

Transforming Education in Powys

Options Appraisal

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to consider options for the future organisation of education in Llanfair Caereinion. There is currently a dual stream primary school (Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School) and a dual stream secondary school (Caereinion High School) in the town. The two schools are located on the same campus.

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School primarily serves Llanfair Caereinion, whilst Caereinion High School serves a larger catchment area. In particular, the high school's Welsh-medium stream serves a very large catchment, which includes the towns of Newtown and Welshpool.

Pupil numbers¹ at the two schools are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	13	21	17	27	24	31	29	162

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
Caereinion High School	84	74	72	91	75	34	35	465

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'Develop a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations'.

During 2019-20, discussions have taken place with representatives of the governing bodies of both Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, to explore the possibility of moving to establish an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion. These discussions have indicated that the two governing bodies agree in principle to move towards establishing an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion. The remainder of this paper explores the ways in which this could be achieved.

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys also includes a Strategic Aim to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. One of the objectives within this aim is to 'Move schools along the language continuum'. The Council recognises the strength of Welsh-medium provision in this area, and that, in particular, the Welsh-medium provision at Caereinion High School

¹ Teacher Centre, 7th September 2020 & SIMS, 10th September 2020

is central to the Council's aspiration to provide access to enhanced Welsh-medium secondary provision.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process to amalgamate Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to establish an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion, the Council would continue to engage in constructive dialogue with representatives of the two schools in parallel to this process, to continue to explore ways to develop and enhance the Welsh-medium provision in Llanfair Caereinion. This would contribute to the implementation of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Government's Strategy to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Following the inspection of Powys Education Services carried out by Estyn in the summer of 2019, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. The Vision Statement is as follows:

All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.

The Guiding Principles are as follows:

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

The strategy sets out a number of strategic aims and objectives, to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. These include an objective to 'Develop a network of all-age schools based around the 13 current secondary school locations' in order to improve overall learner entitlement and experience in Powys.

2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

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

The Council's new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

i) High proportion of small schools

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 40% of the primary provision in the county. 21 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

ii) Decreasing pupil numbers

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to decrease further over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 4% by 2025.

iii) High number of surplus places

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there was 18% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

iv) Building condition

Whilst the Council has invested in its school's estate through the 21st Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

v) Financial pressures

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,127 to £7,877 in the primary sector.

vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

ix) Historical lack of political decision making

Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in

Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANFAIR CAEREINION

3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School are two dual stream schools located on the same campus in Llanfair Caereinion in North Powys.

The primary school primarily serves Llanfair Caereinion, whilst the high school serves a larger catchment area. In particular, the high school's Welsh-medium stream serves a very large catchment, which includes the towns of Newtown and Welshpool.

The following is a summary of key data relating to Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	Community Primary School building owned by Powys County Council	Dual Stream	27
Caereinion High School	Community Secondary School building owned by Powys County Council	Dual Stream - Bilingual (Type B)	114

Pupil Numbers

i) Current pupil numbers²

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	13	21	17	27	24	31	29	162

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
Caereinion High School	84	74	72	91	75	34	35	465

² Teacher Centre, 7th September 2020 & SIMS, 10th September 2020

ii) **Historical pupil numbers³**

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	202	209	195	185	174	173	166
Caereinion High School	549	530	494	495	487	456	447
Total	751	739	689	680	661	629	613

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Live birth info)⁴**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	159	153	144	139	133
Caereinion High School	443	416	390	367	344
Total	602	569	534	506	477

iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Projections received by the Council's Finance team)⁵**

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	162	145	143	N/A	N/A
Caereinion High School	459	465	460	N/A	N/A
Total	621	610	603	N/A	N/A

Building Capacity and Condition

i) **Capacity**

³ PLASC

⁴ Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

⁵ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school

The following table provides information about the current capacities of school and the capacity:

	Current Capacity	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	167	162 (97%)	5 (3%)
Caereinion High School	603	465 (77%)	138 (23%)

ii) Building condition

In 2009, Welsh Government carried out condition and suitability assessments of the school. The assessments were as follows:

	Condition	Suitability	Access to hall on site
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	C Poor	B Good	Yes
Caereinion High School	C Poor	B/C Good/Poor	Yes

Standards of Education

i) Estyn

	Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School
Date of Inspection	January 2018
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good

Leadership and management	Good
Follow Up	School to produce action plan to address recommendations

	Caereinion High School
Date of Inspection	November 2013
Standards	Adequate
Wellbeing	Adequate
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Adequate
Care, support, and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Good
Leadership	Adequate
Improving quality	Adequate
Partnership working	Good
Resource management	Adequate
Follow Up	<p>School to produce action plan to address recommendations. Estyn to monitor progress.</p> <p>December 2016 – Placed into schools requiring significant improvement</p> <p>May 2018 – Removed from schools requiring significant improvement</p>

ii) School Categorisation

	Standards Group	Improvement Capacity	Support Capacity

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	N/A	C	Amber
Caereinion High School	N/A	C	Amber

Financial information

i) Cost per pupil (Section 52 Budget Statement, 2019/2020)

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	£169,000	£3,730	£45,000	£22,000
Caereinion High School	£2,381,000	£5,335	£33,000	£40,000
Powys average (Primary)	N/A	£3,978	N/A	N/A
Powys average (Secondary)	N/A	£4,562	N/A	N/A

ii) Current budgetary position (as of 1st May submittal by full governing body)

	2019/20 Actual Cumulative Outturn	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	£103,281	£59,901	£43,963	£19,442
Caereinion High School	(£6,123)	(£27,421)	£31,511	£119,764

Equalities Information

i) Free School Meals⁶

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	24 (14.5%)
Caereinion High School	33 (7.4%)

ii) Pupils in care⁷

	Number of pupils in care
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	0
Caereinion High School	0.4%

iii) SEN/ALN⁸

	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	25	10	0
Caereinion High School	64	30	0

Early Years

There is no early years provision at Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School.

⁶ PLASC 2020

⁷ PLASC 2020

⁸ PLASC 2020

3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN LLANFAIR CAEREINION

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the two schools in Llanfair Caereinion:

i) Decreasing pupil numbers

Total pupil numbers at the two schools over the last few years are as follows⁹:

	Jan. 2014	Jan. 2015	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	202	209	195	185	174	173	166
Caereinion High School (Yr 7-13)	549	530	494	495	487	456	447
Total	751	739	689	680	661	629	613

This shows that total pupil numbers at the two schools have decreased by 138 since January 2014.

Pupil numbers across the two schools are not projected to increase over the coming years – the following table includes the latest projections received by the Council's Finance Team¹⁰

	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025
Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School	162	145	143	N/A	N/A
Caereinion High School	459	465	460	N/A	N/A
Total	621	610	603	N/A	N/A

Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School is currently slightly over capacity, however the projected decrease in pupil numbers over the coming years would mean that pupils numbers would be within the school's capacity.

The decrease in pupil numbers at Caereinion High School has resulted in a high number of surplus places at the school. Based on current pupil numbers, there are 138 surplus places at the school, which is 23% of the school's capacity.

⁹ PLASC

¹⁰ Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the school

ii) Temporary leadership arrangements at both schools

There are currently temporary leadership arrangements in place at both schools. In order to ensure continued improvement in the provision in Llanfair Caereinion, there is a need to secure permanent leadership arrangements.

iii) Building condition

Based on the Welsh Government's condition survey carried out in 2009, the condition of both school buildings was identified as poor. In addition, Caereinion High School does not meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

This suggests that the current buildings do not meet the Council's aspirations for education, as outlined in the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

iv) Budget pressures

Similarly to many other schools across Powys and Wales, Caereinion High School is facing budgetary pressures, and is currently predicted to be in a deficit budget position during 2020/21.

The Council as a whole is facing significant financial pressure over the foreseeable future, which will continue to put pressure on school budgets.

v) Welsh-medium provision

Both Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School are dual stream schools.

Welsh-medium pupil numbers in the primary school have increased, suggesting greater demand for Welsh-medium provision in the town.

Whilst Caereinion High School has successfully provided Welsh-medium education to pupils across a wide catchment area in North Powys over a number of years, the school's dual stream arrangement causes challenges in terms of providing a comprehensive Welsh-medium curriculum.

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes an aim to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages', and identifies issues with the Welsh-medium secondary provision in Powys:

'It is apparent that there is no equality of provision for Welsh-medium learners across the county, and the level of Welsh-medium provision available is a postcode lottery. In addition, learners in Powys do not have access to a Welsh-medium secondary school.'

The Strategy also includes an objective to ‘move schools along the language continuum’.

Given Caereinion High School’s successful record of providing Welsh-medium education over recent years, Llanfair Caereinion will be a key focus for the Council in moving forward with implementing the strategy.

vi) Need to provide an attractive post-16 curriculum

The Council has seen a reduction in the number of pupils in its sixth forms over the last few years, which is making it increasingly difficult to provide a broad range of subjects to learners.

The number of sixth form pupils at Caereinion High School over the last few years is as follows:

	Year 12	Year 13	Total
2015/16	36	30	66
2016/17	40	31	71
2017/18	29	32	60
2018/19	23	31	54
2019/20	42	16	62

Whilst sixth form numbers at the school have remained fairly stable over recent years, numbers remain small. This means that it is increasingly challenging to provide an attractive post-16 curriculum to learners. This is particularly the case in respect of Welsh-medium provision.

The Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys recognises the need to improve post-16 provision, and also includes a strategic aim to ‘Improve learner entitlement and experience for post-16 learners’.

PART B – OPTIONS FOR LLANFAIR CAEREINION

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

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

Option	Description
1	Status quo – both schools continue to operate as standalone schools
2	All-age federation – Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School federate to create a federated all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion
3	All-age school – Merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

This options appraisal paper is focussed on creating an all-age governance structure in Llanfair Caereinion, and does not propose any change to the current language categories of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes a Strategic Aim to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. One of the objectives within this aim is to 'Move schools along the language continuum'.

The Council recognises the strength of Welsh-medium provision in this area, and that in particular, the secondary Welsh-medium provision at Caereinion is central to the Council's aspiration to provide access to enhanced Welsh-medium secondary provision. Whilst the discussions with the schools have included consideration of the school's language category going forward, this paper does not consider any changes to the language provision in Llanfair Caereinion.

Alongside the development of plans to establish an all-age governance structure in Llanfair Caereinion, the Council will continue to engage in constructive dialogue with representatives of the two schools, in order to continue to explore ways to develop and enhance the Welsh-medium provision in Llanfair Caereinion. This would contribute to the implementation of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Government's Strategy to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

SWOT analyses for each of the four options are provided below.

Option 1: Status quo – both schools continue to operate as standalone schools

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retention of primary and secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion - No disruption to pupils, parents or staff - There would be no additional transport costs - No requirement for a reorganisation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is currently no permanent leadership arrangements in place in either school - Would not lead to any financial efficiencies - Two separate schools, therefore there is no strategic overview of the provision of education in Llanfair Caereinion - Unlikely to attract capital investment in the future
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for greater collaboration between the two schools 	

Option 2: All-age federation – Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School federate to create a federated all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retention of primary and secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion - Minimal disruption to pupils, parents or staff - There would be no additional transport costs - Would provide improved opportunities for sharing staff expertise and good practice - Would provide opportunities for improved transition links between the primary and secondary schools - Potential for one headteacher across the two schools - The two schools would retain their individual identities - May be more acceptable to other primary schools in the catchment - Potential to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would not lead to any financial efficiencies - Unlikely to attract capital investment in the future - Would remain as two separate schools therefore there could be some tensions between the two schools - Federation is a less robust model than amalgamation - Parents may be unfamiliar with the concept of an ‘all-age’ school and may have concerns about the model - Other primary feeder schools may have concerns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One governing body which would have strategic overview over the two schools - Would be easier to dissolve a federation if the change was not working 	
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity for improved collaboration between the two schools - Opportunity to run more efficiently - Opportunity for shared staffing across the federation 	

Option 3: All-age school – Merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retention of primary and secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion - There would be no additional transport costs - Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across all key stages - Would improve transition between each key stage - Minimal disruption for pupils and parents - Would improve the ability to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils - Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc. - One governing body which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages - One leadership team which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents may be unfamiliar with the concept of an ‘all-age’ school and may have concerns about the model - Other primary feeder schools may have concerns - Impact on staff as management of change process would need to take place to allocate posts in the new school

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to secure permanent leadership arrangements across the age range - Opportunity to enable all learners to achieve high standards of achievement and attainment - Opportunity to provide excellent teaching and learning provision reflecting national, regional and local priorities - Opportunity to develop resilient leadership and management arrangements - Opportunity to access capital investment in the future - Opportunity to develop an inclusive education model, meeting the needs of vulnerable learners - Opportunity to streamline policies, procedures and schemes of work' - Opportunity to share best practice between staff from Primary and Secondary sectors - Opportunity to develop a single culture and ethos - Opportunity to develop bilingualism across all key stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transition process for pupils, staff and parents may cause uncertainty with a potential impact on pupil numbers, as parents choose other schools (potentially out of county) - Difficult to recruit staff in a period of instability - Instability could impact on the continued need to improve outcomes

6. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF EACH OPTION

Finance Notes and Assumptions General

Financial costings are based on current school provided pupil numbers projections and the current formula principles. Please note that should the numbers change or pupils do not transfer to the schools as per the model or the formula principles change there could be significant changes to the projected savings. Updated savings will need to be projected should the options progress.

All financial costings do not include the following

- Central Service SLA reductions – to be calculated
- Early years provision across the county to compliment the revised structure
- Access to Leisure facilities across the county and cost impact of this.
- Afterschool Clubs attached to the school
- Breakfast clubs attached to the school

- Any deficits or one off surpluses for school delegated and any clubs
- Capital costs
- Transport costs
- Catering costs
- As numbers supplied are based on current PLASC numbers and the formula is based on count date numbers for 21-22 financial year, adjustments and assumptions have been made regarding reception and where year groups had different numbers.

Option 1: Status quo – both schools continue to operate as standalone schools

Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion Primary	£639,747 (162 pupils dual stream)
Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion High	£2,646,617 (397 pupils dual stream)
Total	£3,286,364
Saving / (Cost)	0
Estimated Saving / (Costs)	0

Option 2: All-age federation – Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion federate to create a federated all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion Primary	£639,747 (162 pupils dual stream)
Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion High (inc Post 16)	£2,646,617 (397 pupils dual stream)
Total	£3,286,364
Saving / (Cost)	0
Estimated Saving / (Costs)	0

Option 3: All-age school – Merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Ysgol Uwchradd Caereinion to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion Primary	£639,747 (162 pupils dual stream)
Current Estimated funding 21/22 Llanfair Caereinion High (inc Post 16)	£2,646,617 (397 pupils dual stream)
Total	£3,286,364

Revised Estimated Funding/Costs	
Estimated Delegated funding 21/22 (inc Post 16)	3,274,370
Total	3,274,370
Saving / (Cost)	£11,994
Estimated Saving / (Costs)	£11,994

New ISR:

Unit Pts. Score	STPCD Group	Powys sub-group	Headteacher ISR	Deputy ISR	Asst ISR
5,841	Group 5	5bu	21-27	15-19	11-15

Does not impact funding as all age management funded on average for sector plus TLRs.

Notes and Assumptions

- 21-22 formula funding used
- Run as a single site school but all age (2 schools but removed .2 mgt time primary and funded as single school for ALNCo)
- All teachers funded in primary sector at pt 523.
- Used both schools current funded pupil number projections for 21/22.
- Premises funding left as current 21/22 funding. Condition factors not changed. For two sites – this would need updating once new school sqm is known.
- ALN delegated funding has been left as is for both sites, this may change as stats change.
- Rates and SLA's kept at current funding – will need updating once new school rates known.

7. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must align with the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 - Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must optimise the benefits of the Council's Transforming Education Programme
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning • The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option must be achievable within current legislation • The option must be operationally achievable • The option must be physically achievable
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council's forecasted revenue • The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council

Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets ? – Could meet x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	✓
5 – Potential affordability	x	x	✓
Total ✓	1	1	4

Total x	3	3	0
Outcome	Discount	Discount	Preferred option

8. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the SWOT analyses carried out and the financial estimates received so far, the emerging preferred option for Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School is:

Option 3: All-age school – Merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

The reasons for this are:

- Retention of primary and secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion
- There would be no additional transport costs
- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across all key stages
- Would improve transition between each key stage
- Minimal disruption for pupils and parents
- Would improve the ability to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils
- Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc.
- One governing body which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages
- One leadership team which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

9. NEXT STEPS

Further consideration of the emerging preferred option will be carried out, to include consideration of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

Alongside this, the Council will continue to engage in constructive dialogue with representatives of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, to continue to explore ways to develop and enhance the Welsh-medium provision in Llanfair Caereinion.

If the outcome of the dialogue is a need to change the school's language category, a further options appraisal exercise would be carried out, and a statutory process would be required in order to implement any changes. This would not happen before September 2022.

PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals. Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, to merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion, based on the factors outlined in the Code.

10. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

10.1 Likely impact on standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills

The Council would expect the establishment of an all-age school to have a positive impact on standards and progress overall. The Council would expect that establishing an all-age school would lead to securing permanent leadership arrangements for all pupils in Llanfair Caereinion, which should lead to improved standards across all ages.

It is anticipated that establishing an all-age school would have a positive impact on standards and progress overall for all pupils, including pupils belonging to specific groups such as English as an Additional Language, eligible for Free School Meals, Looked After Children, Additional Learning Needs. One learning continuum could be implemented across all age ranges, meaning that pupil progress could be monitored and supported more effectively throughout their school career. This would be particularly beneficial for pupils belonging to specific groups such as those outlined above, as there would be improved opportunities for sharing staff specialisms and expertise in working with these groups of pupils across all age ranges, ensuring that they can be more effectively supported throughout their time in the school.

It is also anticipated that establishing an all-age school would have a positive impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, through improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources across all age ranges, and through the ability to target across all phases of education.

The Council would also expect establishing an all-age school to have a positive impact on provision and progression, through the effective implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. An all-age school would allow for careful planning in the six areas of learning and experiences and the core purposes across all age groups, to allow for strong progression in skills, knowledge and understanding, and would allow for the sharing of staff expertise and skills.

10.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Establishing an all-age school would mean that pupils in Llanfair Caereinion would attend the same school throughout their time in school. This would avoid the transition difficulties which sometimes arise when pupils move from primary school to secondary school, and therefore would have a positive impact on pupil well-being.

Establishing an all-age school would also mean that pupils in the primary ages would have improved opportunities to access specialist facilities currently available at the high school, including PE, science and technology facilities. It is hoped that this would have a positive impact on the opportunities available to them in the primary sector, and on their attitudes to learning.

10.3 Teaching and learning experiences

10.3.1 Quality of teaching

The Council would expect establishing an all-age school to lead to improvements in the quality of teaching in Llanfair Caereinion, due to the improved professional development and collaboration opportunities that could be offered to staff, for example cross phase working, peer to peer working, triad working, and sharing pedagogical principles.

10.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum

It is anticipated that establishment of a new all-age school would provide improved opportunities to provide a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for pupils in Llanfair Caereinion.

Establishing an all-age school would also provide an opportunity to redesign the curriculum offer in Llanfair Caereinion, in order to meet the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales, as outlined in 'Our National Mission', which sets out the ambition for all schools to develop as learning organisations.

Pupils would benefit from closer links between the various phases of education, and the opportunity to access specialist teachers. Primary aged pupils would also benefit from the opportunity to access specialist facilities located in Caereinion High School, which could include PE, science and technology facilities.

10.3.3 The provision of skills

It is anticipated that establishing an all-age school would have a positive impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, through

improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources across all age ranges, and through the ability to target across all phases of education.

An all-age school would allow for careful planning in the six areas of learning and experiences and the core purposes across all age groups, to allow for strong progression in skills, knowledge and understanding, and would allow for the sharing of staff expertise and skills.

10.4 Care, support and guidance

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

The Council would expect establishing an all-age school to lead to improvements in the care, support and guidance provided to pupils. Pupils would be part of one establishment throughout their primary and secondary education, which would result in improvements in the tracking and monitoring arrangements which could be put in place throughout their time in school, and would enable more effective transition arrangements to be implemented during the pupil's time in school.

Should an all-age school be established, pupils would be part of a larger body of pupils. It is expected that this would have a positive impact on their personal development and the opportunities available to them. As part of this, opportunities could be offered to older pupils to provide support to younger pupils.

10.5 Leadership and Management

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

It is anticipated that the establishment of a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion would lead to improvements in terms of leadership and management. Neither Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School nor Caereinion High School currently have a permanent headteacher. The Council would hope that establishing an all-age school would lead to securing permanent leadership arrangements for the new school, and therefore for all pupils in Llanfair Caereinion, which should lead to improvements in leadership arrangements across the school.

The establishment of a new all-age school would also provide more opportunities for distributed leadership across the primary and secondary sectors, and would enable middle leaders to be developed more effectively, and improved developmental opportunities for staff, including increased

opportunities to develop specialisms across the school, and to work across different key stages.

Should an all-age school be established, one new governing body would replace the two current governing bodies, which should provide more robust governance arrangements.

Establishment of a new all-age school would provide improved opportunities to develop robust self-evaluation process which could be implemented across all key stages, resulting in improvements for learners, as well as improved opportunities to plan more effectively across all age ranges.

10.5.2 Professional learning

Establishing an all-age school would provide improved professional learning opportunities for staff through greater opportunities for cross phase working, opportunities to develop leaders more effectively and more opportunities to develop middle leaders.

Establishing an all-age school would enable the school to develop as an effective learning organisation, in accordance with the ambition set out for all schools, as outlined in 'Our National Mission'.

10.5.3 Use of Resources

Should a new all-age school be established, the school would be funded as one school, with one budget, and would be run by one governing body. This would enable the school to operate more efficiently compared with the current arrangements, and should result in some efficiencies through shared staffing and sharing of other resources.

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

Amalgamating the two schools would provide enhanced opportunities to support pupils belonging to vulnerable groups. There would be improved opportunities to provide support to pupils across the primary age range, and will provide continuity in the support provided to vulnerable pupils.

10.7 Ability of the school/schools which are the subject of the proposals to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and each key stage of education, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this

It is not anticipated that establishment of a new all-age school would have a negative impact on the school's ability to deliver the full curriculum in the

foundation stage and each key stage. The school would continue to operate from the current sites of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, and no significant change would be expected in total pupil numbers across the two sites.

There could be a positive impact on the ability to deliver the full curriculum due to the opportunities to access staff specialisms across all age ranges and to share other resources as appropriate. There would also be an improved opportunity for primary aged pupils to benefit from specialist secondary facilities, such as science laboratories, which would provide improved opportunities to deliver the full curriculum to pupils.

11. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

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

The intention is to establish a new school in the current accommodation of the two existing schools, which would provide the same capacity as is currently available, and would provide accommodation of equivalent quality.

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

The intention is to establish a new school of the same language category as the two existing schools.

Neither of the two existing schools have a designated religious character.

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

The intention is to establish a new all-age school on the current sites of Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, therefore there would be no change in terms of journey times.

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

The latest pupil projection figures suggests that pupil numbers at the two schools are expected to remain fairly stable over the coming years – there is no evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places.

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

The intention is to amalgamate the two schools in their existing accommodation, therefore there would be no change in terms of access for disabled pupils in accordance with requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

12. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

The intention is to establish a new school in the buildings currently occupied by Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School. It is not anticipated that establishing an all-age school would impact on surplus places in the area.

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

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys includes an aspiration to develop new purpose-built all-age schools across Powys, that will not only provide state of the art facilities for teaching and learning, but also childcare and early years provision, community and leisure facilities, multi-agency areas that can provide support for learners and their families and SEN/ALN facilities of the highest quality.

Whilst the intention is that in the longer term new accommodation would be provided in Llanfair Caereinion as part of the 21st Century Schools Investment Programme, the intention is to merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School in their current accommodation, and is not dependent on capital investment.

12.3 What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?

There are no recurrent costs associated with amalgamating the two schools.

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

No additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of establishing a new all-age schools in the buildings currently occupied by Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School.

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

There are no capital costs associated with establishing a new all-age school in the buildings currently occupied by Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School.

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

It is estimated that establishing a new all-age school would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of £11,994 per annum.

As the intention is to establish a new school in the accommodation currently occupied by Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, there would be no impact on transport costs, and there would be no capital costs.

12.7 Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?

As indicated in section 3.1 above, based on the 1st May submittal by the governing bodies, Caereinion High School is projected to be in a deficit budget position during 2020/21, however it is projected that this will be recovered by the 2021/22 financial year.

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

Any savings would be reinvested into the schools system.

12.9 Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?

Establishment of a new all-age school would not result in any capital receipts.

13. OTHER GENERAL FACTORS

13.1 What impact will the proposals have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds?

It is anticipated that amalgamation of the two schools would have a positive impact on the educational attainment of all pupils, including children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Amalgamation of the two schools would ensure that consistent support could be provided to these pupils throughout their time in school. In addition, as a larger school, the new school would have a larger pupil deprivation grant, which could be used to support pupils consistently throughout their time in school. Resources and expertise could be shared effectively across the school to support learners from economically deprived backgrounds to achieve their potential.

13.2 Any equality issues, including those identified through equality impact assessments

Amalgamating the two schools would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the schools. However, it is anticipated that amalgamating the two schools would have a positive impact on all pupils, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups.

13.3 Whether the school / schools involved are subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land.

The schools involved are not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the establishment of a new all-age school.

14. SPECIFIC FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROPOSALS TO REORGANISE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OR TO ADD OR REMOVE SIXTH FORMS

14.1 Whether proposals will lead to an improvement in the educational or training achievements of persons who are above compulsory school age but below the age of 19

Establishing an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion would continue to offer provision for learners who are above compulsory school age but below 19 in Llanfair Caereinion, therefore pupils who currently access provision in Llanfair Caereinion would still be able to access this. It is not anticipated that there would be an impact on the educational or training achievements of these learners.

14.2 Whether proposals will contribute to an appropriate range of relevant courses and qualifications and high quality, employer informed, vocational learning routes targeted at pupils of all abilities, whilst maintaining GCSE, AS/A level and other established courses, as required under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 for 14-19 year old learners

It is not anticipated that establishing an all-age school would impact on the range of relevant courses and qualifications available. Learners would continue to be able to access a similar range of courses to what is currently available at Caereinion High School and the North Powys Learning Pathways offer, in accordance with the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

14.3 Whether proposals are likely to lead to an increased participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age, taking into account transport issues and costs to the learner and others, the affordability of such costs, and the likelihood of learners being willing to travel

Establishing an all-age school at Llanfair Caereinion would continue to provide access to learning beyond compulsory school age at Llanfair Caereinion, therefore there would be no impact on transport or cost to the learner.

It is not anticipated that there would be an impact in participation in learning by pupils beyond compulsory school age.

14.4 The extent to which proposals contribute to the 14-19 agenda taking account of the views of regional 14-19 networks

It is not anticipated that establishing an all-age school would impact on the range of relevant courses and qualifications available. Learners would continue to be able to access a similar range of courses to what is currently available at Caereinion High School and across North Powys, in accordance with the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

14.5 The effect of proposals on 11-16 provision in schools

Establishing an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion would continue to provide access to Welsh-medium and English-medium provision in Llanfair Caereinion for 11-16 year old pupils. It is anticipated that establishing an all-age school would strengthen the provision and delivery of the Curriculum for Wales for 11-16 year olds, through improved transition processes from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, and the ability to share expertise across all key stages.

14.6 How proposals would affect the viability of institutions already providing good-quality post-16 provision, including school sixth forms, Further Education Institutions and private training organisations

Establishing an all-age school at Llanfair Caereinion would continue to provide access to post-16 provision at Llanfair Caereinion.

It is not anticipated that there would be an impact on the viability of the provision at Llanfair Caereinion, or on the viability of any other providers.

14.7 How proposals might affect the sustainability or enhancement of Welsh medium provision in the regional 14-19 network and wider area and promote access to availability of Welsh medium courses in post-16 education

It is not anticipated that establishing an all-age school would impact on the range of Welsh-medium courses available in Llanfair Caereinion.

Learners would continue to be able to access a similar range of Welsh-medium courses to what is currently available at Caereinion High School and the North Powys Learning Pathways offer, in accordance with the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

14.8 The extent to which proposals will provide additional learner benefits compared with the status quo and other tenable options for post-16 organisation

It is not anticipated that establishing an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion would have a significant impact on learner benefits compared with the status quo. There could be some additional learner benefits from opportunities for older pupils to work with younger pupils, and in the sharing of specialist staff across the school.

14.9 How proposals might affect discretionary transport provision a local authority may provide to learners above compulsory school age

Establishment of an all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion would not affect discretionary transport provision provided to learners above compulsory school age.

15. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the options appraisal carried out and further consideration of the emerging preferred option against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code, the preferred option is as follows:

Option 3: All-age school – Merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion

As indicated in section 8 above, the reasons for this are:

- Retention of primary and secondary provision in Llanfair Caereinion
- There would be no additional transport costs
- Would enable staff expertise and good practice to be shared across all key stages
- Would improve transition between each key stage
- Minimal disruption for pupils and parents
- Would improve the ability to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils
- Would enable the school to run more efficiently through shared staffing, shared resources etc.
- One governing body which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages
- One leadership team which would have strategic overview over the provision for pupils/learners in all key stages
- Meets all of the Critical Success Factors

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to merge Llanfair Caereinion C.P. School and Caereinion High School, to create a new all-age school in Llanfair Caereinion.