through schools, and also bringing people here to see what you are doing in Llanfyllin.

Alec Clark – We have changes in ALN coming as well, which will put a lot more pressure on the ALNCo across the school. So there is an opportunity that you could increase capacity, and have a more freed up role to carry out this more substantial role.

Question: Would you build in support for staff to work together during 2019-20 to work towards the new curriculum, changes in ALN etc.?

Alec Clark – Not a lot has been said yet about additional inset days to work towards these changes – if you're not a pioneer school, not much money has come in to free up time. However there definitely needs to be opportunities. Now isn't a bad time to considering merging schools so that you can work through these things organically now.

Question: I had the opportunity to go to the teaching and learning conference held by Anwen Orrells. I came away thinking that what we are looking to do here is the magic answer. However, I would be interested to see how through schools have incorporated the new curriculum across the school – nobody seems to have done this. I was impressed with the presentation from Ysgol Bro Hyddgen – this was the most advanced in terms of 'middle school'. If we were going out to schools to see where this has been done well, would you be able to recommend schools to go to?

Alec Clark – there are some other through schools that aren't named in the document. But yes, we would certainly be able to recommend schools to you.

Marianne Evans – with regard to Ysgol Bro Hyddgen. They are currently located on separate primary and secondary sites, however they will soon be moving to one new campus, which will be phased – early years, foundation phase, middle school, and the more senior pupils. By coming together and being physically located in one place, this will help with advancing the thinking around the curriculum.

Alec Clark – some of these changes can be scary. However, it's an exciting time. And being in one school will help with this. As an all-through school, you would be inspected as one school and governed as one school. There is much more collective responsibility when you are all part of one school. I think all-through schools are the most interesting and have the highest chance of success.

Question: Has there been any feedback to the consultation from feeder primary schools?

Marianne Evans – not yet, but I would expect there to be some concerns. There are always concerns from the other schools, these concerns include being seen as second class, and concerns about the impact on their pupils. I don't think these concerns are insurmountable. It's an opportunity to develop the relationship with the feeder schools – I know Bro Hyddgen do a lot with their feeder schools, bringing the children in very early to take part in joint projects. However, Bro Hyddgen has a much smaller catchment – yours is much larger. You already have a relationship with your feeder schools, however there is an opportunity to develop that further.

Question: Why isn't the invitation out there for some of the other feeder schools to join in this amalgamation?

Alec Clark – If the heads of any of those feeder schools approached us and said that they wanted to be part of this, I think we would probably be open to this.

Marianne Evans – In some circumstances, all-through schools have been established by closing a number of small schools, in order to build a new school. However this was often hard, and was difficult for the communities involved. The process we are required to go through already takes a long time, even though we are in a situation where the two governing bodies are supportive of the proposal. In the past, we have been in a position

where the local authority has wanted to go in and force changes on communities. Now, we want to work with communities to develop proposals. That's not to say that things won't change in the future due to the challenging financial situation the council is in, but that's where we are now.

Question: Is there going to be a feasibility study on the impact on feeder schools? Some parents may think the all-through may become oversubscribed, and so they may want to get the children in early – this would have an impact on the small schools.

Marianne Evans – this hasn't happened in Bro Hyddgen. In that area, numbers in the two smallest schools in the catchment have increased. What would encourage parents to move their children would be if the quality of education was much better. I daresay that we will receive responses from feeder schools raising these queries as part of the consultation. These concerns will then be reflected in the consultation report, and considered by Cabinet when deciding whether to proceed.

Question: What will be the make up of the new governing body? How many members will there be? The two schools have governing bodies that know their schools well, it would be a shame to lose this expertise.

Catherine Cottle – The temporary governing body would be made up of existing governors. It does set out on page 32 of the consultation document what the make up of the temporary governing body would be. Not all current governors at both schools would be able to be part of the temporary governing body for the new school. However, we do try to get a reasonable representation of the two schools – sometimes the Chair of the temporary governing body will be from one school, with the Vice Chair being from another school. All current governors would be written to, to ask whether they would be interested in being part of the temporary governing body. However, the temporary governing body wouldn't be established until September 2019.

Marianne Evans – it's incredible how quickly the two governing bodies become one and come together, even in circumstances where the governing bodies have been totally against each other, and against the proposal. Within a couple of meetings, the focus changes from 'we don't want this to happen' to 'I'm part of this now, I want to make this happen'. Once this happens, the business for the temporary governing body comes quite quickly – there is a job to do to get the school established. Then you're on to a quite specific timetable of activity. The downside is that members of the temporary governing body are members of the current governing body at the same time – so are serving two governing bodies – this is a significant workload. However it is very exciting at the same time.

Catherine Cottle – Everyone is here because they want the best for the children of Llanfyllin. It would be the same in the case of a new all-through school.

Marianne summarised the process going forward. The consultation closes on the 31st January. We will then be analysing the responses, and producing a consultation report. This will then need to go to Full Council for consideration, before going to Cabinet. We expect that it will be around March by the time it gets to full council.

Then, if the Cabinet decided to proceed, we would publish statutory notices, and there would be an objection period of 28 days – this is likely to be April/May time. We would then need to

analyse the objections, then go back to Cabinet for a final decision. This would probably be in June/July.

The temporary governing body would then be set up in approx. September, which would give three terms before the new school opened. The first job would be to consider the leadership of the all-through school, and appoint the headteacher. Then, they would move on to developing the staffing structure with the involvement of the headteacher. Until we get to that point, we don't know what the staffing structure will be.

It's likely that the staffing structure would be agreed in the spring term, with appointments being made in the summer term, ready for the new school to open on the 1st September 2020.

Staff were encouraged to send any further comments / queries / responses to the School Transformation Team using the 'school.consultation@powys.gov.uk' e-mail address. All responses need to be received by the 31st January 2019. Staff were also advised that officers would be available after the meeting for staff to discuss any particular concerns with them.

2. Meeting with the Governors of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School

Consultation meeting with Governors of Llanfyllin CP School and Llanfyllin High School

17th December 2018

Present:

Governors:

Llanfyllin C.P. School:

Jane Carrington
Sarah Hunter
Harri Jones
Meinir Jones
Peter Lewis
Eleri Llwyd Jones
Mark Prust
Sioned Vaughan
Jo Williams

Llanfyllin High School:

Aled Davies
Emma Hale
Graeme Hunter
Peter Missen
Peter Lewis
Huw Llwyd Jones
Darren Mayor
Bethan Page
Ann Roberts
Lucy Roberts
Gwynfor Thomas
Lynne Walters

Officers:

Cllr Myfanwy Alexander, Portfolio Holder for Education
Dr Alec Clark, Head of Learning
Marianne Evans, Senior Manager School Transformation
Richard Waggett, Schools Finance Manager
Sarah Astley, Programme Manager, School Transformation

Alec Clark welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the officers. He explained that a meeting with staff has already taken place today.

Marianne Evans outlined where are in terms of the statutory process. The current proposal is to establish a new all-through school by closing Llanfyllin CP School and Llanfyllin High School. The target date is that the new school would open in September 2020. Consultation will end at the end of January. Two drop in sessions will be held in the new year for parents and community members, and we will also be consulting with school councils. Responses to the consultation can be provided by filling in an online questionnaire, or by writing or e-mailing the School Transformation Team.

When the consultation period ends, a consultation report will be produced. This has to be considered by Full Council and by the Cabinet. Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal. If they decide to proceed, the next stage would be to publish a statutory notice, and there would be 28 days for people to submit objections. Then a report will be produced outlining the objections received, and there will be a final decision making point

when Cabinet will make a decision on whether or not to implement. If they approve this, we would then move into the implementation phase.

Questions were invited on the proposal.

Governor: To start with, could you share with us some of the themes from the meeting with staff held earlier today?

Alec Clark – There were quite a few questions relating to the staffing structure and the impact on jobs. It was explained that there was a possibility that all posts in the new school could be opened up, however in reality that would be frowned on, by unions in particular. Sometimes there are difficulties with recruitment in this area, so the temporary governing body would need to consider this. The staff were pleased to hear that there wasn't an agenda for having a clear out.

Staff from both schools were asking about the possible strengths of moving to an all-through school. It was explained that we are moving to a new time in education where it will be a through curriculum, and moving to a middle school feel. Much more collaboration will be needed between primary and secondary, so this is a good time to become an all-through school.

They also wanted to be sure that it wasn't about savings – it was explained that there would be some savings, however this isn't the reason for the proposal. There was also some concern about the impact on other schools in the catchment area and about governance – will there be less governors. We spoke a bit about how governing bodies come together in these situations.

Marianne Evans – There were also questions around capital funding, and some concerns were raised after the meeting by some of the primary school staff about the Welsh-medium transition and how we can develop Welsh-medium provision across the board. A flowchart for staff was circulated, this was only available in English, however we accept that this should have been available in Welsh as well. We will circulate a Welsh version as soon as possible.

Governor: Many are concerned that the primary school is currently more Welsh than the high school. We don't want to lose the Welsh ethos of the primary school. The consultation document mentions 'improve the ethos', but doesn't say how.

Marianne Evans – This is an opportunity – we're talking about a new school, one school. There are strengths in the primary school which could influence the development of the Welsh language in the secondary phase. For one thing, there would be an opportunity to share resources and staffing between the two phases to strengthen the Welsh ethos.

Myfanwy Alexander – Welsh as a subject is changing – Welsh as a second language will disappear. To ensure progress in linguistic skills continue throughout their time in school, it's important to know where pupils are on the Welsh language continuum. Parents choose Welsh-medium or English-medium, but there are pupils in the middle – their skills have improved, but sometimes these skills don't develop any further. This development could result in more opportunities to develop the skills of those children in the middle.

Marianne Evans – It will be the same cohort of pupils throughout – they are currently in a minority when they move to high school – the situation will be the same as it is now. However, the opportunities to collaborate across the school and across the age ranges would be stronger than they are as two separate schools.

Governor: I would propose that much more Welsh should be offered in the primary phase – that all children are taught in Welsh, this could be implemented gradually over 5-10 years – all children in the area would then have the opportunity to be bilingual. This would then feed into the secondary age range, and would ensure a stronger Welsh-medium stream.

Myfanwy Alexander – This could be an opportunity to develop provision in the new school. For example, the new school could establish Welsh-medium childcare. Parents contact us to say that there is a lack of childcare generally, but particularly through the medium of Welsh. There is an opportunity here to introduce something to normalise the Welsh language.

Marianne Evans – In terms of new proposals, any new proposals suggested during the consultation have to be included in the consultation report. However, the current proposal is to establish a dual stream school, which is the same as the current provision in Llanfyllin. If there was a change following new proposals suggested during the consultation period, it's likely that this would need to be a new proposal, so we may need to consult again.

Alec Clark – Welsh language categorisation of schools is likely to change in the not too distant future. There have been discussions for a while about moving away from the current categorisations. In order to achieve Welsh Government's aim of a million Welsh speakers, a commitment is needed that all children are more exposed to both languages when they are very young.

Governor: The opportunity to create something very special in Llanfyllin in a dual streams school was one of the driving factors for pursuing this. The opportunities of what we can do here. I understand that it won't be plain sailing, but securing dual stream, quality education in this area far outweighs anything else.

I am completely on board with this, but have some fundamental concerns around the finances, and the viability of the whole proposition. The figures now don't quite add up. We're still waiting for the formula to come through, the implication is that Powys will realise savings through economies of scale. I'm not worried about the amalgamation, I'm worried that we're not being ambitious enough. When you look at the cost of running the two sites we have, they are expensive. We need to think about the cost of staffing. I think that the way to make it work is to look beyond 5-18 education and look to encompass more, as this would bring in more funding from other areas, so that it becomes more practical. We would be reducing our cost and improving our product. My concern is that we make this change now, and by 2022 the school would be in financial difficulty. We don't want to have had our bite of the cherry. We need to look at early years, drive the fact that we are bilingual. Even with an 80/20 split, the system for funding bilingual education isn't linear – it's difficult to do if your split is not quite right. We should be looking at offering apprenticeships etc. There is a library in the town but the school doesn't have a library – the school could run libraries within the cluster. That would give us the finance of the library, and would mean that there weren't two libraries within 100m.

We could also look at working with social services to provide services. If we can get a bit of the social services budget, we become a much more viable option as we have more fingers in more pies. The more we can change the ratio in terms of the Welsh-medium/English-medium so that it works better, the better.

The building is closed 10 weeks a year. We have this amazing facility which could be used 365 days a year – that would bring in revenue, and would mean that we could pay for part of the building through different means. At this moment in time, I'm concerned that on the 1st September 2020 when the new all-through school opens, the spotlight will come off. From today, I think we need to be thinking about what is truly transformational – amalgamation of schools happens all the time. I think we should be looking at something more transformational which also serves the surrounding villages.

Alec Clark – When you get to a stage of establishing a temporary governing body, you will have the opportunity to look at some of these things.

Governor: We are almost too low down to make that difference – we are losing the potential for the momentum – we should be supporting this as a concept. The school governing body should be sitting within the consortium – this needs to be led by the school, the local authority, county councillors.

Alec Clark – As a governing body you are able to invite experts to your meetings.

Governor: If you were to hand this as a concept to the governing body as something that had come through the consultation, it would be more achievable.

Alec Clark – There is work ongoing in Newtown where all stakeholders are working together to develop a hub. I'm not saying that the authority won't assist, but my feeling is that really, this needs to come from you in order to be successful.

Governor: Are you saying that the people in this room should be pushing for this now?

Alec Clark – My feeling is that the majority of stakeholders will support this development. There is a logic to it. If that was the case, I would be surprised if it wasn't supported by Cabinet. If it was to move forward, on day one of the interim arrangements of making it happen, some members of the temporary governing body could be tasked with looking at some of the things that have been suggested. You are going to have to diversify from 'school' to survive, there is no doubt about that. Schools are going to have to become a community function.

Myfanwy Alexander – The concern is that if a project like this is made potentially more complicated than it needs to be, you slow it down. If you can start doing the background work to this now, you could be in a position to move forward with some of these elements very soon after the establishment of the new school. If I was looking for a job here, having a crèche would be important, so perhaps this is something you could start talking about now – will this be Welsh-medium, will this be a private crèche or some other arrangement? If we try and cover all of these elements now, we could still be talking about establishing an all-through school in 5 years time – there is a danger of complicating matters. Immediately,

there would be issues with governance. The proposal is to establish a 4-18 school, however we probably should be looking at 0-25 or beyond.

Governor: We don't want September 2020 to come and go without us having moved forward with some of these elements. We currently have capacity to start looking at some of these elements – we have at least 12 months before the new school starts to be developed. Because we have a start date, we can fit in as much as we want. What I would like is for the consultation phase to identify that there is a bigger project here than just establishing an all-through school.

Alec Clark – ideally we would like you to have a new school. There is capital funding available until 2025 as part of Band B of 21st Century School, however we would have to make a case for this and it would become a political decision.

Marianne Evans – A number of all through schools are sometimes badged as lifelong learning campuses. What you're articulating isn't a lifelong learning campus, it's a lifelong learning cluster.

Governor: If we have the capacity now to start working on this, and can bring it to the table in small chunks as we move towards September 2020, we would like to be pushing at an open door.

Marianne Evans – We have a legal process to get through, and we need it to be as robust as possible. However, this doesn't mean that you can't have conversations and work on some of the suggestions whilst this is happening. I realise that the consultation document that has been published in relation to this proposal isn't the visionary document you had wanted to see, however it is what is needed to get through this stage of the process. We have to follow Welsh Government guidance in terms of the process, and what information is included in the consultation document.

Alec Clark – The fact that you came to us with the initial request is a positive thing.

Marianne Evans – To go back to the climate we are working in, we need transformational things. What you're talking about sounds like it fits in with that. Anything you can do to help move this along would help with this.

Governor: It would be very useful if the governors could visit some schools that are doing this kind of thing very well – it would be useful if you could let us have a list.

Alec Clark – I know of a number of schools, and would be happy to share this information with you. It isn't always the case that these are new buildings.

Myfanwy Alexander – With regard to capital funding, transforming the school isn't a guarantee of capital, however not transforming the school is a guarantee of not having it. Welsh Government would consider the bid, and if there was no transformation, they would ask why are we doing this? I would suggest that you include the ideas you have suggested in your responses to the consultation – both as a governing body and as individuals.

Alec Clark – There are changes ahead in Powys – there will be a Director of Transformation – he or she will need to realise the need to use what we have got – as you have said, we

have buildings that we don't use all year which could be used more. There is a lot of money out there in the way of grant funding, but you need to know where to go to look for it.

Going forward, we will have one Director covering Education and Children's Services, this is potentially a good thing as these two areas need to work together and currently, there is some reluctance to get together. Children don't spend that much time in schools, and currently if they leave school at 16, Powys isn't a great place to be – this is something we need to work on.

Governor: It's right that we should be serving the whole community. I'm concerned that if we are one school, we need to be one, and we need to be located in one building. I'm also concerned that we on the governing body are volunteers, and that you as officers are stepping away.

Marianne Evans – We have to step away whilst we are going through the legal process – we don't want to be accused of any pre-determination. We take you through the technical process, then once we have a final decision, we will work with you to take this forward.

Governor: The issue then is that you don't have all the information to make the decision.

Marianne Evans – Put those ideas in your consultation responses. The responses will be submitted to Cabinet, they will see everything and will make a decision based on that information.

Alec Clark – Having a transformation lead will help to push this forward.

Governor: The difficulty is that we are in a chicken and egg situation. If we stay as we are, we're not going to get any capital funding. I'm concerned about the outcome of the fair funding formula – we will probably get less money, but will still both be hit anyway if we stay as we are. Nothing solid can be done about these transformational ideas unless / until a decision is made to move forward. Once a decision is made, we can make a case to push forward, but the governing body would need support from the local authority and the transformation lead to achieve this. There is funding available, but you need to know where to get it. There has to be a push to ensure that the information is available to us as a governing body. We will be looking to the local authority to steer us in the right direction – but I accept that you can't do that until this consultation is concluded and a decision has been made. However, we as governing bodies could look at these areas in parallel to this process, with a view to having a case to put to the shadow governing body.

Alec Clark – There would be nothing to stop either current governing body moving forward with this.

Governor: But where do we start is the question? At the moment, we can't come to you and ask for this.

Governor: As two governing bodies, we're not bound by the consultation protocol – we can sell this to the local communities – we could sell it to the communities during the consultation period so that the vision was coming back through them as well. I think we can do something between now and the decision being made.

Governor: We're talking about a community school, but we should be thinking about a catchment school. I'm concerned that some catchment schools won't contribute to the consultation, however it's important that we do get them to contribute. We're already losing pupils to the Marches from some parts of the catchment – people travel to Oswestry to work etc. We have to get out to our catchment to sell this vision.

Governor: If we as governing bodies can agree a vision that goes beyond the current proposal, that's great. I'm slightly nervous about how we sell it to people – we could come under criticism if we can't deliver on what we promise. As far as saying this is a first stage of transforming this catchment, that's a brilliant message. But until this consultation process has been completed, I don't want to be making promises.

Governor: You wouldn't have to make promises though, it could be a case of presenting ideas

Governor: If we could bring money in from other areas, we could offer more – more appropriate teaching, bilingual education where we haven't been able to previously. If we could fund this from elsewhere, this would become self-sustaining.

Alec Clark – Significant sums of money go into some schools across Wales because they know where to go to find it. Those schools who develop and do best are the schools that will succeed.

Governor: The one way to save small schools in small communities is to have them as part of a larger entity – this would be a much easier way to share costs etc. This could potentially be the one thing that could keep those schools open. If you could take the leadership time from the small schools and put it into something central, the cost wouldn't matter – it could become a loss leader.

Governor: Individuals that are doing 1 day of leadership out of 5, and are teaching the other 4 days, most of the time they don't want to be doing that one day of leadership anyway – they want to be teaching.

Marianne Evans – Going back to how do you get the views of the wider community, if we were in a position that the Council was proposing to do something that you weren't happy with, what would be happening? You would have formed a committee, there would be work going on to look at how to respond. Turn it on its head – if you are in support of it, do the same thing – you can do that without tainting the process.

Governor: We only have a fixed amount of time. The two governing bodies need to be selling the same message. We as a group need to decide what it is we want to sell. As two governing bodies, we probably need to decide tonight how we are going to do that – it needs to be done pretty rapidly to have any effect. When are the public meetings?

Sarah Astley – There are no public meetings in the traditional sense. There are drop in sessions, which will be held on the 10th January in Llanfyllin CP School and the 16th January in Llanfyllin High School.

Alec Clark – We have held drop in sessions as part of another consultation that has taken place recently. These have been more successful than public meetings – you hear more of the middle ground.

Governor: Between now and those dates, we could put together a video presenting our vision. This could be presented at the drop ins.

Governor: Conversations are already happening. On the whole, people think this makes sense. We did proactively come to you and say that this is what we want to do. However, I feel slightly exposed – it is a bit of a leap of faith. I'm concerned that we will get through the process, and will then be asking you what comes next. In particular, what will happen with transition arrangements?

Alec Clark – Historically what has happened when schools have been part of reorganisation is that they have spent madly then capitalised the debt. That can't happen here. However, we have to be sensible – processes cost money.

Governor: Will there be another round of VSS?

Alec Clark – This is being looked at. There was a discussion that transformational change would be capitalised – the onus of it goes from being held by the governing body and is held by the local authority who then holds the risk. In the past, things weren't done for the right reason. There are much bigger problems in Powys e.g. superannuation for staff, teachers' pensions. There is an argument that where we have transformation like this, we should be sensible. But, we can't have a situation where teachers have VSS on Monday and are back on a supply teacher contract on the Wednesday. We can't do much about situations where this happens, but we can think about whether we would support VSS.

Governor: We're all taking a bit of a leap of faith in supporting this. However, I would say that everything we have talked about sits totally within the Council's School Organisation Plan and the Delivery Plan. Personally speaking, it would look pretty bad on the local authority if, having had governing bodies come up with a proposal that sits within those documents, they don't see the transformation through.

Governor: We as governing bodies need to agree what we are going to do next – come up with a mission statement to make a video, put something out on social media

Alec Clark – You have County Councillors on your governing body, community councillors etc. You have plenty of people to draw on. I've heard a lot of sense here tonight, at a level that I haven't heard across Powys / Wales for many years.

Marianne Evans – You were the first school that came to us once the new policy was published. You came with an emerging vision. We have been in the process of engaging with a range of secondary schools in north Powys over the last 6 months, however you are by far ahead of the game in terms of where you feel you want to go, which is very refreshing. Everything you have articulated as a vision is in the council's policy – the more supportive words that come through, the Council / Cabinet will need to take notice.

Governor: The way things are going, the status quo is unsustainable. Post-16 for example is a concern – the document says that funding will decrease. We've always had a strong sixth form here, we need to maintain this.

Alec Clark – You are already working with other schools as part of the Trisgol partnership. Do you think this should be formalised further?

Governor: There is a will here and in Caereinion. If we as governors can get the message out to the communities in terms of where we think this can lead in the future, if the decision is being made by Cabinet, they are essentially saying that they approve the vision. That then gives us, as a new governing body of an all-through school, more strength when we go back to Welsh Government / the local authority wanting support to see it through.

Governor: I agree with the vision that has been talked about. But from a Welsh language perspective, the document talks about provision being no worse than it is now. Frankly though, it's not good enough. You need to be able to show the community that the basics are there.

Alec Clark: The perception that this is a takeover by the secondary is wrong – this is the opportunity for the primary to make clear what isn't good enough in the secondary.

Governor: If we want to put forward a more far reaching vision, that is something the governing bodies should be putting forward. We need to get together and agree how to sell it to people – the aim is to improve bilingual education, whether that is the quality or the quantity.

Governor: What is the timescale for the fair funding formula? When will know the outcome?

Richard Waggett – It is going to Cabinet / Mgmt Team on Thursday. Then it is going to Scrutiny on the 4th January and Cabinet on the 15th January, so a decision on the formula should hopefully be taken before the end of the consultation period.

Marianne Evans reminded everyone that the consultation period ends on the 31st January, therefore all responses will need to be received by that date.

3. Meeting with the School Council of Llanfyllin C.P. School

10th January 2019

Officers from the School Transformation Team met with Llanfyllin C.P. School Council on 10th January 2019 to discuss the consultation on the future of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School.

One session was held with 15 School Council members in attendance.

The officers outlined the background, including the Council's role and the current proposal for the two schools in Llanfyllin. It was explained that the Council wanted to know people's views on the proposal, and that we especially want to know what the pupils think of the idea to establish an all-through school in Llanfyllin:

- 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.

The pupils were asked a number of questions and their responses are summarised below:

1. What do you like about Llanfyllin C.P. School?

- We have a fun education
- We can learn new things
- We have good teachers
- We can make lots of friends
- We have lots of opportunities – school trips, opportunities to take part in sport.

2. Is there anything you dislike about Llanfyllin C.P School?

- Issues with the building
 - There is sellotape on the carpet
 - The door doesn't shut properly so there is lots of mud in our classroom
 - People pick the paint off of the walls
 - The toilets
 - Corridors where the pegs are haven't been painted for a long time
 - The plaster is coming off of the walls
 - We had a burst water pipe in the library
- Would like to be able to do more activities/games, e.g. basketball, ballet, drama club, acrobatics
- There is hardly any Wi-Fi in the school

Pupils were asked if they had any further comments/questions. The following comments were asked:

- ***Will it be on building or two separate schools?***

It was explained that they would be separate to start with – primary pupils would continue to go to Llanfyllin Primary School, and secondary pupils would continue to go to Llanfyllin High School. However, there could be opportunities to share some facilities – for example, primary pupils could use some of the facilities in the high school, such as science labs.

- ***Would the high school pupils be able to come down and look after primary children?***

Yes, it is likely that there would be opportunities for high school pupils to come and work with younger children if that was agreed with the Headteacher.

- ***Would school dinners be at the same time? The high school have burgers on the menu?***

The temporary governing body for the new school would need to decide what the arrangements for school dinners would be.

- ***Where will primary school pupils go at break time? Will they stay as they are?***

Yes, they will probably continue to have separate areas for break times, in order to keep everyone safe.

- ***What will happen with assemblies? Will we have assemblies together?***

This will need to be decided by the temporary governing body / Headteacher of the new school. However, there probably wouldn't be room for the whole school to have assemblies together

- ***Would we have our own Headteacher?***

There would probably be one Headteacher for the whole school. The temporary governing body would need to appoint the Headteacher.

- ***When would the change happen?***

The current intention is that the new school opens in September 2020, so for example, pupils in year 4 now would be starting year 6.

- ***What would the name of the new school be?***

The temporary governing body would need to decide the name of the new school. However, it was explained that there would be opportunities for pupils to take part in this.

Pupils were asked what they thought about the idea of establishing a new all-through school in Llanfyllin. They were asked to put their hands up if they thought establishing a new all-through school was a good idea. Most agreed that it was a good idea, 2 thought it was a bad idea, 2 were unsure.

The following advantages were noted:

- It won't be so confusing when pupils go to high school as they will know where to go
- Year 6 can go to the high school to have lessons so they will know where to go when they go to high school
- It would be good if primary pupils could go up to the high school to use their facilities to do PE
- We could save money as we didn't have to buy things the high school already has
- There could be more clubs – we could go and use the gym for Dragon Sports if it was raining

The following concerns were raised:

- Concern about high school children being mean to primary school children
- Unsure how it would work
- Some pupils might get lost
- Concern about what would happen to staff
- Concern about bullying

The following suggestions were also made:

- Maybe we could connect the two schools to make one big school
- Perhaps there could be a competition to name the school

To conclude the session, the officers explained that the consultation will close on the 31st January, and if pupils have any further comments, they were encouraged to write them down and hand them to their teachers, who would ensure that they were passed on to the Council/School Transformation Team, or to their teachers who will be able to arrange for them to be sent on.

4. Meeting with the School Council of Llanfyllin High School

16th January 2019

Officers from the School Transformation Team met with Llanfyllin High School Council on 16th January 2019 to discuss the consultation on the future of Llanfyllin C.P. School and Llanfyllin High School.

One session was held with 12 School Council members in attendance.

The officers outlined the background, including the Council's role and the current proposal for the two schools in Llanfyllin. It was explained that the Council wanted to know people's views on the proposal, and that we especially want to know what the pupils think of the idea to establish an all-through school in Llanfyllin:

- 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

The School Council were asked whether they had any questions on the proposal. The following questions were raised:

- **Would we all share a building?**

Not at the moment. The current proposal is that the primary pupils would continue to go to the primary school and secondary pupils would continue to go to the secondary school. However, there would be an opportunity to share facilities, so primary pupils may have the opportunity to use the facilities at the secondary school for some subjects.

- **Would pupils that go to other primary schools in the area still be able to come to the school?**

Yes, pupils from the feeder schools would still be able to join the school in year 7 as they do now.

- **What would happen when Estyn come to inspect the schools?**

It would be one school so there would be one inspection – the whole school, including primary and secondary, would be inspected at the same time.

- **Would everyone have the same uniform?**

This would be a decision for the temporary governing body, which would need to be set up to oversee transition to the new school. They would need to think about the school name, logo, uniform etc. However, there would be opportunities for pupils to contribute to these discussions.

- **Where would the Headteacher's office be? Would there be an impact on the other site if the Headteacher wasn't there?**

The Headteacher would probably have space on both sites. However, here you are on one campus, so the Headteacher would be on the campus anyway.

The pupils were asked to consider the Strengths and Weaknesses of the proposal. The following were suggested:

Advantages / Strengths:

- The primary school has been unable to recruit a Headteacher, so this proposal would mean that they would have a permanent Headteacher. The acting head would be able to teach more, which is what she wants to do. Hopefully this would lead to better teaching and learning
- There could be an opportunity for older pupils to work with younger pupils for some things
- Could be useful for students that want to do teaching, social work or work with children in other ways to have a direct link with the primary school
- More opportunities for years 5 and 6 – they would be able to use facilities such as science labs in the high school
- Transition from year 6 to 7 would be easier for pupils in Llanfyllin Primary School Wouldn't be much change for staff, but they could come together for staff meetings etc.
- Younger pupils would feel more comfortable moving into secondary as they would know their teachers already, and teachers would already know the children
- It could reduce the number of pupils that move from Welsh-medium to English-medium when they move into high school, and also during their time in high school.
- Can involve the primary schools in extra-curricular activities e.g. Lonely Tree, the primary pupils always come and watch the plays, so would be able to get them involved in the plays.
- Opportunity for older pupils to run extra-curricular activities with younger pupils
- Primary pupils could use the sports hall at the high school as it is bigger than the hall in the primary school
- More opportunity for the primary school to come and practice their concerts in the hall
- Could be an advantage for pupils with ALN that they could have the same tutors supporting them throughout their time in school

Disadvantages / Weaknesses:

- Concern about the impact on feeder schools – children from the other schools in the catchment might not feel as comfortable when they start here
- Some of the older pupils might be scary to the primary pupils
- Security / safeguarding concerns due to the open nature of the campus – may be more problematic if it was a shared campus

- Concern about different groups of pupils wanting to use facilities at the same time e.g. if year 11 wanted to use the drama studio but primary pupils wanted to use it at the same time – concern about the operational management
- Not sure what it would solve – can see the benefits for the primary school but not sure what the benefits would be for the high school. But at the same time, there aren't really many negatives for the high school – don't think there would be that much change.
- Concern about putting more pressure on teachers if they were expected to teach in the primary and secondary phases

It was also noted that there were some opportunities linked to establishing a new all-through school in Llanfyllin. The following were suggested:

- Opportunity to work more with primary aged pupils, in particular with regard to options e.g. for DT could make something for primary aged pupils
- Opportunity to work with primary aged pupils would be good for older pupils to be able to put on their CV
- Opportunity to start learning languages sooner – for example French, pupils could start learning when they are still in the primary phase
- Opportunity to improve the links with other feeder primary schools
- Opportunity to have responsible for areas of work across the whole age range
- More opportunities for the sixth form to gain experience

It was also noted that there were some concerns / threats linked to establishing a new all-through school in Llanfyllin. The following were suggested:

- Concern about overstressing staff by adding to their workload by being subject leaders across the all-through school
- Concern about putting more pressure on teachers generally by adding to their teaching timescale to teach primary pupils too

The following general comments were also made on the proposal:

- We already have a good relationship with the primary school – for example, they use our facilities. Making it an all-through school wouldn't be too much of a jump – it's more behind the scenes things that would change.
- In terms of the impact on pupils with ALN, whilst there could be a benefit in terms of having one tutor throughout their time in school, they can also be supported successfully by transferring information from one school to the next. There is already quite a strong SEN hub in the school, so teachers can work with pupils from an earlier age. Would like this to continue and to be developed.

The pupils were thanked for their contributions. It was explained that the consultation period ends on the 31st January, and if pupils have any further comments, they were encouraged to submit them before the closing date.