

FRIDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2016

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE **EDUCATION & CHILDREN
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE **EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN**, AT **2:00PM** ON **MONDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2016**, FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.

Mark James

CHIEF EXECUTIVE



PLEASE RECYCLE

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EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**13 COUNCIL MEMBERS, 2 NON-ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS AND 3
ELECTED VOTING PARENT GOVERNOR MEMBERS**

PLAID CYMRU GROUP – 6 MEMBERS

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|----|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | C.A. Campbell |
| 2. | Councillor | J.M. Charles |
| 3. | Councillor | W.G. Hopkins |
| 4. | Councillor | P. Hughes Griffiths |
| 5. | Councillor | M.J.A. Lewis |
| 6. | Councillor | J.E. Williams (Chair) |

INDEPENDENT GROUP – 3 MEMBERS

- | | | |
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| 1. | Councillor | I.W. Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | A. James |
| 3. | Councillor | D.W.H. Richards |

LABOUR GROUP – 4 MEMBERS

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| 1. | Councillor | D.J.R. Bartlett (Vice-Chair) |
| 2. | Councillor | J.D. James |
| 3. | Councillor | P.E.M. Jones |
| 4. | Councillor | J. Williams |

NON ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS (2)

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Mrs. V. Kenny | Roman Catholic Church Representative |
| 2. | Canon B. Witt | Church in Wales Representative |

ELECTED VOTING PARENT GOVERNOR MEMBERS (3)

Term of office expires on the 31/03/2018

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Mrs E. Heyes | Area 3 – Llanelli |
| 2. | Mrs. K. Hill | Area 1 – Dinefwr |
| 3. | Mrs. A. Pickles | Area 2 – Carmarthen |

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**
3. **DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS**
4. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

4.1 **QUESTION BY MS. NIKKI LLOYD**

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, places a statutory duty on local authorities to assess the demand for Welsh-medium education in their area through their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs). The Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy required local authorities to submit Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs), to measure demand for Welsh-medium education and outline their targets to the Welsh Government. When looking at the current position within the Llangennech Schools there are currently 121 children from outside of catchment coming into Llangennech School and at the same time 111 Children leave the village to seek education. The demand for Welsh Medium in Llangennech is clearly being fabricated by these movements and not from demand within the village itself. Has a WESP assessment been done for Llangennech to measure the demand and if so, where is the demand for Welsh Medium in Llangennech?

4.2 **QUESTION BY MR. STEVE HATTO**

The School Organisation code states: Where a new school, increase in capacity or age range expansion is proposed;

- that there is evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places, with reference to the school or proposed school's language category, designated religious character, and the gender intake (i.e. co-educational/single sex);
- The demand for additional provision of any type in an area should be assessed (WE CONSIDER THIS TO BE THE Llangennech catchment area) and evidenced (In the case of Welsh medium provision this would include an

assessment of the demand for Welsh Medium education conducted in accordance with any regulations made under section 86 of the 2013 Act).

- whether proposals will improve access for disabled pupils in accordance with requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

According to information provided via Freedom of information by the School a pilot was carried out to look into Welsh immersion in the reception classes. However, we are still yet to see the results from this pilot. At the time of the pilot only parents who attended the meeting (LESS THAN A DOZEN WITHOUT THE REST OF THE PARENTS BEING AWARE) were told about it and no letters were issued. The evidence found from this pilot should have been collated and presented with the proposal. The only time we were told about the pilot was when we requested it through FOI and it has never been made public. The evidence and results have not been presented with the proposal or whether they have an impact on the need for change. Can you confirm why this assessment has not been done along with the community assessment that the Authority has refused to undertake?

4.3 QUESTION BY MRS. MICHAELA BEDDOWS

In a previous Scrutiny Committee meeting Mr Sully stated that his intention is to change all Dual Stream Schools to Welsh Medium and All English Medium to Dual Stream and so on... This will eventually eradicate all English medium Schools in Carmarthenshire. Can you confirm if this is the Authorities long term Education plan?

4.4 QUESTION BY MRS. SHEENA LEWIS

We find that we must now ask this question for the third as we believe you have yet to give a clear response. When we first asked this question, there were 1710 empty seats in the Welsh medium Schools in Carmarthenshire. The reply from you and Mr Jones were exactly the same. You both stated you had filled 3500 seats in Welsh medium schools. That was not the question we asked. So again, we ask you. How many empty seats are there in Welsh Medium Schools in Carmarthenshire and don't you think it would be more beneficial to fill those seats before you create anymore?

4.5 QUESTION BY MRS. JULIA REES

There are only 3 Observation/Assessment units in Carmarthenshire. These are units where children with speech and learning difficulties are placed when it is decided by Carmarthenshire county council's education psychologists that they require assessment so that their additional needs can be

catered for in school. Some children move from here into special schools, while others are released into mainstream school with support. At present all three of Carmarthenshire's assessment units educate via English medium. It was stated by Mr Sully that the aim of Carmarthenshire county council is to discontinue the provision of English medium education by 2022 and that Llangennech school is merely on this path of change. I am a parent of a child who was enrolled and accepted into the Welsh medium stream at Llangennech school, but on the say of Carmarthenshire county council specialists was placed for assessment at a unit which educated via English medium. This then prevented him being placed back into Welsh medium education upon his release into mainstream education as he could only speak English. How can Carmarthenshire County Council discontinue English medium education in Llangennech thus barring my child to be returned to education in his community school with the longer term possibility of then moving, with support into the Welsh stream of his local school, when it cannot support welsh speaking pupils with learning difficulties to integrate into their chosen communities?

4.6 QUESTION BY MRS. KAREN HUGHES

During previous meetings, we have been repeatedly told it is not the Authorities intention for any child to leave Llangennech School and due to this a transport or community assessment was not required. However, recent evidence shows that in addition to the 91 that have already sought English medium other than in Llangennech a further 20 plus pupils have been removed or not started at the school in relation to the implications, if the proposal goes ahead and this number will continue rising. The only English medium school that could accommodate these pupils is Hendy School but this does not have a safe route to school. Following this information, we believe under the School Organisation Code 2013 a community and transport assessment needs to be carried out before any decision can be made. Considering this information, Are you now going to carry out a community and transport assessment?

4.7 QUESTION BY MR. DEAN BOLGIANI

We have previously been advised that the nearest English medium Schools Bryn and Bynea were not oversubscribed. However, recent information obtained under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that both Schools have already refused places. We were advised the reason for refusal is always the same they only refuse admission if the year group is already full or oversubscribed. It was expressly stated in the response that you have never refused an application for any other reason other than over capacity. The issue of providing

alternative provision for English Medium education for families from Llangennech was also raised by ESTYN as part of their response to the initial consultation. Can you now please clarify where are you going to cater for pupils who seek English medium Education if it is removed from Llangennech?

4.8 QUESTION BY MR. DARREN SEWARD

As part of the statutory notice you state that you are prepared to pay transport costs for pupils from outside of the catchment to attend Llangennech. You have made it clear that you are refusing to pay for pupils seeking English medium education outside of Llangennech. In these days of equal opportunity for all irrespective of sex, race, colour or creed how can you justify such a blatant discriminatory move?

4.9 QUESTION BY MR. ROBERT WILLOCK

I would like to point out that in the Llanelli Star dated 14th October 2016 Mr Dole stated "We will always consult the public" How is it that no one consulted the public within the Llangennech area, neither had the Authority consulted with one of its major education partners Bryngwyn School, in the change of language of Llangennech School. This only became apparent when it was leaked in the local paper. Now we have hard evidence of over 750 objections from the community within Llangennech supporting our position of keeping the dual stream option for the school. With this level of objection against the proposal are you now going to listen to the Public of Llangennech?

4.10 QUESTION BY MRS. JACQUELINE SEWARD

It really saddens us to see how much our once close knit community has been divided by this proposal being pushed by a minority from the village. We have spent nearly a year engaging with community, taking the time to knock doors and listening to what people want. From the last exercise we have hard proof of 750 people against the proposal and need to make you aware that those in support who we spoke to on the doorstep were very few and we encouraged them to let their views to be known. We have always been in support of our children being taught Welsh at the school but are against the total immersion, no parental choice option being peddled under this proposal.

We are aware that a large amount of support letters for the change have been gathered from outside of the village and we have requested an FOI request for a breakdown on postcodes as to where the support and objections have been gathered so it will show where exactly this support has been collected. This evidence is an important factor to enable members to make a

decision.

Surely, to decide what is best for the residents of our community it's the people of Llangennech that should have a say. Even without questioning the generated location of the support letters there are still a majority in favour of keeping the dual stream at the school. Unfortunately the results speak for themselves and this has split the village therefore the logical solution would be to keep Welsh and English streams in the school and cater for all. Do you therefore agree that this be best dealt with by delaying this decision until after the May 2017 election, a delay of only 6 months to the whole process, to gauge exactly what the village want which is the way it should have been done rather than letting people from outside the village decide on the fate of our community?

5. MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME – PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE LLANGENNECH INFANT SCHOOL AND LLANGENNECH JUNIOR SCHOOL AND ESTABLISH LLANGENNECH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL	9 - 290
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