



## **Proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School**

### **Updated Impact Assessments**

**January 2024**



#### **Contents**

		<b>Page</b>
1	Introduction	2
2	Integrated Impact Assessment	3
3	Equality Impact Assessment	19
4	Community Impact Assessment	26

# Proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School

## Draft Impact Assessments

### 1. Introduction

Powys County Council has consulted on a proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

In line with the Council's policy, an Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out which incorporates the Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management.

In addition, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) requires local authorities to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment in relation to all school reorganisation proposals. For proposals which affect teaching through the medium of Welsh, local authorities are also required to carry out a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

**These impact assessments have been updated following the consultation period, and are provided in this document.** The Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out based on the latest PLASC information available. The Community Impact Assessment has been carried out with input from the school.

The impact assessments have been updated to incorporate any issues raised during the consultation period. The updated versions, presented here, will be considered by the council's Cabinet when determining how to proceed in relation to this proposal.

## 2. Integrated Impact Assessment

The Impact Assessment (IA) below incorporates Welsh Language, Equalities, Well-being of Future Generations Act, Sustainable Development Principles, Communication and Engagement, Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting, Community Cohesion and Risk Management, supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

<b>Proposal</b>	Irfon Valley C.P. School Proposal
<b>Outline Summary / Description of Proposal</b>	
The Council has carried out consultation on the following proposal:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.</li> </ul>	

### 3. Consultation requirements

<b>Consultation Requirement</b>	<b>Consultation deadline/or justification for no consultation</b>
Public consultation required	Consultation in accordance with the School Organisation Code was conducted from the 26 <sup>th</sup> of October 2023 to the 7 <sup>th</sup> of December 2023.

### 4. Impact on Other Service Areas

<b>Does the proposal have potential to impact on another service area? (Have you considered the implications on Health &amp; Safety and Corporate Parenting?) PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM / ENGAGE ANY AFFECTED SERVICE AREAS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY</b>					
Adult Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	✓	Legal and Democratic Services	✓
Children's Services	✓	Finance	✓	Property, Planning and Public Protection	✓
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highways, Transportation and Recycling	✓	Transformation and Communications	✓
Digital Services	✓	Housing and Community Development	✓	Workforce and OD	✓

### Data Protection Impact Assessment

Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals? Yes ✓ No

Is Powys County Council the data controller? Yes ✓ No

Personal details will be processed in accordance with the Transforming Education Privacy Notice.

#### 4a Geographical Locations

What geographical area(s) will be impacted by the proposal? (Chose all those applicable)			
Powys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brecon	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Builth and Llanwrtyd	✓
North	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crickhowell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid	✓	Hay and Talgarth	<input type="checkbox"/>
South	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knighton and Presteigne	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Llandrindod and Rhayader	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Llanfair Caereinion	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Llanfyllin	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Llanidloes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Machynlleth	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Newtown	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Welshpool and Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Ystradgynlais	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How does your proposal impact on the Welsh Government's well-being goals?

<b>Well-being Goal</b>	<b>How does proposal contribute to this goal?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>A prosperous Wales:</b> An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>As part of the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, this proposal represents an effort to ‘reconfigure and rationalise primary provision.’ Implementation of this proposal would positively contribute to a Powys that uses resources efficiently, and which produces a skilled and well-educated population.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales:</b> A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would require additional travel for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School for whom this is their closest school. This would have a negative environmental impact as more home to school transport would need to be provided to transport pupils to their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Implementation of the proposal would mean that the Council would no longer need to run the Irfon Valley school site. This would result in a reduction in the use of heating and electricity amongst other factors.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>

<b>Well-being Goal</b>	<b>How does proposal contribute to this goal?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>A healthier Wales:</b> A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p> <p><b>Public Health (Wales) Act, 2017:</b> Part 6 of the Act requires for public bodies to undertake a health impact assessment to assess the likely effect of a proposed action or decision on the physical or mental health of the people of Wales.</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would result in closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on the mental well-being of pupils, staff, and other stakeholders associated with the school during the transition period, however the long-term aim is to provide improved learning opportunities for all learners.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation period noted that the transition period is likely to be especially difficult for ALN/EAL learners, who are likely to need additional support.</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Support would be provided to pupils during the transition period to enable them to transfer effectively to their new schools. The council recognises that some learners are likely to require additional support. Powys County Council has a strong track record of supporting schools to deliver high quality ALN provision, and this will continue throughout the transition periods for pupils of Irfon Valley C.P. School should the school close.</p> <p>The process is to be concluded as quickly as possible to minimise the period of uncertainty for pupils, staff, and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities:</b>  Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected Communities.</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Garth, as there would no longer be provision in the village, and therefore there could be a potential loss of community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is acknowledged that this could impact on pupils' ability to access after school activities. There would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has been updated following the consultation period.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation period have emphasised the importance of Irfon Valley C.P. School within the Garth community.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>	<p>There is a village hall in Garth, which would continue to be available for community activities should the school close.</p>	<p>Very Poor</p>

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<u>IMPACT</u> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<u>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</u> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales:</b>  A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> <p><b>Human Rights - is about being proactive (see guidance)</b></p> <p><b>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:</b>  The Convention gives rights to everyone under the age of 18, which include the right to be treated fairly and to be protected from discrimination; that organisations act for the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to be heard.</p>	<p>The aim of implementing the proposal is to provide the best possible opportunities to learners, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Consultation will be carried out on the proposal, which will include consultation with affected pupils, ensuring that all those affected by the plans would have the opportunity to give their views.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:</b> A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.  <i>Incorporating requirements under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards</i></p>				



<b>Well-being Goal</b>	<b>How does proposal contribute to this goal?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourable than the English language</i>	<p>Irfon Valley C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, pupils could choose to transfer to Builth Wells C.P. School, which is a dual stream school. This would provide an opportunity for pupils to choose Welsh-medium education and become bilingual, being fluent in Welsh and English.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</i>	<p>Irfon Valley C.P. School and is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the proposal would impact on opportunities to promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, pupils could choose to transfer to Builth Wells C.P. School, which is a dual stream school. This would provide an opportunity for pupils to choose Welsh-medium education and become bilingual, fluent in Welsh and English.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.

<b>Well-being Goal</b>	<b>How does proposal contribute to this goal?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<i>People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation.</i>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would lead to the closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School, with pupils transferring to their nearest alternative schools. The alternative schools would be larger schools, which should be able to offer a greater range of sport, art, and recreation activities for pupils.</p> <p>Implementation of the proposal would also result in increasing pupil numbers at neighbouring schools, which should enable them to provide additional opportunities for pupils to take part in sport, art, and other extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation period have indicated that Irfon Valley offered a broad range of extra-curricular activities. It has been emphasised that the school has worked hard to be inclusive of all pupils in these activities.</p>	Good		Choose an item.
<b>A more equal Wales:</b> A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances). <i>Incorporating requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Social Economic duty (2020).</i>				
<i>Age</i>	The proposal would impact on primary aged pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Disability</i>	The proposal would impact on any pupils with disabilities currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all affected pupils, including any pupils with disabilities.	Neutral		Choose an item.

<b>Well-being Goal</b>	<b>How does proposal contribute to this goal?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Marriage or civil partnership</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Race</i>	The proposal would impact on all primary aged pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, including pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for pupils, including those belonging to protected characteristic groups.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Religion or belief</i>	Irfon Valley is not a church school. The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, regardless of their religion or belief.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sex</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	The proposal aims to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, regardless of their sexual orientation.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i>	No impact.	Neutral		Choose an item.

Well-being Goal	How does proposal contribute to this goal?	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<i>Socio-economic duty</i>	<p>The aim of the proposal is to provide improved educational opportunities for all pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, including those eligible for Free School Meals. PLASC 2023 data indicated that 17.6% of pupils at the school were eligible for Free School Meals, so the proposal would impact on some pupils from lower income homes.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school in Garth. This would mean that pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School would need to travel to their nearest alternative schools. Whilst home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is possible that this would impact on pupils' ability to access extra-curricular / after school activities, and that this impact would be greater in respect of pupils from lower income households. There would also be an impact on the parents of these pupils in terms of accessing school activities.</p>	Neutral		Choose an item.
<b>Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements</b>				
PLASC				

6. How does your proposal impact on the council's other key guiding principles?

Principle	How does the proposal impact on this principle?	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<b>Sustainable Development Principle (5 ways of working)</b>				

<b>Principle</b>	<b>How does the proposal impact on this principle?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<b>Long Term:</b> <i>Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</i>	Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School are low and are not expected to increase over the coming years. The aim of the proposal to close the school is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.	Good		Choose an item.
<b>Collaboration:</b> <i>Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.</i>	Full consultation has been carried out, which has enabled all interested parties to give their views. This has included an opportunity to suggest any alternative options for the school.	Neutral		Choose an item.
<b>Involvement (including Communication and Engagement):</b> <i>Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them including:</i> <b>Unpaid Carers:</b> <i>Ensuring that unpaid carers views are sought and taken into account</i>	Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This ensures that all interested parties have had an opportunity to give their views. The findings of this exercise will be reported to Cabinet and will be taken into consideration when determining how to proceed. This impact assessment has been updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received.  All stakeholders have had the opportunity to give their views as part of this process, this includes any unpaid carers in the area.	Good		Choose an item.

<b>Principle</b>	<b>How does the proposal impact on this principle?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>Prevention:</b> <i>Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring including:</i></p> <p><b>Safeguarding:</b> <i>Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults with health and social care needs who can't protect themselves.</i></p>	<p>The aim of the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School is to ensure the best possible opportunities for learners in the area now and in the future, and to ensure better strategic management of the Powys schools estate.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements is a key aspect of any school organisation proposal. The intention is that the proposal would maintain or improve the safeguarding arrangements for all pupils.</p>	<p>Good</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><b>Integration:</b> <i>Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.</i></p>	<p>No impact.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>

<b>Principle</b>	<b>How does the proposal impact on this principle?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<p><b>Powys County Council Workforce:</b> What Impact will this change have on the Workforce?</p>	<p>Implementation of the proposal would impact on all current staff at Irfon Valley C.P. School as there would no longer be a school in Garth, therefore staff would be subject to a Management of Change process.</p> <p>Full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This process is supported by relevant LA teams (e.g. HR). The process has included consultation with staff, ensuring that they have had an opportunity to give their views.</p> <p>Comments received during the consultation period have indicated that staff may require some additional support. Additional support has been offered to school staff by Powys County Council's HR team.</p>	<p>Poor</p>		<p>Poor</p>
<p><b>Payroll:</b> How will this impact salary, any overtime/enhanced payments etc? Does this affect any particular group of employees? E.g. Male/Female dominated workforce. Does this proposal comply with the Councils Single Status Terms and Conditions?</p>	<p>Implementation of the preferred way forward could impact on salary arrangements for current staff at Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><b>Welsh Language impact on staff</b></p>	<p>Irfon Valley C.P. School is an English-medium school, therefore it is not anticipated that there would be a Welsh language impact on staff</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>Choose an item.</p>

<b>Principle</b>	<b>How does the proposal impact on this principle?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> Please select from drop down box below	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> Please select from drop down box below
<b>Apprenticeships:</b> Has consideration been given to whether this change impacts negatively, or positively on Apprenticeships within the service?	No impact	Neutral		Choose an item.
<b>Source of Outline Evidence to support judgements</b>				

7. What is the impact of this proposal on our communities?

<b>Communities</b>	<b>How does the proposal impact on residents and community?</b>	<b>IMPACT</b> See impact definitions in guidance document	<b>What will be done to better contribute to a more positive impact or to mitigate any negative impacts?</b>	<b>IMPACT AFTER MITIGATION</b> See impact definitions in guidance document	<b>Source of Outline Evidence to support judgement</b>



Garth	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Garth, as there would no longer be provision in the village, and therefore there could be a potential loss of community facilities associated with the school.</p> <p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, it is acknowledged that this could impact on pupils' ability to access after school activities. There would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities / events.</p> <p>A separate community impact assessment has been carried out which includes input from the school. This has been updated as required throughout the process.</p>	Major	There is a village hall in Garth, which would be continue to be available for community activities should the school close.	Major	
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9. What are the risks to service delivery or the council following implementation of this proposal?

Description of risks			
Risk Identified	Inherent Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)	Mitigation	Residual Risk Rating Impact X Likelihood (See Risk Matrix in guidance document)
N/A			

10. Overall Summary and Judgement of this Impact Assessment?

Outline Assessment (to be inserted in cabinet report)	Cabinet Report Reference:
<p>The aim of the proposal is to improve the educational provision for learners, however the assessment has identified some negative aspects. These primarily relate to the impact on the local community due to loss of educational provision from the village, and the additional travel that would be required for pupils to attend alternative provision and their parents to access school activities.</p>	

11. Is there additional evidence to support the Impact Assessment (IA)?

<b>What additional evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?</b>
<p>Full consultation has been required to implement this proposal, and this has enabled the impact assessment to be further developed from its original draft form.</p>

12. On-going monitoring arrangements?

<b>What arrangements will be put in place to monitor the impact over time?</b>
<p>The Transforming Education Programme Board will continue to monitor impact over time.</p>
<b>Please state when this Impact Assessment will be reviewed.</b>
<p>The impact assessment will be reviewed at all stages of the development.</p>

### 3. Equality Impact Assessment

## Powys County Council

### Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



<b>Proposal</b>	To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.
<b>Service Area</b>	Schools Service
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	October 2023, updated January 2024

The Equality Act 2010, requires that public sector organisations in the exercise of their functions, pay due regard to the following 'general duty':

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;**
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.**

*The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. This assessment also includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh.*

The specific regulations for Wales [Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011] require public sector bodies to monitor relevant policy and practises and then assess and report on the impact based upon an analysis of relevant data and evidence.

#### 1. AIM or PURPOSE

In October 2023, the Council's Cabinet approved carrying out consultation on the following proposal:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

This consultation has subsequently been carried out.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

**Please state the current business objectives of the change proposal.**

The Council is proposing to close Irfon Valley C.P. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Minimal impact on any other schools compared with other options
- Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site

## 3. BENEFITS and OUTCOMES

**i) What are the intended benefits or outcomes from the change proposal?**

The benefits of the proposal are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Minimal impact on any other schools compared with other options
- Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site

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#### 4. CORPORATE RELEVANCE

##### How does this change proposal relate to Corporate Improvement Plan?

The proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School is aligned to the Transforming Education Programme and forms part of the Transformation Portfolio, set up to support the priorities and objectives outlined in the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan.

#### 5. DATA USED

##### 5.1. What data has been used to conduct this assessment?

Tick/shade boxes as appropriate.

Profiling of service users, providing a breakdown of who uses the service by the protected characteristics.	✓
Service user satisfaction rates, broken down by the protected characteristics.	
Qualitative data (analysed against the protected characteristics) which provides evidence about current services users experience accessing the service.	✓
Qualitative data gathered from those that are not currently using the service.	✓
Complaints monitoring against the protected characteristics.	
Wider research reports and findings.	
Relevant service-based Equality Impact Assessment.	

##### 5.2. Are there any gaps in the data?

Yes  No

Please state the gaps:

- None

How will the gaps be addressed going forward? N/A

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS

<p><b>6.1 Quantitative</b> <b>Summarise the key quantitative data analysis results, providing key headline statistics.</b> Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. statistics generated from a consultation questionnaire.</p> <p><b>Key questions:</b></p> <p>i) Are certain groups currently underrepresented in service user figures? Will a change affect this?</p> <p>ii) How do satisfaction levels compare across the protected characteristic groups? How will a change affect this?</p>	<p><u>PLASC January 2023</u></p> <p>Based on the information provided in the school's PLASC return in January 2023, the following pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School belong to protected characteristic groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Free school meals: 17.6% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals.</li><li>- ALN: 18.6% of pupils have additional educational needs. Of these, 11.6% of pupils are on School Action, 4.7% of pupils are on School Action Plus, 0.0% of pupils have statements, 2.2% of pupils have IDPs issued by the School and 0.0 % of pupils have IDPs issued by the local authority.</li><li>- Disabilities: 18.6% of pupils have additional learning needs.</li><li>- English as an Additional Language: 5.3% of pupils with EAL.</li><li>- Ethnicity: 84.2% of pupils that attend the school are White British, while 15.8% of pupils are of other known ethnicities.</li><li>- Looked after Children: 0.0% of pupils are looked after.</li></ul> <p>This information shows that a small number of pupils that belong to a protected characteristic group will be affected by this proposal. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 17.6% of pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School are eligible for Free School Meals. This is lower than the Powys average for primary schools (18.8%). However, pupil numbers at Irfon Valley are low, so this percentage translates to a small number of pupils</li><li>- 18.6% of pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School have additional learning needs. This is slightly lower than the Powys average for primary schools (20.9%)</li></ul> <p>The proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School would impact on all pupils currently attending the school, including those pupils belonging to protected characteristic groups.</p>
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<p><b>6.2 Qualitative</b>  <b>Summarise the key qualitative data analysis, providing key themes or patterns.</b>  Include data that relates to existing provision and also data relating to proposal. E.g. protected characteristics focus group on the proposal.</p> <p><b>Key questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i)</b> Do certain groups have a different service user experience? How will a change affect this?</li> <li><b>ii)</b> Have any areas for improvement been communicated by particular groups? Will a change have an impact upon these views?</li> <li><b>iii)</b> What are the reasons behind some groups not using the service? How will a change affect this position?</li> <li><b>iv)</b> What has consultation on your proposals revealed about impact on the protected characteristics?</li> </ul>	<p>Full consultation has been carried out on the proposal relating to Irfon Valley C.P. School, including consultation with pupils at the affected schools. This has provided qualitative data in respect of the proposal, and information regarding any additional impact on pupils that belong to protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Comments received during the course of the consultation indicated concern about the impact on pupils with additional learning needs that currently attend the school, and concern about English as additional language pupils that currently attend the school.</p>
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## 7. EqIA RESULT

Based on an analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data, please tick/shade the appropriate box opposite to provide the EqIA assessment result.

<p><b>The proposal does not present any adverse impact on equality.</b>  [Proceed to question 10]</p>	
<p><b>The proposal presents some adverse impact on equality.</b>  [Proceed to question 8]</p>	✓

<p><b>The proposal presents significant impact on equality</b>          [Proceed to question 8]</p>	
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## 8. AREAS for IMPROVEMENT

<p><b>Please provide detail of weak or sensitive areas of the proposal identified by the assessment.</b></p> <p>i) Which protected characteristic groups are particularly affected?          ii) Will people on low incomes be affected?          iii) Will Welsh speakers be affected?</p>	<p>i) The proposal will impact on pupils that are members of protected characteristic groups. The proportion of pupils with ALN is higher than the Powys average. In addition, some EAL pupils attend the school.</p> <p>ii) The proportion of pupils that qualify for Free School Meals is also higher than the Powys average.</p> <p>iii) Irfon Valley C.P. School is an English medium school – therefore the proposal will not directly affect Welsh speakers.</p>
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## 9. EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT

<p><b>9.1 Having identified problematic aspects to the proposal, how will this now be addressed?</b></p> <p><i>i.e. Are you able to involve (in some capacity) people from protected characteristic groups, Welsh Speakers, people on low incomes, to assist you in this process?</i></p> <p>i) Can the impact be mitigated, and how will this be done?          ii) Does the proposal require modification to reduce or remove this impact?</p>	<p>Should the proposal be implemented, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would attend their nearest alternative schools.</p> <p>This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, including any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend that school, as some additional travel would be required in order to attend their nearest alternative school.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the school, it is to be noted that alternative schools, being larger than Irfon Valley, should be able to deliver the new curriculum more effectively, offer more extra-curricular activities for pupils, and also offer a greater amount of wraparound care to support parents. Therefore, the negative impacts of additional travel are likely to be mitigated by the benefits of attending a larger school. In addition, there is no reason to believe that alternative schools would not be equipped to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected</p>
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<p>iii) Should the proposal be considered for removal, owing to the degree of impact it is likely to have?</p>	<p>characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils eligible for Free School Meals, and Looked After Children.</p>
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**9.2 Will the management of the impact as outlined in 9.1, be included in the Service Improvement Plan?**

<p><b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date added.....</p> <p>Reference.....</p>	<p><b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please explain why not:  <b>Need was not identified at time of writing Service Strategy</b></p>
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#### 4. Community Impact Assessment – Irfon Valley C.P. School

**i) Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school**

The closest provider for pupils attending Irfon Valley C.P. School in September 2023 was as follows:

School	% of Pupils
Irfon Valley C.P. School	89.5%
Builth Wells C.P. School	5.3%
Ysgol Dolafon	5.3%

This suggests that 89.5% of pupils attending the school were attending their closest primary school, whilst 10.6% of pupils attending the school live closer to other primary schools.

If there were no school in Garth, the closest school for the pupils on roll in September 2023 would be as follows:

	Pupils' closest school should there be no school in Garth
Ysgol Dolafon	52.6%
Builth Wells C.P. School	36.8%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	10.5%

The average travel distance for all pupils on roll in September 2023 at Irfon Valley C.P. School is 2.23 miles.

If there were no school in Garth, the average travel distance for all pupils attending the school in September 2023 to attend alternative provision would be 4.97 miles.

Of the pupils that attended Irfon Valley C.P. School in September 2023, the furthest travel distance to the school for those pupils for whom Irfon Valley C.P. School is the closest provider is 5.39 miles.

If there were no school in Garth, the furthest distance to these pupils' nearest alternative provision would be 6.82 miles.

**ii) After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school**

The after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school include the following:

- Hockey club
- Breakfast club

However, the school has indicated that limited pupil numbers/staff have made clubs like after-school club unfeasible

**iii) Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides**

The school accommodates or provides the following other facilities or services:

- The school is the site for the 3+ setting, Rainbow Tots

**iv) Other use by the community of the school building**

The school building is used by the community to provide the following activities:

- School attends community events at Garth Village Hall
- Joint events run with Ysgol Dolafon

**v) Other links between the school and the community**

- Community events such as MacMillan Coffee Morning and school concerts
- School attends community events at Garth Village Hall

**vi) If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?**

Should the proposal be implemented, there would no longer be a school in Garth, which could result in the potential loss of community facilities associated with the school.

There is a village hall in Garth, therefore should the school no longer be available, community events and activities could be re-located here.

**vii) Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category**

Should the proposal be implemented, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative schools would be:

School	Distance from Irfon Valley	Approx. travel time
Ysgol Dolafon	6.5 miles	12 minutes
Builth Wells C.P. School	6.0 miles	10 minutes
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	9.1 miles	17 minutes
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	6.8 miles	12 minutes

The travel times above are the approximate travel times from Irfon Valley C.P. School to the alternative schools, however the distance from individual pupils' homes to alternative schools would be different.

Analysis has shown that the distances and travel times to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes for primary pupils.

An analysis of pupils attending Irfon Valley C.P. School in September 2023 suggests that the furthest distance to the new school for pupils for whom Irfon Valley C.P. School is currently the closest school would be 6.8 miles.

Home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport which is in operation at that time. Whilst free transport would be provided to eligible pupils, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

**viii) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported**

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

Irfon Valley C.P. School currently shares a Headteacher with Ysgol Dolafon. This would ease transition and support parents' and pupils' engagement for any pupils choosing to transfer to this school.

**ix) Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provision, wider community safety issues**

- At present, very few pupils walk to school, and none use public transport.
- If the school were to close, pupils would need transport to attend their alternative schools. The average travel distance for pupils to their nearest school, should Irfon Valley close, would be 4.97 miles. This would therefore not promote walking/cycling to school as the distance is likely to be too far for most pupils.

**x) Additional considerations for rural schools**

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Irfon Valley C.P. School is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below:

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community**

Information from the school suggests that it is unlikely that the closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School would encourage families to leave the community as travel distances to new schools would not be significantly longer.

While it is certainly possible that the closure of the school may discourage some young families from moving to Garth, the school has also acknowledged that they are currently unable to offer significant wrap-around care through, for example, after school clubs. This may have put off some young families from moving to the area even if the school were to remain open.

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community**

Should Irfon Valley C.P. School close, community events and activities could continue to take place at Garth Village Hall.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purpose – such as public meetings, local events, fetes surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere**

The school is currently not used for any additional purpose other than the pre-school.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community**

Information received from the school indicates that effects on the wider economy of the community are expected to be minimal.

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, (particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)**

As indicated in section (viii) above, should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventually implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their closest alternative schools.

Irfon Valley C.P. School currently shares a Headteacher with Ysgol Dolafon. This would ease transition and support parents' and pupils' engagement for any pupils choosing to transfer to this school.

It is acknowledged that there would be an impact on pupils' ability to participate in after school activities as there would be an additional travel requirement for parents to access school activities/events.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community)**

Should Irfon Valley C.P. School close, Garth would lose a number of community events such as school concerts. The school has also noted that Irfon Valley plays an important role in Garth as a meeting place for parents within the locality.

However, there is a village hall located in Garth where community events and activities could continue to take place.

#### **xi) Issues raised during the consultation period**

A number of comments were received during the consultation period which related to the proposal's impact on the community.

These comments are listed in full in the consultation report produced in respect of this proposal, along with the Council's response to the points raised, and are also summarised below:

- **Travel implications**
  - Additional travel time/distance
  - Queries about the Council's Home to School Transport Policy
- **Comments about housing developments in the area**
  - Concerns that there will not be enough pupil places in the area to meet the demand of the new housing developments
- **Impact on early years provision**
  - Concern about the loss of pre-school provision in the area
- **Impact on the community**
  - General concern about the impact on the community
  - The school is an important part of the community
  - The school acts as a central hub for the community

## **xii) Conclusion**

Should there be no school in Garth, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that an increased number of activities would be available to pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school provision in the village of Garth. The information provided above indicates that there is some community use of the Irfon Valley School building, including as a meeting place for parents. There is, however, a village hall located in Garth, therefore community events and activities could continue to take place in the village.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Garth is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.