



# Transforming Education in Powys

## Engagement Report

March 2020



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## **1. Background and Introduction**

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

Since then, the Council has recognised the need to review education provision in the county, and has been engaging with a range of key stakeholders in order to shape a vision for education in Powys for the future. A number of engagement events were held in the autumn term 2019, and the feedback received during these events was used to develop a Case for Change and a draft Vision for Education in Powys. These documents, and a summary of the feedback received during the engagement events were considered by the Council's Cabinet in January 2020, when the Cabinet approved carrying out a further period of engagement on the emerging vision for education in Powys.

As part of this second period of engagement, an opportunity was provided for stakeholders to give their views on the draft 'Vision for Education' document. This report provides a summary of the feedback received.

### **1.1 Methodology**

The engagement period started on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020, and ended on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020. A questionnaire was prepared which asked respondents for their views on the draft 'Vision for Education' document. This questionnaire was available online on the Council's website throughout the engagement period. In addition, paper copies were available at libraries.

As well as responding via the questionnaire, respondents could submit written responses, either by e-mail or by post.

A young people's version of the engagement document was also prepared, and a young people's version of the questionnaire was also circulated to all schools.

Two engagement events were also held during the engagement period. A Schools Conference was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020, and an online Learner Engagement event was held using distance learning technology on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

### **1.2 Responses Received**

A total of 478 individuals completed the engagement questionnaire. This included 206 pupils.

In addition, 124 written responses were received to the engagement exercise. This included 110 responses from school pupils.

Completed pupil questionnaires were also received from the School Councils of 13 schools.

All responses received from pupils, including responses to the engagement questionnaire, completed pupil questionnaires and other written responses from pupils, are considered in Section 4 of this report.

## 2 Online Questionnaire

This section provides a summary of the responses received to the online questionnaire which was available during the engagement period.

**This section does not include responses received from pupils – these are considered in section 4 of this report.**

### 2.1 Summary of Responses – Introduction

Respondents were asked to indicate how they are associated with education in Powys. 274 online questionnaires were completed, however 387 individual responses were received to this question. This is higher than the number of questionnaires completed as some respondents indicated more than one association.

The responses received are as outlined in the table below. Two percentage figures are provided in this table, the first of these gives the percentage based on the total responses received to this question, the second of these gives the percentage based on the total number of responses received to the questionnaire.

Association with education in Powys	Number of responses	% of responses to this question	% of total responses to questionnaire
Member of staff	103	26.6%	43.7%
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	12	3.1%	8.0%
Governor	51	13.2%	29.7%
Parent, carer or guardian	130	33.6%	55.8%
Former parent, carer or guardian	23	5.9%	15.8%
Member of the community	40	10.3%	25.3%
No association	7	1.8%	5.4%
Other	21	5.4%	12.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Respondents were asked to provide their postcode. 184 respondents gave their postcode. The postcodes provided were as follows:

Postcode	Area	Number of responses	%
BS48	Backwell, Nailsea, North Somerset	1	0.5%
DG3	Thornhill, Dumfriesshire	1	0.5%
HR3	West Hereford, Hay on Wye	3	1.6%
LD1	Llandrindod Wells	19	10.3%
LD2	Builth Wells, Llandrindod Wells	5	2.7%
LD3	Brecon, Talgarth, Llandrindod Wells	20	10.9%
LD4	Llangammarch Wells, Llandrindod Wells	1	0.5%
LD5	Llanwrtyd Wells, Llandrindod Wells	1	0.5%
LD6	Rhayader, Llandrindod Wells	10	5.4%

LD7	Knighton, Llandrindod Wells	1	0.5%
LD8	Presteigne, Llandrindod Wells	1	0.5%
LL17	St. Asaph, Allt Goch, Rhualt, Tremeirchion, Waen, Conwy	1	0.5%
NP7	Abergavenny, Monmouthshire	1	0.5%
NP8	Crickhowell, Powys	2	1.1%
SA10	Aberdulais, Llandarcy, Neath Port Talbot	2	1.1%
SA9	Abercraf, Cwmtwrch, Ystalyfera, Ystradgynlais, Neath Port Talbot	3	1.6%
ST18	Stafford, Staffordshire	1	0.5%
SY1	Shrewsbury Town Centre, North Shrewsbury, Shropshire	2	1.1%
SY10	Oswestry, Shropshire	7	3.8%
SY15	Montgomery, Powys	8	4.3%
SY16	Newtown, Powys	20	10.9%
SY17	Caersws, Llandinam, Powys	16	8.7%
SY18	Llanidloes, Powys	15	8.2%
SY19	Llanbrynmair, Powys	4	2.2%
SY20	Machynlleth, Powys	2	1.1%
SY21	Welshpool, Powys	20	10.9%
SY22	Llanfechain, Llanfyllin, Llansantffraid, Llanymynech, Meifod, Powys	15	8.2%
SY23	Aberystwyth, Llanon, Llanrhystud, Ceredigion	1	0.5%
SY24	Bow Street, Pen-y-garn, Rhydpennau, Llandre, Ceredigion	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>184</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 2.2 Summary of Responses to Engagement Exercise

Respondents were asked to give their views on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

A summary of the responses received to each question is provided below.

### Section 3 – Vision for Education

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the high level vision for education in Powys which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

271 respondents answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree with this as a high-level vision for education in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	105	38.7%
Agree	105	38.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	24	8.9%

Disagree	26	9.6%
Strongly disagree	11	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **77.4%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the high-level vision. **13.7%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **8.9%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents that disagreed with the vision were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider.

Comments were received from 89 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) Comments on specific elements of the draft vision:**

***‘Globally engaged’***

- What does this mean? Are you proposing encouraging pupils to leave the area and Wales?
- Should be locally and globally engaged.

***‘Economically productive’***

- What does ‘economically productive’ mean? School is about more than churning out the next batch of workers
- ‘Productive’ may be more appropriate than ‘economically productive’.
- Would like to see something about their potential – economically productive seems impersonal, could this be ‘active contributors to the economy’?
- ‘Economically productive’ turns children into a resource. Important that we equip young people to be creative, brave, adaptable, resilient problem solvers, not make them sound like future production line workers for careers in a manufacturing industry that won’t be there

**Other**

- What does ‘socially responsible’ mean?
- ‘Developing the skills, knowledge and attributes...’ – this should mean children following the learning pathway that is appropriate for them

**ii) Other elements that should be included in the vision**

Reference to Welsh:

- Would like to see a reference to Welsh medium education in this statement – we are the only county in Wales without a Welsh-medium high school
- Suggested amendment – ‘high quality education in their choice of language – Welsh or English’

- The vision is lacking uniqueness – it could be a vision for anywhere in the world. It should mention Welsh, maybe ‘Welsh citizens’.
- The first sentence should read ‘All children and young people in Powys experience high quality education in Welsh or English’
- No reference to Welsh-medium education or the importance of the language to communities
- The vision is silent on education being delivered in English or Welsh in line with parental preference
- Welsh language should be mentioned

Needs more of a local context:

- Should aspire towards all learners carrying a pride for being educated in Powys.
- An appropriate vision for a school in England, but shows a lack of understanding of the needs of children in the county

Reference to lifelong learning:

- Needs to sound more inspiring – needs to talk about the love of learning and developing lifelong learners.
- It’s missing something – want the education itself and their time at school to be fun and enjoyable, giving them a lifelong lust for learning and application of skills and problem solving

Other:

- ‘Resilient’ needs to be added – ‘personally fulfilled, economically productive, social responsible, resilient and globally engaged citizens.’
- Education should be ecologically sustainable
- Should mention ‘the highest quality education’
- Should mention children and young people reaching their own full potential / being the best they can be
- Should reflect that not all children are the same and schools should meet individual needs of children not try and teach them all the same way
- Education is for all, but maybe for this it should bracket the age range (0-25).
- Need to add a commitment to local provision bearing in mind the geographical spread of Powys
- Should emphasise the importance of local post-16 and Welsh-medium provision.
- Should mention the value of community learning, young people learning in the heart of their communities
- Vision should be for a system where for all learners the nearest school is their best option, where all schools of like phase provide the same excellent opportunities, are equivalently funded, and provide the same aspirational outcomes

### iii) **Suggested alternative visions**

- ‘All children and young people in Powys experience high quality education within a reasonable distance from their home and develop the knowledge, skills and



attributes that will enable them to become personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible, spiritually aware and globally engaged citizens.'

- 'All children and young people in Powys experience high quality education where they develop skills, attributes and personal strengths based on learnt knowledge to enable them to become fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged individuals'
- 'All children and young people in Powys have equal opportunities to experience high quality education and develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of Wales.'
- The vision should be something like 'Enabling high quality education,' 'Creating the best for the next generation'. The rest can then fit in as objectives e.g. 'Creating the best learning environment for the next generations'.

**iv) Other general comments:**

- Like the sentiment, but it's too wordy and therefore ambiguous
- Doesn't really mean anything other than a collection of impressive sounding words
- In its current form, typical PCC meaningless words on a page
- Need to have the finances to back the vision up
- Seems to be just words and very woolly
- It's very vague, corporate speak
- A vision should be achievable, aspirational and short, it should also mean something. I have no idea what you want to do
- How will achieving this vision be financed?
- A vision should be something to strive for not something that is expected
- It doesn't really challenge the status quo much – reads like what schools already try to do
- I wish more effort had gone into how it could be achieved, rather than pages of the 'wish list'
- The vision does not refer to raising standards or reducing the attainment gap which are key features of the WAG national mission
- The vision is a summary of the 4 WG principles – it appears PCC has not taken the time to make the vision specific to Powys
- The vision considers education in isolation of community assets and broader public sector offer.
- Cut the flowery language and sort your schools out now, not in some amazing vision for 2025.
- Powys needs to be ambitious. The vision doesn't show anything innovative.

**Section 4 – Guiding Principles**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the guiding principles to be used to underpin the Council's thinking going forward, which were included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

270 respondents answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that these guiding principles are appropriate?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	113	41.9%
Agree	102	37.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	18	6.7%
Disagree	31	11.5%
Strongly disagree	6	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **79.7%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the guiding principles. **13.7%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **6.7%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents that disagreed with the guiding principles were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider.

Comments were received from 123 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) Comments on individual guiding principles**

- ***Excellent and inclusive schools that are encouraged to work together to develop high-quality teaching, learning and leadership***
  - This seems very confused. Would be clearer to say 'Schools that are rated the best in Wales, promote inclusivity and work in partnership.'
  - 'Excellent and inclusive schools that work together' – encouraging them isn't enough.
  - 'Excellent and inclusive schools that are encouraged to work together to develop high-quality teaching, learning and leadership located in the communities they serve'
- ***A curriculum that is responsive to the need of learners, the community and the economy, and meets statutory requirements***
  - Is it local or UK economy? Concerned that the curriculum would be biased to just that. Nothing wrong with developing the local economy, but needs to be balanced
  - Surely the curriculum is a statutory requirement?
  - Should say 'future economy' – post Brexit, huge developments in technology and the massive implications of climate change are going to have implications for our young people way beyond anything we can currently envisage.
- ***Welsh medium provision across all key phases of education, where growing numbers of learners can be confident that they will have access to provision in Welsh***

- English speaking education should be funded as well as Welsh
  - It should not feel as though Welsh-medium education is the first class citizen compared to English language providers
  - Would add that English medium education shouldn't be detrimentally affected as a consequence
  - Could scrap the Welsh-medium one – pupils leaving Welsh education don't use Welsh when they leave school
  - Less emphasis on Welsh provision where this is at the expense of other pupils
  - More investment should be put into STEM and high impact foreign languages from around the world rather than Welsh medium
  - Do not agree with this – it should be parental choice whether they choose to educate their child through the medium of Welsh or English
  - Should include that pupils have access to Welsh-medium provision as near to home as is practically possible
  - Welsh-medium education needs to be offered in dual stream settings to make it acceptable to the majority of parents
  - Too long winded – 'Welsh-medium education that can be accessed at all stages of life'
  - Children should have better access to Welsh language education within the county they live
  - Need to strengthen Welsh language comment that all learners will have Welsh language skills as a consequence of their education
  - Should state that provision should be as near to home as is practically possible
  - Should state 'all learners' – 'Welsh medium provision across all key phases of education, where growing numbers of learners can be confident that they will have access to provision in Welsh'
  - Need to establish designated Welsh-medium provision
  - The opportunity to be bilingual should be essential rather than optional in my opinion, especially in primary schools
  - Need to be stronger in terms of improving Welsh-medium provision – 'Welsh-medium provision across all educational key stages, where an increasing number of learners can be sure that they have access to Welsh-medium provision and a clear pathway between each phase'
  - No reference to developing the language skills of pupils attending English-medium schools
- ***Schools that are financially stable and sustainable, where their leaders can concentrate on pupil and staff learning and well-being***
- Sustainable budgets are doing nothing but limiting provision, breadth of options for learners, ALN needs, providing for the most vulnerable and traumatised learners, and definitely not helping the well-being of staff
  - You are setting yourselves up to fail – we will have a Conservative government for some years to come, austerity is likely to continue and budgets will be squeezed even tighter. Don't know how achievable this is
  - Members of the Cabinet have previously criticised schools for not being able to manage budgets successfully. Schools are cutting staff to balance budgets. A wonderful vision, but not borne out in reality

- Doubt that any schools in Powys could ever truly be financially viable. Money needs to be shared from more affluent areas where it is spent on frivolities when rural schools lack necessities
  - All schools should be financially stable, how can teachers do their best for our children without the best resources or lack of funding?
  - Not sure 'financially stable' is fair in rural communities – rural communities require adequate and appropriate schools, but these may not be as financially stable as those in suburban communities
  - Don't need the second part. Delivery of the first part will deliver the second.
  - You can't have a school that is financially stable if the leaders are concentrating on well-being and learning – a headteacher's role is either to manage staff and pupils or to generate income.
  - 'Schools that are financially stable, sustainable and have the resources to enable continual improvement...'
  - Should include something about avoiding the current major differences in the cost per head between schools
- ***Curriculum choice from the age of 14 that offers a breadth and balance of specialist academic, vocational and work-based learning to meet the needs of all learners***
- Especially agree that vocational courses and work-based learning needs to be readily available
  - It's important that there is curriculum choice from the age of 14 and 16 that offers a breadth and balance of specialist academic, vocational and work-based learning to meet the needs of all learners
  - Pupils should have full choice of what subjects to pick. No more columns.
  - Suggest 'Curriculum choice from the age of 14 to meet the needs of all learners to meet their full potential'
  - Broader curriculum at KS4 and KS5
- ***Appropriate provision for pupils with additional learning needs, as near to home as is practically possible, in a way that best combines the specialisms and facilities needed to provide effective support.***
- Difficult to shorten this one. People need to realise that we can't deliver everything within 1 mile of their house
  - This needs to be more specific
  - Still sounds like a compromise – 'be grateful for anything you get' – needs better and more ambitious vision / wording
  - The point about children with ALN remaining close to home is really important
  - Should be a commitment to providing inclusive education for all
  - 'Appropriate provision for pupils with additional learning needs, as near to home as is practically possible, in a way that best combines the specialisms and facilities needed to provide effective support.'
  - Does not take into account that for some ALN pupils, the distance travelled is of secondary importance to the provision they receive

- ***A safe, digitally rich, learning environment that is fit for purpose***
  - Scrap this – surely this is a given these days?
  - Slight concern about ‘digitally rich’ – digital learning is very important but hope not too much and that it also includes education about the risks of digital use – research into screentime, social media, internet use found it has a negative impact on children’s wellbeing and mental health. Too much homework is on computer, we should encourage children to go outside, engage with people without technology as well as being able to use it correctly
  - This is key
  - Agreed, schools need to keep up with the digital age and be safe places to learn
  - Huge issue with the word ‘safe’ here. The concept of internet safety has moved on in the last 10 years – we cannot make the internet ‘safe’ for young people – they will be exposed to adult content by the time they are 8. They need a space within school where they can discuss and start to develop coping mechanisms.
  - ‘A safe, technologically rich, learning environment...’
  
- ***School environments that provide attractive spaces for community activities, including sport, active citizenship and culture***
  - Schools shouldn’t have to rent out their space to fund themselves
  - Libraries, community halls should be separate from schools to allow appropriate space and access for all
  - Schools don’t need to be made attractive – children in Africa still learn in very poor school environments
  - Schools generally have very poor history in engaging with the wider community. Caretakers generally will not open the building after hours, and they certainly won’t heat it. Access cannot be given during school hours due to safeguarding.
  
- ***A local authority where staff in our schools are valued and are encouraged to work collaboratively with partners to develop the new curriculum***
  - This is very aspirational for Powys County Council
  - This is key
  - As long as teachers are given time off from work to do it – they don’t need their workload to increase
  - Take out the word ‘collaboratively’ – for the future of our children and young people we need to break down barriers and work in partnership with everyone we can
  - Should also mention that governors are valued
  - Teaching staff who are interested in teaching and engaging with pupils
  
- ***An open and transparent process for change***
  - This is very aspirational for Powys County Council
  - If you aren’t open aren’t you by default transparent?
  - How much of this document has been shared and distributed to the wider ‘community’?

- These last two could work together – ‘An open and transparent local authority where all stakeholders are valued and encouraged to work collaboratively to drive change to develop a high quality education system.’
- This should be prioritised, previous work on school modernisation has been anything but open and transparent.
- Need to add to this – ‘An open and transparent process for change with clear timescales’

## ii) Other elements that should be included

### - The interests of learners

- The overriding principle of any education system has to be that ‘The best interests of the learners must be at the forefront of any policy setting and decision making’

### - Sustainability

- The only mention of sustainable is in terms of it being economic
- Although the document mentions sustainability it is vague and needs to address the environmental concerns of young people
- Climate crisis

### - Local provision

- Localism is important
- The importance of small rural schools to the communities they serve should also be recognised
- No reference to locality
- Schools should be positioned to reduce the flow of learners to England
- Would only agree if able to offer these with children being kept in their local area. Bussing children out of the area to create a mass is not an option.

### - Travel distances

- Would like to see a limit on how far you would expect pupils of different ages to travel to access appropriate education
- Needs to be a commitment to limiting travel distance, particularly for younger pupils

### - More Able and Talented

- Need to refer to more able pupils
- Should be provision for gifted children as well as children with additional needs
- That a learning environment is nurtured in schools so that all pupils, including the brightest, are encouraged, enabled and motivated to fulfil their potential.

- **Diocesan provision**
  - No mention of Church Schools. Would like to see a commitment and aspiration to providing a range of educational offers and including the valued place of Church Schools in the Powys offer
  - Would like to see referenced the place of partnership with the 3 Diocesan Bodies serving Powys
- **Mental health / Well-being**
  - Mental health and well-being of staff and pupils needs to be a priority
  - The well-being of staff working in education needs to be a higher priority
- **Other**
  - 'A local authority highly valued by all its schools for its support and proactive collaboration with partners to achieve excellence in education.'
  - Nature based learning (e.g. forest school) should be up there with Welsh-medium and digital.
  - Young carers are supported to have an education alongside the right to continue to care for family members
  - Need to include pre-school education – education is from 3 years old and these pupils are not in school
  - For schools to be 'engaging' – engaged with pupils, parents, community, services, nature, the world around them
  - An element of play – encouraging children to have time and space to play and be children
  - No mention of the invaluable relationship between care givers and education

### iii) Other general comments

- The principles are good, but in our current climate, will not be able to achieve some of them in combination with each other
- No one could disagree with these, but where will the money come from to achieve these?
- There are a lot of them
- Reads like the same old mistakes. Another opportunity to shut small schools and provide less for communities.
- They are all things one would hope any education system would aim to embrace
- Overall, reads like 'corporate speak'
- This would be better as a matrix sliding scale rather than asking for en bloc agreement
- Would be easier to comment if the points had been numbered rather than bullet pointing
- More consistency in language is needed – it mentions pupils and learners and also schools which then does not include settings/college
- The need for quality should underpin all aspects – this should be the guiding principle, not cost saving or rationalisation

- Some of these guiding principles could contradict each other, care should be taken to clarify which ones can be used to override others
- Does
- Do not provide a 'robust' enough picture or plan for the future.
- Throughout the document the education service appears to have been considered in isolation – need to consider wider public sector offer

## **Section 5 – Staffing and Leadership**

The 'Transforming Education in Powys' document outlined the need to develop systems in order to better attract and retain staff and the need to develop leadership pathways to encourage our professionals to grow within the local authority. Respondents were asked to give their views on two questions. A summary of the responses is provided below.

### **Question 1: In your view, what does the Council need to do to better attract and retain staff?**

Comments were received from 246 respondents. These are summarised below:

#### **i) Reduce workload**

- Tackle workload issues
- Reduce workload
- Need to invest in staff – an attractive building isn't going to improve the workload of a stressed teacher or HLTA
- Less paperwork to allow teachers to teach
- Provide more time to prepare outstanding lessons
- many teachers are working 55-70 hours a week just to keep on top of their workload
- Increase minimum PPA time to at least 20% of teaching time
- 5 hours of PPA time for full time teaching staff
- More time for marking
- Acceptable class sizes
- Less paperwork
- More generous staffing levels

#### **ii) More focus on well-being**

- Have a proper well-being programme in place
- More focus on staff well-being
- People that work in education tend to be people who put others needs before themselves, its vital they are looked after too
- Improve staff morale / job satisfaction

#### **iii) Better training / development opportunities**

- Better opportunities for CPD
- Support the staff you already have by offering training opportunities to all staff not just those in leadership



- Invest in experienced teachers by offering CPD courses that help their career to progress
- Offer sabbaticals to improve development opportunities
- CPD on a collaborative basis allowing staff to think more regionally and to be less focussed on the immediate vicinity of their own school
- Online webinars
- Opportunities to have work experience in different schools
- Succession planning e.g. Emerging Leaders Programme
- Encourage and give current staff opportunities to learn Welsh or improve their Welsh
- More opportunities for school to school support and visits
- Lead teachers to be appointed to share good practice
- Clear progression pathways in place
- Improve digital opportunities to strengthen links with universities and improve career progression / access to further education / training
- Larger schools would create more opportunities for development / career progression
- Encourage school staff to have regular monthly supervision and review of key performance indicators

#### **iv) More stability**

- Provide more permanent positions
- Staff need to feel stability in their schools and free from fear of school closure
- Long term funding needs to be available to allow schools to offer long term employment
- Uncertainty of education provision and jobs does not provide reassurance to staff

#### **v) More flexibility**

- Allow more flexibility
- Better use of part time / job share arrangements
- Remote working to prepare lessons

#### **vi) More opportunities / recognition for support staff**

- Improve progression routes for support staff
- Fair pay for teaching assistants
- Allow schools to set their own pay scales, e.g. for support staff who go above and beyond
- Pay for teaching assistants / learning assistants needs to reflect their responsibility / commitment

#### **vii) Make Powys a more attractive place to come and work**

- Powys has to be seen as a great place to live with many opportunities for exciting leisure activities

- Campaign to encourage teachers to come to work in Powys, similar to the one being run for social workers
- Invest in services to attract individuals and families – teachers need to want to life here

#### **viii) Better working environments**

- Provide well maintained schools and up to date technology
- Better working environments
- Better quality facilities
- Adequate funding, better facilities
- Need to ensure sufficient funding for resources

#### **ix) More opportunities to join the profession**

- Is it possible to train teachers within Powys?
- Establish links with training providers, teacher training organisations
- More links with universities / training providers
- High level apprenticeships and traineeships – similar to social workers

#### **x) Better support**

- Support from the council on key areas e.g. ALN, behaviour support, financial management
- Better HR support
- Staff must feel well supported in their schools
- Better support for staff in acting roles to encourage them to strive to take these roles on permanently
- Support for staff during the NPQH application process which is fair and consistent across the board
- Supportive ethos from ESTYN, SLT, colleagues

#### **xi) More recognition**

- Not enough praise given to higher quality teachers
- More identification and recognition for excellent teachers in Powys
- Believing in staff's professionalism
- Respect staff
- Incentives to acknowledge staff services – discounts? Staff awards for long-service or exemplary performance?
- Take staff views into consideration
- Value loyalty
- Competitive salaries

#### **xii) Teachers need to be accountable**

- Teachers need to be better performance managed and held accountable
- Need to deal with under performance

- Provide challenge but support
- Encourage school staff to have regular monthly supervision and review of key performance indicators

### **xiii) Other**

- Make sure subjects are taught by specialists
- Policies and procedures in schools should be consistent across the board
- Establish a central PCC function employing cover staff
- Communicate openly, honestly and transparently
- Avoid implementing too many changes all at once and give reasonable time for change to be implemented and embedded

### **Question 2: In your view, what does the Council need to do to encourage our professionals to aspire to leadership roles?**

Comments were received from 225 respondents. These are summarised below:

#### **i) Reduce the workload**

- Reduce the workload - SLT are firefighting constantly
- Ensure all headships are non teaching roles
- Reduce the pressure on leaders to be business managers, accountants, social workers, police officers etc.
- Business managers and cluster based teams to support leaders
- Offer more support for leaders

#### **ii) Training**

- Supported in-house training programmes
- Make it clearer what's involved, offer training to bridge the gap between current experience and qualifications and what would be needed
- Take a holistic approach to career progression – upskill the member of staff in areas other than education e.g. leadership, management, finance, HR

#### **iii) Development / shadowing opportunities**

- Provide opportunities for staff to experience middle / senior leadership roles, with the appropriate time allocated for this
- Release teachers for a week / fortnight to observe good leaders / headteachers so that they can make an informed decision
- Offer more secondments
- Promote good leaders and use them to encourage and mentor others

#### **iv) 'Grow your own'**

- Encourage staff to share their aspirations and be guided towards leadership roles by the senior leadership team.

- Talent identification within schools
- A clear structure of support for potential headteachers
- Create a pathway

**v) More stability**

- Stability in the number and type of schools
- Have a school structure that is securely funded and sustainable, this will allow leaders to focus on the core purpose of teaching, learning and well-being and will aid more effective strategic planning

**vi) Better funding / facilities**

- Better facilities – buildings, IT
- Reduce financial pressures faced by leaders

**vii) Better recognition**

- Competitive salary
- Giving a sense of ownership of roles
- More recognition of excellent leaders / managers

**viii) Other**

- Blame free culture
- Flexible working
- Trust young teachers to lead the way

**Section 6 – What education in Powys could look like in the future**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future, as outlined in the ‘Transforming Education in Powys’ document, are appropriate.

262 respondents answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future are appropriate?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	58	22.1%
Agree	119	45.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	54	20.6%
Disagree	23	8.8%
Strongly disagree	8	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **67.5%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future. **11.9%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **20.6%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked whether there are any other models the local authority should consider as it looks at transforming the schools' system in Powys.

Comments were received from 148 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) Sixth form / Post-14/16**

**- Establishment of dedicated centres / hubs**

- Sixth form hubs – could have 4 across Powys – Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod and Brecon
- 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges
- 3 sixth form colleges – mid, north, south
- Should be a small number of 6<sup>th</sup> form centres built in strategic points in the county which are run by the high schools in their area, teaching done by the staff from the high schools
- Close all sixth forms in North Powys and create a high quality sixth form college in Newtown that can offer a wide range of academic subjects together with more vocational options where pupils can mix and match
- Build two sixth form centres in the north and the south which offer all courses
- One sixth form in the north and another in the south of the county, offering both academic and vocational qualifications under one roof. This would allow economies of scale, greater choice and increased teaching expertise
- Upper schools in the format of a 6<sup>th</sup> form college with three campuses, one south, one mid, one north
- 6<sup>th</sup> form college provision that offers a wide variety of subjects in English and Welsh and links to both English and Welsh universities

**- Tertiary model**

- Post 14/16 centres which are strategically placed to ensure maximum catchment with the lowest number of centres
- Should have a tertiary education offer with 6<sup>th</sup> forms away from the high schools
- Tertiary system would allow more collaborative working between primary and secondary, and would allow FE staff to be specialists in their subject area
- Look at a tertiary model for post 16 education to stop the drift to neighbouring authorities

**- Reduce the number of post-16 providers**

- Reduce the number of secondary schools that are able to offer Post 16 curriculum
- Fewer secondary schools with sixth forms
- **More collaboration between providers**
  - 6<sup>th</sup> forms working in curriculum groups is the way forward, with IT and teacher movement part of the solution
  - Joint sixth forms
- **Other**
  - Consider handing over all post-16 to NPTC
  - Adequate choice at 14 and 16 can only be achieved if there is a large enough scale

## ii) Less schools

- **Less schools generally**
  - There are too many schools for the population – would rather children travelled further to a centre of excellence than pop down the road to the mediocre
  - Reducing schools would mean more choice of subjects
  - It's cheaper to bus students than to keep schools open
  - Need to close some primary and a very few secondary schools
  - Reduce the number of schools and satellite schools
  - Look towards larger institutions (perhaps multi-site) to give a range of subjects and to improve prospects on the staffing side
  - Impossible to give pupils access to the same experiences in a school of 30 and 130
- **Less small schools**
  - Need to close all primary schools with less than 50 pupils within the next 5 years
  - Close smaller schools to be able to better fund bigger schools
  - Small schools need to be closed to allow sustainability on other larger schools
  - Closure of small primary schools where numbers are below 50 and travel distance to the nearest school is small
  - Small primary schools need to go
  - Time to close small schools that are economically inefficient – secondary schools cannot continue to prop up primary schools financially
  - Going forward, with the new curriculum small schools will face significant challenges to deliver this

- **Less primary schools**
  - Fewer primary schools
  - Look at closing primary schools – less primary schools in big towns such as Newtown and Welshpool
- **Less high schools**
  - Fewer secondary schools

### iii) **Welsh-medium**

- **Designated Welsh-medium provision**
  - Single stream schools
  - Additional single medium schools rather than Welsh streams
  - Need designated Welsh-medium schools which provide continuity throughout all key stages
  - Welsh-medium high school so that Welsh medium pupils can learn in an immersive environment
  - Welsh-medium 3-18 school/s
- **Immersion provision**
  - Language immersion units to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to become fluent in Welsh
  - Welsh language immersion scheme as used in other areas e.g. Wrexham and Llandudno
- **Provision needs to be available locally**
  - Welsh-medium education needs to be available locally to students
- **Need to increase provision more generally**
  - Need to look seriously at increasing Welsh language provision, especially in primary schools.

### iv) **All-through Schools**

- More all-through schools
- More 3-18 schools in Powys
- One site schools from age 3 to 18
- All-aged schools
- More all through models
- All through schools centred on each high school
- All through Welsh medium schools so that a Welsh ethos can be more easily established and staff are utilised more strategically

**v) Federation**

- Federate primary schools in the cluster
- More federating or closer links between schools
- More federations

**vi) More collaboration / sharing of resources**

- Having a business manager in charge of several schools to reduce the workload of headteachers
- Create 3 school groups – south, mid, north – to work together to share resources and teachers, rather than having schools competing against each other

**vii) 3-14 schools**

- Look at developing 3-14 schools, with post-14 and post-16 education tying together to ensure high level specialist teaching is available with a wider offer range

**viii) Digital**

- Use of digital options for linking up with other schools or providers
- Closer digital collaboration
- Distance learning should be a better option

**ix) Need to invest in buildings**

- Make the existing building stock more sustainable, with reduced utility costs using 'green' energy sources.
- Need to invest in carbon neutral school infrastructure
- Purpose built super school with increased curriculum and specialist teachers

**x) Look at other rural areas**

- Look abroad at similar rural communities
- What other models are used in other sparsely populated areas?
- Look at Shropshire and Herefordshire
- Look at Australian, Scandinavian models
- Look at Gwynedd to transform Welsh-medium education in Powys
- Look further afield e.g. Finnish education system
- Look at Dumfries & Galloway, Scottish Highlands

**xi) Reference to retaining the Status Quo**

- Dual stream schools reflect the linguistic nature of our community
- Need to maintain post-16 provision in schools
- Concern about impact on communities if local, modestly sized primary schools close



- Small schools are better for young children but inter school activities / visits to senior schools should be encouraged.
- There are very successful small schools in Powys – closing these would destroy the local communities
- Unproven whether sixth form centres of 240+ provide the correct provision for Powys pupils. Centres such as these could create a huge gap in access to higher education in the county
- Due to the rural nature of Powys, having large schools will not always be viable

**xii) Reference to local views**

- The answers lie within the communities themselves – need to communicate and discuss with each catchment. This may be time consuming in the short term, but will be met with long term outcomes
- Wrong to think that one model would suit all – local issues are key

**xiii) Other suggestions**

- More involvement with other agencies early on to eradicate problems later in high school
- PSHE / nurturing needs to be built into the curriculum

**xiv) General comments on this section**

- The document just sets out ideas – not very strong or positive language
- The ideas are vague, models aren't clear
- Suggestions are extremely vague and broad brush
- Neither agree nor disagree as there are no concrete plans. I fear the Council is trying to get us to agree to one thing disguised as another
- It's not clear what is being suggested

Respondents were asked to provide any further comments on this section. Comments were received from 81 respondents. These are summarised below:

- Need more detail on how to get there
- Funding is needed to achieve this
- As a Council, need to promote Powys as a fantastic place to live to encourage more families to come and live here
- Over the years, politicians have not had the strength to implement proposals to modernise secondary education. There is no evidence that the current administration will take these decisions
- Modern buildings do not always transform learning – they are not the answer to everything
- No reference to adult learners
- Do not think Federations are worth pursuing – do not provide enough efficiency or solve the wider problem of creating sustainable, high quality education
- Need to consider the effect of developing Welsh-medium education on social mobility – often Welsh-medium primary schools become middle class enclaves.

- Difficult to see what difficulties and issues may arise until the new curriculum is rolled out
- Community engagement is a massive failing of the local council – local school children should be more involved in decisions
- Powys solutions should come from Powys, not outside voices
- Odd that there is no direct reference to the college as one of the key education partners in Powys – talk about collaboration between schools, but collaboration should be wider than this
- It's clear that pupils are willing to travel for the best possible education – the rural nature of Powys should not be an excuse to keep the status quo
- Is the ambition to deliver transformation by 2025 realistic given the time and resources it takes to close, open and merge schools?
- Should centralisation proceed, the compilation of governing bodies will need to reflect the wider catchment area of pupils

### **Section 7 – Welsh-medium provision**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education in Powys.

267 respondents answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document set out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	39	14.6%
Agree	97	36.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	90	33.7%
Disagree	32	12.0%
Strongly disagree	9	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **50.9%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document set out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education. **15.4%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **33.7%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked whether they had any concerns or evidence to suggest that the Council is treating/using the Welsh language less favourably than English in the document.

261 respondents answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>Do you have any concerns or evidence to suggest that the Council is treating/using the Welsh language less favourably than English in the document?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	36	13.8%
No	180	69.0%
I don't know	45	17.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents who answered 'yes' were asked to provide details.

Comments were received from 75 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) Lack of Welsh-medium subject provision**

- The document clearly shows that Powys does not provide sufficient Welsh-medium education, particularly at secondary level – there is no provision at all in at least 2 catchment areas
- The document doesn't say that the opportunities and continuity will be full or at least equal to the English-medium opportunities
- Not all subjects are offered in Welsh in high schools
- A lack of Welsh-medium subjects in further education colleges
- For English-medium pupils, 100% of subjects are available in English in KS3, 4 and 5. This is not true for Welsh-medium

**ii) Welsh-medium pupils expected to travel further than English-medium pupils**

- Powys has historically treated Welsh-medium pupils less favourably by putting unacceptable pressure on them due to expecting them to travel unacceptable distances to access their education
- Students who are Welsh speakers should be given the same opportunities as English-medium pupils to be educated in their own community
- Welsh-medium pupils have to travel miles to get to a Welsh-medium school when it could be provided more locally

**iii) Need dedicated Welsh-medium provision**

- Powys must have dedicated Welsh-medium secondary provision
- Bilingual schools do not offer equity of access. Powys children do not have the same options or opportunities as children in any other county in Wales
- You don't value it as a language enough to offer separate Welsh schools lumping it with the English as a 'stream'

**iv) Need equity for both languages**

- Need equity for both languages – there is a significant gap in the funding currently in favour of Welsh-medium pupils
- Welsh is always treated more favourably than English

- PCC are positively discriminating against English language pupils
- Welsh medium is treated far more favourably in this county – financially it has access to pots of money
- Where is the mention of English language provision?

**v) Communication**

- LA officers not communicating in Welsh as well as English (e.g. letters, e-mails, documents)

**vi) Reference to the ‘Transforming Education in Powys’ document**

- The document hardly sets out a vision of how Powys could lead in this area
- The document gives lip service to the Welsh language but does not give it the prominence it should have
- Unfair use of per pupil funding figures – the implication in the document is that we should move towards less variance in per pupil funding. However, this shows a lack of understanding of the measures taken by the Formula Review Group to remove discrimination against schools with a Welsh stream

Respondents were asked what changes could be made to the document to have a more positive effect on the Welsh language.

Comments were received from 91 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) More Welsh-medium provision**

- Needs to go further than ‘more accessible Welsh medium secondary provision’ – needs to state that the vision is to have it available in all catchments as it does for early years and primary schools
- Ensure availability of Welsh-medium schooling within local areas
- Every secondary school should have a Welsh stream
- Develop a county-wide network of full Welsh-medium provision from 4-18
- Direction and commitment to establish Welsh-medium schools in the primary and secondary sector
- Perhaps all primary schools should be Welsh medium?
- Fully Welsh medium schools
- Emphasis on teaching through the medium of Welsh

**ii) Need to make Welsh more appealing**

- Make it more exciting
- Encourage young people to want to learn it
- Need to change attitudes towards the Welsh language
- Make the Welsh language fun, conversational
- A more dynamic leadership group to drive forward the cultural, language and history of the Welsh language

**iii) Improved promotion / communication**

- Consistent messages
- Need to actively promote the benefits of bilingualism
- The Council publically supporting Welsh-medium provision in Powys to create confidence
- Develop a network of full Welsh medium provision for all catchment areas and all ages

**iv) Need to follow up with proposals**

- Follow through with outlined proposals
- The document mentions the aspiration that children in future will have more opportunities to study through the medium of Welsh but gave no indication as to how this is to be achieved
- Not too worried about the document, it's the implementation I'm interested in
- More detail about how Powys intend on offering Welsh medium education to all learners where it is required

**v) Reference to staff / teachers**

- Invest in your Welsh teachers, be creative – Welsh food, culture, stories
- More enthused teachers who wish to inspire the young
- Training for staff

**vi) More focus on increasing Welsh in English-medium schools**

- More Welsh in English-medium schools
- Innovative ways that we can get all pupils to be Welsh speakers, not just those opting for Welsh medium

**vii) Welsh needs to be a central consideration**

- Welsh must be central to all Council policies, plans and decisions
- Visibility of the language in schools

**viii) Other**

- Needs to be a focus on bilingualism
- Welsh medium schools need to be more involved with Welsh speaking communities who aren't also parents
- The vision should be that all schools in Powys can provide Welsh and English language opportunities, and thus maximise national cultural exposure and language exchange within and without formal class activities
- Free classes to parents to support their children as they develop bilingual skills
- There is no reference to the Welsh Government's target to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and how Powys will contribute to this vision

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for Welsh-medium provision in Powys as outlined in the document. Comments were received from 83 respondents. These are summarised below:

- Both language should be equal – neither should be at the detriment to the other
- There aren't the pool of qualified professionals to draw upon to fulfil this vision at the moment.
- English-medium schools are doing a lot more teaching through the medium of Welsh – this could be another option
- People want to include their children in Welsh-medium education but don't because of the lack of provision locally. Numbers will not rise unless there is confidence that there will be provision available locally
- Lack of full Welsh-medium provision in the county makes it more difficult to recruit teachers, who want this type of provision for their children
- Need to ensure the development of Mudiad Meithrin provision for the early years – Cylchoedd Ti a Fi and Cylchoedd Meithrin

### **Section 8 – Additional Learning Needs**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs in Powys.

263 respondents answered this question, and their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	45	17.1%
Agree	111	42.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	74	28.1%
Disagree	28	10.6%
Strongly disagree	5	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **59.3%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document sets out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs. **12.5%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **28.1%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs as outlined in the document.

Comments were received from 160 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) References to Funding**

- Stop cutting funding
- The provision is under funded
- Provide increased funding
- Powys funding has negatively impacted ALN funding
- More funding for ALN pupils in mainstream schools
- ALN funding needs to be ringfenced to secure provision
- Budget cuts to special needs schools means that more young people are being forced into mainstream education where their needs are not catered for
- Funding needs to be available if more children are going to access mainstream to ensure staff are trained and skilled in supporting those children
- More funding for children with ALN – it shouldn't matter which school they attend – the support should be the same in all schools
- More funding needed to support children by using learning mentors / programmes put in place to help
- Schools should be given extra funding to enable schools to support pupils
- More considered allocation of monies to effectively deliver the provision, to ensure all entitlements are met
- Level of need is huge but there seems to be no money in the pot to support these children in mainstream schools
- Money to release ALNCoS from class to support these pupils
- Revised funding for the PRUs
- Stop paying for out of county provision

**ii) References to Staffing**

- There are staff shortages
- Not enough staff to support ALN pupils
- All staff at county level working in the ALN department should have degree training in ALN
- Staff do not have specialist strategies to help children with varying degrees of learning needs
- Staff in north Powys schools are unskilled in areas of ALN
- Lot of work to be done for school staff to understand neurological difficulties, trauma and attachment issues
- Staff at mainstream schools cannot be expected to be as experienced as SEN school staff
- Too many unqualified assistants in schools, especially high schools, supporting children, but they don't have the skills and basic background knowledge to understand how some children need to be supported
- Teachers and heads need to take responsibility for ALN and behaviour – a lot of staff have low tolerance for ALN and behaviour
- Currently there is a lack of support staff, lack of differentiated provision / curriculum offer due to staffing levels, lack of specialism in ALN
- Constant change of staff is upsetting for those with ALN even if they are in mainstream education
- Many special schools have staff who are not adequately trained – this needs looking at

- ALN learners need enough trained staff in school to cover the provision they are entitled to – this is not currently the case

**iii) Need more Teaching Assistants / 1 to 1 support**

- Put in TAs to provide support
- More 1 to 1 support is needed to help pupils – there is such a wide spectrum of additional needs
- More support in the classroom i.e. 1:1 for those with ALN, also using assistants to contribute to the learning of the wider class
- Ensure that there are sufficient support staff who are not the first to go if/when there are budget cuts

**iv) References to variations in provision**

- Provision varies significantly – this needs to be evened out
- Reduce the differences between areas – same criteria in north and south for access to pre-school specialist centres
- ALN support is patchy
- Needs to be a more equitable service throughout the county
- Some schools provide better support than others – all schools should learn from the best in terms of how they can improve
- Better provision in primaries to ensure all ALN pupils have the same opportunities wherever they go to school
- Uniformity of practice
- Need for the county to set out exactly what a student at different stages of the current code of practice is entitled to and for this to be replicated county wide
- Additional needs learners should have the same opportunities, no matter where they live in the county

**v) References to training needs**

- More training needed for mainstream staff on inclusive learning
- Specialist training to be made more available
- Need to develop teachers knowledge of additional needs and supporting teachers to deliver appropriate interventions
- Need to upskill staff – proper CPD, not just school based

**vi) Need better provision for More Able and Talented Pupils**

- Need to spend more on cleverer pupils, less pandering to pupils who won't have a reasonable academic chance in mainstream school and place them in special schools where they can be supported
- Need to take account of learning needs of exceptional students and not leave them in the mainstream where they could become disruptive out of boredom



**vii) Reference to the document**

- Not enough information in the document
- Little in the document other than a token paragraph – gives a feeling that Additional Learning Needs aren't really being considered
- Case for Change document does not address ALN at all
- No mention of the impact of the new ALN bill

**viii) Reference to the LIST team**

- Disbanding the LIST team has been detrimental to the needs of ALN pupils and their teachers
- Loss of the LIST team has made it harder to liaise between schools and Powys
- The LIST team were excellent and need to be re-introduced
- Need staff available to support eg LIST

**ix) Need for more behaviour support**

- For pupils with behavioural issues, need increased powers for school staff to discipline pupils
- Hard to access support for pupils with behavioural and emotional needs
- Provision for pupils with BESD / challenging behaviour – these are the ones who eat up leadership time in schools
- Need a behaviour support team

**x) Welsh-medium**

- Pupils with ALN should be able to access Welsh-medium provision like any other pupils
- Welsh-medium provision in special schools?

**xi) Better support needed**

- Need a system where teachers are supported to support pupils with ALN at a much quicker rate
- Lack of Ed Psychs / delays in referrals mean that children have to be 'managed within the school' however great their needs
- All schools must have better access to ALN specialists to be able to treat behavioural and educational challenges early at source
- Easier and quicker access to support services needed e.g. ed psych
- Schools don't have access to support
- Need to provide additional support to schools to enable them to support ALN pupils in mainstream
- More support to schools for children with ALN
- Access to relevant support at the correct stage without the fear of it only being available on a short term basis

**xii) Integration into mainstream provision**

- Pupils with ALN should be integrated into schools as much as possible not segregated
- Inclusion should be a high priority – some pupils in special schools could be in mainstream
- More emphasis on inclusivity with ALN pupils being integrated more into mainstream settings
- Mainstream provision where appropriate with adequate funding, however there are times when this is not appropriate

**xiii) Reference to other authorities**

- Advice from other authorities needs to be sought
- Ceredigion model is impressive – highly specialist resources in mainstream schools, no length drawn out process to access them
- Ysgol Bro Pedr – at secondary level they have set up the Life Skills provision that supports around 20 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. CANolfan y Bont – part of the school but resourced by the LEA – 15 young people with PMLD. Level of inclusion is inspirational. Resource bases in other schools, meaning that children with ALN can be supported adequately by highly trained staff in their own / nearby communities

**xiv) More joined up working**

- Increased co-ordination of expertise to allow full and equal access to provision
- Multidisciplinary teams to work across health/education/the council to coordinate ALN needs with key stakeholders
- Closer working between primary/secondary schools
- Rationalisation of the service with joined up thinking and co-operation between LEA and schools.
- A happy medium of joint schooling between special school and mainstream school, a key member of support staff working at both schools, liaising between schools, home/family and any other services
- Joined-up thinking on ALN pupils progression
- Close partnership with the Health Board
- Implement sufficient strategies that allow for a decrease in the number of pupils starting school with ALN e.g. increase the number of health visitors, social workers, parenting/lifestyle classes
- Better links with special schools to use expertise and resources

**xv) Specialist units**

- Specialist centres provide nurturing safe havens that meet the needs of children
- Specialist units in schools that support pupils needs and teaches realistic curriculum that meet their future needs
- Each high school should have a specialist centre at one feeder primary school and the high school.
- Mainstream hubs for pupils who need support but don't need special school provision
- ASD units in all mainstream high schools – let pupils stay with their peers

- Understand the value of specialist centres and their staff
- Each school to have a 'unit' which concentrates on ALN pupils
- Larger schools to become ALN hubs, staffed in part by PCC resources – could then effectively support the local network of schools
- Need more resource and provision based in schools/catchments

**xvi) Accessibility**

- Better / more equal access – some school buildings not fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities

**xvii) Need to consider each individual pupil**

- Concern about pupils who like smaller primary schools being pushed into bigger primary schools and getting lost in the system
- A variety of settings is essential – can't adopt a 'one size fits all' model
- More focus on the best interest of the child – not what the parents want
- The county needs to consider the feelings of the children and the schools that support them, not just look at the figures on a paper
- More vocational and outdoor courses available for ALN pupils
- Important to consider the safety of all pupils so that ALN pupils effectively receive the support they need but also that the needs of non ALN pupils are considered as the impact of meeting the needs of ALN pupils in the classroom can have a significant effect on the other children
- More emphasis on basic skills instead of making a pupil who struggles to learn things which are beyond them

**xviii) Better communication**

- Linking in with parents is crucial
- Parents need better information on what's happening with their children and better guidance on where they can get support
- Listen to the children / parents – communication is vital

**xix) Mental Health / Well-being support**

- Mental health support needed – this is a growing concern
- Need to bring back school counsellors
- Emotional wellbeing is paramount
- More support for mental health issues

**xx) Early intervention**

- Greater emphasis on early intervention in pre school to ensure children are supported well and to minimise impact later on in their schooling
- Primary referrals should be addressed sooner – there are pupils accessing secondary education with specific learning issues that haven't been identified soon enough – these

issues should be addressed at primary level so that pupils are given every opportunity to reach their potential.

**xxi) Need to be able to respond more quickly**

- Short waiting times for assessment is crucial
- Earlier identification of children with autism
- Where children need referral or help, it should be available and implemented within 6 weeks of the initial referral
- More efficient referral system to allow young people to access the support or intervention they need sooner, to stop them disengaging

**xxii) Other**

- Form filling is a huge burden
- PRUs should be located in remote locations
- Need clarity re IDPs

**Section 9 – 14-19**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision in Powys.

253 respondents answered this question, and their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	38	15.0%
Agree	106	41.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	73	28.9%
Disagree	31	12.3%
Strongly disagree	5	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **56.9%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document sets out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision in Powys. **14.3%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **28.9%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for developing 14-19 provision as outlined in the document.

Comments were received from 151 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) More subject choice**

- Students need to be offered a wider range of subject options – this is difficult to achieve in small secondary schools
- Range of learning opportunities needs to be good to retain the 16+ from going across the border where their needs are not better met in the long term
- Choices are the most important aspect – the more the better
- Pupils should have choice but in their own school
- Offer more subjects
- Educational and vocational opportunities to be widened to encourage students to find their best path.
- Teach practical skills e.g. woodwork, metalwork
- More practical courses e.g. bricklaying, hedging, rural based/farming, and basic maths skills used day to day in adult lives e.g. VAT
- More young people are wanting to learn in a hands on way – young people need these courses, and offering as wide a range as possible would be very beneficial
- Opportunities for learners from 14 onwards need to be as wide ranging and varied as possible to ensure that all young people can make choices and are supported in progressing their learning in many different ways
- Agree with choice but quality over quantity needs to be considered
- Teach life skills e.g. First Aid, Money and Finance, Employability
- Introduction of wider skills and choices in year 9
- Wider 14-19 learning pathways will result from consolidating to fewer secondary schools with better funding, improved staffing, wider curriculum choice, potential to grow with appropriate capital investment
- What about highly talented artistic students – need appropriate learning opportunities for these pupils

**ii) Less subject choice**

- Need to focus on core subjects
- Less choice therefore less movement. Classic/traditional subjects with a couple of extras.

**iii) More vocational provision**

- For pupils who are less academic, the vocational route must not be marketed as the 'you aren't good enough for uni, so this is your option'
- Vocational courses in colleges only
- Should be more vocational qualifications available
- Vocational education is vital
- Work with NPTC to develop more vocational options
- Broaden vocational pathways
- Needs to be a better balance between vocational and academic
- Students must be able to access vocational courses without travelling long distances
- Llandrindod college could provide vocational subjects which would cut down on pupils having to spend time travelling to access these subjects in Newtown, Brecon, Hereford

- Vocational partnerships between firms and training providers should be extended over the whole county
- Offer college courses at a younger age
- More opportunities for those who struggle with school to have days in college or a work environment

**iv) 6<sup>th</sup> form hubs / centres**

- Reduce the number of sites, have purpose built centres offering a wide range of subjects taught by subject specialists, including level 1 vocational or pre-apprenticeships for pre 16
- 6<sup>th</sup> form learning hubs should be created to offer a wider and more diverse learning pathway for level 2 and 3 students.
- 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges are shown to be financially efficient – achieving good results despite receiving lower per student funding
- Specialised post-16 institutions, whether 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges or more vocational institutions, can provide better range and quality of courses
- Sixth form hubs – could have four across Powys – Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod, Brecon. Close smaller sixth forms to be able to offer a greater selection of subjects
- New sixth form centre with digital hubs is essential, but to maintain standards and LEA control these should be in high performing schools
- Sixth form hubs/centres in towns that are accessible for all
- Provide a range of subjects in one place without pupils having to transfer from one school to another for different subjects
- Students seek a different sort of environment as they reach post-GCSE age and separate institutions offer much better than school 6<sup>th</sup> forms ever can
- This would be best achieved by having fewer centres, creating the capacity and economy of scale to extend provision in vocational and academic pathways
- Need to reduce the number of schools / remove post 16 provision from secondary school – too much money is wasted on tiny sixth forms
- Need a wider selection of learning pathways that support apprenticeships, vocational, non-academic and life skills

**v) Tertiary**

- Move to a tertiary system with joint governance between FE, HE and training companies

**vi) Travel**

- Children can't be expected to learn properly if they are travelling around the countryside in between lessons
- Agree with trying to increase the range of learning pathways for pupils at both stages, but not at the expense of creating huge sixth form centres for pupils in the 14-19 age group which vast amounts of pupils can't access due to the distance
- Move teachers around not students
- No detail on how the Council plans to do this. The vision is good but the travel safety of children needs to be considered

**vii) Closer links with business**

- Engage with local businesses, the local community – make learning real and valid
- Would like more links with successful local employers and businesses
- Work with business leaders to provide the courses they want
- Link with large employers to give youngsters who are more vocational the chance to get out there and see the world of work in a controlled environment

**viii) Funding**

- More funding needed so that more provision can be offered – this is not possible on current staffing levels
- Need increased funding for the arts – music / drama etc across education and availability to study these at a high level at GCSE and A level
- Proper funding for 6<sup>th</sup> form courses
- Schools shouldn't be funded per pupil, it should be curriculum-led

**ix) Career guidance**

- Better career guidance needed so that pupils choose subject pathways suitable to their abilities
- More focus on vocational – there is too much focus on A levels
- Schools and the careers service do not offer the correct advice to the most able learners
- Greater link with the Careers service, local colleges and further education opportunities in year 9

**x) More focus on career pathways**

- Needs to be geared towards developing the skills needed to have a successful career
- Broadening of choices needs to be geared towards developing opportunities for careers that retain skills in the locality and set up our young people for the world beyond
- Need to be seeking talent from within the authority – training these people can start at 14 – need to be identifying the skills we need for the next 20/30 years and investing in young people now – if young people can see job opportunities in the county and specific routes into these careers, they may not be tempted to move away as soon as they can
- Should extend work experience e.g. visits to seminars or workplaces, talks by possible employers to help give some idea of the opportunities available
- Greater focus on work experience in year 9 to help pupils make choices for GCSE and A levels
- Powys needs to be sold as somewhere of opportunity – that starts at age 14

**xi) More Able and Talented**

- More funding for MAT pupils
- More able learners have been let down in the past – these pupils should be offered more opportunities in the way of additional subjects and the ability to sit exams early to increase subjects taken

- For most able learners, needs to be a formal STEM programme bringing in scientists and engineers to work alongside pupils

**xii) More use of technology / online learning**

- Powys should be leading England and Wales in developing teaching methods using online courses together with teachers
- Use technology to offer wider choices and have teachers moving across sites
- Digital learning to create more choice
- Use satellite learning in year 9 – link up to a college curriculum

**xiii) Local provision**

- As much needs to be local as possible – local provision provides excellent community links and excellent role models within our community – central to ensure our rural towns survive and young people are attracted to stay / return.
- Community is essential to 14-19 education and they are very important to our communities so local is better

**xiv) Welsh Bacc.**

- Some go out of county to avoid the Welsh Bacc. Making the Bacc optional may help with this?
- Dropping the Welsh Bacc

**xv) More collaboration**

- Meaningful collaboration with Newtown and Brecon Colleges is a necessity to achieve this but not really mentioned
- Improve links with NPTC to avoid losing so many pupils to colleges out of the county
- Better links with training providers
- Better links with colleges
- More collaboration between schools
- Encourage more partnerships between schools and colleges rather than closing sixth forms and reducing staff numbers in schools
- Need to ensure open, coherent and constructive dialogue with the tertiary sector to ensure that this doesn't become an arm wrestling competition with colleges, in and out of county, chasing pupil numbers and fees
- Schools and colleges should not be in competition with each other – we should be putting the child first.
- Schools to work together to offer more choice
- Improve links with other schools and colleges
- Formal partnerships between sixth forms

**xvi) Reference to pupils travelling out of county**

- We are haemorrhaging pupils over the border – pupils heads are turned by options, opportunities and shiny new buildings



- Wales/Powys must legislate to keep pupils local / to stop pupils travelling out of county
- If courses were provided in Powys and there were improved facilities, pupils would remain in Powys.

**xvii) ALN provision**

- More choice needed for ALN pupils – more choice of entry level courses in college and high schools

**xviii) Welsh-medium provision**

- Need parity between English and Welsh provision

**xix) Reference to the document**

- Words are fine, but massive cultural change needed to make it happen
- The vision is clear. The pathway towards it is the difficult bit.
- Having read the document, not clear what the proposal for post-14 education in our area is
- Don't think the document articulates this vision very well. It hints at possibilities but isn't clear
- Risk that the future vision articulated in the document will result in further 'brain drain' from Powys to out of county providers
- The document mentions pupils simultaneously enrolling on different courses in different institutions. How would the practicalities be managed? Minibuses or other transport between schools and colleges? How would timetable compatibility be managed? What about work-based learning e.g. apprenticeships
- Not a lot of information at all about 14-19 learning pathways

**xx) Other**

- Powys would be wise to see the implications of the new curriculum before considering further changes. Too much change at once (particularly when the national picture keeps changing) is not helpful for anyone.
- Do not see the requirement for stand alone 14-19 provision.
- Keep post 16 teaching in schools where there is a high level of specialism
- Keep the model within LEA provision not NPTC who can do as they please

**Section 10 – Post-16**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing post-16 provision in Powys.

248 respondents answered this question, and their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Post-16 provision in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	35	14.1%
Agree	90	36.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	80	32.3%
Disagree	33	13.3%
Strongly disagree	10	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **50.4%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Post-16 provision in Powys. **17.3%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **32.3%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for developing post-16 provision in Powys.

Comments were received from 180 respondents. These are summarised below:

**i) Sixth form / post-16 centres**

- Need to reduce the number of 6<sup>th</sup> forms, have specialist centres that teach a wide range of subjects taught by specialist teachers
- Three specialist sixth form colleges with the option to board for those travelling
- Take sixth forms out of schools and focus on breadth of subjects and depth
- A sixth form college for north and south Powys would enable us to retain our young people in the county but give them the independence and new environment they want to access. Perhaps in partnership with NPTC but calling it a 'sixth form' provision and differentiating it from the vocational provision of college
- A college-type facility whereby pupils become independent young adults may encourage pupils to stay in Powys e.g. no uniform, flexible timetabling, good transport links, an out-of-school facility as a stepping stone to higher education
- Need a reduction of centres, and a new structure based on areas of population and with good communication link
- Have a tertiary system – the consortium approach doesn't work

**ii) References to young people travelling out of Powys**

- Many pupils access out of county colleges as they feel they are treated like young adults, not an extension of schools
- Young people travel out of Powys for independence and a change, also due to the choice of subjects and the facilities (nice sixth form lounges, facilities)
- Learners are attracted to new 'modern' builds in Merthyr and Hereford
- Pupils are travelling out of county because the subject choice isn't as good here. Also following their friends
- Students seek a different sort of environment when they reach post-GCSE age, separate institutions offer that much better than school 6<sup>th</sup> forms ever can

- Pupils travel out of Powys to avoid the Welsh Bacc
- Need to recognise that some learners wish to be educated in a town environment – we cannot reproduce that in Powys and would be foolish to try.
- Pupils choose to travel out of county because they can access all subjects on one site – it's tiring and unsettling for pupils to be travelling between sites during the school day
- As well as lack of subject choice, lack of facilities in current sixth forms drives students out of Powys – many students do not have access to up-to-date tech equipment/facilities or a decent, modern common room
- The prospect of going to Shrewsbury is more appealing than Newtown because it's a nicer place
- Shrewsbury 6<sup>th</sup> form has invested significantly in its engineering and mechanics department
- Need to do a questionnaire to get the views of those that have gone out of county over the past 2-3 years

**iii) Need more choice**

- Need to ensure pupils have access to a range of opportunities
- Choice needs to be given to pupils – some prefer to remain at high schools to study for A levels, others prefer to go to a college

**iv) Need to value sixth forms more**

- The Council should value sixth forms more
- Make it clear that sixth forms are valued – the constant message from the council that they are under threat reduces confidence and becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy

**v) Reference to Welsh Bacc**

- Welsh Bacc qualification is valuable

**vi) More links with businesses**

- Need more provision in Powys – engage with local business to provide apprenticeships and encourage them into schools

**vii) More vocational options**

- Need high quality vocational courses – companies want to expand but can't get the right qualifications/courses to train future employees
- More vocational courses / job placements / apprenticeship opportunities / uni visits
- Improve availability and choice of apprenticeships

**viii) More focus on career pathways**

- Work experience should be improved in the 6<sup>th</sup> form
- Secondments to work places to give experience of being in a working environment, interacting with people

- More support in school with career progression and choice
  - Careers and provision of apprenticeships
- ix) Need to ensure local access**
- Ensure that subjects are taught locally
  - Sixth forms need to stay in high schools
- x) Reference to distance learning**
- More distance learning
  - Collaborative and partnership working and E-learning may be appropriate at the margins to broaden the offer in specialist areas, but should not be fundamental to the structure, and should not be used as an excuse to sustain the current structure
- xi) Welsh-medium**
- No reference to the Welsh language
  - Need opportunities to study vocational subjects through the medium of Welsh
  - Need equal access for Welsh-medium pupils
- xii) Suggestions for how to improve current sixth form provision to retain pupils**
- Perhaps incentives need to be given to entice pupils back e.g. laptops, gym membership, rewards schemes, bursaries, discount schemes
  - Sixth forms need to treat students like young adults, they should have certain privileges e.g. better common rooms, study areas, libraries, canteen/café area, lecture theatres
- xiii) More collaboration**
- 6<sup>th</sup> forms working in curriculum groups is the way forward, with IT and teacher movement part of the solution
  - Joint sixth forms would be an appropriate solution
- xiv) Reference to the document**
- The document is too vague – does not outline any definite plans
  - Meaningful collaboration with Newtown and Brecon colleges needed, but this isn't really mentioned in the document

### **Section 11 – Other comments**

Respondents were asked to provide other comments on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document which the Council should take into consideration. Comments were received from 96 respondents. These are summarised below:

- Will this document make a difference to the teaching of children?

- Fear this will be another set of words that sit on the desks at County Hall
- Significant investment is required for this to work
- Good luck!
- Education is the number one most important service
- Our children are our future – need an economy that provides income and opportunities to support younger people, as well as an ageing population
- You need to be innovative
- This is a step in the right direction
- Schools will need support engaging with local communities.
- Any change will need good project managers and change management skills – need for staff development in these areas
- Need to transform quickly – many learners will have left school before anything is implemented
- Seems to be a case of doing something – anything – rather than having firm ideas on a way forward
- Producing the document is the easy bit, delivery of the vision is the challenge
- Ensure the right decisions are made for standards and children not the purse strings
- No justification or evidence base has been provided to support the soundbite opinions in the document – there is insufficient evidence to ensure informed decision making
- Care must be taken with data – the use of percentages is unreliable at best, especially when considering figures generated by small schools
- Need rural solutions for a rural area

### **3 Other Written Responses**

#### **3.1 Overview of responses**

14 other written responses were received, either via e-mail or in the post. 4 of these were duplicate responses from stakeholders associated with Llanidloes High School.

The issues raised in the written responses are summarised below.

#### **3.2 Summary of comments**

##### **3.2.1 Comments on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document**

###### **i) Comments on the Vision**

- The vision is aspirational in character and offers very little hint of how it can be realised against the background of the challenges facing Powys
- The high level vision is broadly right
- Should have the Welsh language and Wales at its heart

###### **ii) Comments on the Guiding Principles**

###### **Guiding Principle 3:**

- Suggested amendment: 'Welsh-medium provision, as near to home as is practically possible, across all key phases of education, where growing numbers of learners can be confident that they will have access to provision in Welsh.'
- The aim of widening access to Welsh-medium multiplies the challenge facing the Council

###### **Guiding Principle 5:**

- As well as supporting post-14 education, the Council needs to ensure that there is high quality provision for post-16 pupils to benefit all young people in Powys

###### **Guiding Principle 6:**

- Commend the Council's commitment to providing appropriate provision for learners with additional learning needs
- Suggested amendment: 'Appropriate provision for pupils with additional learning needs that best combines the specialisms and facilities needed to provide effective support.'

###### **Other:**

- Need to add reference to learner travel, e.g. 'As far as practicable, minimise learner home to school travel.'
- Need to add specific reference to post-16, e.g. 'As far as is practicable, provide excellent local post-16 provision that offers a breadth and balance of specialist academic, vocational and work-based learning to meet the needs of all learners. Make effective use of modern technology to facilitate wider partnership working and provide digital learning pathways to help overcome the challenges of rurality.'

- Need to add reference to supporting high quality provision, e.g. 'Consolidate and support current post-16 provision with a track record of delivering high standards.'
- Essential that the guiding principles emphasise the local area as well as the international perspective
- High level guiding principles are broadly right

**iii) Comments on Staffing**

- To better attract and retain staff, the Council needs to keep local sixth forms open, support local dual stream provision, expand the federation model

**iv) Comments on what education in Powys could look like in the future**

**Post-16:**

- Joint sixth forms
- Post-16 hubs
- Sixth form education needs to be reorganised on the basis that a viable sixth form needs to be between 175 and 225.
- Need to develop a post-14 and post-16 system that provides a range of suitable opportunities for all pupils
- Need to consider other solutions that minimise learner travel e.g. advances in digital technology present an opportunity to overcome budgetary challenges whilst delivering a high quality, broad, balanced, local post-16 curriculum

**Less schools:**

- More all-through provision
- Need to rationalise the number of schools
- Some schools will need to close so that the remaining schools can have a larger portion of the education budget – including primary and possibly secondary schools
- Should be aiming for secondaries of about 1000 students with 200 in the sixth form

**Welsh-medium:**

- Need to develop a network of Welsh-medium provision
- Need to ensure Welsh-medium schools are within 10 miles of every home in Powys
- Welsh-medium education needs to be as accessible as English-medium education
- Need to move dual stream schools along the continuum to become fully bilingual schools
- Need to provide full Welsh-medium secondary provision
- Need to ensure immersion provision is available

**Other:**

- Need to provide 21<sup>st</sup> century schools investment for areas which have been repeatedly overlooked
- Need to ensure the right model is in place for each area – one size does not fit all

**v) Comments on the Personas**

- The Personas elaborate the vision a bit further, but don't deal with 'How' the Council will achieve this.
- Query the feasibility of the vision as illustrated by the personas, and the cost of providing this

**vi) Other general comments on the document**

- Cannot see any plans for addressing the issues being experienced, e.g. lack of subject choice for post-14, in the short time between now and 2025.
- Reference to sustainability towards the environment is missing – not for profit, sustainable transport would be a great benefit if pupils will need to travel further
- The document provides more vision than plan, lacks sufficient detail on which to engage
- Very little to disagree with in the document, there is a lot of vision and no plan
- Would have liked to see practical real world outlines of how transformation can take place, what it will look like in terms of numbers of schools, sites, staffing levels, funding levels – this is missing
- Should have been more detail in the document
- Question the ability to achieve what's in the document by 2025 – either Powys already knows what needs to happen in which case the vision is credible but not open and transparent, or it doesn't, in which case it probably isn't credible.

**3.2.2 Other Comments**

**i) Subject choice**

- Choices for pupils at GCSE and A level are too narrow and pupils have few opportunities to develop other key skills
- Need to expand secondary MFL provision
- Post-14 offer must be based on high standards and a broad range of subject choice

**ii) Post-16**

- Pupils are being forced to choose to travel out of Powys due to the lack of 6<sup>th</sup> form courses that can be accessed in Powys



- Dissatisfaction at present travel arrangements for post-16 students from Llandrindod Wells to Hereford 6<sup>th</sup> Form College – this is a long and uncomfortable journey, 4 hours travel time a day.
- Concern that it will take years to reverse the current failure of post 16 education in the authority
- 6<sup>th</sup> forms provide a positive impact on schools. Stripping a high school of its sixth form is a great loss for the school and pupils. Some 6<sup>th</sup> formers benefit from college, others gain from staying on in school – taking away choice may not suit everyone.
- Post 16 should be solely funded based on pupil numbers that will allow learners a better range/choice of subjects
- Per course funding rather than per pupil funding punishes schools with larger sixth forms to protect schools with small sixth forms
- Caution needed re establishing sixth form colleges in Powys – risk that pupils would travel out of the county instead of attending it.
- Local post-16 provision and funding needs to take into account the rurality of Powys – changing the post-16 funding formula has failed to adequately take into account our rurality
- Local sixth form provision in rural towns brings wide ranging benefits, and closing rural sixth forms would bring innumerable, adverse, unintended consequences

### **iii) Welsh-medium / Welsh language**

- Policy of dual stream high schools has limited the range of Welsh-medium and English-medium subjects available and impacted the opportunities available to pupils
- The Council needs to establish designated Welsh-medium secondary schools in central locations, then it will be possible to see more clearly how to introduce changes that will also benefit English-medium pupils
- Need to ensure a number of designated Welsh-medium primaries in each high school
- Many parents and students oppose compulsory Welsh second language GCSE lessons and exams
- Centralising Welsh-medium secondary provision would potentially have an adverse impact on Welsh first language uptake elsewhere
- Need to nurture further expansion of Welsh-medium provision where it is currently delivered
- Fully bilingual education should be provided to all pupils living in areas where more than 20% of the population are Welsh speakers – the law insists that the Welsh language has to be a planning consideration in these areas
- To contribute to the target to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050, the Council needs to ensure that by then, all children receive Welsh-medium education

### **iv) ALN**

- Need a commitment to retain ASD provision in high schools

**v) School leadership**

- Would be beneficial to have a greater breadth of experience on school governing bodies e.g. industry professionals, representatives of the business world, Armed Forces

**vi) Criticism of historical processes**

- Powys is in its current situation because of the shortcomings of politicians, officers and governors in the past

**vii) New builds**

- Hope that any new build projects will be thought through with care for the future of the planet e.g. passivhaus principles
- Powys is building schools for much larger numbers of pupils than ever forecast to attend e.g. Brecon High School, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen

**viii) Funding**

- Transformation needs to ensure funding per pupil is fair and represents value for money across all schools
- Larger schools offer better value for money as proportionately more is spent on education than maintaining buildings
- The Council gets a level of funding for schools that is comparable to other Councils, however the money is not being divided up appropriately between schools – the disparity in per pupil funding between schools is unfair
- Money needs to be shared out more fairly – funding needs to follow the student more substantially
- Protection of schools with falling rolls at the expense of schools with increasing rolls needs to stop
- The Formula Review Group have taken measures to remove discrimination against schools with a Welsh stream in its review of the funding formula
- Local authority funding formula should be based on a prescribed system of weighting in accordance with Welsh Government regulations
- Analysis of secondary school funding shows that Powys has the greatest levels of redistribution of funds compared with all other local authorities
- In Powys, the new funding formula has prioritised smaller schools with falling rolls, and dual sites and dual streams

**ix) Travel / Transport**

- For secondary aged pupils, a bus journey of an hour to and from school is acceptable. Not ideal, but this is the norm in many areas of Wales
- Need to see calculations of the travel costs involved in centralising post-16 provision before any proposals are put out for consultation
- Need to commit to minimising learner travel to reduce our carbon footprint

**x) Comments about the need for change**

- Change is overdue and urgently required
- Advocate early, decisive steps in the implementation phase to realise the benefits of change and establish momentum to attain real outcomes in the medium term

## **4 Powys Schools Conference**

### **4.1 Introduction**

On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the Council held a Schools Conference in the Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells. This followed an earlier conference held in October 2019. The conference was attended by 74 Powys headteachers and governors, alongside reps from trade unions, diocesan authorities and Mudiad Meithrin.

The purpose of the second conference was to update attendees on developments which had taken place since the last conference, and to give an opportunity for attendees to give their views on the emerging vision for Powys schools and what education in Powys could look like in the future.

The feedback received at the conference is summarised below.

### **4.2 Vision for Education**

Attendees were asked to consider the Council's draft vision for education, and to suggest any amendments. The feedback received is as follows:

#### **4.2.1 Suggested changes**

The following changes were suggested to the draft vision:

- Removal of 'economically-productive'
- Addition of 'local' alongside being globally-engaged
- Add references to well-being
- Add 'love to learn'
- Add 'enthusiastic'
- Add 'resilience'
- Add 'world class'
- Add 'community'

#### **4.2.2 Other comments**

The following additional comments were received:

- This should be a vision for learners not Schools Service
- No mention of community
- Powys should be ahead of the game, providing world-class education
- The vision should engage learners in education
- What age is a learner? Up to 18? 25? Lifelong?

### **4.3 Guiding Principles**

Attendees were asked to consider the Council's draft guiding principles for education, and to suggest any amendments. The feedback received is as follows:

#### **4.3.1 Suggested changes**

The following changes were suggested:

- Replace 'schools' with 'provision'
- Replace 'that are encouraged to work together' to 'will work together'
- After 'provision in Welsh' add 'or in a language of their choice, including BSL'
- After 'learning and well-being' add 'and strategic planning'
- After 'all learners' add 'and their future careers'

#### **4.3.2 Additional comments**

The following additional comments were received:

- Refer to 3+ settings
- Refer to Welsh culture
- Refer to lifelong learning
- Refer to multi-agencies
- Refer to communities
- No reference to governors
- 'This is good!'
- The no. 1 principles should be 'Learners best interests will be at the heart of every decision made'

### **4.4 What education could look like**

Attendees were asked to consider what education in Powys could look like in the future. Each table was asked to consider a different theme, and to suggest how the Council could move forward to improve the opportunities for learners related to that theme.

The following is a summary of the feedback received for each theme:

#### **4.4.1 Early Years**

- Difficult to reach a decision for the whole county – each cluster is so different
- Whichever model, Early Years provision should be better
- Other countries make it easier for parents who work – we should aim to do the same
- Admissions process is easier in England
- Higher hours of pre-school provision in England so border schools suffer
- Current system is difficult for parents to manage
- Centralised admissions causes issues and delays
- Better equity if Early Years returned to the school environment
- Age 3-5 could be back in primary schools

#### **4.4.2 Primary**

- Nursery aged pupils being part of the school again
- Early interventions e.g. speech and language
- Outdoor space
- Middle school model
- Cluster working – sharing resources such as Business Manager, ICT

#### **4.4.3 Secondary**

- More collaboration with partners
- Encourage well-being at Post-16
- Quality and choice are key drivers
- More NVQs need to be offered
- Wide range of subjects at Post-14
- Need resources to support
- Post-14 should remain in the high school setting
- Breadth and Quality

#### **4.4.4 Post-14**

- No one size fits all approach in Powys
- Partnership arrangements need strengthening (e.g. NPTC)
- Better vocational offer needed
- Fewer sixth forms
- Using ICT for advantages

#### **4.4.5 Welsh-medium**

- Each child has opportunities to access Welsh-medium provision at all ages
- Need to build on Mudiad Meithrin and Welsh-medium provision in Early Years
- Need to provide a range of GCSEs in Welsh
- Welsh-medium secondary school – however, mindful of the potential impact on current providers
- Trochi – Immersion settings

#### **4.4.6 Additional Learning Needs**

- More support in schools – Ed Psych meetings
- There should be an entry and exit criteria for PRUs
- Powys should challenge exclusions and ask critical questions
- Powys should consider purchasing outreach support when required
- Behaviour needs monitoring through Core Visits using a standard template
- Allow schools to purchase PRU placements
- Satellite provision must be fit for purpose
- Encourage secondments for teachers who have abilities and skills in ALN
- Pre-school support and early identification
- Cluster ALNCos
- Establish a system of ALN mentors across the system
- Specialist centres and mainstream need to work closely together

## 5 Responses from Learners

### 5.1 Responses to online questionnaire

#### 5.1.1 Introduction

206 online questionnaires were completed by individuals that indicated that they were pupils.

162 of these provided their postcodes. The postcodes provided were as follows:

Postcode	Area	Number of responses	%
LD1	Llandrindod Wells	3	1.9%
LD2	Builth Wells, Llandrindod Wells	1	0.6%
LD6	Rhayader, Llandrindod Wells	21	13.0%
SA10	Aberdulais, Llandarcy, Neath Port Talbot	1	0.6%
SY15	Montgomery, Powys	2	1.2%
SY16	Newtown, Powys	15	9.3%
SY17	Caersws, Llandinam, Powys	24	14.8%
SY18	Llanidloes, Powys	88	54.3%
SY19	Llanbrynmair, Powys	4	2.5%
SY21	Welshpool, Powys	1	0.6%
SY22	Llanfechain, Llanfyllin, Llansantffraid, Llanymynech, Meifod, Powys	2	1.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

This shows that a high proportion of the learners that responded to the questionnaire were from Llanidloes and the surrounding area.

#### 5.1.2 Summary of Responses to Engagement Exercise

Respondents were asked to give their views on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

As indicated above, it appears that the online survey was completed by a high proportion of pupils from Llanidloes High School. Many of the responses were duplicate responses, with exactly the same comments provided.

A summary of the responses received from pupils to each question is provided below.

### Section 3 – Vision for Education

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the high level vision for education in Powys which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

206 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree with this as a high-level vision for education in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	14	6.8%
Agree	81	39.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	62	30.1%
Disagree	39	18.9%
Strongly disagree	10	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **46.1%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed with the high level vision for education. **23.8%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, and the remaining **30.1%** stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents that disagreed with the vision were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider.

Comments were received from 75 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Could reword to make sure everyone understands it
- Not sure what your plans are – it has not been explained very clearly
- It's a bit complicated
- It's a very broad statement – difficult to understand the aim
- The statement is a bit wordy
- Should include the word local – e.g. local high quality education
- Don't think pupils need to be 'personally fulfilled' – the aim of school is to pass exams

#### **Section 4 – Guiding Principles**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the guiding principles to be used to underpin the Council's thinking going forward, which were included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document.

206 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that these guiding principles are appropriate?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	22	10.7%
Agree	75	36.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	59	28.6%
Disagree	41	19.9%
Strongly disagree	9	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **47.1%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed with the guiding principles. **24.3%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **28.6%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.



Respondents that disagreed with the guiding principles were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider.

Comments were received from 87 pupils. These are summarised below:

**i) Comments on individual guiding principles**

- ***Welsh medium provision across all key phases of education, where growing numbers of learners can be confident that they will have access to provision in Welsh***
  - Access to Welsh medium should be equal all over Powys
  - Welsh is a waste of time
  - Should keep Welsh medium in local areas
  - Welsh-medium should be as close to home as possible
- ***Appropriate provision for pupils with additional learning needs, as near to home as is practically possible, in a way that best combines the specialisms and facilities needed to provide effective support.***
  - There should be more support for pupils with learning difficulties, for example dyslexia
  - More support for learning support units in schools
- ***An open and transparent process for change***
  - What does this mean?
  - Agree with this point especially – schools have not changed/developed much in comparison to the changes and growth in other aspects of life and in the places we live.

**ii) Other elements that should be included**

- **6<sup>th</sup> form provision**
  - 6<sup>th</sup> form provision should be kept local
  - Sixth forms have not been mentioned – they are important for Powys as travel will be required if there are not many locally
- **Travel distances**
  - Should minimise the amount of time pupils spend travelling, including A level students – this should be a guiding principle
  - Should be an adaptation in terms of travel for all students whether they are in Welsh-medium provision, ALN or post-16
  - Need to add a principle to keep pupil travel to a minimum, including A level students

- **Staff**
  - Teachers that are prepared to support pupils in the school and give appropriate support for different abilities
- **Reference to the curriculum**
  - Need to add that we need to learn more stuff that we will need in real life on a daily basis
  - More focus on learning skills such as finding jobs, money saving and managing, how to lead a healthy life
  - Curriculum needs to include mental health topics, equality, discrimination, awareness of relevant topics in the news
- **Local access**
  - Need a point about being able to access high quality education as close to home as possible
- **More support for mental health issues**
  - More support to pupils who struggle with stress and mental health issues

### iii) **Other general comments**

- Needs to be worded more simply
- Need to use less fancy words, maybe less bullet points but with the same amount of information
- Many of the points are good, however they don't actually tell me as a pupil how this will affect me and what will change for me
- Agree with some of these points but I think most are very ambitious, it's unclear how they would be achieved

## **Section 5 – Staffing and Leadership**

The 'Transforming Education in Powys' document outlined the need to develop systems in order to better attract and retain staff and the need to develop leadership pathways to encourage our professionals to grow within the local authority. Respondents were asked to give their views on two questions. A summary of the responses received from pupils is provided below.

### **Question 1: In your view, what does the Council need to do to better attract and retain staff?**

Comments were received from 127 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Work more closely with universities

- Continued professional development opportunities
- Pay more money
- One teacher for each subject
- Improve the school's facilities to attract more teachers
- Keep 6<sup>th</sup> forms in the school
- Treat them nicely / with respect
- Provide a dynamic work environment, career long development
- Courses to support teachers who want to enter the workforce or education
- Make the job more fun
- Give them the right resources
- Offer good working conditions
- Offer more help to teachers who are under stress
- Make the job less stressful for teachers
- More advertising
- Don't make knowing Welsh compulsory
- Bring people in who want to train on the job
- Employ more staff to reduce workloads
- Improve discipline so that teachers aren't put off by bad behaviour
- Have a clear career path

**Question 2: In your view, what does the Council need to do to encourage our professionals to aspire to leadership roles?**

Comments were received from 100 pupils. These are summarised below:

- More leadership training for assistant heads / deputy heads
- More time to do leadership
- More training
- Let young people have the opportunity e.g. work experience
- Let younger staff members have the chance – you could put them on a 6 month trial period
- More pay
- Make it fun
- Have another leader do a presentation to explain the difficulties and the good points about the job or role they are doing
- Make it more attractive
- Open up more leadership roles and allow teachers to experience what these positions would be like
- Let those in leadership roles have time to focus on their priorities, not juggle with the task of teaching

**Section 6 – What education in Powys could look like in the future**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future, as outlined in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document, are appropriate.

190 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future are appropriate?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	19	10.0%
Agree	74	38.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	63	33.2%
Disagree	28	14.7%
Strongly disagree	6	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **49.2%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed with the high level vision for education. **17.8%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **33.0%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked whether there are any other models the local authority should consider as it looks at transforming the schools' system in Powys.

Comments were received from 112 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Better facilities
- Investment in buildings
- Make school buildings more efficient
- Retain 6<sup>th</sup> forms in schools
- Build strong links with colleges to do vocational courses
- Retain local Welsh-medium provision
- More federating of schools
- Better technology in schools
- Each school should have its own headteacher
- Don't think the school system needs to change
- Keep travel time to a minimum

Respondents were asked to provide any further comments on this section. Comments were received from 76 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Need to invest in school buildings and facilities
- Question whether the ideas are realistic – is funding available to achieve the suggestions?

### **Section 7 – Welsh-medium provision**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education in Powys.

193 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document set out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	8	4.1%
Agree	56	29.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	65	33.7%
Disagree	50	25.9%
Strongly disagree	14	7.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **33.1%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that the vision set out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education. **33.8%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **33.7%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked whether they had any concerns or evidence to suggest that the Council is treating/using the Welsh language less favourably than English in the document.

194 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

Do you have any concerns or evidence to suggest that the Council is treating/using the Welsh language less favourably than English in the document?	Number of responses	%
Yes	59	30.4%
No	64	33.0%
I don't know	71	36.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Respondents who answered 'yes' were asked to provide details.

Comments were received from 77 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Welsh-medium education needs to be encouraged to grow further where it is currently provided
- Only 1 Welsh stream class in our year compared to 3 English stream
- Don't make Welsh-medium pupils travel further
- Schools with a Welsh stream need more funding
- Need to minimise pupil travel by investing in bilingual schools

Respondents were asked what changes could be made to the document to have a more positive effect on the Welsh language.

Comments were received from 99 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Mention that more funding needs to be given to Welsh streams to grow even more
- Make it fun
- More Welsh in every high school

- More Welsh teachers
- More Welsh schools locally
- Welsh medium lessons close to students houses or an online class
- Encourage more people to speak it

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for Welsh-medium provision in Powys as outlined in the document. Comments were received from 71 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Refer to 'Ciw Cymraeg'
- More needs to be done to improve Welsh as a second language

### **Section 8 – Additional Learning Needs**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs in Powys.

172 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	20	11.6%
Agree	53	30.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	78	45.3%
Disagree	15	8.7%
Strongly disagree	6	3.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **42.4%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that the document set out a clear enough vision for developing provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs. **12.2%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **45.3%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs as outlined in the document.

Comments were received from 81 pupils. These are summarised below:

- More support from experts
- More materials for the children
- More specifics are needed
- Opportunities for pupils to learn sign language
- More teacher support
- More training for teachers

- More ALN centres
- More support for children that don't have major additional learning needs
- Make sure pupils get additional lessons if needed
- Unclear what the vision is
- More LSAs
- ALN pupils need to stay in school with other pupils that don't have ALN so they gain the social skills they need
- Local provision so that pupils can access it without having to travel

## **Section 9 – 14-19**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision in Powys.

165 pupils answered this question, and their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	13	7.9%
Agree	46	27.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	79	47.9%
Disagree	16	9.7%
Strongly disagree	11	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **35.8%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that the document set out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision. **16.4%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **47.9%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for developing 14-19 provision as outlined in the document.

Comments were received from 74 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Like the idea of having more choice at 14
- Need local sixth form
- Better awareness for year 9 students
- Agree that we need a wider range of learning pathways
- Let pupils have a taster of the subject they want to do before they make their final decision
- 14-19 provision in Powys needs to be attractive to stop them going outside Powys
- More funding needed to offer a range of subjects
- Need good quality facilities
- More careers advice
- More opportunities in the real world

- E-sgol
- More options and opportunities for able learners
- Provide opportunities close to home

### **Section 10 – Post-16**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing post-16 provision in Powys.

176 pupils answered this question. Their responses were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Post-16 provision in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	11	6.3%
Agree	42	23.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	78	44.3%
Disagree	36	20.5%
Strongly disagree	9	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **30.2%** of pupils that responded to the online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that the document set out a clear enough vision for developing 14-19 provision. **25.6%** of pupils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **44.3%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments on the vision for developing post-16 provision in Powys.

Comments were received from 97 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Need more subject choice
- Retain local sixth form
- Limit travel
- More distance learning
- Need to improve what's available in Powys to stop pupils travelling out of the area
- Sixth form facilities need to be improved
- Better pastoral care and guidance in helping pupils make big decisions that will affect their lives e.g. university and career
- Work placements
- Should be opportunities to experience university life
- Need more investment in post-16 education in Powys

### **Section 11 – Other comments**

Respondents were asked to provide other comments on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document which the Council should take into consideration. Comments were



received from 84 pupils. These are summarised below:

- Request for simpler document for younger primary aged pupils
- Plans are very vague, which makes it difficult to give an opinion
- Should be made more clear about how schools will change in the future
- The survey was unclear

## **5.2 Virtual engagement session**

As part of the engagement exercise, the Council facilitated a virtual engagement session with secondary school pupils, using E-sgol digital learning equipment. 6 schools accepted the invitation to take part in the session – Gwernyfed High School, Llanidloes High School, Newtown High School, Welshpool High School, Ysgol Maesydderwen and Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion. The discussion was led by Geraint Rees, Education Improvement Advisor.

In total there were approximately 27 learners present. A summary of the comments made during the session is provided below:

### **i) Comments on the Vision**

- Overall it is a good vision
- We should still support those who don't want to become economically productive straight away
- The vision is all encompassing

### **ii) Comments on the Guiding Principles**

#### **Guiding Principle 1:**

- Inclusive should reflect financial access to a range of education

#### **Guiding Principle 2:**

- The curriculum should meet the needs of further employers
- Not enough flexibility in the current curriculum, found it hard to choose A Levels due to size of school
- Progression to University would have been aided by having the ability to choose specialist subjects such as Law or Economics
- Hard to do Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> Language past GCSE level due to funding of small classes
- Lack of vocational provision pushes people to other FE providers across the border
- Flexibility with option blocks for GCSE and A Level must be a priority

#### **Guiding Principle 3:**

- Begin the journey of Welsh Medium in primary school
- Secondary school need to reinforce the basics to assist learners with Welsh development

- More emphasis on speaking Welsh, as opposed to just learning it for exams
- Increase the number of subjects and options available through the medium of Welsh

**Guiding Principle 5:**

- There is a low level of choice for vocational provision
- Greater careers support to guide learners in choosing option at 14 and 16.

**Guiding Principle 6:**

- Dyslexia testing needs to occur earlier in the education journey

**Guiding Principle 7:**

- Quality of existing digital infrastructure is a big issue. Funding for technology is an issue.
- Distance learning through technology not quite there yet

**iii) Comments on what education in Powys could look like in the future**

**Post-16:**

- Some students wish to move to different stream so that the subject is available to them but others want to stay in stream.

**Post-14:**

- Barely any vocational options at GCSE
- More varied learning about life issues such as taxes, voting, sex education
- More varied PSE lessons with life issues instead of just healthy eating – e.g. current affairs, politics.
- Mandatory ICT lessons
- Better use of Welsh by introducing more common, everyday phrases which can be helpful for employment

**Other:**

- Infrastructure not fit for purpose – buildings are so old and cold. Toilets don't work properly
- More school trips and connections with employers to widen the scope of access
- More education on invisible disabilities
- Bring Your Own Device schemes should be extended down to younger students
- Class sizes need to remain sensible and suitable
- More support for students with disabilities or adverse childhood experiences
- Quality of subjects is more important than quantity.

### 5.3 Responses from School Councils

A questionnaire asking for the views of Schools Councils on the young people's version of the engagement document was circulated to all schools. 13 responses were received from the following schools:

Buttington C.P. School, Cradoc C.P. School, Forden C. in W. School, Franksbridge C.P. School, Llangattock C. in W. School, Llanidloes High School, Priory C. in W. School, Treowen C.P. School, Ysgol Bro Cynllaith, Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, Ysgol Bro Tawe, Ysgol Penmaes, Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion.

The responses received are outlined below.

#### Vision for Education

School Councils were asked to what extent they agree with the high level vision for education in Powys which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document. The responses provided were as follows:

To what extent do you agree with this as a high-level vision for education in Powys?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	4	30.8%
Agree	7	53.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	15.4%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **84.6%** of School Councils agreed or strongly agreed with the vision for education in Powys. **0%** of School Councils that responded disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **15.4%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

School Councils that disagreed with the vision were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider. These are summarised below.

- Could be more simply worded for younger pupils
- There should be more values such as kindness, empathy, care, equality and self love and worth.

#### Guiding Principles

School Councils were asked to what extent they agree with the guiding principles to be used to underpin the Council's thinking going forward which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document. The responses received were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that these guiding principles are appropriate?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	4	30.8%
Agree	9	69.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**100%** of School Councils that responded agreed or strongly agreed with the guiding principles.

School Councils that disagreed with the guiding principles were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider. The comments received are summarised below.

- The words need to be more pupil friendly
- Suggestion to add a principle which relates to quality education being locally accessed.

### **The future of education in Powys**

School Councils were asked to what extent they agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future, as outlined in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document, are appropriate. The responses provided were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future are appropriate?	Number of responses	%
Strongly agree	1	8.3%
Agree	10	83.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	8.3%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**91.6%** of School Councils that responded agreed or strongly agreed with the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future. **0%** of School Councils disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **8.3%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

School Councils were asked whether there are any other models the local authority should consider as it looks at transforming the schools' system in Powys. These are summarised below:

- Do not forget the value of small, rural, schools too. Small community schools are very important.
- A link between community sports coaches and after school clubs and transport to enable access for all

- Wider range of languages + sciences (biochemistry/biology) should be offered
- Improvements are needed to school buildings and the current school estate
- More school trips (Funding/transport to make this possible)
- Members were unsure the timescale of 5 years was feasible to achieve with such bold ambitions and with so many schools spread across such a geographical area. Furthermore, it was firmly felt that these changes must come with additional funding.

### **Other comments**

School Councils were asked to provide other comments on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document which the Council should take into consideration. These are summarised below:

- There were too many complicated words e.g. economically productive.
- We need a child friendly version – Young People's version was too difficult to understand for primary pupils
- As a school, we are very keen for change and updates with internet, software and technology. We always experience internet connection problems.
- School Council members felt the plan made it look like centralisation of school provision was part of this plan and they were concerned of the knock on impact on the environment of the additional transport required in such a system.
- Help children to feel happy in school and enjoy being in school. Then they will want to stay in sixth form.

## **5.4 Other responses**

### **5.4.1 Young people's questionnaires**

104 completed young people's questionnaires were received from pupils in Welshpool High School and Llanidloes Primary School. The responses to these questionnaires, and a summary of the comments provided, are outlined below.

### **Vision for Education**

Pupils were asked to what extent they agree with the high level vision for education in Powys which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document. The responses received were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree with this as a high-level vision for education in Powys?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	44	42.3%
Agree	54	51.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	6	5.8%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	104	100.0%

Overall **94.2%** of pupils that completed young people's questionnaires agreed or strongly agreed with the vision. **0%** of pupils disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **5.8%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Pupils that disagreed with the vision were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider. These are summarised below.

- Future life skills should be taught such as business, how to manage your own money etc.
- More Welsh where possible.
- Develop the Trisgol method including more schools and courses.

### **Guiding Principles**

Pupils were asked to what extent they agree with the guiding principles to be used to underpin the Council's thinking going forward which was included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document. The responses received were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that these guiding principles are appropriate?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	44	42.3%
Agree	53	51.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	5	4.8%
Disagree	1	1.0%
Strongly disagree	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **93.3%** of pupils that completed young people's questionnaires agreed or strongly agreed with the guiding principles. **2%** of pupils disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **4.8%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Pupils that disagreed with the guiding principles were asked to suggest any amendments which they thought the Council should consider. These are summarised below.

- More practical field trips should be considered.
- Exams should be given less focus as they are unnecessarily focused on.
- Not all people have access to digital.
- English speaking schools should have the same funding as Welsh speaking schools.
- English speaking schools are important and should have more money than Welsh schools
- English speaking schools are important too
- Don't give welsh schools more money than English schools

### **The future of education in Powys**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future, as outlined in the 'Transforming Education in Powys – Young people's version' document, are appropriate. The responses received were as follows:

<b>To what extent do you agree that the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future are appropriate?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	39	37.5%
Agree	61	58.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.9%
Disagree	2	1.9%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Overall **96.2%** of pupils that completed young people's questionnaires agreed or strongly agreed with the suggestions for what education in Powys could look like. **1.9%** of pupils disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the remaining **1.9%** stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Pupils were asked whether there are any other models the local authority should consider as it looks at transforming the schools' system in Powys. These are summarised below:

- The Council should look at transporting pupils from place to place.
- Primary schools should not merge to a degree that pupils must travel for each day.
- Primary schools should be kept as local as possible.
- Small primary school should be kept with facilities to share.
- The pupils point of view.
- Welshpool having a sixth form.
- Welshpool is the largest town around here and should keep the bigger town schools open
- Schools should be in more populated areas.
- Welsh schools should not receive more money just because they're Welsh.
- Use technology.
- Welsh and Ethics would be more effective subjects.
- Important to have a larger choice of subjects but not just in one place.
- Transport cost for A Level students who have to travel should be cheaper/free

### **Other comments**

Pupils were asked to provide other comments on the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document which the Council should take into consideration. These are summarised below:

- A higher standard of sports facilities and a higher range in after school activities.
- Welsh language should be used in English medium as well. The language should be offered and pupils should be able to opt in to do lessons.
- Each room should have air conditioning to keep students from over heating.

- I would like a modern school.
- Schools should attract good/great teachers and good resources.
- Higher funding so students can have a better education
- I would like a school where I'm not afraid to be myself.
- Sixth Forms should be in one place instead of pupils having to travel to different schools for each of their different subjects.

#### **5.4.2 Other written responses**

6 other written responses were received from pupils at Llandinam C.P. School. The comments made in these responses are summarised below:

- Our school already meets most of the vision and guiding principles
- Pupils in small schools shouldn't have to go to bigger schools – it would affect the learning and would be more difficult to concentrate
- Our school feels like home
- We have good relationships with the children and adults in our school
- We already have breakfast club, after school club, sports areas, attractive spaces, a safe digitally rich learning environment, high quality education
- We don't want to be in a class with over 25 children
- We understand that it would cost less in a bigger school, but we can learn better in a smaller school
- We would like a creative studio to create art and put on shows
- It's easier to learn in a smaller school



## 6 Conclusion

Overall, the majority of responses to the questionnaire indicated support for the Vision, Guiding Principles and suggestions for what education in Powys could look like in the future, as outlined in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document, with the majority of respondents indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed with the document.

The exception to this is the individual responses received from pupils to the online questionnaire, as outlined in section 4.1.2, where the majority did not support the content of the document. However, it must be noted that most of the pupils that responded to the online questionnaire attend one school, therefore the percentage reflects the views of pupils in one particular area, rather than being representative of the views of pupils across Powys. The feedback received from other pupils e.g. school councils did not reflect this.

Although overall the majority of respondents indicated that they agreed with the Vision and Guiding Principles included in the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document, many comments were also received which suggested improvements / alternatives to these sections. These will need to be taken into consideration when preparing the final version of the 'Transformation Education in Powys' document.

The questionnaire also asked respondents for their views on whether or not the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document sets out a clear enough vision for developing Welsh-medium education, provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs, 14-19 provision and Post-16. Whilst overall, the majority of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that the visions set out in each of these cases were clear enough, the percentages here are lower than for the previous section. This is particularly the case in respect of developing Welsh-medium education, where only 50.9% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document sets out a clear enough vision for development, and developing post-16 provision, where only 50.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the document sets out a clear enough vision for development. This suggests that the Council should ensure that a clearer vision is provided for these aspects when preparing the final version of the 'Transforming Education in Powys' document. Many suggestions were provided to outline how the Council could move forward in these areas, which are outlined in this report.

Other general comments were received which questioned the Council's ability to deliver the vision as outlined in the document, particularly within the suggested timeframe. Comments were also received regarding the language used in the document, particularly in respect of the young people's version. This will also need to be addressed when preparing the final version of the document.

## Appendix A – Equalities Information

Respondents that completed the online survey were also to respond to a number of equalities questions. The responses provided are outlined below. This includes the responses provided by all respondents, including pupils.

What is your gender	Number of responses	%
Male	152	32.0%
Female	277	58.3%
Gender Fluid/Non-binary/Gender neutral	4	0.8%
Prefer not to say	42	8.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Is your gender the same now as when assigned at birth?	Number of responses	%
Yes	420	89.6%
No	10	2.1%
Prefer not to say	39	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

How old are you?	Number of responses	%
Under 16	141	29.8%
16-24	49	10.4%
25-34	35	7.4%
35-44	88	18.6%
45-54	78	16.5%
55-64	25	5.3%
65-74	8	1.7%
75-84	4	0.8%
85 +	6	1.3%
Prefer not to say	39	8.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Do you have a substantial and long term physical or mental health condition or illness that reduces your ability to carry out normal day to day activities?	Number of responses	%
Yes	51	10.8%
No	369	78.0%
Prefer not to say	53	11.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

If you answered 'Yes' please indicate all that apply to you:	Number of responses	% of responses to this question
Hearing Impairment	6	4.7%
Visual Impairment	7	5.5%
Speech Impairment	7	5.5%
Learning Disability or difficulty	11	8.7%

Mental Health Issues	23	18.1%
Physical/Mobility Impairment	14	11.0%
Other	14	11.0%
Prefer not to say	45	35.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

How would you describe your national identity?	Number of responses	%
Welsh	250	53.2%
English	43	9.1%
Scottish	2	0.4%
Northern Irish	2	0.4%
British	122	26.0%
Irish	5	1.1%
Other	14	3.0%
Prefer not to say	32	6.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

What is your ethnic group?	Number of responses	%
White	406	86.8%
Bangladeshi	4	0.9%
Black Caribbean	2	0.4%
Black Other	1	0.2%
Chinese	1	0.2%
Mixed Ethnicity	5	1.1%
Gypsy/Traveller	2	0.4%
Irish Traveller	1	0.2%
Indian	1	0.2%
Pakistani	2	0.4%
Any Other ethnic group	4	0.9%
Prefer not to say	39	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

What is your preferred language?	Number of responses	%
Welsh	66	14.1%
English	362	77.2%
BSL - British Sign Language	2	0.4%
Other	13	2.8%
Prefer not to say	26	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Can you....?	Yes	%	No	%
Understand spoken Welsh	277	66.6%	183	40.5%
Speak Welsh	256	61.5%	197	43.6%
Read Welsh	256	61.5%	195	43.1%
Write Welsh	232	55.8%	218	48.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

What is your religion?	Number of responses	%
Christian (all denominations)	187	41.0%
Buddhist	0	0.0%
Hindu	0	0.0%
Muslim	2	0.4%
Sikh	2	0.4%
Jewish	1	0.2%
Atheist	31	6.8%
No religion	162	35.5%
Other	15	3.3%
Prefer not to say	56	12.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Are you?	Number of responses	%
Working full time	167	32.1%
Working part time	105	20.2%
Unemployed	19	3.7%
Still in education	151	29.0%
Volunteering	18	3.5%
Retired	18	3.5%
Other	10	1.9%
Prefer not to say	32	6.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?	Number of responses	%
Heterosexual/Straight	352	77.2%
Gay Man	5	1.1%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	6	1.3%
Bisexual	12	2.6%
Other	7	1.5%
Prefer not to say	74	16.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Which of the following best describes your partnership status?	Number of responses	%
Single	153	33.1%
Married	190	41.1%
Co-habiting	22	4.8%
Separated	7	1.5%
Divorced	4	0.9%
Widowed	2	0.4%
Civil Partnership	2	0.4%
Other	19	4.1%
Prefer not to say	63	13.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Do you have dependants, or caring responsibilities for family members or other persons?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	226	49.7%
No	229	50.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>If yes, are your dependants or the people your look after...?</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>% of responses to this question</b>
A child or children	195	81.3%
A disabled person or persons	22	9.2%
An elderly person or persons	23	9.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.0%</b>