

CABINET

April 29th 2024

Subject: The proposal to federate Ysgol Rhys Pritchard and Ysgol Llangadog to deliver a sustainable learning community in this area of Carmarthenshire, under the leadership of one Governing Body and one Headteacher

Purpose: To consider initial feedback and a proposal to discontinue the current consultation on federating Ysgol Rhys Pritchard and Ysgol Llangadog.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To discontinue the current consultation to federate Ysgol Rhys Pritchard and Ysgol Llangadog to allow further informal discussion with the Governors and school staff.
- To update our Federation Strategy and review our process for Local Authority led federations.

Reasons: Governors and staff have voiced concerns that there hasn't been sufficient discussion and engagement with them prior to the formal consultation.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Glynog Davies
 Cllr. Davies is supportive of the recommendation and the need for further informal engagement with Governors and staff in line with the Welsh Government's '*Federation process of maintained schools: guidance for governing bodies and local authorities*' guidance.

<p>Directorate: Education & Children</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Simon Davies</p> <p>Report Author: Gareth Morgans Sara Griffiths</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Head of Access to Education</p> <p>Director of Education and Children Modernisation Team Manage</p>	<p>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</p> <p>01267 246471 SiDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01267 246522 EDGMorgans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 246618 SMGriffiths@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUBJECT

Proposal to federate Ysgol Rhys Pritchard and Ysgol Llangadog

Officers, in line with the agreed policy and process, and supported by Carmarthenshire County Council's Cabinet, agreed to formally consult on federating Ysgol Rhys Pritchard and Ysgol Llangadog with the aim of creating a sustainable learning community in this area of Carmarthenshire. The proposal is to federate the schools under the management of one Governing Body and appointing one Headteacher to lead both schools.

The formal consultation commenced on April 9th and is planned to close on the 20th of May. The consultation focuses on gathering the views of governors, school staff, parents, pupils, local councillors, community councillors, Estyn, unions and other stakeholders.

Correspondence and feedback has been received from governors and staff noting that they feel that there has been insufficient informal discussions with them directly prior to launching the formal consultation.

Officers have reviewed the Welsh Government's guidance document, ***Federation process of maintained schools: guidance for governing bodies and local authorities*** which provides advice and information to local authorities on the processes and practical aspects of establishing a federated school.

Having considered the guidance and feedback from key stakeholders, it is proposed to discontinue the current consultation to enable further work with both schools at the Exploration and Preparation Phases as described in the advice and guidance document, to include-

- *Setting up a governor working group with representatives from both schools.*
- *Meetings with the staff of both schools*
- *Arranging visits to established federations to learn lessons and*
- *Engagement with Chairs of Governors and Headteachers who work in federations.*

Officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language is still supportive of the proposal to federate these schools to ensure an effective, efficient and sustainable and resilient education offer in this part of Carmarthenshire. The Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language has also requested officers to review the Local Authority led federation process and Federation Strategy. Officers will table these for further discussion.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

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:

Head of Access to Education

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets	Bio-diversity & Climate Change
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

If approval is granted to discontinue the consultation, appropriate informal discussions will be held with both schools subject to this proposed federation in accordance with the relevant procedures as noted in Welsh Government's Federation Guidance document. Reviewing the Local Authority's process for considering and implementing federations would allow for a new process to be considered in line with the process used for considering and determining school organisation proposals. This would demonstrate consistency and that all proposals are considered equally whether they are federation or school organisation proposals.

2. Legal

If approval is granted to discontinue the consultation, appropriate consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures as noted in Welsh Government's Federation Guidance document following informal discussions with the Governors and staff of both schools implicated within this proposal. Reviewing the Local Authority's process for considering and implementing federations would allow for a revised process to be considered in line with the process used for considering and determining school organisation proposals. This would demonstrate consistency and that all proposals are considered equally whether they are federation or school organisation proposals.

3. Finance

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

5. Risk Management Issues

If approval is granted to discontinue the consultation, appropriate informal discussions will be held with both schools subject to this proposed federation in accordance with the relevant procedures as noted in Welsh Government's Federation Guidance document before a decision to formal consult is made. This will ensure that key stakeholders have a further opportunity to note their views on an informal basis before any decision is made on whether to consult formally. Reviewing the Local Authority's process for considering and implementing local authority led federations would allow for a new process to be considered in line with the process used for considering and determining school organisation proposals. Whilst this is not necessarily required, this would demonstrate consistency in Local Authority processes and that all proposals are considered equally whether they are federation or school organisation proposals.

6. Physical Assets

Following informal discussions with both schools, if a decision is made to consult formally and the proposal implemented to federate both schools, one governing body will be responsible for schools within the federation.

7. Staffing Implications

Any staffing implications will be addressed in accordance with the County Council's Policies and Procedures.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed:



Head of Access to Education

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	YES
Scrutiny Committee	Will be consulted with during any formal consultation.
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

2. Local Member(s)- Will be consulted with during any formal consultation.

3. Community / Town Council- Will be consulted with during any formal consultation.

4. Relevant Partners- Will be consulted with during any formal consultation.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations- Will be consulted with during any formal consultation.

**CABINET MEMBER
PORTFOLIO HOLDER
AWARE/CONSULTED-
YES**

Cllr. Davies is supportive of this approach and further informal engagement with Governors and staff in line with the Welsh Government's 'Federation process of maintained schools: guidance for governing bodies and local authorities' guidance document.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Federation process of maintained schools in Wales – Guidance for governing bodies and local authorities		https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/federation-process-of-maintained-schools-in-wales-guidance-for-governing-bodies-and-local-authorities.pdf