

# EXECUTIVE BOARD

## 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2016

### MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE BANCFFOSFELEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### Recommendations / key decisions required:

It is recommended that Executive Board approves:

1. the proposal as outlined below;
2. officers to initiate formal consultation on the proposal during the Summer Term 2016;
3. that a report is submitted to the E & C Scrutiny Committee and Executive Board at the end of the statutory consultation period.

#### Reasons:

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.

#### Relevant Scrutiny Committee Consulted - YES (9<sup>th</sup> March 2016)

1. That the report be noted.
2. That prior to making any recommendations to the Executive Board regarding the future of the school, the Committee receives a presentation from Bancffosfelen School's Governing Body on its proposal to establish a community charitable trust and re-categorise Bancffosfelen as a voluntary aided school.
3. That prior to making any recommendations to the Executive Board regarding the future of the school, the Committee undertakes visits to Bancffosfelen, Pontyberem, Y Fro and Llanddarog schools.

#### Council Decision Required - NO

**Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Gareth Jones (Education & Children)

<b>Directorate:</b> Education & Children  <b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Gareth Morgans  <b>Report Author:</b> Simon Davies	<b>Designations:</b>  Chief Education Officer  School Modernisation Manager	<b>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</b>  01267 246450 <a href="mailto:EDGMorgans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">EDGMorgans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>  01267 246471 <a href="mailto:SiDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">SiDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
---	---	---

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
**21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2016**

**MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

**PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE BANCFFOSFELEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Background**

The Authority has a legal responsibility to review the number and type of schools it has and whether or not it is making the best use of resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

In recent years Bancffosfelen Primary School has seen a steady decline in pupil numbers. For example, from 48 pupils on roll in January 2011 to 35 pupils on roll in January 2016. This has resulted in there being 64% surplus places at the school. Welsh Government defines any schools with greater than 25% surplus places as 'significant' and advises local authorities to review any schools with greater than 10%.

Following the departure of the Headteacher in Easter 2014, there has not been a permanent Headteacher employed at the school. However, there is an informal arrangement between the Governing Body of Pontyberem and Bancffosfelen for part time cover (0.2) to be provided by the Headteacher of Pontyberem.

The culmination of these unavoidable facts presents a school model which does not represent a sound, stable educational model or best use of resources.

In addition, the Authority feels that from an educational perspective having such a small number of pupils makes it extremely difficult for the school to deliver the breadth and depth of curricular and social experiences which pupils of this age require to fully develop.

## Proposal

The Authority's proposal is as follows:

- **To close Bancffosfelen Primary School on the 31 August 2017;**
- **As from 1 September 2017; the catchment area of Bancffosfelen is re-designated and included within the existing catchment area of Pontyberem Primary School.**

The details of the proposal are outlined in the attached Draft Consultation document. The Consultation Document is currently in draft format and is updated where appropriate during the informal consultation exercise.

A copy of the Draft Consultation document has been shared with the Local Member, the Chair of Governing Body of both of Bancffosfelen/Pontyberem Schools and the Headteacher of Bancffosfelen on 11 February 2016. Comments were invited by 26 February 2016.

In response to the proposal the Governing Body of Bancffosfelen has produced a detailed bilingual report with an additional option for consideration. This option is detailed in the attached report.

Observations have been received from the Chair of Governors and Headteacher of Pontyberem school.

The Director of Education & Children's Services has received 23 letters opposing this proposal.

## Conclusion

In light of the low and declining pupil numbers at the school with no evidence to support the prospect of reversing this trend, it is recommended that the Authority moves to close Bancffosfelen Primary School through the instigation of formal statutory procedures. The closure of the school will be planned for the end of the summer term in 2017.

From 1 September 2017, the catchment area of Bancffosfelen Primary School to be included within the existing catchment area of Pontyberem Primary School.

Transfer to Secondary School will remain the same, Ysgol Maes y Gwendraeth and Ysgol Dyffryn Aman. It must be noted that it is the home address which is taken into account when considering admission to secondary school and not the primary school attended.

Transport will be provided in accordance with Carmarthenshire County Council's School Transport Policy.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**Yes - 2 Reports**

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed:            **G. Morgans**                      **Chief Education Officer**  
                          **S. Davies**                              **School Modernisation Manager**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

## 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Developments are consistent with the Authority's Corporate Strategy, Integrated Community Strategy and the Modernising Education Strategic Outline Programme.

## 2. Legal

Appropriate consultation will need to be initiated in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures.

## 3. Finance

Revenue implications will be catered for within the Local Management of Schools Fair Funding Scheme.

## 4. ICT

Resources will follow pupils to alternative school within the locality including ICT.

## 5. Risk Management Issues

Continuing with current inadequate provision would see current problems being perpetuated and the County Council failing to meet its obligations for the education of children in the area served by the present school.

## 6. Staffing Implications

Staffing implications will be addressed in accordance with the County Council's Redeployment Policy and Procedures.

## 7. Physical Assets

One redundant school building which would be addressed in accordance with the Modernising Educational Provision Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the MEP programme policy and procedures.

## CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed:	G. Morgans	Head of Education Services
	S. Davies	School Modernisation Manager

### 1. Local Member(s)

The Local Member, Cllr. Joy Williams, (Pontyberem Ward), has been advised of the proposal and provided with a copy of the draft consultation document.

### 2. Community / Town Council

Not applicable at this stage in the process. Community Council will be consulted formally during the formal consultation stage.

### 3. Relevant Partners

Not at this time but will be consulted during the formal consultation stage.

### 4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Teaching and non-teaching staff unions will be consulted during the formal consultation stage.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:	
Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Planning School Places – Primary Schools – The Way Forward	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales">www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales</a> – The County Council Agenda 9 Pre 28/06/2004) – 11/04/2001
Modernising Education Provision Strategy and Draft Implementation Plan	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales">www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales</a> – Education and Learning – Useful Links
Modernising Education Provision Timeline / Rollout:	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales">www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales</a> – Executive Board Agenda – 31/05/2005
Modernising Educational Provision Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the MEP programme	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales">www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales</a> Executive Board 31/05/05
Strategic Outline Programme 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools	<a href="#">Strategic Outline Programme 21st Century Schools</a>
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017	<a href="http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshmededstrat/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshmededstrat/?lang=en</a>
MEP Annual Report 2013/14 and Programme 2014/15	<a href="http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk">www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a> County Council Agenda 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2015