



PROPOSALS FOR LADYWELL GREEN INFANTS SCHOOL AND HAFREN C.P. JUNIOR SCHOOL

Consultation Report

November 2019



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CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR LADYWELL GREEN INFANTS SCHOOL AND HAFREN C.P. JUNIOR SCHOOL

1. OVERVIEW OF THE CONSULTATION

Powys County Council consulted on proposals to amalgamate Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School in order to establish a new primary school for pupils aged 4-11 in Newtown. The proposals were as follows:

- To close Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School
- To establish a new English-medium primary school for pupils aged 4-11 on the current sites of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School

The consultation took place from the 26th September 2019 to the 7th November 2019.

1.1 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 available and distributed to pupils, and 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 School Transformation Team at County Hall, or by e-mailing / writing to the School Transformation Team.

Informal drop in sessions were held to give parents the opportunity to discuss any queries with officers. These were held in Hafren C.P. Junior School on 14th October 2019 (3-6pm) and in Ladywell Green Infants School on 16th October 2019 (3-6pm).

In addition, meetings were held with the following:

- Staff of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School – 9th October 2019
- Governors of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School – 9th October 2019
- School Council of Ladywell Green Infants School – 14th October 2019
- School Council of Hafren C.P. Junior School – 14th October 2019

1.2 Responses received

A total of 16 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, 1 written response was received from Estyn.

The response received from Estyn is provided on page 17, in-line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.

1.3 Summary of issues raised

The issues raised in the consultation responses are listed in detail in section 6 on page 19. This includes the Council's response to each issue.

However, the following is a summary of the issues raised:

1. Impact on pupils
2. Impact on staff
3. Queries regarding categorisation / inspection arrangements
4. Financial queries
5. Reference to a potential new building
6. Comments relating to the North Powys Well-being Programme
7. Comments relating to documentation
8. Comments relating to the process
9. Other options

2. CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

16 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.

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.

Section 1 – About you

1. Please indicate how you are associated with Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|-----|
| Parent, carer or guardian | 9 | 45% |
| Prospective parent, carer or guardian | 2 | 10% |
| Governor | 3 | 15% |
| Member of staff | 2 | 10% |
| Member of the community | 2 | 10% |
| No association with either school | 1 | 5% |
| Other | 1 | 5% |
| Total responses ¹ | 20 | |

2. Please specify which school you are associated with:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|
| Ladywell Green Infants School | 6 | 38% |
| Hafren C.P. Junior School | 7 | 44% |
| No association with any school | 3 | 19% |
| Total responses | 16 | |

Section 2 – Consultation Response

3. Do you agree with the current proposal to amalgamate Ladywell Green and Hafren?

| | | |
|-----------------|----|-----|
| Yes | 10 | 63% |
| No | 4 | 25% |
| Don't know | 2 | 13% |
| Total responses | 16 | |

4. Do you think that the Council should be considering any other options for Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School instead of the proposal to amalgamate the schools to establish a new primary school?

¹ Some respondents provided more than one response to this question therefore the total percentage is higher than 100%.

| | | |
|-----------------|----|-----|
| Yes | 4 | 27% |
| No | 9 | 60% |
| Don't know | 2 | 13% |
| Total responses | 15 | |

3. CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

Officers from the local authority met with the School Council of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School to get their views on the proposals.

The notes of these meetings are provided below:

i) Ladywell Green Infants School

Officers from the School Transformation Team met with Ladywell Green School Council on the 14th of October to discuss the consultation on the future of Ladywell Green and Hafren Junior School.

One session was held with 9 pupils from the school council in Ladywell Green. The group were a combination of students from reception to year 2.

The officers explained the proposals for the merging of Ladywell Green and Hafren Infant School and explained the difference between other primary schools in the Newtown area compared to Ladywell Green and Hafren Infant School as most primary schools educate pupils from reception to Year 6.

The pupils were asked several questions and their responses are summarised below:

1. What do you think is good about Ladywell Green School?

- We are all friends
- We play – tag, cars, football and hide and seek.
- In Hafren there is one big playground with a gym
- There are two playgrounds – one for break time and one for snack time.
- We like the teachers.
- We like the school dinners
- We get to go on trips, went to Shropshire Hill

2. Is there anything you don't like about Ladywell Green?

- I don't like people hurting me
- I don't like being called mean
- I don't like people who fuss about me
- I don't like when people snatch

3. What do you think about the buildings and the classrooms?

- Great
- Fantastic
- The toilets are leaking

4. If things were different and Ladywell Green and Hafren were one school what would be different?

- The hall would be bigger
- We would have different yards
- There would only be one headteacher
- New uniform which would be exciting
- New name for the school

5. What do you think would be better if Ladywell Green and Hafren were one school?

- We would be in the same school as our brothers and sisters
- We might be able to get more laptops
- The schools are joint together

6. Is there anything that would be worse or worry you about Ladywell and Hafren being one school?

- Older children might bully you

To conclude the session, the officers explained the next steps in the consultation process. It was explained that the consultation would close on the 7th November, after half term, and the pupils were encouraged to send any further comments to the school transformation team using the contact details on the pupil version of the consultation document, or to their teachers who would be able to arrange for them to be sent on.

ii) Hafren C.P. Junior School

Officers from the School Transformation Team met with Hafren School Council on the 14th October 2019 to discuss the consultation on the future of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren Junior School.

One session was held with 12 pupils from the school council in Hafren Junior School. The group was a combination of pupils from year 3 to year 6.

Officers explained the proposals to merge Ladywell Green Infant School and Hafren Junior School.

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

1. What do you like about Hafren Junior School? What's good about the school?

- The grounds
- Everyone is nice and friendly
- Gym
- Lessons
- Teachers – being able to get humorous teachers to teach you
- Competitions and sporting events
- Cross Country

- Creative writing club
- The school is healthy
- We go on lots of trips – we went somewhere that talked to us about Celts and we did some weaving
- In year 5 and 6 you can go to London and Llangrannog
- We go on trips to Liverpool
- The grounds are big so we can have nice big events like, summer fete, visits from tanks and a fire engine, the air ambulance lands there, also used for school sports and sometimes Ladywell pupils use the grounds
- The yard has games painted on the floor, designed by school council
- Mile a day around the ground which gives us more energy
- Gardening club where we grow tomatoes, carrots, peas and corn

2. Is there anything you don't like about Hafren Junior School?

- A friend used to be a bully
- Bring back the swimming pool
- People could respect the library more
- Food in the school – healthy eating
- There could be more clubs in the school - recycling, dance, football and singing club.

3. What do you think about the buildings?

- They need to fix the buildings
- They need to make the buildings cleaner
- The corridor where the headteacher's office is could be used more than it is now.
- The school's bathroom looks quite scary – it looks like the roof is about to collapse on use and there is a door that doesn't have a lock anymore.

4. If the Council was to move forward with the plan to merge Ladywell Green and Hafren Schools, what would be different?

- People wouldn't have the excitement of moving to a new school in year 3
- New uniform
- New logo
- New school name
- There would be only one headteacher
- Where the school be? (It was explained that for the time being, pupils would still attend school in the same buildings – so older pupils would come to the Hafren buildings, and younger pupils would go to the Ladywell Green buildings. However, there are plans for a new building in the future, which all pupils would go to.)

5. Is there anything you think would be better if Ladywell Green and Hafren were one school instead of being two separate schools?

- We would be able to help the younger pupils and help teach them like year 6 do with new year 3's.
- There is a big playground so we will all be able to play
- The older children might help the younger children when they are getting picked on.
- More teachers and more to learn
- Pupils would be in the same school as their older/younger brothers or sisters.

6. Is there anything that would be worse or worry you about Ladywell and Hafren being one school?

- The younger children might get bullied.
- Being a bit squished at dinner time
- On the playground, some people are littering – Ladywell Green pupils don't know about climate change and littering so this could be worse.
- We would need to teach the younger pupils the rules – or there might be new rules
- When we are in class and hear all the construction and the playground being squished.
- The school field being built over.
- The tress would probably have to be cut down and there are hedgehogs nesting in the oak trees along with bats.
- Car parking
- We would need more ice packs
- If nursery children do the mile a day they could run off.

To conclude the session, the officers explained the next steps in the consultation process. It was explained that the consultation would close on the 7th November, after half term, and the pupils were encouraged to send any further comments to the school transformation team using the contact details on the pupil version of the consultation document, or to their teachers who would be able to arrange for them to be sent on.

4. CONSULTATION MEETINGS WITH STAFF AND GOVERNORS

Consultation meetings were held with the staff and governors of both schools. The issues raised at these meetings are summarised below:

i) Consultation meeting with Staff of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School – 9th October 2019

- Could you repeat the timescales?
- Initially we were advised that the temporary governing body would be established in Easter 2020 and therefore the staffing processes would start at this time. However, from looking at the consultation document, it looks as though the timescale has been pushed back.
- The more time we can have to work through the staffing processes the better as there are many discussions which will need to be had. I see from the consultation document that the intention is that Cabinet considers the consultation report in January/ February. Can that be moved to January? Obviously we don't want to rush things through, but it's important that nothing is delayed. The earlier this can be moved forward the better for the staff, they don't want the process to be delayed. Also, not linked directly to the merger, we are aware of the wider plans for the site and the buildings – some decisions are due to be made in April 2020. I'm concerned that there would be no governing body or headteacher in place by this time. It's crucial that no decision is made about the site until there is a temporary governing body and headteacher in place. If there are decisions that cannot be made until there is a governing body and headteacher in place, it's important that the health board are aware of this as it could delay them.
- In terms of the temporary governing body, it's only made up of who currently sits on the governing bodies of the two schools. It's important that it's set up as early as possible. However, if it's people that are already on the governing bodies of the current schools, they could be well prepared for the sorts of decisions they will need to make.
- Are you not able to tell us when the final decision will be? We were first told April but then the document says December?
- So that would be relatively soon after June?
- Can a temporary governing body be set up ready?
- So if there was a general election, could this then delay the process?
- What is the February Cabinet date?
- Given the amount of work involved and that our governors are working, what happens if there are not enough expressions of interest to form a temporary governing body?
- Is the membership of the temporary governing body kept equal between the schools that are merging?
- Would staff governors be allowed on the temporary governing body?
- Do members of the temporary governing body continue to hold their positions as governors in their respective schools?
- Is there any more you can tell us about the staffing process at this stage?
- Would staff have brand new contracts?
- Would it affect sick pay or anything like that?

- When the temporary governing body start to set up the new staffing structure do, will they know what the budget will be?
- Will the budget correspond to the budget for a school in a new building, or will it be based on the new school being established in the current ageing buildings?
- Can you explain how redeployment works?
- If more than one person is going for a role and you don't get the role and take redundancy, is it correct that you cannot work for Powys for a year?
- Would there still be a break in service if you started working somewhere else on the 15th of September?
- Is there a frequently asked questions sheet that has got all this information on?
- With the staffing structure, would the current level / pay grades of TAs go across?
- Can I ask about the new build? This merger is based on establishing a new school in the current buildings, but is there money set aside for a new building?
- If you are on a 39-hour contract but all the jobs are 25-hour contracts, would you get redundancy for those 14 hours?
- Is that for Teaching Assistants as well, if they lose a grade?
- What happens next? Will there be another meeting like this during the next phase of the process?
- Will the sessions for parents will be a meeting like this?
- How long will it take for the Consultation Report to be pulled together?

ii) Consultation meeting with Governors of Ladywell Green Infants School and Hafren C.P. Junior School – 9th October 2019

- If the process is completed more quickly, is it possible that the implementation date could be brought forward?
- How does this impact on governors that are already governors at two schools – can they be governors at two schools and a member of a temporary governing body?
- In the staff meeting earlier today we were told that if there was a redundancy situation, you wouldn't be able to work for Powys for a month and a day. If a decision is made at Easter that you will be made redundant, would your contract end at the end of August and would that mean that you were unable to apply for a job until the 2nd October?
- This consultation is to merge the two schools. The timeline you are proposing seems adequate from the point of view that it will ensure that there is plenty of time to prepare the two schools. The outside pressure which isn't really referred to in the document is the promise of a new building and the plans relating to the well-being centre, which will also have key decision dates. This isn't reflected in the timeline. We need to have a full timeline presented to us before any decision is made – the temporary governing body will need to be in place before any decisions are made.
- The concern is that while the schools are in a period of flux, it's not clear who will be making decisions relating to the site. You have said that there won't be a temporary governing body until a decision is made by

Cabinet to move forward with this proposal, the two separate governing bodies will continue, however decisions could be made about how the site is used without the school having a voice.

- That is my view too – you are asking us to agree to the merger but there are other things going on in the background. I find it difficult to make this decision without knowing what else is going to happen in the future. There are concerns that the planned developments for the site will be detrimental to our pupils in terms of the open space available. I think we need more assurances.
- This is a school site, and therefore school land. We have some of the most vulnerable pupils in Newtown who need that open space to be able to let off steam in a controlled environment. If we are going to be hemmed in, it could be to the detriment of our pupils.
- The temporary governing body and the headteacher need to be key decision makers regarding the site and where the different elements are going to be.
- It feels like the Health Board is deciding where they are going to be, and we will end up with what's left.
- Councillor Alexander's role as Portfolio Holder for Education expanded and she also became responsible for the North Powys Well-being Programme – Cllr Davies, does your role as Portfolio for Education also include responsibility for the North Powys Well-being Programme?
- We are under no illusions, we know that there is a lot of land on this site and understand that compromises will need to be made, however the open space here is very important to us here, the headteachers, governors and parents will back me up on this. We accept that there is guidance and formulas, but I think you need to step outside the formula here.
- What you are saying is giving me confidence. However, I'm still concerned about the timeline. What I would like is to see the temporary governing body established and the headteacher appointed. Once this is done we will have key decision makers in place. I wouldn't want plans for the site to be drawn up and sent out for the public to give feedback on before we have these key people in place.
- In Welshpool for example, who was approving? Were the schools merged by then or was it the 4 individual schools?
- The point I'm trying to make is that I know you're saying you will consult with us, but there is consulting, and there is key decisions being made – these are different. As two separate bodies working together, we can give you our views, but the key decision makers have got to be the newly appointed head and the new governing body.
- Is there any regulation that would prevent a joint working party of governors being set up in the interim instead of having a temporary governing body until a decision has been made?
- Is there one appointed consultant working on the Well-being Programme looking at the whole space, or is it two separate entities?
- It seems that the plans are quite open ended and vague. The wellbeing hub needs some of the schools land to work for it to work, and the fact that the plans haven't developed in any way make it difficult to know what is that impact – does the design of the new school need to take

account of a certain amount of land which is required to make the well-being hub work, or can we continue and let them have what's left over?

- If the Well-being Development doesn't go ahead, what happens then?
- We knew that this merger was on the cards when the 21st Century Schools Programme was published. We knew that and we are quite happy and accepting of the timescales. From what I hear, you are saying that we have real plans and real ambition, and the well-being hub is a secondary priority which may or may not happen.
- Could we be accused of putting the cart before the horse in that a new build school is dependent on what you do with the rest of Newtown. We are looking at population expansion within Newtown. It depends what you do with other schools – we have to do something sensible, you can't just let the situation remain as it is. The Council has to do something pretty drastic because of budgets, so that creates pressure elsewhere. If we're only building a new school for what we've got now, I'm assuming that you will be taking things like that into account.
- I would like to point out an error on page 15. It talks about the capacity of the new school being 342.
- This is different to what is presented earlier in the document – on page 5 is states that the capacity of Ladywell Green is 150 and the capacity of Hafren is 210 – the total is 360, not 342.
- But you are building a school for 360?
- Are any other projects in Newtown going ahead?
- The governing body will be given a budget for the next school year a whole year ahead. How accurate is that going to be as we currently find out our budget in the February?
- On page 23 of the Consultation Document you have the potential saving and the funding for the school. This gives an estimated saving of £131,000. For me, the only significant saving would be one Headteacher – that's not £131,000. Where is that figure of £131,000 coming from?
- Were the two figures based on the same pupil numbers?
- The sensitivity is already coming from the staff, the land, the site and now it's down to the children. This all means that ensuring as long as possible for stage 2 is crucial.
- Can I get clarification about the budgets – about the information in paragraph 2 on page 24. There is an error here – it says 2022. In this paragraph you talk about a net deficit. I can't see where the £44,000 you refer to on page 24 comes from. We are talking about year 2, and on page 9 Ladywell is £14,000 in deficit and Hafren is £20,000 in surplus. How do you see the wind up process going if the schools have a deficit or a surplus?
- So, with regard to Ladywell's circumstances at the moment, something needs to be done to ensure that they are not in a deficit position.
- We work hard to get the deficit down. The new funding formula comes in on the 31st of March and we came out of that ok, that then affected my spend this year. My spending changed on the 1st of April to reflect the differences in the funding formula. On the 1st of April 2020, am I able to change my spending plans for or against to make savings or not?
- In Hafren, we are working hard and look at that 3rd year figure, however if the proposal goes forward that won't exist – does that mean we don't need to worry about it?

- The new temporary body will get a 3-year budget plan based on the new funding formula?
- The temporary governing body will be working with 2 different budgets as it will be for one school on two sites and a different one in a few years when there is a new building.
- As soon as the temporary governing body is formed and not when the school is opened, I would be looking for a transitional budget and additional funding to cover additional costs.
- I think a lot of the work we would need to do would be getting our parents involved. What we don't want is for some parents to leave the school. I think we are going to have to work very hard in order to ensure that parents are engaged. Would we be able to access funding to engage with parents and get them on board?
- When are pupils consulted?
- What happens if the Cabinet refuse to move forward with the merger?
- If there was a redundancy situation as a result of this proposal, would the school have to pick up the cost of this?
- If we were a new school on the existing site what I wouldn't want us to need to have staff running between the two schools continuously. We want to see it adequately staffed – we are aware of the Builth and Llandrindod situation and know what has happened in that area.
- Would Powys help with the costs of moving to one admin team, for example by installing an internal phone system?
- I think in the new building we can see where the savings will be. I think with a new school in the existing buildings, the funding formula will disadvantage us and I would want us to see a factor to ensure that we can operate. We have talked about a transitional budget, but that isn't going to help with the day to day running costs. If we go on the funding formula alone, the pupils are going to miss out.
- I agree. Not only are those pupils going to be shoved into smaller classes, in one building while one or both is being demolished, we will also have lost a lot of staff because we can't afford to pay them. The pupils that are in the school during that transitional period are going to be doubly affected. Parents aren't going to send their children to a school with less teachers and no building.
- The site of the school is working in our favour as we can build the new school on another part with little or no impact on the education of the children, so we have to see that as a positive
- On the educational front we have two green schools, on the opening of the new school a new headteacher would be appointed, would we become a yellow school and get additional support?
- I thought it was automatic that a school with a newly appointed headteacher would be yellow?
- As a new school, when would we expect an Estyn inspection?
- How does that affect schools that are categorised, for example schools that are in special measures?
- There is a bit of a disparity in the equalities information between Ladywell Green and Hafren, for example things like percentage of pupils having English as an Additional Language and Free School Meals. What does this tell us about what's happening in the area?

- We have a number of languages, Ladywell have Polish, Bulgarian, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese.

5. ESTYN

Estyn's response to the consultation is provided below:

The proposal is part of the Council's School Organisation Policy, which sets out the Council's aim to 'remove infant / junior split by creating 'all-through' primary schools.'

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the amalgamated schools.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the reasons behind this proposal. It has outlined well the reasons for amalgamating the two schools and creating an all through 4-11 primary school. It states clearly that this would be in accordance with its policy of amalgamating separate infant and junior schools and developing high quality learning environments.

The proposer states relevantly that the proposal will not affect Welsh-medium provision as it concerns the amalgamation of two English-medium schools.

The proposer outlines effectively the potential benefits of the proposal. These appear to be reasonable and include:

- Management of projected deficit budgets
- Responding to falling numbers at foundation phase and a projected overall fall in numbers over both phases over the next four years
- More effective transition arrangements between foundation phase and key stage 2
- More effective staff development by providing opportunities to develop skills across the phases
- Addressing the poor condition of both buildings and in the long term replacing with a new build alongside a Multi-Agency, Well-Being Campus bringing together a range of services to include education, health and social services on one site

The proposer lists potential disadvantages and risks appropriately. These include adjustment to the staffing complement and the impact of this on provision. The proposer appears to have given valid consideration to the management of such risks.

The proposer has given suitable consideration to alternative options to the current proposal. These include retaining the two schools as separate entities and federating both the infant and junior school. It has outlined clearly the advantages and disadvantages of each option and the reasons for its preferred option.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact on learner travel arrangements and states reasonably that the proposal will not have any effect on existing arrangements.

The proposer has given sufficient consideration to the effect on surplus places and states validly that new primary school will operate at the same capacity as the current infant and junior schools.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has considered effectively the impact of the proposals on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management.

The proposer has referenced the outcomes of the most recent Estyn reports, but has stated that both schools are now 'good schools'. The infant school has recently been inspected and achieved 'good' in all areas whereas the junior school received 'adequate' judgments in its last inspection under a previous framework. However, the proposer has explained clearly and reasonably how the amalgamation will strengthen provision in each inspection area.

The proposer has also provided the categorisation reports on both schools and indicates that if implemented, the proposal will be likely to have a positive effect on learning outcomes.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on pupils with special needs. They anticipate that amalgamation would strengthen the monitoring, tracking and support of more vulnerable pupils, those with additional learning needs and the more able and talented. They suggest, reasonably, that the school would be able to work with vulnerable children for longer periods of time and therefore ensure a consistency of approach for pupils across the whole primary phase.

The proposer asserts reasonably that an amalgamated school may improve the leadership structure of the school by providing an opportunity for a non-teaching head teacher and therefore an increased focus on leadership. It suggests, with merit, the new structure will result in improved professional development for staff and ensure an enhanced approach to developing self-evaluation and improvement approaches.

The proposer claims reasonably that there would be a simplified single school management and support structure with one governing body covering the whole 4-11 age range.

The proposer states validly, that an all-through primary school will be equipped appropriately to deliver a full curriculum across both the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 and will be in a better position to deliver the demands of the new curriculum for Wales.

The proposer has identified fairly that there will be limited disruption to pupils, transport and to the local community as the amalgamated school will remain on its current site and no current building work will be required.

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. IMPACT ON PUPILS | | |
| 1.1 Positive impact | | |
| 1.1.1 Opportunities for older pupils to help younger pupils | | |
| 1.1.1.1 | We would be able to help the younger pupils and help teach them like year 6 do with new year 3's. | The Council notes these comments and agrees that implementation of the proposal would provide opportunities for older pupils to support younger pupils. |
| 1.1.1.2 | The older children might help the younger children when they are getting picked on. | |
| 1.1.2 Improved transition | | |
| 1.1.2.1 | We would be in the same school as our brothers and sisters. | Comment noted. |
| 1.1.3 Improved facilities/equipment | | |
| 1.1.3.1 | We might be able to get more laptops | Comments noted. |
| 1.1.3.2 | There is a big playground so we will all be able to play together | |
| 1.1.4 Improved learning opportunities | | |
| 1.1.4.1 | There would be more teachers and more to learn | Comment noted. |
| 1.2 Concerns about possible negative impact | | |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1.2.1 Concerns about bullying | | |
| 1.2.1.1 | Hafren is very crowded now and a lot goes on unseen (bullying) so I would hate for this to make this worse. | Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, the new school would be responsible for ensuring the well-being of all pupils and to manage their behaviour. All schools are required to have a bullying policy, and the schools would be required to operate in accordance with its bullying policy. |
| 1.2.1.2 | The younger children might get bullied. | |
| 1.2.1.3 | Older children might bully you | |
| 1.2.2 Transition | | |
| 1.2.2.1 | People wouldn't have the excitement of moving to a new school in year 3 | Comment noted. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, it is true that pupils wouldn't move to a new school in year 3. However the Council's view is that being part of one school throughout their primary education would have positive benefits for pupils. |
| 1.2.3 Concern about older and younger pupils being part of one school | | |
| 1.2.3.1 | On the playground, some people are littering – Ladywell Green pupils don't know about climate change and littering so this could be worse. | Comments noted. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, there would be a period of transition, which would provide an opportunity to ensure a shared understanding of the expectations of pupils. |
| 1.2.3.2 | We would need to teach the younger pupils the rules – or there might be new rules | |
| 1.2.3.3 | If nursery children do the mile a day they could run off. | Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, the new school would need to ensure that appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils of all ages. |
| 1.2.4 Concern about impact on the space / facilities available | | |

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| 1.2.4.1 | Being a bit squished at dinner time | The current proposal is to establish the new school in the buildings currently occupied by the two schools, therefore there should be no impact on the space available to pupils. |
| 1.2.4.2 | We would need more ice packs | Comment noted. |
| 1.2.5 Concern about bigger class sizes | | |
| 1.2.5.1 | Concern that children will struggle with bigger classes and different staffing ratios. | The Council notes this comment. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, the temporary governing body and headteacher would be required to determine the class structure and staffing structure of the new school within the budget available to it. Whilst it is possible that there could be an impact on class sizes and staffing ratios, this would not be known until later on in the process. However, the temporary governing body would need to ensure that class sizes were manageable in order to provide the best possibly opportunities to all learners. |
| 1.2.5.2 | Concern that there will be less teachers as the new school won't be able to afford them, which will have a negative impact on pupils. | |
| 1.3 Impact on pupils during any building process | | |
| 1.3.1 | Pupils will be in stuck and will hear all the construction and the playground being squished. | It is acknowledged that there could be an impact on pupils during any building process which may be required in the future. Every effort would be made to minimise the impact on pupils during this process. |
| | Pupils will be shoved into smaller classes, in one building while one or both is being demolished. | The current proposal is to establish the new school in the buildings currently occupied by the two schools. This was not impact on the space available. It is acknowledged that there could be an impact on pupils during any building process which may be required in the future. Every effort would be made to minimise the impact on pupils during this process. |

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| | Concern that pupils in the school during the transitional period will be doubly affected as there will be less teachers and they will be affected by building works. | It is acknowledged that any school reorganisation process impacts on pupils in the schools affected, and that in this case there could also be an impact on pupils in the future during any building process which may be required. Every effort would be made to minimise the impact on pupils during this process. |
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| 2. IMPACT ON STAFF | | |
| 2.1 Comments relating to current staff | | |
| 2.1.1 | I hope that current teaching staff can be maintained as this can be an opportunity to provide much better quality education given that there are more potential classes so class numbers can potentially be smaller. | <p>Comment noted. The staffing structure for the new school would be determined by the temporary governing body, who would be required to operate within the budget allocated to the new school.</p> <p>The impact on the number of teachers / classes and class sizes would not be known until later on in the process. However, the temporary governing body would need to ensure that class sizes are manageable in order to provide the best possibly opportunities to all learners.</p> |
| 2.1.2 | Hafren needs more qualified staff who have up to date training. | Comment noted. |
| 2.2 Concerns about job security | | |
| 2.2.1 | My concern is that of job security. There are going to reductions in roles due to currently there being two schools that both have a management system that will now be reduced to one. There is also the issue of both teaching and non teaching roles within the two schools. | Should the Council proceed with the new amalgamation of the two schools, the staffing structure for the new school would be determined by the temporary governing body in discussion with the headteacher, and would need to be within the budget allocated to the school. |
| 2.2.2 | I am fully aware that much of this is dependent on the new governing body for the process. In the meantime there is an | Staffing requirements at all levels within the new school will not be known until later on in the process, however it is acknowledged that any school reorganisation process creates a period of |

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| | awful lot of unsettlement within the staffing structure and many unanswered questions. | uncertainty for the staff affected. The Council will proceed with this process as quickly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for those affected. |
| 2.3 Queries regarding the staffing structure | | |
| 2.3.1 | How will the new staffing structure be set up? | <p>Should the Council make a final decision to proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, the next step would be to establish a temporary governing body, made up of current governors at the two schools, to oversee the transition to the new school.</p> <p>One of their first tasks would be to appoint a headteacher for the new school, then they would work with the headteacher on the staffing structure for the new school. It is not possible to provide any further details on the make up of the staffing structure at the current time, as this would be determined by the temporary governing body in conjunction with the new headteacher.</p> <p>There would be consultation with staff as part of the staffing process, which would provide an opportunity for staff to give their views on the proposed staffing structure before it is finalised.</p> |
| 2.3.2 | How will the new Management Structure be set up? | |
| 2.3.3 | With the staffing structure, would the current level / pay grades of TAs go across? | |
| 2.4 Queries regarding staffing processes | | |
| 2.4.1 Timescales | | |
| 2.4.1.1 | The more time we can have to work through the staffing processes the better as there are many discussions which will need to be had. | Comments noted. The Council acknowledges that any school reorganisation process leads to a period of uncertainty for those affected by the proposals, and will move forward with the process |

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| 2.4.1.2 | The earlier this can be moved forward the better for the staff, they don't want the process to be delayed. | as quickly as possible in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for those affected. |
| 2.4.2 Appointment processes | | |
| 2.4.2.1 | Will staff have to re apply for their current positions, will be it skills based? | Following agreement of a staffing structure for the new school, the next stage would be to get people into posts. This would be done in accordance with the management of change principles. The posts in the new school would be ringfenced to the current staff. If there is more person for a post, there would need to be a competitive element, either an interview process or a skills audit. The temporary governing body along with the headteacher make the decisions, and HR are there to advise, to ensure that decisions are made in a sensible and transparent way. |
| 2.4.2.2 | If the Head Teacher position is ring fenced to the two current Head Teachers, will the unsuccessful candidate then be able to apply for a Teaching Position within the New School? | Any member staff who is displaced would be entitled to discuss any other suitable alternative positions that may be available within the new staffing structure. |
| 2.4.3 Queries regarding contractual implications | | |
| 2.4.3.1 | Would staff have brand new contracts? | It would be a new contract as it would be a new school. However, because the proposal is that the current schools close on 31 st August and the new school opens on the 1 st September, staff would have continuity of service. |
| 2.4.3.2 | Would it affect sick pay or anything like that? | No, it would not affect sick pay. Because the proposal is that the current schools close on 31 st August and the new school opens on the 1 st September, continuity of service would continue. |
| 2.4.3.3 | Would there still be a break in service if you started working somewhere else on the 15th of September? | Each case would need to be looked at but normally a break of a week or more constitutes a break in service but there are also specific rules when redundancy payments are made and the break in this case would need to be at least a month if the new job is on a list of employers who are on the redundancy modification order. |

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| 2.4.4 Queries regarding redundancy arrangements | | |
| 2.4.4.1 | If more than one person is going for a role and you don't get the role and take redundancy, is it correct that you cannot work for Powys for a year? | <p>There are different types of redundancy. The redundancy where you can't work for the Council for a year is where people took voluntary redundancy as part of the severance scheme, and it was to stop people from taking redundancy then coming back to work for the Council immediately.</p> <p>In this situation, it would be a compulsory redundancy situation, therefore it would be a month and a day – staff wouldn't be able to work for the Council, other local authorities or other organisations which recognise continuous service for a month and a day.</p> |
| 2.4.4.2 | In the staff meeting earlier today we were told that if there was a redundancy situation, you wouldn't be able to work for Powys for a month and a day. If a decision is made at Easter that you will be made redundant, would your contract end at the end of August and would that mean that you were unable to apply for a job until the 2nd October? | This is correct – you would not be able to have another contract with the Council for a month and a day. |
| 2.4.4.3 | If you are on a 39-hour contract but all the jobs are 25-hour contracts, would you get redundancy for those 14 hours? | If staff were to lose hours, they would get a compensatory payment, but because they wouldn't lose their continuity of service, the compensatory payment would be taxable. This would be the same for teaching assistants. |
| 2.4.4.4 | If there was a redundancy situation as a result of this proposal, would the school have to pick up the cost of this? | At the moment, the Council is still picking up the cost of this. |
| 2.5 Impact on staff of working in a school located on two sites | | |
| 2.5.1 | If we were a new school on the existing site what I wouldn't want us to need to have staff running between the two schools continuously. We want to see it adequately staffed – we are aware of the Builth and Llandrindod situation and | Comment noted. However, this is a different situation to other examples where schools have merged in separate buildings. In the Ysgol Calon Cymru example (Builth and Llandrindod), the two buildings are located several miles apart. If you look at Welshpool, |

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| | know what has happened in that area. | <p>the school is located on 3 separate sites and have to travel between them.</p> <p>Here, the two buildings are located on the same site, therefore there would be more opportunities to move to a staffing structure which is more similar to the structure you would have in one building as you would be closer together. For example, it is possible that the school would be run with one admin team, despite being located in two buildings.</p> |
| 2.6 Other | | |
| 2.6.1 | What's the point of a brand new school with retro trained teachers | Comment noted. |
| 2.6.2 | Is there a frequently asked questions sheet that has all the information regarding the staffing processes? | Yes, a frequently asked questions sheet has been prepared in the past as part of the staffing process in order to establish a new school. However, this can't be provided until a final decision has been made and the temporary governing body is in place. |
| 2.6.3 | I agree with the proposal as long as they provide enough staff | <p>The Council notes this comment. Should the Council proceed with the proposal to amalgamate the two schools, the temporary governing body and headteacher would be required to determine the class structure and staffing structure of the new school within the budget available to it.</p> <p>Staffing numbers would not be known until later on in the process, however the temporary governing body would need to ensure that class sizes were manageable in order to provide the best possibly opportunities to all learners.</p> |

| 3. QUERIES REGARDING CATEGORISATION / INSPECTION ARRANGEMENTS | | |
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| 3.1 National Classification Model | | |
| 3.1.1 | On the educational front we have two green schools, on the opening of the new school a new headteacher would be appointed, would we become a yellow school and get additional support? | The categorisation process would be exactly the same as happens every other year – the categorisation visit would be carried out in the same way, and would be categorised based on evidence given by the headteacher and governing body. |
| 3.1.2 | I thought it was automatic that a school with a newly appointed headteacher would be yellow? | No, this would only be in the case of a new head appointment who is a new head, in which case the default position would be amber. |
| 3.2 Estyn inspection arrangements | | |
| 3.2.1 | As a new school, when would we expect an Estyn inspection? | In the current inspection framework, it's usually two years before a new school is inspected, however they can inspect schools at any time. |

| 4. FINANCIAL QUERIES | | |
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| 4.1 Reference to the need for transition funding | | |
| 4.1.1 | As soon as the temporary governing body is formed and not when the school is opened, I would be looking for a transitional budget and additional funding to cover additional costs. | The Council recognises that there are additional costs associated with establishing a new school, and funding is provided to support this, however this is not an endless pot. We usually provide funding for a day a week to release the headteacher to work on the staffing structure and other things they have to deal with, however any costs must be reasonable, and there would need to be a good business case. |
| 4.1.2 | Would Powys help with the costs of moving to one admin team, for example by installing an internal phone system? | Yes, the Council would help with the cost of this. |

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| 4.1.3 | I think in the new building we can see where the savings will be. I think with a new school in the existing buildings, the funding formula will disadvantage us and I would want us to see a factor to ensure that we can operate. We have talked about a transitional budget, but that isn't going to help with the day to day running costs. If we go on the funding formula alone, the pupils are going to miss out. | The new school will be funded in line with other Powys schools in accordance with the Council's funding formula. Some transitional funding will be provided to support transition to one new school, however any costs must be reasonable, and there would need to be a good business case. |
| 4.1.4 | A lot of work will need to be done to get our parents involved – we don't want for some parents to leave the school during the transition period. Would we be able to access funding to engage with parents and get them on board? | Comment noted. Some transitional funding will be provided to support transition to one new school, it is possible that funding could be made available to engage with parents, subject to approval of a business case. |
| 4.2 Queries relating to budgets | | |
| 4.2.1 | Will the new temporary governing body get a 3-year budget plan based on the new funding formula? | Yes they would. |
| 4.2.2 | The temporary governing body will be working with 2 different budgets as it will be for one school on two sites and a different one in a few years when there is a new building. | Yes this is the case. |
| 4.2.3 | The governing body will be given a budget for the next school year a whole year ahead. How accurate is that going to be as we currently find out our budget in the February? | <p>In relation to the current and ongoing projects, if a new school was going to open in September 2021, we would have to have a discussion with the schools service management team as to what potentially is the cut off date for estimates of pupil numbers which are used to fund the period from September 2021 – March 2022.</p> <p>At the moment as an example, the Council funds the financial year from April 2020 based on the first Friday after the October/November half term. When schools are merged, the funding is based on estimates for the September the school is due to open. For the financial year that follows, you would go back to the normal funding count date.</p> |

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| 4.2.4 | Will the budget correspond to the budget for a school in a new building, or will it be based on the new school being established in the current ageing buildings? | The budget will be based on the current buildings. |
| 4.2.5 | When the temporary governing body start to set up the new staffing structure do, will they know what the budget will be? | Yes, finance officers will support the temporary governing body and will ensure that they have this information. |
| 4.3 Reference to savings | | |
| 4.3.1 | I am at a loss to see how large savings can be made from this restructure. | The savings in the current proposal are based on the current estimated pupil numbers received from the both schools. The saving is predominantly in relation to the Headteacher saving and the estimated number of classes provided to the new school, which differs from the current funding provided to the existing schools. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis should the proposal proceed. |
| 4.3.2 | They are both on the same site effectively but with two headteachers. Amalgamation will save one salary. | Comment noted. As indicated in the consultation document, it is currently estimated that implementation of the proposal would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of £131,885, based on the latest estimated pupil numbers available. This will be updated if pupil numbers change and the proposal proceeds. |
| 4.3.3 | The amalgamation is obviously a sensible way to save money within the county. | Comments noted. |
| 4.3.4 | I accept that School modernisation needs to be carried out and savings made | |
| 4.3.5 | Any savings made should automatically go towards maintaining and improving the current buildings which according to the consultation report are in need of some attention. | Both schools would receive property funding in their budget allocations. |

| 5. REFERENCE TO A POTENTIAL NEW BUILDING | | |
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| 5.1 | This merger is based on establishing a new school in the current buildings, but is there money set aside for a new building? | <p>The current proposal is to establish a new school in the buildings currently occupied by the two schools. However, there is an intention to provide a new building in the future, as part of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme.</p> <p>There is an indicative allocation in the Council's capital programme to build a new primary school here. To access the money from Welsh Government we would have to submit a number of business cases. However, the case is strong given the condition of the buildings and the pressure the heads are under to maintain them.</p> |
| 5.2 | A new build school is dependent on what you do with the rest of Newtown. We are looking at population expansion within Newtown. It all depends on what happens with the other schools in Newtown – it we're only building a new school for what we've got now, this may not meet the future demand. | The work that has been done so far in terms of the site and the early spatial planning which has been done has been based on a school for 360 pupils. This would already be building in some additional capacity compared with the current pupil numbers at the two schools. |
| 5.3 | Are you building a school for 360 pupils? | However, we would need to look in more detail at the size when we get to the actual design work – the capacity of the new building could end up being larger or smaller than this depending on the local situation. |
| 5.4 | We knew that this merger was on the cards when the 21st Century Schools Programme was published. We knew that and we are quite happy and accepting of the timescales. | Comment noted. |
| 5.5 | The site of the school is working in our favour as we can build the new school on another part with little or no impact on the education of the children, so we have to see that as a positive | Comment noted. |

| 6. COMMENTS RELATING TO THE NORTH POWYS WELL-BEING PROGRAMME | | |
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| 6.1 Concerns that there will be less land available for the school due to the planned Well-being development | | |
| 6.1.1 | I just hope it don't take all the green away from them and the gyms and the mile a day walk | The Council notes these comments relating to the possible reduction in the land available for a new school building due to being co-located with the Well-being centre being planned by the North Powys Well-being Programme. No decisions have yet been made in terms of the site configuration, however opportunities will be provided for key stakeholders to contribute to this process. |
| 6.1.2 | This is a school site, and therefore school land. We have some of the most vulnerable pupils in Newtown who need that open space to be able to let off steam in a controlled environment. If we are going to be hemmed in, it could be to the detriment of our pupils. | |
| 6.1.3 | Concern about the school field being built over | |
| 6.1.4 | Concern that the trees may need to be cut down – there are hedgehogs nesting in the oak trees along with bats. | As part of any building process which may be required in the future, full ecological surveys would be carried out in line with planning policies, which would include consideration of these aspects. |
| 6.1.5 | We are under no illusions, we know that there is a lot of land on this site and understand that compromises will need to be made, however the open space here is very important to us here, the headteachers, governors and parents will back me up on this. We accept that there is guidance and formulas, but I think you need to step outside the formula here. | Comments noted. Any new building in the future will be developed in line with Building Bulletin and Welsh Government guidance, and the space available to pupils will meet these requirements as a minimum. |
| 6.1.6 | There are concerns that the planned developments for the site will be detrimental to our pupils in terms of the open space available. I think we need more assurances. | |
| 6.2 Queries regarding decision making relating to the site | | |
| 6.2.1 | The concern is that while the schools are in a period of flux, it's not clear who will be making decisions relating to the site. | There will be numerous opportunities for key stakeholders to contribute to discussions relating to the future configuration of the |

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| | You have said that there won't be a temporary governing body until a decision is made by Cabinet to move forward with this proposal, the two separate governing bodies will continue, however decisions could be made about how the site is used without the school having a voice. | site. Should this work proceed before a temporary governing body has been established, opportunities will be provided to representatives of both current governing bodies to be involved in these discussions. |
| 6.2.2 | The temporary governing body and the headteacher need to be key decision makers regarding the site and where the different elements are going to be. | Decisions regarding the school site will be made in discussion with all partners within the North Powys Well-being Programme. Whilst the school(s) will be key stakeholders in this work, they are not decision makers. |
| 6.2.3 | Whilst the Council says it will consult with us, with us, but there is consulting, and there is key decisions being made – these are different. As two separate bodies working together, we can give you our views, but the key decision makers have got to be the newly appointed head and the new governing body. | However, there will be numerous opportunities for key stakeholders, including the temporary governing body and the headteacher of the new school, to contribute to discussions relating to the future configuration of the site. Should this work proceed before a temporary governing body has been established, opportunities will be provided to representatives of both current governing bodies to be involved in these discussions. |
| 6.2.4 | Whilst the schools are in a period of flux, it's not clear who will be making decisions relating to the site. You have said that there won't be a temporary governing body until a decision is made by Cabinet to move forward with this proposal, the two separate governing bodies will continue, however decisions could be made about how the site is used without the school having a voice. | |
| 6.2.5 | Some decisions on the site are due to be made in April 2020. I'm concerned that there would be no governing body or headteacher in place by this time. It's crucial that no decision is made about the site until there is a temporary governing body and headteacher in place. If there are decisions that cannot be made until there is a governing body and headteacher in place, it's important that the health board are aware of this as it could delay them. | |

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| 6.2.6 | I'm still concerned about the timeline. What I would like is to see the temporary governing body established and the headteacher appointed. Once this is done we will have key decision makers in place. I wouldn't want plans for the site to be drawn up and sent out for the public to give feedback on before we have these key people in place. | |
| 6.2.7 | In Welshpool for example, who was approving? Were the schools merged by then or was it the 4 individual schools? | <p>Whilst the temporary / permanent governing body will be key stakeholders in relation to developments regarding the site, and there will be numerous opportunities for them to contribute to discussions relating to the future configuration of the site / new building.</p> <p>In respect of the work in Welshpool, the schools had already been merged before the detailed work on the building designs commenced.</p> |
| 6.3 General comments regarding the North Powys Well-being Programme | | |
| 6.3.1 | If the Well-being Development doesn't go ahead, what happens then? | <p>The indicative funding allocation for a new primary school building is included in the Council's capital programme for Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme, and needs to be spent by 2025, so the Council would proceed with the new school building.</p> <p>If the Well-being Development is delayed, the Council could commission designers to start working on the new school building.</p> |
| 6.3.2 | From what I hear, you are saying that we have real plans and real ambition, and the well-being hub is a secondary priority which may or may not happen. | |
| 6.3.3 | Can we continue with the plans for a new school building and let the North Powys Well-being Programme have what's left over? | |
| 6.3.4 | The wellbeing hub needs some of the schools land to work for it to work, and the fact that the plans haven't developed in any way make it difficult to know what is that impact – does the design of the new school need to take account of a | <p>The new school would be designed in accordance with Building Bulletin guidance.</p> <p>The work that has been done so far in terms of the site and the early spatial planning which has been done has been based on a</p> |

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| | certain amount of land which is required to make the well-being hub work? | school for 360 pupils. This would already be building in some additional capacity compared with the current pupil numbers at the two schools. |
| 6.3.5 | Is there one appointed consultant working on the Well-being Programme looking at the whole space, or is it two separate entities? | <p>A consultant was initially employed to prepare an initial feasibility report as part of the North Powys Well-being Programme, which included initial spatial planning work.</p> <p>The Programme are currently carrying out a further tendering process to appoint consultants to prepare a business case for the site, which would include consideration of where each element would be located.</p> |
| 6.3.6 | It feels like the Health Board is deciding where they are going to be, and we will end up with what's left. | This is not the case. No decisions have yet been made regarding what will be located where on the site. There will be opportunities for key stakeholders, including the two current schools, to contribute to this as it moves forward. |
| 6.3.7 | Councillor Alexander's role as Portfolio Holder for Education expanded and she also became responsible for the North Powys Well-being Programme. Does Cllr Phyl Davies' role as Portfolio Holder for Education also include responsibility for the North Powys Well-being Programme? | No it doesn't. Responsibility for the North Powys Well-being Programme remains with Cllr Alexander. |

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| 7. COMMENTS RELATING TO DOCUMENTATION | | |
| 7.1 Queries relating to timescales | | |
| 7.1.1 | Initially we were advised that the temporary governing body would be established in Easter 2020 and therefore the staffing processes would start at this time. However, from looking at the consultation document, it looks as though the timescale has been pushed back. | The indicative timescales provided in the Consultation Document are a worst case scenario based on receiving a significant number of responses. However, if the level of response is relatively low, it's possible that the timescales for the statutory process could be brought forward. |

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| 7.1.2 | I see from the consultation document that the intention is that Cabinet considers the consultation report in January/ February. Can that be moved to January? Obviously we don't want to rush things through, but it's important that nothing is delayed. | The Council carried out the process to merge Llanfyllin CP School and Llanfyllin High School last year. This process started in November, and the final decision was made in April which was earlier than planned, so it's possible that a final decision could be made earlier than what's indicated in the Consultation Document in the case of this proposal. |
| 7.1.3 | Are you not able to tell us when the final decision will be? We were first told April but then the document says December? | <p>The document says the final Cabinet decision would be made in May/June 2020. It could be sooner than that, but it wouldn't be expected to be any later than that. This would be the final decision to move forward with the proposal.</p> <p>Then, the next step would be to set up the governing body, and one of their first tasks would be to appoint the headteacher.</p> |
| 7.1.4 | This consultation is to merge the two schools. The timeline you are proposing seems adequate from the point of view that it will ensure that there is plenty of time to prepare the two schools. The outside pressure which isn't really referred to in the document is the promise of a new building and the plans relating to the well-being centre, which will also have key decision dates. This isn't reflected in the timeline. We need to have a full timeline presented to us before any decision is made – the temporary governing body will need to be in place before any decisions are made. | <p>Comment noted. The current proposal is based on merging the two current schools in their existing buildings and is not dependent on the provision of a new building or the development of the well-being centre. This is the reason why timescales for these elements are not included in the consultation document.</p> <p>There will be numerous opportunities for key stakeholders to contribute to discussions relating to the future configuration of the site. Should this work proceed before a temporary governing body has been established, opportunities will be provided to representatives of both current governing bodies to be involved in these discussions. This will include sharing information on timescales for these other elements as these become clearer.</p> |
| 7.2 Queries relating to capacity of a new school | | |
| 7.2.1 | I would like to point out an error on page 15. It talks about the capacity of the new school being 342. This is different to what is presented earlier in the document – on page 5 it states that | The proposed capacity of the new school which is provided on page 15 is based on a calculation based on a formula provided by Welsh Government. It is not simply a case of adding one capacity figure to another. |

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| | the capacity of Ladywell Green is 150 and the capacity of Hafren is 210 – the total is 360, not 342. | |
| 7.3 Queries relating to financial information | | |
| 7.3.1 | Can I get clarification about the budgets – about the information in paragraph 2 on page 24. There is an error here – it says 2022. In this paragraph you talk about a net deficit. I can't see where the £44,000 you refer to on page 24 comes from. We are talking about year 2, and on page 9 Ladywell is £14,000 in deficit and Hafren is £20,000 in surplus. How do you see the wind up process going if the schools have a deficit or a surplus? | <p>The 2022 in the consultation document is an error and should read 2021.</p> <p>The financial position on closure has been calculated using the prorated (5 months) in year projected overspend position for the 2021/22 financial year for both schools, combined with the brought forward balances from 2020/21.</p> <p>Work will continue with the current schools to ensure that any deficit projected has a robust recovery plan to recover the deficit prior to closure.</p> |
| 7.3.2 | On page 23 of the Consultation Document you have the potential saving and the funding for the school. This gives an estimated saving of £131,000. For me, the only significant saving would be one Headteacher – that's not £131,000. Where is that figure of £131,000 coming from? | <p>The savings in the current proposal are based on the current estimated pupil numbers received from the both schools.</p> <p>The saving is predominantly in relation to the Headteacher saving and the estimated number of classes provided to the new school, which differs from the current funding provided to the existing schools. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis should the proposal proceed.</p> |
| 7.4 Queries relating to equality information | | |
| 7.4.1 | There is a bit of a disparity in the equalities information between Ladywell Green and Hafren, for example things like percentage of pupils having English as an Additional Language and Free School Meals. What does this tell us about what's happening in the area? | The equalities information in the consultation documentation suggests that there is a higher percentage of EAL pupils and pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Ladywell Green compared with Hafren. However, it must be noted that pupil numbers are higher at Hafren, which may have an impact on the percentages. |

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| 8. COMMENTS RELATING TO THE PROCESS | | |
| 8.1 General comments regarding the consultation process | | |
| 8.1.1 | When are pupils consulted? | <p>Pupils could give their views on the proposal at any time during the consultation period.</p> <p>A pupil version of the consultation document was distributed to pupils at the two schools at the start of the consultation process.</p> <p>In addition, officers met with the school councils of both schools during the consultation period to discuss the proposals with them.</p> |
| 8.1.2 | Will the sessions for parents will be a meeting like this? | No, the sessions for parents was be 'drop-in' sessions similar to the informal sessions held before the start of the formal consultation process, to provide an opportunity for parents to discuss any questions / concerns they have with officers. |
| 8.2 Queries regarding the process going forward | | |
| 8.2.1 | What happens next? Will there be another meeting like this during the next phase of the process? | No, there won't be any other meetings as part of the formal process to merge the two schools. Letters will be provided to stakeholders, including staff, governors and parents, to advise of progress during each stage of the process. |
| 8.2.2 | What happens if the Cabinet refuse to move forward with the merger? | <p>The Cabinet would make a decision on whether to proceed based on the feedback received during the consultation period. It is unlikely that they would decide not to move forward unless feedback received indicated significant concerns regarding the proposal.</p> <p>However, there have been circumstances where the Council's Cabinet has decided not to proceed with school reorganisation proposals following consultation. Should this happen in this case,</p> |

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| | | that would be the end of this process, and the two schools would continue to operate as separate schools. |
| 8.2.3 | You are asking us to agree to the merger but there are other things going on in the background. I find it difficult to make this decision without knowing what else is going to happen in the future. | The purpose of this consultation process is to ask for views from key stakeholders on the proposal to merge the two schools – responsibility for decision making remains with the Council's Cabinet. |
| 8.3 Queries regarding timescales | | |
| 8.3.1 | How long will it take for the Consultation Report to be pulled together? | This will depend on the level of responses received. If the number of responses received is relatively low, it is possible that the report could be completed and a decision on whether or not to proceed could be made more quickly than the timeline provided in the consultation document. |
| 8.3.2 | If the process is completed more quickly, is it possible that the implementation date could be brought forward? | In theory this could be possible, however generally it makes more sense to open a new school on the 1 st September. |
| 8.3.3 | If there was a general election, could this then delay the process? | Should a general election be announced, it would not be possible for the Council's Cabinet to make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposal during the pre-election period. This have an impact on timescales depending on the timing of the election and Cabinet dates, however the Council would endeavour to work around this in order to minimise any delay to the process. |
| 8.4 Queries relating to establishing a temporary governing body | | |
| 8.4.1 | In terms of the temporary governing body, it's only made up of who currently sits on the governing bodies of the two schools. It's important that it's set up as early as possible. However, if it's people that are already on the governing bodies of the current schools, they could be well prepared for | A temporary governing body cannot be established until a final decision has been made to proceed with the proposal to merge the two schools. |

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| | the sorts of decisions they will need to make. | |
| 8.4.2 | Can a temporary governing body be set up ready? | No, a temporary governing body cannot be established until a final decision has been made to proceed with the proposal to merge the two schools. |
| 8.4.3 | Given the amount of work involved and that our governors are working, what happens if there are not enough expressions of interest to form a temporary governing body? | Generally there are enough expressions of interest to form a temporary governing body. If there are not expressions of interest to fill all positions, it's likely that the temporary governing body would continue to operate with these vacancies. |
| 8.4.4 | Is the membership of the temporary governing body kept equal between the schools that are merging? | Expressions of interest would be invited from all current governors at the two schools. The local authority would then make every effort to ensure an equal balance of governors from both schools on the temporary governing body, however this would be dependent on the expressions of interest received from each school. |
| 8.4.5 | Would staff governors be allowed on the temporary governing body? | Yes, staff governors would be part of the temporary governing body in accordance with the instrument of government. However there are certain discussions which they would not be able to be part of, e.g. discussions relating to the staffing structure. |
| 8.4.6 | Do members of the temporary governing body continue to hold their positions as governors in their respective schools? | Yes, members of the temporary governing body continue to act as governors in their respective schools alongside their membership of the temporary governing body. |
| 8.4.7 | How does this impact on governors that are already governors at two schools – can they be governors at two schools and a member of a temporary governing body? | Yes, governors can be governors at two schools and a member of a temporary governing body. |
| 8.4.8 | Is there any regulation that would prevent a joint working party of governors being set up in the interim instead of having a temporary governing body until a decision has been | No, there is no reason why a joint working group consisting of governors from the two schools could not be set up in the short term, before a temporary governing body is established. |

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| 9. OTHER OPTIONS | | |
| 9.1 Status Quo | | |
| 9.1.1 | Keep them separate at least for now, repair or replace the buildings. If you must amalgamate them because of the plans being for only one building then amalgamate them when the new school is built. | The Council would need to carry out the statutory process to amalgamate the two schools before completion of the building work. The Council's view is that completing this stage of the process now would provide greater clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities during any new build process in the future. |
| 9.2 Retain separate infant provision | | |
| 9.2.1 | I am a proponent of Infant education believing that children will benefit from the nurturing environment that being in an Infant School can give. Ladywell Green is exemplar in providing this. | The Council notes this comment regarding the benefits of a separate infant school. However, as outlined in the Consultation Document, the Council's view is that the primary model offers a number of benefits compared with the separate infant / junior school model, including benefits for pupils, benefits for staff and financial benefits. In addition, an all-through primary school would be better equipped to provide education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum. |
| 9.2.2 | Has thought been given to establishing one English Medium Infant School for the whole of Newtown and then condensing the remaining Primary Schools into 2. | As outlined in the Consultation Document, the Council's view is that the primary model offers a number of benefits compared with the separate infant / junior school model, including benefits for pupils, benefits for staff and financial benefits. In addition, an all-through primary school would be better equipped to provide education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum. |
| 9.2.3 | A through welsh medium school would vacate the site that Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd sits on and an Infant School would fit there. Then the current Hafren/Ladywell site could be used as a large Primary School base. You will be building anyway. | Whilst consideration was being given to establishing a Welsh-medium all-through school in Newtown, this is at a very early stage and there have been no decisions to proceed with this. |

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| | | As outlined in the Consultation Document, the Council's view is that the primary model offers a number of benefits compared with the separate infant / junior school model, including benefits for pupils, benefits for staff and financial benefits. In addition, an all-through primary school would be better equipped to provide education which meets the requirements of the new curriculum. |
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| 10. OTHER COMMENTS | | |
| 10.1 | Are any other projects in Newtown going ahead? | <p>The Council is currently moving forward with plans for a replacement building for Ysgol Cedewain.</p> <p>No other projects are currently being taking forward in respect of other primary schools in Newtown, however a large scale review of education of education across Powys is currently underway, which could have implications for other Newtown schools.</p> |
| 10.2 | Concern about parents leaving the school during the transition period. | <p>The Council acknowledges that any school reorganisation process leads to a period of uncertainty for the schools affected, and stakedholders associated with those schools, including parents. The Council will aim to conclude this process as swiftly as possible, in order to minimise this period of uncertainty for those involved.</p> |