

EXECUTIVE BOARD

21st MARCH 2016

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE LLANMILOE CP, TREMOILET VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED AND LAUGHARNE VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND CREATE NEW AREA 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 (9TH MARCH 2016)

The Committee unanimously resolved that:

- The report be received.
- It be recommended to the Executive Board that officers initiate a formal consultation process on the proposal during the Summer Term 2016.
- A report be submitted to the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Board at the end of the statutory consultation period.

Council Decision Required - NO

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE LLANMILOE CP, TREMOILET VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED AND LAUGHARNE VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND CREATE NEW AREA SCHOOL

Background

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

In recent years, many of our rural primary schools have witnessed a decrease in pupil numbers, Tremoilet VC, Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne VC primary schools all bear witness to this trend and based on current data available no significant change in this trend is anticipated. Declining pupil numbers across the schools will cause further educational and financial challenges, in particular, maintaining appropriate pupil teacher staffing ratios to provide an effective curriculum for all learners.

A range of 'soft federation' arrangements have existed between the three schools over a period of time. Llanmiloe CP School and Tremoilet VC School have experienced a 'shared leadership' model (under the previous and last permanent Headteacher of Llanmiloe CP School). A similar model between Laugharne VC School and Tremoilet VC School was established in 2014, with the newly appointed Headteacher at Laugharne VC School (September 2015) currently developing this work.

Each model has explored and highlighted the benefits of greater levels of collaboration between schools. However, they have also recognised the challenges and fragility of such models. These findings have reinforced the need for a more formalised approach and sustainable resolution to serve the longer term educational needs of this area. Whilst Headteacher recruitment is a national challenge, it is undoubtedly the case for such small schools as Llanmiloe CP and Tremoilet VC Schools.

Llanmiloe CP School is currently under the leadership of an acting Headteacher for an interim period while the Governing Body attempts to put in place more secure and strategic arrangements.

The culmination of these unavoidable facts presents a current model of provision in the area which does not represent a platform for educational stability and enhancement or the best use of resources. With no prospect of there being a significant increase in pupil numbers in the area for the foreseeable future, coupled with ongoing challenges two of the schools face to secure permanent senior leadership, it is not viable to sustain current arrangements.

Proposal

The Authority's proposal is as follows:

- To close the existing Tremoilet VC, Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne VC Schools on the 31st August 2017;
- To open a new 3-11 Voluntary Controlled area school on the 1st September 2017 using the site and buildings of the current Laugharne VC school to accommodate pupils from Tremoilet VC, Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne VC Schools. The language category of the new area school will be dual stream offering a Welsh and English stream;
- It is proposed from the 1st September 2017 that the catchment area of Tremoilet VC, Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne VC primary schools be combined to create the new catchment of the new area school.

It has been identified in a review of Carmarthenshire's Early Years Provision that the Tremoilet VC / Llanmiloe and Laugharne VC geographical area is currently unable to offer the Foundation Phase Early Years Learning Entitlement. If this proposal is approved it will ensure that the children in the Tremoilet VC / Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne areas will have access to Foundation Phase Early Years Learning.

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

As stated in the School Organisation Code (2013) the Diocesan Authority has been consulted prior to the consultation document being published. No comments were received.

Conclusion

In light of the present pupil numbers and uncertainty with regard to fulfilling the senior leadership position at two of the schools it is recommended that the Authority moves to close Tremoilet VC, Llanmiloe CP and Laugharne VC primary schools through the instigation of formal statutory procedures.

From 1st September, 2017, the catchment area of Tremoilet VC and Llanmiloe primary schools to be included within the existing catchment area of Laugharne VC primary school.

Transfer to Secondary school will remain unchanged.

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

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
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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
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES

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

Two redundant school buildings. Should the proposal be adopted the Tremolet VC school building would revert back under the ownership of the Church in Wales. Llanmiloe CP School building 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** **Chief Education Officer**
 S. Davies **School Modernisation Manager**

1. Local Member(s) – The Local Member (Laugharne Township) has been advised of the proposal.

2. Community / Town Council – Not applicable at this stage in the process. The Community Councils will be consulted formally during the formal consultation stage.

3. Relevant Partners – As stated in the School Organisation Code (2013) the Diocesan Authority has been consulted prior to the consultation document being published. No comments were received.

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	www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales – The County Council Agenda 9 Pre 28/06/2004) – 11/04/2001
Modernising Education Provision Strategy and Draft Implementation Plan	www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales – Education and Learning – Useful Links
Modernising Education Provision Timeline / Rollout:	www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales – Executive Board Agenda – 31/05/2005
Modernising Educational Provision Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the MEP programme	www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales Executive Board 31/05/05
Strategic Outline Programme 21 st Century Schools	Strategic Outline Programme 21st Century Schools
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017	http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshmededstrat/?lang=en
MEP Annual Report 2013/14 and Programme 2014/15	www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk County Council Agenda 14 th January 2015