

TUESDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2020

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

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A VIRTUAL MEETING
OF THE **EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
WHICH WILL BE HELD AT **10.00 A.M. ON MONDAY, 23RD
NOVEMBER, 2020** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE
BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE



PLEASE RECYCLE

Democratic Officer:	Michelle Evans Thomas
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E-Mail:	MEEvansThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

PLAID CYMRU GROUP – 7 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Liam Bowen |
| 2. | Councillor | Kim Broom |
| 3. | Councillor | Betsan Jones |
| 4. | Councillor | Jean Lewis |
| 5. | Councillor | Darren Price (Chair) |
| 6. | Councillor | Emlyn Schiavone |
| 7. | Councillor | Dorian Williams |

LABOUR GROUP – 3 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Dot Jones |
| 2. | Councillor | Gary Jones |
| 3. | Councillor | Bill Thomas |

INDEPENDENT GROUP – 2 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Arwel Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | Edward Thomas (Vice-Chair) |

NEW INDEPENDENT GROUP – 1 MEMBER

- | | | |
|----|------------|---------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Shahana Najmi |
|----|------------|---------------|

UNAFFILIATED – 1 MEMBER

- | | | |
|----|------------|--------------|
| 1. | Councillor | John Jenkins |
|----|------------|--------------|

NON ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS (2)

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Mrs V. Kenny | Roman Catholic Church Representative |
| 2. | Rev. D. Richards | Church in Wales Representative |

ELECTED VOTING PARENT GOVERNOR MEMBERS (3)

Term of office expires on the 31/03/2022

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Vacancy | Area 1 – Dinefwr |
| 2. | Mr A. Eynon | Area 2 – Carmarthen |
| 3. | Vacancy | Area 3 - Llanelli |

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.
3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).
4. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CARMARTHENSHIRE'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. 5 - 62
5. THE EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGY 2020-2025. 63 - 76
6. MEP - PROPOSAL TO SHORTEN THE INTERNAL SCHOOL ORGANISATION DECISION MAKING AND DETERMINATION PROCESS. 77 - 88
7. EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20. 89 - 108
8. EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2020/21. 109 - 118
9. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 11TH MARCH, 2020. 119 - 122
10. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND RECONVENE AT 2.00 P.M. IN ORDER TO CONSIDER THE REMAINDER OF BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA.
11. MEP - PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA TO A NEW SITE AND INCREASE ITS CAPACITY FROM 75 TO 120. 123 - 172
12. MEP - PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE BLAENAU AND LLANDYBIE AREAS. 173 - 230
13. MEP - RECONFIGURE AND REMODEL BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT SERVICES AT YSGOL RHYDYGORS TO IMPROVE PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. 231 - 266
14. MEP - PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE AT SWISS VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 4-11 TO 3-11. 267 - 304
15. MEP - PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE MYNYDDYGARREG AND GWENLLIAN AREAS. 305 - 354

Education and Children Scrutiny Committee

23rd November 2020

Impact of COVID-19 on Carmarthenshire's Children and Young People

Purpose: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with information in regard to impact of Covid-19 on our children and young people and the Department/ Council's response to the challenges.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

That the report is accepted, and that the short, medium and long term implications are considered.

Reasons:

To take stock of the impact of the pandemic on the Community and the Council's response.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Glynog Davies

Directorate Name of Head of Service: Gareth Morgans Report Author: Robert James	Designations: Director of Education and Children's Services Performance Management Officer	Tel Nos. / E Mail Addresses: 01267 246 522 EDGMorgans@sirgar.gov.uk 01267 224486 RNJames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
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Executive Summary
Education and Children Scrutiny Committee
23rd November 2020

Impact of COVID-19 on Carmarthenshire

This document is a Community Impact Assessment of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Council's response over the last six months.

There are four interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from:

- Impact on the **Community**
- Impact on the **Economy**
- Impact on the **Infrastructure and Environment**
- Impact on **Health and Welfare**

The nature of the impacts and whether and at what level action needs to be taken will depend in large part on the nature, scale and severity of the emergency itself. This assessment should inform the reset and re-prioritisation of resources and services.

The section most relevant to this Scrutiny Committee's responsibility is the **Community Section** specifically the following items-

- *Children*
- *Wellbeing of pupils and students*
- *Free school meals*
- *Continuation of Learning*
- *Modernising Education Services*
- *Children's Services*
- *Young People*

In addition the following sections will be of interest to Members-

- *Building a Better Council*
- *Reset*
- *The Well-being of Future Generations Act*
- *COVID-19*

The report will not cover all aspects of the Department's work since March but will give an insight into some of the challenges faced and the solutions developed to address those challenges. It has to be noted that our services and schools continue to be under pressure as a result of Covid-19.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

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: Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities YES	Legal NONE	Finance YES	ICT NONE	Risk Management Issues NONE	Staffing Implications YES	Physical Assets NONE
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1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

1. We must make sure that we learn from this unprecedented experience as we reintroduce our services and re-set our strategic and operational priorities. We must identify our key learning points at an organisational level and across the breadth of our services. To achieve this our Transformation and Innovation and Change Team is undertaking a strategic evaluation.
2. We will also need to reset our '*Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire 5 Year Plan*', *Corporate Strategy* and revisit our *Well-being Objectives*.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to inevitable widespread changes to the way in which services are delivered by local authorities. This means that it is even more critical that Local Authorities respect the needs of all service users and equalities.
4. We will need to reprioritise services and our resources in budget setting.

3. Finance

We are in an unprecedented position due to a combination of additional irrecoverable costs due to COVID-19 activity, foregone income from closed services which may not be fully recompensed by Welsh Government (WG) and planned savings proposals which have been undeliverable due to the pandemic.

6. Staffing

In May, **2,543 (32%)** of our staff across all departments took part in a survey on the new way of working following the COVID-19 outbreak, the results will help shape the future way of working.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

1. Local Member(s)- N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

During the Pandemic the following consultations took place:-

- Parental survey with 4,433 responses
- 574 businesses responded to our questionnaire and 422 businesses were contacted
- 2,543 responded to our staff survey

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

This report has been considered by the Executive Board Member for Education and Children.

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
Impact of COVID-19 on Carmarthenshire		See page 53 of report

IMPACT OF COVID-19 on Carmarthenshire

September 2020

PARCHU·DIOGELU·*Mwynhau*

Yn cadw **Sir Gâr** yn ddiogel

RESPECT·PROTECT·*Enjoy*

Keeping **Carmarthenshire** safe

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN CARMARTHENSHIRE



Introduction by the Leader of the Council Councillor Emlyn Dole

These are without doubt unprecedented and challenging times. Never in my time as Leader did I think I'd see the Council setting up temporary hospital facilities to support our colleagues in the NHS.

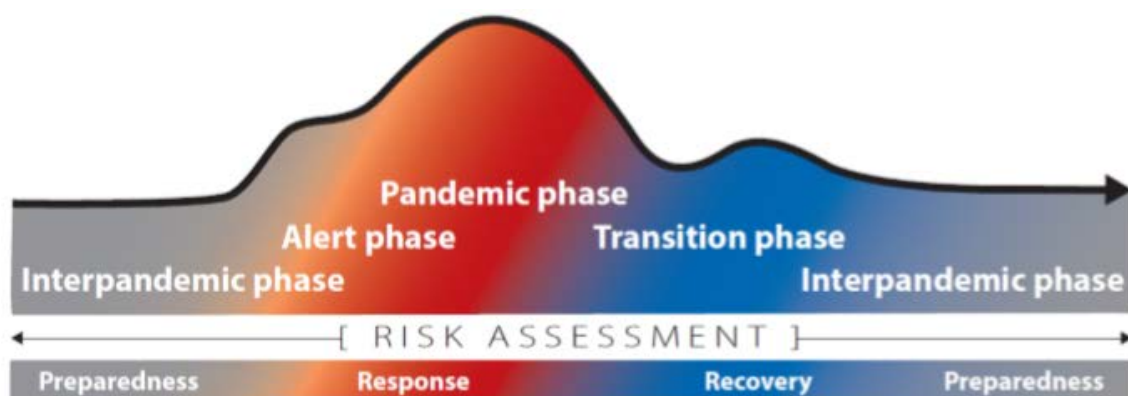
It is unsettling for all of us who are trying to adapt to a new 'normal', at least for the time being, to help protect ourselves, the people we love, and the communities where we live.

What I will say, is that in the face of huge challenges I have seen remarkable community spirit. Neighbours helping each other, colleagues supporting each other, and strangers finding a common ground.

In this document we aim to better understand the community impact of the pandemic as we currently see it. Then we will be reviewing the key priorities we set out in 'Moving Carmarthenshire Forward - Our 5 Year Plan' to ensure that our short-term focus fully supports recovery from the pandemic and that plans are developed for medium and longer term recovery.

Finally, a word of caution. We still do not know what phase we are at in this pandemic.

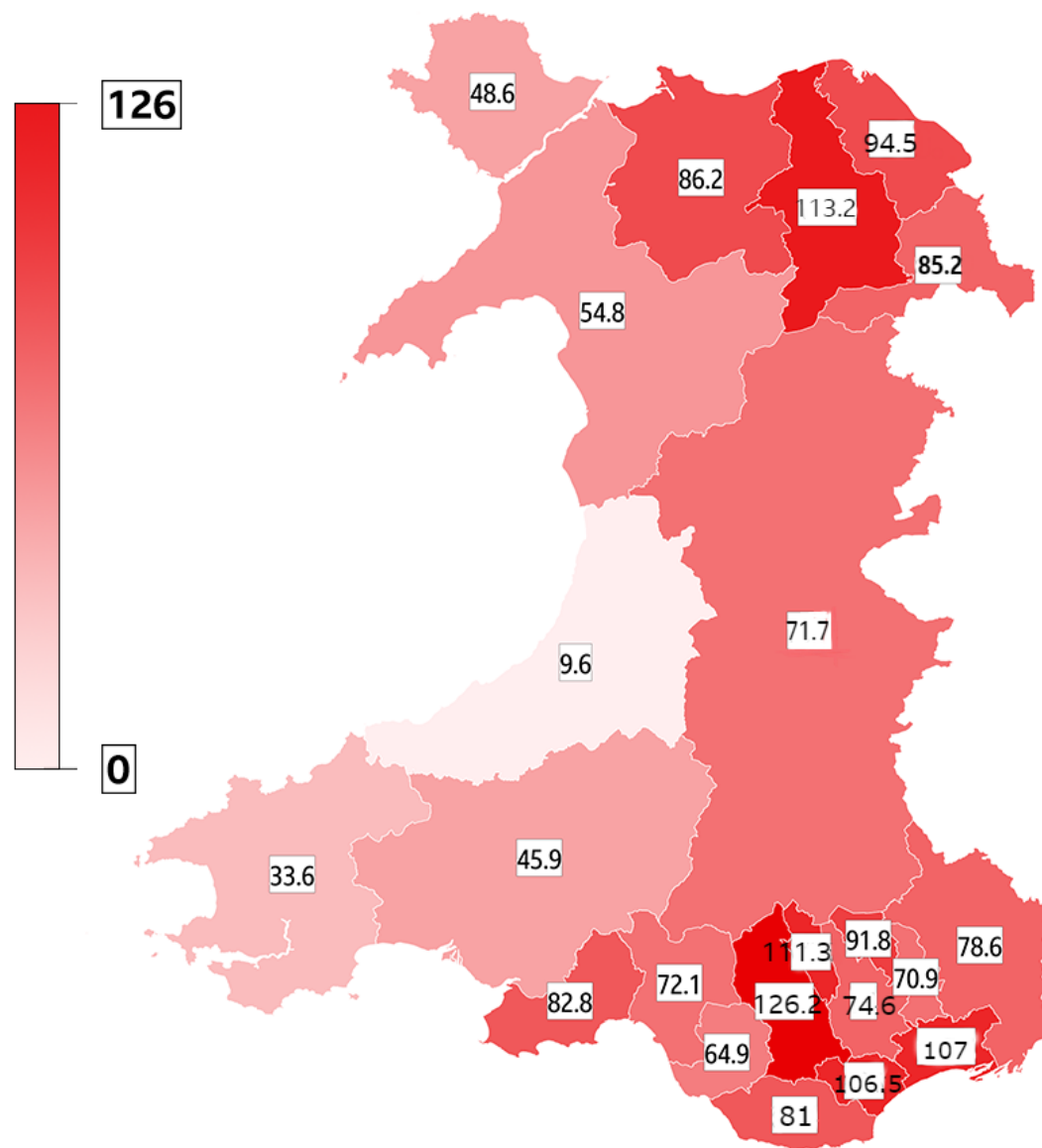
The World Health Organisation Pandemic advice is be prepared.



CARMARTHENSHIRE HAS THE 3RD LOWEST NUMBER OF COVID-19 DEATHS PER 100,000 PEOPLE IN WALES

Wales Covid-19 death rates

Deaths per 100,000 people - occurring up to 18 September



Source: ONS, 29 Sept, not age standardised and based on 2018 population estimates

BBC

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT



There are four interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from. The nature of the impacts – and whether and at what level action needs to be taken – will depend in large part on the nature, scale and severity of the emergency itself.

THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

COVID RECOVERY – The Future Generations Commissioners Office

As this Assessment is being published we are living through very difficult circumstances. Many of our responses are in line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (See page 52). The partnership working, engagement with the private sector to find innovative solutions, new ways of working and increased use of technology in delivering services, the decrease in carbon emissions, and the programmes which are working with communities to provide services, are particularly notable. The Act gives us a framework and the ways of working to ensure that in meeting the needs of today we do nothing to inhibit the needs of future generations to meet their own needs.

As the impacts of COVID-19 continue to demonstrate, Wales is part of a global community and is susceptible to trends experienced across the rest of the world such as our declining natural world, climate change and resource scarcity, evolving population and demographic changes, poverty and inequality, and technological change

Our recovery from the pandemic is a once in a generation opportunity to enact change and build back better (see Reset on page 51).

IMPACT AT A GLANCE



COMMUNITY



24 Childcare Hubs
with an average of
450 Children attending daily
280 Staff present daily



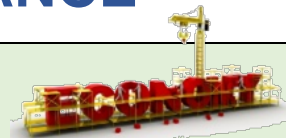
1,840 laptops, Chromebooks & dongles etc. distributed to pupils



FSM (Free School Meals)
entitlement increased by **13.5%**
(643 pupils) (since Jan 2020)



No significant increases in the number of Children Looked After or on the Child Protection Register



ECONOMY



2,100 business & resident callers supported through our Call Line service



108 businesses supported with £270k Welsh Government Business Start Up Grant



4,086 payments made under the business rates grant, totalling over £46 million



18,000 people furloughed



ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE



Improvement in Air Quality



Kerb-side waste collection up 20%
54% increase in fly-tipping



60% increase in rat complaints



150 extra cleaners, 600 retrained



HEALTH & WELFARE



8,389 Food Parcels distributed to help support those Shielding



We maintained contact with 563 of our National Exercise Referral clients, 1,439 hours spent calling and 2,878 phone calls



600 food hygiene & standards combined visits and 200 animal feed visits postponed



Homeless placements up 430%



BUILDING A BETTER COUNCIL



701,000 people visited our website with 15,539 new sign ups to My Account



Compliments are up by 150%



20% increase in the number of Telephone calls



Complaints are down by 47%

COMMUNITY



Faced with a situation nobody had encountered before with the lockdown, one of the more encouraging acts seen across all of Carmarthenshire was the community and volunteer response. Carmarthenshire has always had a strong sense of community and this became even more apparent during the lockdown as a number of community groups were established, mainly online through platforms such as Facebook, with the aim of supporting vulnerable people in their communities. This could provide a platform for community support going forward but will need to be supported and encouraged.

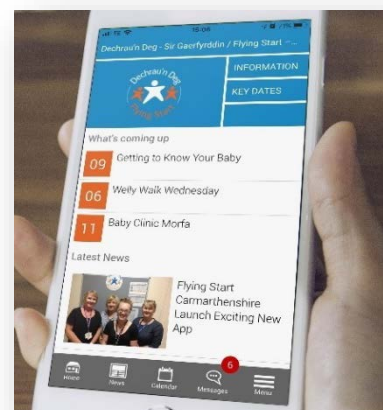
CHILDREN

As part of the response to COVID-19, Carmarthenshire established **13 childcare hubs** at the start of lockdown **increasing to 24** just before all schools re-opened in July. These were available Monday to Friday between 8am - 6pm, across the county providing much needed childcare for the children of key workers during the pandemic. *4 specialist settings* remained open. During the crisis a **daily average of 450 pupils**, including over **250 vulnerable learners** accessed the hubs and specialist provision, these pupils were looked after by **280 staff members a day covering two half day sessions**.

By the end of June, *1,603 devices including laptops, Chromebooks, etc.* as well as **240 4G MiFi dongles** were supplied to support families with remote learning across Carmarthenshire.

*Flying Start Carmarthenshire became the **first Flying Start in Wales to use a mobile app** to help keep in touch with families. The team developed the app as a way to increase engagement, and to signpost families to important information and promote events in the local areas.*

Flying Start re-purposed childcare hubs to provide care for vulnerable and pre-school critical worker children. During one week in July, **632 critical worker** and **37 vulnerable** pre-school children were supported in **93 private settings** including Childminders, Cylchoedd Meithrin, Day nurseries and 3 re-purposed Flying Start Childcare Hubs.



Summer holiday clubs remained open to fee paying parents throughout the Summer. This has been challenging due to needing to operate on a reduced capacity basis due to social distancing requirements and challenges including PPE, additional cleaning etc.

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

It is difficult to predict at this stage what the impact of the pandemic will be on the childcare sector. We already know that two local day nurseries and four childminders have closed to date and are in the process of de-registering with Care Inspectorate Wales. This is just under 100 registered places, and we may see a further reduction in the number of registered childcare providers and childcare places available in Carmarthenshire in the near future. We anticipate the sector will continue to need significant support to 'bounce back' from what has been a very challenging and uncertain period. We know the crucial role childcare plays in enabling parents to return to work and re-starting the economy. Longer term viability will be determined by demand for childcare and parents' ability to pay for this service. With increased concerns in relation to job insecurity and rising unemployment, the childcare sector remains a fragile sector. Continued hardship and start up grant funding, as well as advice and support from Childcare Development Officers with sector specific knowledge, from the Local Authority will be vital to enable providers to remain sustainable. As a Local Authority we have a statutory childcare sufficiency duty. We have worked hard over the last ten years to increase provision, particularly Welsh Medium childcare provision. This ongoing support and commitment will be critical as we continue to move forward.

Helping a business start-up – Buttercup Day Nursery



Directors of *Buttercup Day Nursery* Michelle Howell and Jacqueline O'Flynn started the business in September 2019 when they identified an unused building on the outskirts of Llanelli to be the ideal location to set up a new bilingual Childcare Nursery.

The help and support of a *Carmarthenshire Business Start-up* grant of £10,000 awarded in September 2019 meant that renovations could start in the building in New Road Llanelli. The grant aided the purchase of a new kitchen, flooring, plumbing/heating, and IT equipment to bring the building

back to use and meet the requirements to open the nursery. The business completed all works and received the go ahead from CIW to open in April 2020.

Lockdown in March meant that the planned opening had to be delayed indefinitely. As a new businesses Buttercup Day Nursery was not eligible for many of the support schemes offered, so sought support through the Council's newly set up COVID helpline for business support and advice.

Upon the launch of the COVID Start Up fund introduced by Welsh Government in June and being delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council, Buttercup Day Nursery was contacted and advised to apply as they met the criteria. Through this scheme, they have received £2,500 and due to recent Welsh Government guidelines, the Nursery has been able to open its doors as of the 29th June and welcome their first group of children.

Directors Michelle Howell and Jackie O'Flynn are hopeful that they can welcome many more children soon. They are open throughout the summer for children aged 0-8 and are currently looking to recruit staff ready for when they can take on more children. Opening in June 2020 has meant they have managed to create 2 jobs in this climate but are hopeful to create more by the end of the year.

Directors Michelle and Jacki said *"We are so grateful to Carmarthenshire County Council for the support they have given which has allowed us complete works and open the nursery. We have managed to keep afloat in this difficult time and to be able to our first children in June has been hard work but fantastic. Their assistance has been invaluable and allowed us to create jobs in this climate and hopefully soon to welcome lots more children to our nursery"*

WELL-BEING OF PUPILS AND STUDENTS

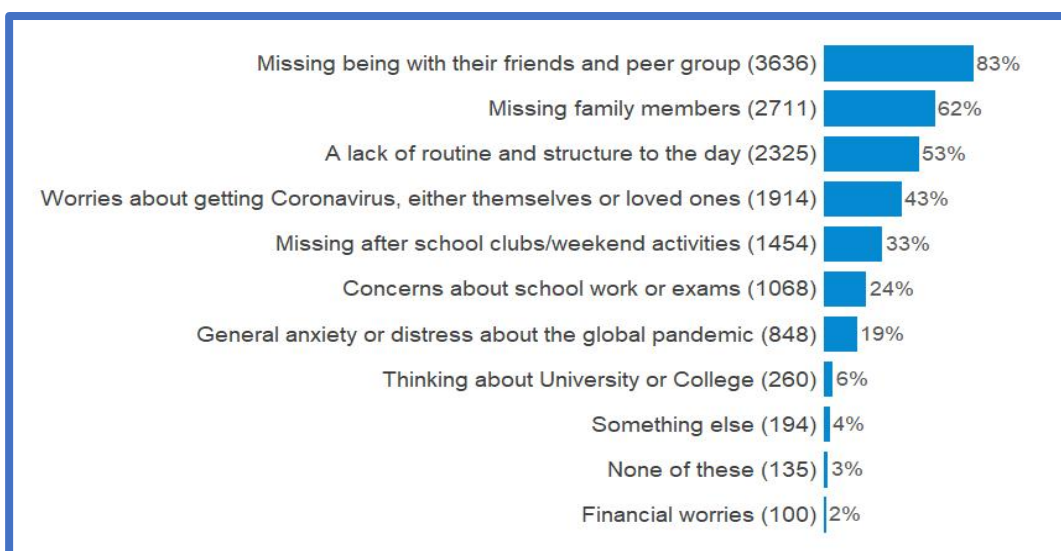
As the pandemic progresses a mixed picture is emerging of the effects that lockdown, media coverage and disruption to normal routines are having on the well-being of children and young people.

The number of counselling referrals have dropped quite dramatically since the outbreak of COVID-19. There were 167 referrals received between 23rd March – 17th July, including 15 primary school children, with 206 children and young people engaged in active counselling compared to 620 April – June 2019.

Following consultation, it was agreed that counselling should be offered remotely via video/ audio conferencing or via telephone. We have been able to take enquiries from parents/ guardians, school staff, health professionals and others, which has been useful and has enabled us to facilitate referrals in the easiest way possible.

To ascertain the current short-term impact a **Parental Survey** conducted with parents, carers and guardians of pupils, with **4,433 responses**, were asked what they think is having the biggest impact on their child(ren)'s well-being and mental health. The results are displayed in the bar chart below.

An overwhelming majority of respondents noted that the issue which is causing the biggest impact on their child(ren)'s well-being is that they are **unable to be with their friends and peers (83%)**.



Parents/carers/guardians also noted that children missing their family members (62%), lacking routine and structure to the day (53%), worried about getting COVID-19 themselves or loved ones (43%) and missing after school clubs (33%) were the top five most reported issues. The least reported issues were financial worries (2%) and thinking about university or college (6%).

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

It is difficult to ascertain the medium, and long-term impact on children, young people and education staff, as a result of the pandemic. We know that some parents and carers are finding it difficult to support direct learning at home for any length of time, especially where they as parents and carers are also working from home. However, some of those living in a rural setting combined with the warm weather, have said that their experience has been very positive. Schools re-opening from 29th June gave pupils a chance to check in, catch up and prepare. Anecdotal evidence suggests that those children attending appreciated this opportunity. This may help to minimise the impact on pupils and staff when schools reopen fully in September 2020. The longer impact on well-being and possible knock on effects for behaviour, attendance and attainment is an unknown but will need to be monitored closely.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Free school meals (FSM) entitlement can be an indicator of deprivation, where family's income can have an impact on children's attainment. As a result of COVID-19 many families may now find themselves in financial hardship with parents being furloughed, made redundant or becoming unemployed, as a result we are likely to see an increase in children eligible for free school meals and the take up of free school meals increase.

In 2019/20, Carmarthenshire had 17.4% of children (4,771 pupils) who are eligible for free school meals in Wales (18%). However, as of 14th July 2020, there was a **13.5% increase** with an additional **643 eligible pupils** in Carmarthenshire since January 2020.

**Data was taken on census day during January 2019 and 2020, source: PLASC, Pupil Level Annual School Census, Welsh Government. July data taken from central School Management Information System.*

The take up increase may be attributed to the way that free school meals have been distributed since schools closed due to lockdown. After an initial period of 5 weeks when Food Packs were provided for collection by FSM families, a BACS payments system was introduced (direct payments), with some families deemed to be vulnerable or self-shielding and any pending payment applications continuing to receive weekly Food Packs delivered to their homes.

As of July 14th, 2,558 BACS payments are being issued fortnightly for 4,615 pupils. This equates to an 85.3% uptake. A total of 4,643 weekly Food Packs have been delivered during the period May 4th to July 14th. Prior to May 4th (from March 23rd) a total of 7,487 Food Packs were delivered and a further 10,100 Food Packs collected. There were 563 families with active FSM claims that we have not been able to contact. These families have not contacted us or have said that they do not need payments or Food Packs.

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

In the short and medium term, it is expected that the number of children eligible for free school meals will increase. As we see unemployment rise more families will face financial hardship. In line with the furlough scheme ending there may be a rise in eligibility through August, September, and October.

More children will be eligible for free school meals in the long term. Family income is known to be linked to children's educational attainment, with children from less well-off backgrounds, on average, less likely to achieve well at school than those from families with higher incomes. A need to reduce the attainment gap between free school meal pupils and non-free school meal pupils will be important over the long term.

CONTINUATION OF LEARNING

School buildings were closed from 23rd March until 29th June 2020. In order to minimise the impact on pupils learning a Continuation of Learning Plan was rapidly put in place, covering:

- The curriculum and teaching and learning
- Staffing and professional learning
- Well-being
- Connectivity
- Sharing and Collaborating

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

The evidence regarding learning regression and any losses is currently qualitative and relatively anecdotal and varies from one learner to the next and from school to school. Attendance figures have been variable as has engagement with distance learning. When almost all of our learners are back in full-time, an important part of schools' approach in September will be to implement a purpose-driven learning approach, which will build learning experiences around:- well-being check-ins for the full cohort; re-establishing relationships; gauging pupils' learner fitness and what is important for them to learn, attuned to their prevailing and emergent needs at this time.

Adopting a research-informed approach, we're also looking at how we can focus on key aspects of the three cross-curriculum competencies (literacy, numeracy, digital competence) and how accelerated learning methodologies can be sustainably deployed. The main attributes of the new curriculum for Wales will be considered for early adoption as will a review of other 21st century learning competencies and how key principles can assist with ensuring that learners catch up and no one is left behind. More formal teacher and externally examined and moderated assessments in the new academic year will assist us in building up a firm picture of the impact of the pandemic on learning, which will help to focus on remedial action for individuals, groups, classes and the wider year and school cohorts.

We have commissioned an independent external review of our Education & Children Services department in response to the pandemic. Estyn are also conducting a Wales wide review with different terms of reference.

MODERNISING EDUCATION SERVICES

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all members of the Modernising Education Programme (MEP) team were fully redeployed to other critical areas within the Department for Education and Children and as such were only able to complete very limited amounts of project work. The MEP team are analysing the effect that this postponement may have on the investment programme.

With regards to our investment programme, all education projects with contractors on site at the time of initial lockdown closed by contractors. As lockdown has eased, we have worked with contractors to ensure safe working arrangements are in place to enable re-commencement of each project as quickly as possible, given supply chain, sub-contractor, and other factors. It is expected that there will be delays to the completion date of projects in addition to an increase in total project costs. As a result, it is expected that the pandemic will have significant impact on the MEP programme in terms of funding and timelines.

What is the short, medium and long-term impact?

During the autumn term, the MEP team will now be undertaking all of the work planned prior to the pandemic and will be working on developing the MEP Review and developing new timescales for the postponed statutory consultations. It is hoped that all relevant project related matters can still be undertaken within the timescale as close to the original as possible.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The number of new Contacts to Carmarthenshire Children's social care has seen an increase of 19.2% since lock-down began (i.e. 23/3/20 - 30/6/20) when compared to the same period last year. The number of safeguarding contacts also increased, by 26.6%. The number of requests for Assessments has remained the same.

While there have been no significant increases in the number of Children Looked After or on the Child Protection Register, this is anticipated in the longer term to increase due to the wider socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

As the service has continued throughout the lockdown; the most concerning cases continued to get support. Less so for other cases. The reality is that the absence of support may well mean that in the longer-term cases that could have remained in lower end preventative services will require the intervention of the statutory service. This is supported by evidence of the increase in domestic abuse referrals.

Social workers rely a lot on informal and formal direct contact with the families and children that they work with and colleagues, both internal and external. The lack of this direct contact is likely to lead to less effective intervention and greater pressure on the social work staff.

YOUNG PEOPLE

COVID-19 has caused significant disruption to family life. We are aware that families are struggling with emotional and mental health issues and referrals into welfare services are on the increase.

While face-to-face teaching has ceased for the time being, [colleges and universities](#) are moving to online delivery wherever this is possible. It is anticipated that it will be possible for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to reopen their learning environments, campuses and other facilities while adhering to the physical and social distancing guidance restrictions and other Government guidelines which HEIs must have regard to. [Keep Wales Safe guidance for HE](#)

WORKING AGE

Analysis of the demographic of those working in 'shutdown sectors' indicates that the majority are female, aged between 25-34. With an inevitable increase in unemployment.

See further information under Economy

BLACK AND ASIAN MINORITY ETHNIC (BAME)

Analysis recently published by the ONS shows that **the risk of deaths involving COVID-19** among some ethnic groups, in England and Wales, is significantly higher than that of those of White ethnicity. This difference is partly explained by socio-economic factors, geographical location, and other circumstances, but part of the difference remains unexplained.

This data is on an all Wales basis and is not available at Carmarthenshire level - it shows that people from all minority ethnic groups, with the exception of Chinese and Mixed, are at a greater risk of death from COVID-19. In particular, black people are nearly twice as likely to experience a COVID-19 related death, taking into account different social and geographical factors. They are followed by the Bangladeshi/Pakistani community who are more than one and a half times more likely to die from coronavirus. Gypsies and Travellers are also an ethnicity and also have a relatively high risk of coronavirus in terms of underlying health issues and cultural factors. It may be worth highlighting sectors as well, for example greater risks for people from minority ethnic backgrounds who work in a range of sectors: health and social care, meat processing, taxi drivers, etc. [Stats Wales - COVID-19 and BAME](#)

According to the 2011 Census, 1.9% (around 3,500) of Carmarthenshire's population are from mixed or other ethnic groups.

COMMUNITY WIDE

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, loneliness and isolation at all ages has been a major issue.

Several countries affected by COVID-19, have seen [increases in levels of violence occurring in the home](#), including violence against children, intimate partner violence and violence against older people. This needs a multisectoral response to prevent and /or mitigate. However, this has not been the case locally or seen across Wales. Our local VAWDASV (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) service providers have not reported any increase in demand, with sexual violence services seeing a significant decrease. From a National perspective, Welsh Women's Aid have reported similar circumstances across Wales. Dyfed Powys Police have also reported a reduced recording of domestic abuse incidents across the region with numbers slowly returning to pre-COVID numbers in recent weeks.

[Digital literacy and inclusion](#) - arguably the most to gain from using digital services are the least likely to be able to do so. Research by Welsh Government shows 13% of households do not have access to the internet. 51% over 75 years do not use the internet.

We need to support local communities to become more self-resilient with sustainable local supply chains.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Throughout Carmarthenshire, communities and businesses have come together to help wherever they can, offering both practical and emotional support.

The [website set up for Community Support](#) shows the breadth of businesses going the extra mile and COVID-19 community Support Groups. Over a 1,000 in Carmarthenshire signed up to the *Volunteering Wales website*, with many more volunteered in their local community, too many to count. There are over 300 Facebook groups and over 100 Phone Befrienders.

Some of the work undertaken by the Area Teams:

- Created an online food and community initiative directory to support rural residents
- Maintained regular contact with town and community councils in order to ascertain volunteer levels, aid those most vulnerable and act as a liaison
- Co-ordinated drivers to assist grocery stores with their capacity to deliver goods to those most vulnerable with over 1,300 deliveries undertaken up to the end of July
- Contacted over 90 food and drink producers to discover capacity in supplying local food stores - a list was produced and circulated to local stores
- Worked with CAVS to administer COVID-19 response fund
- Conducted a third sector COVID-19 impact survey
- Supported rural key workers who were experiencing digital connectivity difficulties through deploying 4G routers via a WG pilot scheme
- Supported rural communities to increase digital connectivity through actively promoting [Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme](#), and encouraged residents to register their interest for broadband upgrade





Trap WI and Llandyfan Sew Good applied for funding to extend their production of facemasks to include the communities of Derwydd, Llandyfan and Trap

Youth Worker *Lorna Hoskken-Thomas* who was supporting local vulnerable people through collecting their grocery orders from local stores and delivering goods





By March 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic spread to the United Kingdom in late January, the scale of the outbreak had already led businesses to change their working practice, such as sending staff to work from home. On March 23rd the UK government imposed a lockdown, banning all 'non-essential' travel. The resulting impact on businesses, jobs and the economy was severe with a significant number of businesses either being required, or choosing, to close - notably in the *retail, hospitality and leisure sectors*.

Businesses in Carmarthenshire are typically smaller (up to 9 employees) than businesses throughout Wales and the UK. They account for 91.4% of all businesses in Carmarthenshire, which is around 2% higher than the equivalent in Wales and the UK. The *Health and Retail* sectors are particularly important to Carmarthenshire, accounting for more than 30% of all employment together (25% in Wales). Whilst *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* represents one of the smaller sectors in terms of total employment, but the proportion working in the sector in Carmarthenshire is *almost double* the national average (2.9% vs 1.5%).

The sad reality of the situation is that many businesses will fail, and others will take a significant length of time to get back to where they were. By contrast, some areas of the economy have seen employment growth including distribution, online retail and healthcare. To what extent this is short term growth is unknown and evidence indicates that this temporary employment may be slowing.

There will be economic challenges for Carmarthenshire, the effects of which will be evident long after the pandemic ends. It may take months for household income to recover to pre-pandemic levels resulting in lower levels of disposable income which feeds the local economy. In this situation, individuals are less likely to purchase items that they deem non-essential, it would therefore be sensible to promote a 'buy local' message for essential items. This would stimulate growth at a local level, resulting in a steadier economic future for local businesses and their staff. Through acting together with our partners, we can take action to restore consumer and business confidence to stimulate investment in our economies, which will create employment and help the unemployed find new jobs.

With many organisations and businesses being able to ensure their staff could work from home during the initial lockdown and during the on-going partial easing, some businesses in those home communities such as food suppliers have seen an economic benefit. If home-working is enabled longer-term this could have a positive impact on local community businesses. However, this will not directly replace the business lost by some companies as a result of the lockdown and restrictions through reduced visitor numbers and usual passing trade. In addition, many businesses have had to adapt their ways of working and those who have been able to develop their online offering have seen a benefit in terms of increasing their audience and customer base with many using virtual platforms to promote and sell their produce. This could be used in future to complement physically located shops and businesses in our towns and local communities.

In some areas there will be a need to challenge current ways of working and regulations to maximise opportunities for local businesses, and to make it as simple as possible for business to open and expand in Carmarthenshire. Now is the time to make real change, to make a difference we must have the courage to challenge the norm. There will also be a need for some financial resource to be made available to support some activities and initiatives to respond to the identified challenges.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN CARMARTHENSHIRE



Area	Level	
	April 2019	April 2020
Carmarthenshire	2,420	5,495
Wales	53,770	104,305
UK	1,106,610	2,117,360

The table shows a breakdown of claimant levels in April 2020 compared with the same time last year, which helps to indicate that the substantial increases seen in Carmarthenshire is most probably as a result of the pandemic.

There are several factors that could have had an effect on our unemployment levels:

- our economy has a higher than average proportion of self-employed individuals (12.4% compared with 9.6% in Wales), with many forced to claim unemployment-related benefits.
- those sectors that have suffered 'shutdowns' as a result of the pandemic offer employment to approximately 25,000 people (accounting for 37% of the total workforce). It is realistic therefore to suggest that whilst a proportion of those have been furloughed, July 2020 HM Revenues & Customs figures show that 18,000 people have been furloughed in Carmarthenshire, the shortfall are likely to be those individuals accessing these benefits. With likely significant increases over the coming months.

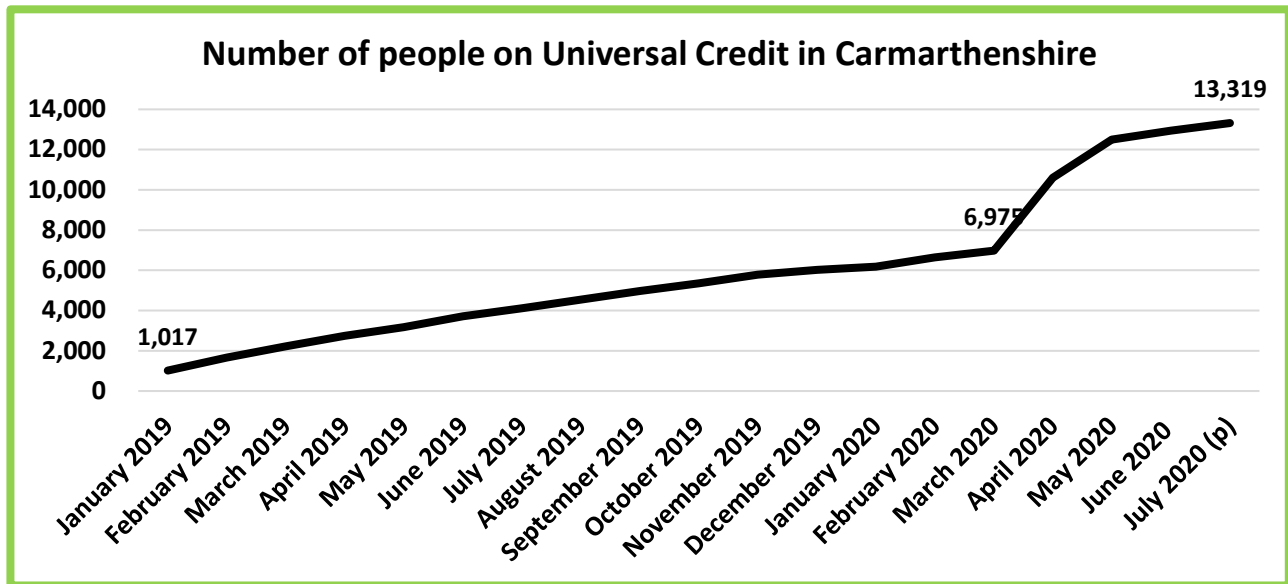
Number furloughed per 1,000 population		
Area	Number Furloughed	Number Furloughed per 1,000 population
Neath Port Talbot	12,700	88.6
Ceredigion	6,500	89.4
Isle of Anglesey	6,400	91.4
Swansea	23,000	93.1
Blaenau Gwent	6,600	94.5
Carmarthenshire	18,000	95.4
Monmouthshire	9,100	96.2
Rhondda Cynon Taf	23,400	97.0
Cardiff	36,000	98.1
Vale of Glamorgan	13,200	98.8
Caerphilly	17,900	98.9
Powys	13,100	98.9
Merthyr Tydfil	6,000	99.5
Denbighshire	9,800	102.4
Pembrokeshire	12,900	102.5
Bridgend	15,300	104.0
Torfaen	9,900	105.4
Gwynedd	13,300	106.8
Newport	16,600	107.3
Wrexham	15,100	111.1
Conwy	13,200	112.6
Flintshire	18,800	120.4
Wales	316,800	100.5

The number furloughed within Carmarthenshire per 1,000 population is less than the national average

Jul-20

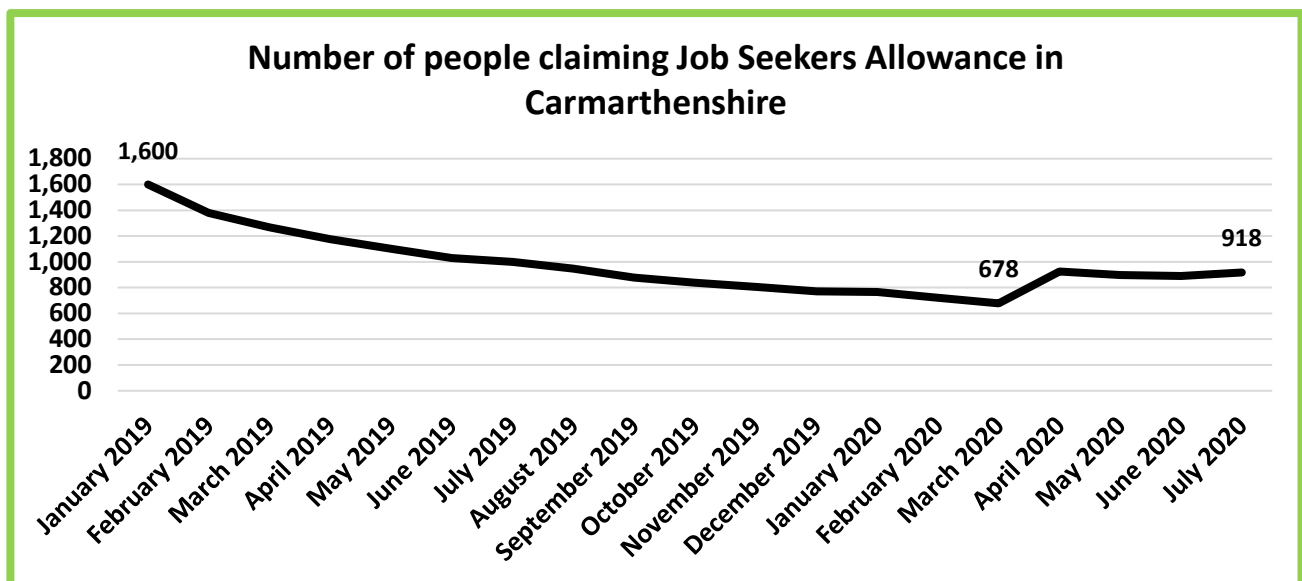
1,200% Increase in Universal Credit claimants in 19 months

The number claiming Universal Credit in Carmarthenshire has taken a steep curve upwards during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 1,017 claiming Universal Credit in January 2019, there is a gradual increase up to March 2020 to 6,975 increasing to 13,319 in July 2020 (provisional figure).



58% Reduction in people claiming Job Seekers in 15 months

The number claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Carmarthenshire has seen a steady reduction during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 1,600 claiming Job Seekers in January 2019, reducing to 678 in March 2020 at the start of the pandemic. Since the end of April 2020, the figures increased slightly to 918 at the end of July which is still 43% lower than they were in January 2019.



HELP AND ADVICE

We provided additional support to help and advise Carmarthenshire businesses and residents throughout the on-going Coronavirus crisis. A help line was established and was available seven days a week.



2,100 callers supported
with their queries through
our Call Line service

Council officers were on hand to provide guidance and signposting on areas including:

- Financial support and other help for businesses
- Assistance available for the elderly, vulnerable and isolated
- Linking the needs of communities with volunteers

This service built on work that had already been carried out in our communities, with council staff helping volunteers on the ground.



4,086 businesses have
received business rates
grants amounting to over
£46 million

We have helped 4,086 businesses to receive Welsh Government's business rates grant payments of between £10,000 and £25,000 with a total amount of over £46 million

IDENTIFYING THE ASSISTANCE BUSINESSES' NEED



A questionnaire (574 businesses responded) and telephone survey (422 businesses were contacted) were conducted in May to find out more about the impact that COVID-19 had on Carmarthenshire businesses, to identify what was important to them in the short, medium and long-term, so that going forward we can provide them with the assistance they most need. Plus, a *dedicated business team* was established to speak to businesses directly.

We found out that:

- The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been significant and wide reaching for our businesses - **171 businesses are completely closed presently with many indicating that they are in a state of 'hibernation'.** A large proportion (**166**) are partially operating but at a reduced capacity and a reduced range of services, with the majority having placed a significant number of staff on furlough.
- There has been significant reduction in income, reduced access to customers, problems with supply chains and the possible cessation of trading
- Many of the businesses worst affected are within those sectors deemed of significant importance to Carmarthenshire in terms of employment and/or GVA - visitor economy, food & beverage sectors are worth almost £169m to the economy; plus Agriculture challenges
- Many businesses (mainly those that are self-employed or freelance), have been unable to access any financial support - *barriers in accessing support and been deemed ineligible for the current offer*
- The most sought-after type of support (short and longer term) is financial (grants, loans or payment deferrals/holidays) - *sustainability of this may require supporting businesses to diversify their operations i.e. moving to online selling, re- training staff, product development, etc.*
- Businesses need support: to enable collaborative procurement of supplies i.e. PPE and safety protection equipment; for us to take the lead on a 'buy local' message and protection of local supply chains; and for us to help them with promoting and advertising
- There are areas of deprivation in the county where the effects of the pandemic could be felt more acutely, therefore *Community support initiatives should be focussed first and foremost in the areas highlighted as experiencing increased levels of deprivation*
- Some businesses foresee that they will experience skills challenges as a result of the pandemic, with the majority stating that this lack of skills relate to digital and IT skills. Skills in general will undoubtedly suffer as a result of the pandemic. The majority of job losses are likely to be at a lower skills level as these jobs tend to be part-time, low paid and more unstable

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

Business Support

In the business survey many local businesses outlined they faced an uncertain future with issues such as cashflow, uncertainty about customer confidence and the need to change their business delivery models being highlighted. Direct engagement with businesses will be essential so that business support can be targeted at the areas of most need.

Procurement

Many businesses were unable to source high demand products such as PPE so supporting businesses moving forward with collaborative procurement or subsidised deals will help keep the impact to a minimum. There will also be a need for us to take the lead on a 'buy local' promotional message and protection of local supply chains.

Communities

There are areas of deprivation in the county where the impact of the pandemic will be felt more acutely. Analysis across the UK has shown that deprived areas have experienced higher death rates, seeing more severe financial effects, and experiencing the largest negative effects to over-all well-being. Within Carmarthenshire attention should be paid to these areas to ensure that interventions meet the needs of these communities as they are more likely to be hit hardest. Reprioritising community support and grants will help COVID-19 community resilience increase and that in turn will help them become more self-resilient together with sustainable local supply chains.

Skills

Skill demand fluctuations have been seen over the last year. Nursing has consistently remained the most sought-after skill in the county, together with increased demand relating to personal care with this trend likely to continue given the current pressures on the National Health Service. How the skills landscape on the whole will be affected as a result of the pandemic is not easily identifiable. Many job losses are likely to be at a lower skills level as these jobs tend to be part-time, low paid and more unstable. This could result in a further widening of the skills gap between the highest and lowest skilled in the labour market. Crucial to addressing this skill gap is understanding exactly what skills people have as well as understanding how these skills are transferrable to other sectors. Employers and businesses need to be able to identify the skills that they need, and providers need to define the skills that they need to teach.

Tourism, Leisure & Hospitality

Arguably the impact on Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality businesses are some of the most adversely affected by the pandemic, with many of them indicating that the impact on them has been significant. Restrictions on movement have meant that most establishments have been forced to completely shut down their operations. There has been very little opportunity for them to diversify within this sector due to the very nature of the services they offer. Public confidence is a further issue, with many indicating that a sector wide approach in response to the pandemic is required which would serve to instil confidence in the public regarding the safety of using their services following the lifting of restrictions. In accordance with this there is further concern from the sector that in a post-COVID world people may be less likely to spend money on 'luxury' or 'nice to have' activities and services.

PRIMARY TOWN CENTRES

Currently, the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis are highly uncertain which makes it difficult to draw a clear picture of immediate impact on our primary town centres - *Carmarthen, Ammanford and Llanelli*. When the UK and Welsh Governments initially imposed restrictions on the operation of businesses which specifically targeted the retail sector, jobs in these businesses are particularly affected. Retail businesses are vulnerable due to shop closures and a strong drop in demand from consumers.

It was crucial that to help as many of our town centre businesses back operating safely as soon as possible, we needed to create safe town centre environments and enable sensible movement throughout that will give users, residents and businesses confidence to resume activity and business. Priorities include: Signage; Communications with businesses; Public Conveniences; Bus Stations; Car Parks; and Street Furniture issues (e.g. benches)

The Centre for Towns, an independent non-partisan organisation dedicated to providing research and analysis on a range of issues affecting our towns, has recently reviewed the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on towns and cities throughout the UK. The [report findings](#) identify Llanelli as being in the top 20 towns in the UK for absolute deprivation and therefore lacking in resilience with regards to COVID-19.

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

Town Centre Economy

The impact on the Retail sector is one that has been widely publicised as being one of the worst hit sectors in terms of the adverse effects of the pandemic. We saw a complete shutdown in March. Whilst there have been upsurges in online purchasing many businesses in the county (being independent and smaller) have not been able to capitalise on this trend. Perhaps those businesses will need support in alternative trading ways moving forward. This lack of access to customers has resulted in many businesses facing challenges in terms of finance. The impact on supply chains, as well as the availability of staff has been significant. With social distancing becoming more of the 'norm' measures would need to be put in place to ensure people are able to feel safe in town centres, together with better access to the town's public transport link.

RURAL TOWNS

Prior to the current crisis we were undertaking work to develop growth plans to revitalise our 10 towns under our [Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward Strategy](#).

1. Llandovery	2. St Clears
3. Whitland	4. Newcastle Emlyn
5. Laugharne	6. Cwmmamman
7. Llanybydder	8. Kidwelly
9. Llandeilo	10. Cross Hands



These growth plans were to look forward 10 years with new ideas and priorities agreed in partnership with businesses. The need for these plans is even more important by the economic whirlwind brought about by the pandemic.

The likely economic impacts of COVID-19 on 5 of the 10 Towns (shown in bold above) has been considered by *Owen Davies Consulting* – but these initial key findings would equally apply across all our rural towns:

- Impacts on *agriculture* are likely to have a greater impact on rural towns because there are a higher proportion of people employed in agriculture.
- Across our rural towns, 35% of the workforce are employed in occupations considered at most risk (administrative, leisure, customer service).
- If one in five of the most at-risk workforce lost their jobs, *unemployment would increase by 70%*.
- *A few towns (Whitland and St Clears)* have been found to have the *highest levels of managers and professionals* which offer more capacity to work from home and are considered to be less risk occupations.
- 20% of employees across the towns are in *self-employment* and are considered more vulnerable to abrupt and, in some cases, total loss of income.
- Over 40% of businesses in the towns are in *shut down sectors* (restaurants, pubs, café, non-food retail etc).
- Food & drink businesses and accommodation providers are likely to have closed across the towns, with *Laugharne* most likely suffering more significantly than others.

A review of the COVID-19 impact on the remaining 5 towns is currently being progressed.

What is the short, medium and long term impact?

Rural Economy

A significant proportion of the workforce are employed in occupations considered at most risk and the self-employed are even more vulnerable to the economic downturn. A number of agricultural businesses within the county appear to be facing challenges related to bringing their product to market. This is especially true for milk producers who indicate that the price at which they sell continues to fall with the devaluation of produce continuing at pace. This is resulting in significant levels of wastage with some having to sell at a lower price than it costs to produce. This is also true for beef and lamb produce. These issues are made worse by supply chain problems and reduced access to customers which culminate into significant issues with finance and income. On a positive note many agricultural businesses are family owned, and the impact has made it simpler to continue to operate throughout the lockdown period, with many farms having seen family members move home for the lockdown period therefore resulting in the availability of additional labour.

DEVELOPER / INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

Some 15 local, regional, and national Developers were contacted in respect of their businesses and how they have been impacted by COVID-19. The discussion with developers revolved around 4 main themes:

1. *Short term impacts (current and in the next 6 months)*

Generally, most developers were surprisingly positive and see the current crisis as a challenge but in some instances an opportunity.

2. *Key constraints anticipated moving forward*

Planning process (needs to be more responsive); Increasing costs; Lack of Gap funding schemes; Public sector too strong need to revitalise private sector; WG withdrawal from Housing association bond scheme

3. *Key opportunities moving forward*

Demand still exists for high quality properties; Opportunities to market stock / development sites to companies in key cities across UK looking to lower costs and increase quality of life to employees; Residential market strong plus relocations as above; Local and consistent procurement; Retirement villages vs care homes

4. *Key public and private sector interventions required*

Gap funding support scheme / Property Development Fund; Higher intervention rates to assist with growing development gap figure; Forum of developers; Support to assist with deferring private sector tenants rent; Rental guarantees from LA

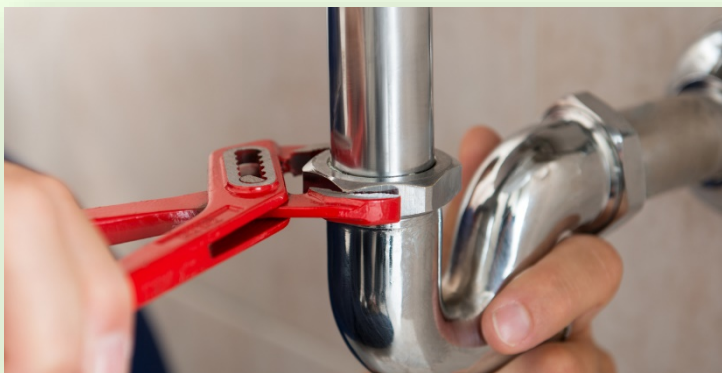
What is the short, medium and long term impact?

The impact of home working and its transformational effects on work/life balance will have to be considered in Local Development Planning. The economic impact will require further consideration for the creation of additional employment areas particularly for small business start-ups. Survey feedback suggested we need to review and simplify planning support for key economic development applications (small & large).

There has been a considerable impact on the construction sector so it will be essential that we continue with significant regeneration capital infrastructure investments to boost demand in the construction sector and stimulate confidence.

The impact of the pandemic on office staff has been lessened by IT systems providing a relatively seamless transmission to home working. The *Digital Transformation Strategy* and *Agile Working* programme that was underway stood us in good stead at the onset of the crisis. Our current accommodation plans will need to be reconsidered.

HOW WE HAVE HELPED OUR BUSINESSES



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-ND](#)

Having been made redundant from his former employer, *Ryan Jones* set up his new business, *Pentre Plumbing & Heating*, in April 2019.

With the help of a grant of almost £3,000 from the *Carmarthenshire Business Start Up Fund* operating at that time, Ryan purchased all the tools and equipment necessary for delivering his services and very quickly won contracts with clients such as Leekes and Ammanford Town

Council, as well as building a reputation as a domestic plumber and heating engineer. This venture has not only created and secured a full-time job for Ryan going forward but has also laid the foundation to possibly creating another job within the business in the near future.

Having become much in demand as a reputable plumber, the arrival of COVID-19 and the closure of Leekes, Ammanford Town Council's facilities and cancellations from domestic clients not wanting any trades people in their homes, meant that unfortunately Ryan's work all but stopped.

Ryan sought support through the Council's newly set up **COVID helpline** where he was referred to a business support officer for advice. Being a start-up business with no business rates liability meant that, unfortunately he fell through the net of many of the business support schemes which were being introduced at that time, but he was held on a reserve list and advised to apply for Universal Credit to help him through the lockdown period.

Upon the launch of the *COVID Start Up fund* introduced by Welsh Government in June and being delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council, Ryan was contacted and advised to apply as he met the criteria. Through this scheme, Ryan received £2,500 to help keep his business afloat until he can fully resume his services.

Ryan said *"I am grateful to Carmarthenshire County Council for the support they have given me in establishing Pentre Plumbing & Heating. From starting up last year to maintaining support when all went quiet during lockdown, their assistance has been invaluable to keeping the business going and sustaining my job"*.

[Discover Carmarthenshire this summer](#)



AIR QUALITY

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels have fallen during April to June 2020

As a consequence of lockdown, a drastic reduction of road vehicle movements has been observed within Carmarthenshire. The main pollutant of concern for Carmarthenshire has been identified as Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) from road vehicles. We have 91 locations throughout the County where NO₂ is measured and we have 3 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) where levels exceed annual statutory limits in “hotspot” locations.

[Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Air Quality Report](#) / [Executive Board 21st September 2020 Webcast](#)

MUNICIPAL WASTE

Municipal Waste collected has fallen by 18.5% (compared to the same April-June period last year) from 21,181 tonnes to 17,252 tonnes. The reasons are likely to be that HWRC were closed and this accounts for a reduction overall. However, the **waste picked up at the kerbside has increased as a result of more people being home by nearly 20%.**

- Up 595t -14% increase in kerbside residual waste
- Up 975t - 34% increase in kerbside dry mixed recycling (blue bag)
- Up 591t - 35% increase in kerbside food waste
- Down 1,606t - 83% decrease in HWRC residual
- Down 4,974t - 77% decrease in HWRC Recycling
- The number of garden waste customers has almost doubled during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

*“Gratitude to the hardworking crews who are still carrying out an excellent service in trying times”
Compliment received*

Housing Waste Recycling Centres were closed for 7 weeks. With many residents at home undertaking DIY projects the demand upon the service on re-launch in June was unprecedented. We set up an online appointment system and reopened the sites in a compliant and managed way.

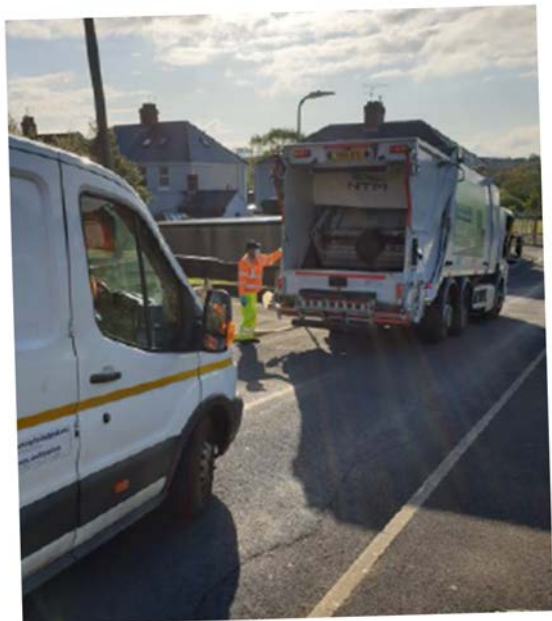
“Went exceptionally well - whoever put this together deserves a huge pat on the back.” Compliment received

FLY TIPPING

Fly tipping has increased by 54%

During the 4 months of April to July 2020 there were **1,089 fly tipping incidences** reported compared to 706 for the same period last year. This has had an effect on communities in terms of local blight. Also, suspension of some community volunteer litter picks and general litter clearance work (other than town centres) that add to the blight. In addition, our Environmental Enforcement work was suspended which meant that investigations into fly-tipping and waste non-compliance issues could not be undertaken.

OUR HI-VIS HEROES!



Waste and recycling collections were crucial to public and environmental health during the COVID-19 crisis, and *waste workers were deemed 'key workers'* by the government' and have continued to carry out essential services during the epidemic. Much like frontline NHS workers, waste workers have been receiving thanks and gratitude from householders.

Non-essential street cleansing services were suspended in the main and cleansing staff were redeployed to help out with refuse collection.

Highway operatives from our Trostre depot were also redeployed each day to the Waste / Refuse Unit as drivers of support vehicles on refuse rounds.

Environmental Enforcement staff and Highway Roadworkers also assisted with food deliveries to

our schools and assisted with food packages being delivered direct to homes. Others in the Environmental Enforcement team volunteered as trainers in the building cleaning service.

FACILITY CLOSURES

FACILITY	
Household Waste Recycling Centres	Closed for 7 weeks.
Parc Howard	Adverse effect on availability of public open spaces to exercise and keep fit.
Closure of Public Conveniences	Basic amenities closed to public, and no real alternative available elsewhere. Except for key transport hubs.
Ammanford Cemetery	Restrictions on the numbers attending burials, potentially impacting on families and communities.

CLEANING SERVICE

600 Cleaners retrained
150 additional Cleaners employed

Cleaners have helped keep our school hubs, schools, food distribution centres, depots, offices and sheltered housing open. We developed an enhanced standard of cleaning across all settings in discussion with colleagues in Public Protection. These enhanced cleaning standards were essential to reduce transmission of the virus and to build confidence and reassurance that the work environment is as safe as we can make it.



The enhanced cleaning arrangements played a significant part in ensuring that schools could reopen in July, with preparations underway to support cleaning arrangements for the additional numbers in schools returning September.

"Spotless due to her constant energy & diligence - huge impact on the confidence of the staff"
Compliment received for a School Cleaner

STREETWORKS

Increase in processing of **utility company street works notices** to ensure that all services such as power, water, gas, phone and broadband services were able to be maintained. The number of works notices during this period increased to 2,600 a month. The noticing system doesn't allow us to break it down into work categories, but *Openreach* were particularly active carrying out works to reinstate services to customers – not necessarily just broadband, but probably also for vulnerable people etc.

Skip licences increased by 50% during April and May due to residents clearing out homes and gardens

A range of other highway licencing functions saw increases including **street cafes (100% increase)**, licences to install apparatus (10% increase) and form vehicular accesses which has increased by 15% (an application to drop the curbs to give access to a property).

TRANSPORT

Public transport was significantly reduced during lockdown, and in fact usage has plummeted even before the formal lockdown. This created an issue for operators where there was significantly reduced income on those routes which they managed to maintain a service on. This has created a funding issue going forward. It could take a considerable amount of time to restore patronage levels, and with many having grown familiar with home working there could be long term adverse effects on service levels. Despite the challenges there may be an opportunity to re-visit and re-prioritise provision according to need.

School transport was provided during the period that schools reopened in late June and July. Transport was available in accordance with our usual policy but only to those who specifically requested it. Transport will operate as normal from September. The need to provide social distancing between driver and passenger is creating quite a challenge as it means that some

seats nearest the drivers will need to be left unused, creating loading issues and the need for additional vehicles. There is also concern that there may be a shortage of drivers and passenger assistants, bearing in mind the elderly nature of many of these.

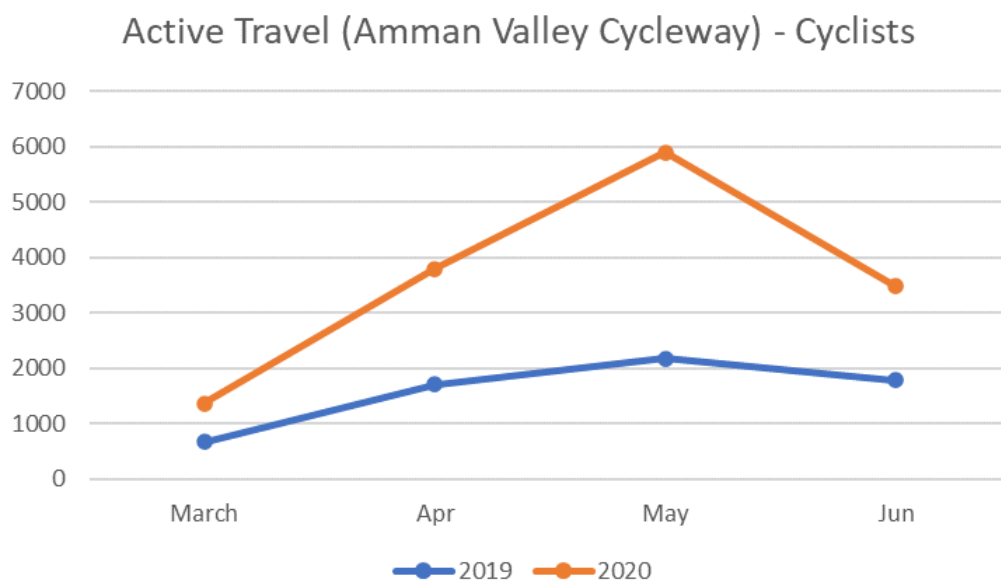
*"Bwcabus drivers have gone above and beyond...assisting key workers...
they are wonderful and are so very appreciated"*

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

Demand on the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network for community usage significantly increased during the height of the pandemic phase. Telephone calls and emails from the public and from landowners saw dramatic increases, a great deal of staff resource was used to keep the community fully informed and reassured on the status of public access. Between March and June use of the PRoW webpage (excluding use by CCC staff) increased significantly, webpage sessions increased by 237%.

There were 49 attempts to close PRoWs without lawful authority during the height of the pandemic phase which would have had adverse effects on the communities using those routes for their daily exercise were dealt with.

Monitoring of our cycleways in May has shown a 5.3% increase in walking and 166% increase in cycling during the pandemic.



HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Cessation of capital maintenance works meant that preventative maintenance has been delayed and may mean that timely intervention to ensure the preservation of the highway assets was not possible. Essential safety works continued as did out of hours safety and emergency response.

Due to the risk posed by affected trees, our management of trees alongside our road network that have been affected by Ash Dieback has been continuing throughout the pandemic. Trees removed within highway limits in the Llanelli area in August, and further worked planned for the Llandeilo area in September.

PLANNING SERVICE

Planning enforcement services suspended resulting in potential planning infringements that impact upon adjacent properties and communities.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE SERVICE

The Property Maintenance Team continued to deliver essential urgent and safety maintenance works across our housing and non-housing property, which required additional measures to ensure the safety of our staff and tenants. This included legionella, gas safety and electrical testing to ensure that properties remained safe. Non-urgent works, however, were suspended during lockdown and records kept of work requests for future implementation. A review of this backlog in mid-August suggested that around 1,500 maintenance jobs were impacted by COVID-19 and needed to be undertaken, once it's safe to do so. It is anticipated that these will be completed over the autumn/winter period, subject to continued easing of lockdown and tenants (where applicable, being happy for us to access).

The Building Inspection Team has not been undertaking non-essential inspections so it is anticipated that there will also be significant latent maintenance work, particularly in closed buildings.

PROPERTY DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

The majority of our construction sites were closed by our contractors during lockdown as a result of staffing and material supply constraints, although some sites continued. We have been working with the range of contractors to restart each site as soon as possible, to ensure delivery of the projects for improved services to the community, but also to support contractor cashflow.

Delivery of our Carmarthenshire Homes Standard works were suspended by the Council and have not yet recommenced. The delay in completing these improvements will continue to have an impact on those occupying our homes.

PROPERTY INFRASTRUCTURE

As lockdown was imposed, a range of Council buildings were closed to the public and staff to encourage home working in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines. Some staff continued to require access to buildings to undertake their work, but this has been closely monitored to ensure access is limited only to those requiring it. To support re-opening of services we introduced an internal independent verification process to ensure that social distancing and other safety measures were in place before any building was reopened, to ensure the safety of our staff and public. The closure of buildings has significantly reduced the availability of face-to-face service delivery to the public, which has shifted to phone and internet communication.

A range of buildings continue to remain closed and we will be reviewing our property needs for the future. The new ways of working from home are likely to provide an opportunity to reduce our office requirements and focus more fully on buildings that deliver direct services to the public.

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

BROADBAND AND MOBILE

Although more people are working from home, home schooling and streaming on-line entertainment providers have explained that networks are built with “headroom” to withstand increases in use. The increase in day-time use is still only half of evening use. Mobile UK, the trade body for UK mobile operators, states that networks [*“have more than enough capacity”*](#) to handle the added demand.

Everybody needs sufficient broadband speeds in order to work efficiently but data from the Open Market Review 2019 claims that there are **12,838 premises in Carmarthenshire with speeds under 30mbps.**

Residents and businesses in rural areas of Carmarthenshire will have access to more funding for better broadband. Welsh Government recently announced it has topped up the value of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to those with less than 30Mbps. The vouchers have doubled in value and those eligible can now claim £7k for a small to medium sized business and £3,000 for residential premises.

What is the short, medium and long-term impact?

AIR QUALITY

Our monitoring before and during the lockdown period has demonstrated that the reduced number of road traffic movements has resulted in a corresponding reduction of NO₂ levels. This is a welcome finding but is no surprise; it is important that we continue to monitor Air Quality as restrictions relax and vehicle movements increase again. Lockdown has taught us that effective use of available technology and improved / safer modes of sustainable travel such as walking, or cycling can have a significant impact on our reliance on road vehicles. It is hoped that we can continue to retain these practices as much as possible and embrace new ways of working to help protect and improve Air Quality for residents and visitors to our County.

ENVIRONMENT

More than ever before we have realised that our natural environment is vital for our well-being. Wild and natural landscapes sustain us; they give us clean water to drink and fresh air to breathe, they store carbon and protect our homes from flooding, and they can help make us happy and healthy. Nature gives us the foundations for our economy, energy system and our food and farming. Biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people are our common heritage and humanity’s most important life-supporting ‘safety net’.

We are also in the midst of an ecological and biodiversity crisis on par with the climate emergency. It’s not just wildlife that’s losing out; it’s us too. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide. Nature’s health and people’s health are linked, and the path to recovery starts with a plan for putting wildlife back in our lives.

During lockdown people have rediscovered the environment. Our Net Zero Carbon plan is our flagship plan to deliver for the environment. We will also need to ensure that our Environmental Act and Biodiversity goals are continued to be met.

During the pandemic we were awarded a Welsh Government grant that will fund the planting of two small new woodlands on council owned land in Llanelli and Llandybie. The woodlands will be designed to offer multiple benefits including access for local people, wildlife habitat and improvements in air quality. Pending the award of further grant aid, it is hoped that additional woodlands will be planted by us in future years.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

We have experienced more volumes of recyclable materials at the kerbside (food and dry mixed and garden waste) in the general sense, but we have also seen more contamination of waste. Households may have got into behavioural poor habits that may be difficult to reverse, or at the very least it will take a significant effort in the medium term to counter. In the short term, contamination levels may increase, thereby diminishing our recycling performance. On the positive side, the green waste service customer base has almost doubled.

Household Waste Recycling Centres – the medium and long-term effects will be around how we manage the service. The appointment system is popular with the public, but of course throughput is reduced. Future systems will need to balance these two aspects.

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT QUALITY

We have seen an increase in the incidents of blight in communities and natural landscapes in terms of fly-tipping. There has been reports of unlicensed waste collection and complaints of fly tipping in both urban and rural areas. There has been an increased frequency of environmental crime, this is both a health and an environmental hazard (including littering, fires). These habits may again take some time to address, so is a medium to long term process.

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Short and medium-term impacts will mean that the full suite of activities and play equipment will not necessarily be available at our parks and playground facilities. This could be the situation in the medium term e.g. swing seats removed from a swing set in playgrounds to ensure social distancing can be achieved. Another example is that the bowls changing rooms in Parc Howard will remain closed, but the greens are open, hence participants will need to arrive already changed for the activity.

PROPERTY

We will need to continue with significant capital infrastructure investments to boost demand in the construction sector, to assist in the recovering economy and to stimulate business.

PLANNING

We need to create safe town centre environment plans to enable sensible movement throughout that will give users, residents, and businesses confidence to resume activity.

Our town centres need to fully support local businesses, retailing, social and leisure activity – with immediate priorities, followed swiftly by more strategic infrastructure projects.

Planning process needs to improve; with consideration in the LDP in terms of home working and the concept of live / work.

The Council, working with PSB partners, should adopt a town centres first principle with a focus on creating public sector office and community hubs. Wherever possible, investment will be prioritised in town centres, bringing back into use vacant properties, and generating footfall and spend to support town centre economies.

TRANSPORT

Mobility is an important part of everyone's lives. If we get it right for our most vulnerable citizens, we will get it right for everyone, with a positive impact on our ability to reduce air pollution and meet carbon reduction targets.

Our planning system will need to ensure we create places which embed active travel infrastructure, such as cycle lanes, enabling people to walk or cycle for all short journeys, fully integrating with public transport for longer distances.

- There needs to be improved access and connections between town centres, out of town sites and public transport links
- The pandemic has led to major changes in commuter travel patterns. Many workers stopped travelling to a workplace either because they were furloughed, began working from home or in some cases lost their jobs. The amount of people travelling to a workplace therefore declined sharply.
- As people return to work public transport and car sharing may not return to previous levels. The impact of staycation will also need to be understood. Journeys to school and education will need to be reviewed.
- With more people walking and cycling during lockdown, consideration is needed for footways will be upgraded, routes better signposted and road space reallocated so cyclists and pedestrians' have safer social distancing

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Digital connectivity, particularly in rural communities, will be important as it will reduce the need to travel, enabling access to jobs away from where people live, helping to improve their work-life balance. Therefore, with increased home working it is likely to lead to increases in house prices in Carmarthenshire. Therefore, an increased demand for rural and coastal properties.



ADULT SOCIAL CARE/INTEGRATED SERVICES

Throughout this emergency our priority has been to continue to support those who receive services and their families, to do this safely, to protect staff and the people of Carmarthenshire.

In Carmarthenshire we have not experienced the infection rates or deaths that some Local Authorities have, but we are remaining vigilant with our governance processes and infection control to ensure this position is sustained.

All day care provision was suspended in March, those accessing services have been supported in other ways and limited respite services have continued. Within Learning Disability Services, virtual activities have been arranged via skype or teams and individuals have accessed buildings on a one to one basis where this has been necessary. Activity packs have been delivered to people's homes and home visits have also been facilitated to support families.

Within Adult Social Care and Integrated Services staffing has remained relatively stable with minimal impact. In order to ensure service provision and minimise impact on service area we have kept a core social work and OT and management presence. In relation to safeguarding of adults it is business as usual, we have set up a regional multi agency COVID-19 response group. The regional Safeguarding Board and associated subgroups are continuing to meet virtually via Skype or Microsoft Teams.

Our Care Management Teams have kept in touch with those in receipt of services regularly and have undertaken essential visits where necessary. Technology such as iPads have been used to keep in touch with people.

All other staff have been working from home and have the IT resources to do so, along with PPE, in case they need to undertake emergency home visits.

A robust regional approach to managing new and existing Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard authorisations has been agreed in the light of us being unable to visit care homes. This approach ensures the principles of the Mental Capacity Act are upheld and is consistent with the guidance received from Welsh Government.

Business continuity plans have been updated to cover COVID-19 and updates are provided to staff daily along with a central resource for staff to access regarding any service change in relation to WG guidance and legislative changes.

We created a central deployment hub where services can make requests for additional staff and also offer staff that can assist with front line operations, such as residential and domiciliary care. Staff from leisure services have moved into domiciliary care and staff from day services have helped out in domiciliary and residential care. Staff in administrative roles have provided support in a central PPE store and in administrative roles in front line service provision.

Management oversight, team meetings, supervision and support continue remotely using Skype and staff have access to a well-being service and support.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

One of the positive outcomes of the pandemic is the collaboration within the council and with external organisations. Attendance at multi agency meetings has improved and regular governance forums have enabled decisions to be made quickly and identified risks responded to swiftly.

Communication between partners and within the council has been critical as guidance has changed regularly.

DOMICILIARY CARE

We have been able to maintain an effective domiciliary care service in extraordinarily difficult circumstances and front-line staff have demonstrated resilience and courage.

The adequate supply and provision of protective equipment to the sector, has made a profound difference in the feeling of safety and security for staff. Without this change in national policy the service would have been unsustainable – the original guidance, rather than policy, stated when we didn't have enough equipment *we should undertake a risk assessment for PPE*. When we then had adequate supplies, we were able to provide our domiciliary care staff with enough PPE to wear at all times.

We responded by:

- Redeploying day service officers to deliver care.
- Reconfiguring larger packages of care based on risk assessments.
- Introducing fast track training and rolling recruitment. General sickness was substantially down and many staff who work part time were willing to do additional hours.
- A recruitment and retention package for in house care staff. This is reviewed monthly.
- Increasing commissioned domiciliary care rates temporarily by a pound an hour.
- Introducing an advanced payment for commissioned hours for domiciliary care agencies to ensure cash flow is maintained in the sector.

A RISK MANAGEMENT AND ESCALATION POLICY for care and nursing homes was established which has been critical in managing the pandemic.

The purpose of the policy, which has been highlighted as an area of good practice is to:

- Ensure that there are robust contingency plans in place.
- Mitigate the risks of harm to care home residents and/or care home quality of care.
- Prevent avoidable deaths.
- Ensure timely, appropriate interventions to support recovery from an escalation in their Risk Status.
- Minimise the impact of care home failure on the whole health and social care system.
- Provide additionality to the existing Regional West Wales Escalating Concerns Policy for provider performance and support analysis of further risk escalation related to COVID-19 and implementation of escalation protocols and processes.
- Provide a process that allows us to assess the level of risk for every care home contracted by Health Board or the Local Authority and provide a daily overview of that risk.
- Provide a process that allows organisations to analyse the level of risk and implement appropriate and necessary escalation processes to mitigate the risk and timely de-escalation.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

The impact of the virus on residents in care homes has been a serious and ongoing concern in Carmarthenshire as it is across much of Wales.

Again, we acted swiftly, we were among the first to put a no visitors policy in all homes and subsequently to cease admissions without a negative test.

Actions to support homes included:



- **The issuing of PPE** – We now have the guidance and the equipment we need to protect staff and residents.
 - **Increased Testing**- The Hywel Dda University Health Board has successfully co-ordinated systematic testing in care homes. Where there is an outbreak in a home a mobile unit test all staff and residents in these homes on a weekly basis. Whilst there were substantial delays in getting adequate testing in place our Local Health Board has been among the most proactive in Wales.
 - **Revised Admission Criteria**- No admissions to care homes are allowed without a negative test in place. When discharged from hospital the guidance now requires a further period of shielding after a negative test.
- **Improved Infection control**- Substantial work has been done by the Health Board advising and supporting homes with infection prevention and control, the use of PPE, enhanced cleaning regimes and the separation of infected and non-infected residents into red and green zones within settings.
 - **Financial Support** - Substantial financial support is in place with a premium being paid to all homes of £50 per placement per week and support in relation to voids where homes are unable to take placements because of infections. We have received confirmation from Welsh Government that this support that we initiated in March 2020 can remain in place to the end of 2020-2021(Our approach has become national guidance). To date we have seen no homes fail although a small number are under significant financial pressure.

Tribute should be paid to our remarkable care staff and managers whose commitment in dealing with the most difficult of situations has been outstanding. Sickness levels in this staff group are now lower than they have been prior to the National emergency.

I think it's remarkable how we have adapted the way we work to continue to offer services despite the current circumstances. Feedback from clients has been positive.
Staff Survey May 2020

Personal Protection Equipment

- In March there were also widespread concerns across the sector at the guidance on the use of PPE that had been re-issued at the end of March.
- Whilst supplies were not initially adequate to meet the guidance in full for the whole care sector, they have since progressively improved with supply from Welsh Government now enough to enable providers to comply with the guidance. We have also seen successful procurement of protective equipment direct by the authority. **At the time of writing we have distributed over 1.5 million items of protective equipment to the care sector.**

- Locally we have a well-resourced centralised distribution system that can deliver PPE 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. When we have identified a small number of providers not following the guidance all have complied after intervention and support from our commissioning team.



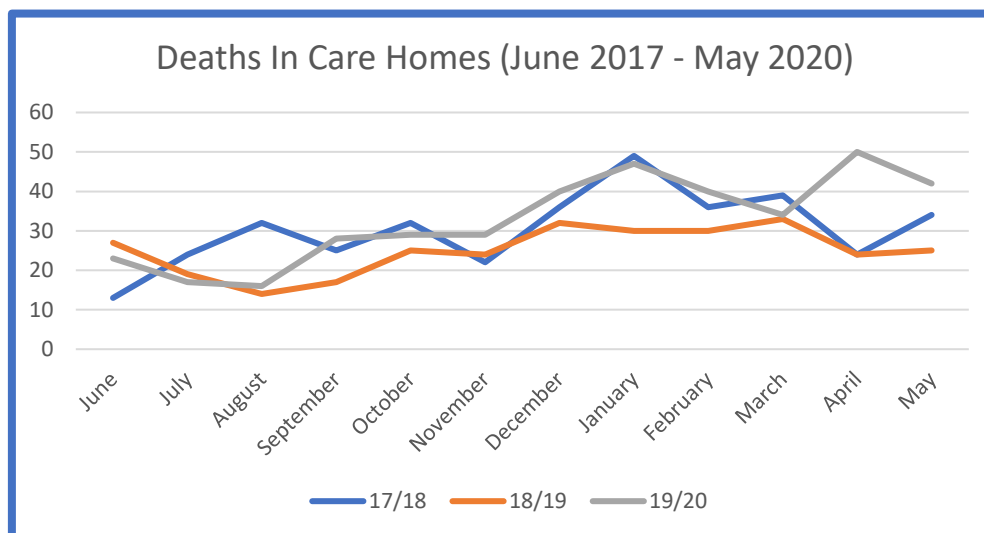
Staff at **Llesiant Delta Well-being** are going the extra mile to make sure extremely vulnerable people in Carmarthenshire are supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coming into work every day throughout the national emergency, staff have worked tirelessly 24/7 behind the scenes to support vulnerable people across the county. Llesiant Delta Well-being, formerly Carmarthenshire Council's Careline Service, has conducted approximately 5,000 calls to residents in Carmarthenshire that have received shielding letters from Welsh Government to ensure they have everything they need to stay safe during these difficult times.

80 iPads were supplied to care home residents to keep in touch with their loved ones

Accurately recording the impact on residents in care homes is difficult with some residents infected but asymptomatic and many whose health was severely compromised prior to infection. The most reliable measure is the number who die in residential care in excess of what we would have ordinarily expected.

This is broadly consistent with the most recent national ONS figures for much of South and East Wales although our figures are calculated differently so caution should be taken before reaching conclusions at this early stage. Whilst there may be some natural variation in the data, our early analysis indicates this increase is largely down to COVID-19 related disease.

Of those residents who have tested positive since monitoring began approximately 60% have since become symptom free. Thus, we can see that whilst the virus is devastating to this population many frail and elderly residents can and do recover. Early evidence locally is that the likelihood of recovery has a strong correlation with the general health of the resident before the infection. Moving forward ensuring we can evidence that all residents receive the highest quality of health care based on their needs as individuals will be a priority for us.



OTHER KEY SERVICES

The following were also put in place to mitigate the anticipated impact of COVID-19

- We increased reablement capacity in domiciliary care by 150 hours per week provided by a 3rd sector organisation and an independent service provider.
- We have increased domiciliary services by 468 hours per week, by block booking hours with two independent providers.
- We can use the field hospitals for recovery periods before discharge home.
- We have step-down and step-up facilities within residential care.
- We have flats that can be used by people recovering from COVID-19 but cannot return home as they live with people who are shielding. These flats are for people who do not have care needs but will have support from the departments housing team with shopping and any other issues that should arise.
- The Out of Hours Service has been enhanced to respond to anticipated additional demand
- Social work response from integrated services to meet the needs of adults with physical disabilities and older people, with dementia related requirements on a 24/7 basis
- Additional Social Work capacity to respond to Learning Disability or general Mental health emergencies.
- We have a rolling recruitment advert for social workers and domiciliary care
- Senior Management Response on a 24/7 basis to Social Care and Health board enquiries.
- The local authority has undertaken a staff skills audit and set up a central redeployment hub to realign staffing resources into critical posts.
- A volunteer survey identified circa 500 persons, including around 100 for care roles.
- Care related training resources now available online, with additional mobile technology sourced to support additional staff in these roles.

COMMISSIONED SERVICES

During the pandemic the relationship with our commissioned services has been very positive, we set up a COVID-19 advice/ helpline with a dedicated hotline and mailboxes. This has enabled providers to directly report suspected cases and act as a support line for any issues /concerns. The Commissioning Team also made proactive calls to keep in touch with providers.

We have implemented guidelines for all discharges from hospital across the care sector to ensure safe discharges and ensure there are measures in place to mitigate risks.

We have ensured a continued supply of PPE and access to advice concerning infection control.

FIELD HOSPITALS

We have converted Carmarthen and Llanelli Leisure Centres, the Selwyn Samuel Centre and the Parc y Scarlets barn, Llanelli, into temporary hospitals to provide additional bed space for the NHS. [See Leaders vlog](#)

More than 360 people volunteered to help set up furniture and equipment at Carmarthenshire's four field hospitals.

What is the short, medium- and long-term impact?

- In the short term COVID-19 Recovery Groups have been set up and we are focusing on recovery plans to sustain services following the crisis.
- We will need to change and adapt the way we work, for example, we will not be able to reopen our day services buildings for some time in order to comply with social distancing and minimise risk of infection.
- We will continue with virtual activities and provide a service to those most at risk safely. This will impact on families and carers who will continue to need support so we will need to do this creatively.
- COVID-19 has provided us with an opportunity to work innovatively and we will capitalise on this in our quest to continuously improve services.
- The impact of COVID-19 will result in us escalating our modernisation plans for some services e.g. less building-based services, agile working.
- Staff will need to return to undertake home visits so there will need to undertake risk assessments to do this safely.
- Staff will need to be prepared to be flexible and adaptive in the long term in the event of future uncertainties.
- We are already seeing an increase in referrals to mental health services, safeguarding and substance misuse because of the pandemic. This will have a significant demand on our resources, so we need to prioritise and transform services to respond to those who are most vulnerable.
- Loneliness is one of the feelings people have been experiencing during the current COVID-19 pandemic. which will impact on the mental health and wellbeing.
- In the medium and longer term, the economic downturn itself will have persistent negative health effects, with these effects being worse for some groups than others. For example, recent estimates suggest that the employment loss associated with the 2008 recession could have resulted in an additional 900,000 UK people of working age suffering from a chronic health condition, including mental health <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14800>
- There is an impact on the health and well-being of our staff and increased referrals to Occupational health with anxiety and stress associated with the coronavirus.
- There will be an impact on the budget as much of the activities for service improvement have been suspended during the pandemic.
- We will need to maximise the use of technology going forward as this has proved critical.
- Pressures in the health acute sector are likely to increase as we enter the autumn/winter months, this will have a significant impact on social care community services and in particular the care home and domiciliary care sector.

HOUSING

Stay Home Stay Safe. During the pandemic the importance of a safe and secure home has been more evident than ever before. The home has been our sanctuary and our community's safety has depended on our housing being of a good standard and fit for purpose.

With people working from home, on furlough, children being schooled from home, shielding or self-isolating, the home has been a crucial factor in the pandemic.

Sustaining Tenancies

Homes and Safer Communities have supported the 9,000+ council tenants, as well as offering advice and support for the private sector and those in need of urgent housing during this time.

- Profiling of our tenants took place early on to target the most vulnerable with welfare calls. Making critical links and referrals to various support services, to ensure tenants had adequate food and financial support during lockdown
- Supported tenants to claim for Universal Credit for their rent where there was loss of employment/income to ensure no council tenant fell into avoidable arrears.
- Continued to support tenants to make payments via electronic means. Payment of rents have been carefully monitored during this time to ensure tenants do not fall into arrears and maintain their security in their home.
- No court action has been taken at this time, the focus has been on support, help and to encourage tenants sustain their rental payments when there may have been greater temptation to spend on non-essential items during lockdown.
- Continue to contact our over 70's tenants throughout this period to ensure they have access to services and reduce loneliness
- Promote Welsh Governments "Connect" scheme to reduce Social Isolation and improve health and well-being
- Delivered Food Parcels to tenants in need
- Made hardship payments to tenants in fuel poverty and tenants with no recourse to public funds
- Sourced white goods and furniture for new tenants in financial hardship
- Worked closely with Housing Benefit to access Discretionary Housing payments to mitigate effect of welfare reform
- Partnered with Welsh Water to reduce tenant's liability with average savings in excess of £250 pa per household
- Voluntarily agreed to extend our Notice period from 3 to 6 months in line with Welsh Government recommendations
- Developed personal housing plans around our prevention fund to reduce rent arrears for tenants affected by COVID-19
- Committed £100k to our Prevention Fund to specifically target tenants who have lost income during this time.
- Worked closely with third sector partners including Shelter Cymru to offer debt advice, maximise income and reduce our tenant's liability.

There is some evidence that more people are interested in rural properties. There may be more community displacement because houses will become unaffordable for local people so they may have to move out to find more affordable options. This may erode Welsh speaking communities because prices will rise for products and services to accommodate more affluent people.

430% increase in homeless placement in Temporary/Emergency Accommodation (32 to 170 between April and July compared to last year)

A change in the Welsh Government Homelessness Policy days prior to lockdown meant that anybody presenting as homeless, would have the right to accommodation through the Council. It was to limit the number of people that were street homeless or those sofa surfing, to control the spread of COVID-19. Carmarthenshire experienced a significant rise in single people requesting housing assistance through the council, they had no fixed residence or could no longer live with family due to the risk to others due to underlying health issues. In addition to the general demand, there was a significant increase in the number of prison releases during this period and a considerable amount of work was required to manage the risk and place them in safe environments. There were 54 prisoners released to Carmarthenshire and 31 were rehoused in temporary accommodation.

The demand on Temporary Accommodation significantly increased, there was an average of 11 placements being made a week compared to 3 placements a week last year. The council was also unable to move people out of temporary accommodation into other council accommodation, social landlords or the private rented sector. Hotels and B&B establishments had closed and the council re-designated some existing temporary accommodation houses as shared accommodation and commissioned 3 B&B establishments that provided 42 additional units of single person accommodation that were manned throughout the day by a security team and meals provided to all occupants.

Officers have been re-distributed within the service to assist with the overwhelming demand at the front end as well as managing the demand on temporary accommodation and focusing on moving people on to other more suitable accommodation to free up emergency accommodation. In addition, the voluntary sector including the Soup Kitchen and other commissioned services were called on to assist with homelessness provision and support for vulnerable people often suffering from other problems such as mental health. The number of people accessing the service meant that we had to introduce an out of hours service and be open on a Saturday to receive and assist with homelessness enquiries. During lockdown we were answering as many as 3000 calls a week, very few were missed, and we maintained a 96% answer rate. People were able to get through to us and receive the assistance they required. To ensure that we continued to meet the increasing demand, provide assistance to those most vulnerable and manage the risk in temporary accommodation a Homeless Coordination Cell was formed to include all key partners including Public Health and the Police.

During lockdown the number of families seeking help from the council dropped because of the Government's decision to place an embargo on all possession proceedings. As lockdown measure relaxed the number of people requesting housing assistance continues to increase. During the first week of July the number of people requesting housing assistance in a single week had increased to 60 in comparison to an average of 31 per week between April and June a 94% increase in demand.

Housing Advice & Tenancy

"How Much I Appreciate Your Help... I really am grateful for the time and help you are giving me"

LEISURE

We have **maintained contact with 563 National Exercise Referral clients** throughout the lockdown period, offering support and advice on how to keep themselves active and healthy. This has required 2,878 phone calls taking nearly 1,500 hours and 668 home programmes have been sent.

'Your messages have made me feel less alone'

'We are most grateful for the care and concern that has been shown us since the fitness classes have been put on hold'

- We have created a number of [online fitness classes](#) for our Actif Leisure members to access free of charge during the period that our leisure facilities have been closed, whilst developing a new Actif Anywhere offer to deliver online memberships and activities in future
- We Supported Sport Wales on 66 Sports Club Applications for the Emergency Relief Fund, totalling over £40k of funding to protect Clubs during lockdown
- We consulted with over 55 Clubs in 6 weeks on applications for the Be Actif Wales Fund
- We held 3 Club Webinars with a total attendance of 87 Sports Clubs and Organisations (1 Welsh Only Session)
- We worked with National Governing Bodies every 3-week cycle on their Return to Play Roadmaps and supporting clubs in response to these changes by assisting them with risk assessments, COVID-19 Coordinator appointments, Implementing Test Track and Trace Procedures etc
- We are preparing to launch Actif Communities Ambassadors programme in early September to increase informal physical activity opportunities in the community.
- We are supporting the School Holiday Hubs by providing activities for the entire 3-week timetable.

Dozens of Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation staff were re-deployed to support other services or furloughed to mitigate unnecessary costs to the authority, with many staff using the time to undertake online training and to broaden their general employment skill-set.

Our Library services continued to provide access to our [online Library](#) offer to tens of thousands of residents throughout the lockdown period, whilst developing a new 'click 'n collect service as part of their phased recovery plan.

The public have rediscovered their love of walking, nature and the great outdoors whilst using the authority's vast network of public rights of way and footpaths. Outdoor spaces such as Pembrey Country Park and parks across the County were amongst the first spaces to re-open allowing people to maintain their physical and mental well-being.

TEST, TRACE, PROTECT

We have been successful in following up in our Test, Trace and Protect service.

Public bodies and hospitality businesses in West Wales are working together to test and trace anyone with symptoms of Coronavirus in a continued effort to protect our communities.

[① Test, Trace, Protect](#)

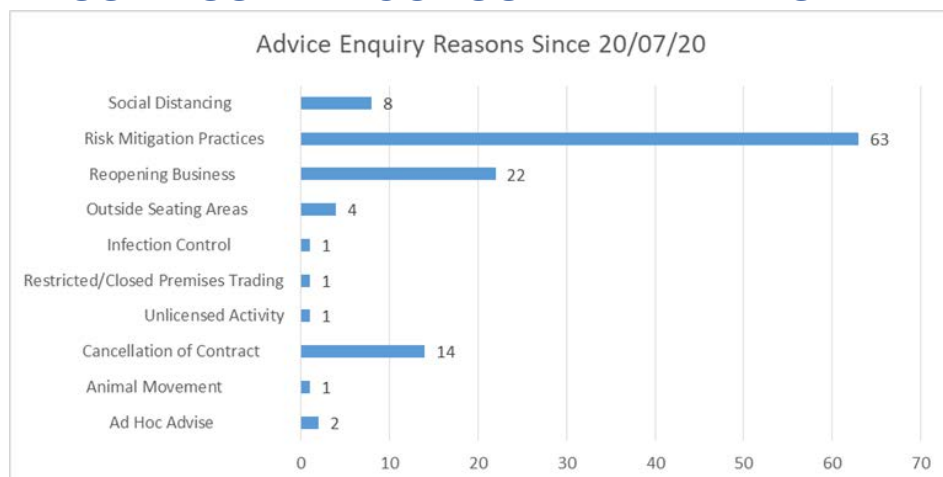
As well as undertaking the contact tracing of confirmed cases of COVID-19, identification of contacts and following up of those identified contacts there is a team of Environmental Health Officers who have been supporting Care Homes throughout the pandemic with advice on Infection Control and the use of chemicals when undertaking cleaning.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

600 food hygiene and standards combined visits and 200 animal feed visits are in arrears. 60+ new businesses are to be seen.

There has been a 60% increase in the number of complaints about rats, due to more people being at home and being able to spot them: together with waste back-log and an increase in fly-tipping incidents. However, this is being managed.

BUSINESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS



1,408 enquiries and intelligence-led visits were made to premises in breach of closure requirements often outside working hours. Businesses were generally compliant, with just one closure notice issued. Extensive advice was provided to the licensed trade. At the start of the emergency period new a stream of enquiries from

business relating to diversifying to be able to offer takeaways and food delivery services saw big impacts on the team. As lockdown restrictions have eased there are more enquiries related to how businesses can practically comply with social distancing and Track, Test, Protect requirements

55 welfare calls were made to vulnerable consumers who have call blocking devices installed. The initiative highlighted where additional support was needed (e.g. access to food deliveries, prescription collections etc.) and sought to combat loneliness

Working with banks we made *third-party cash withdrawals* on behalf of shielding/self-isolating people who needed cash to pay for shopping being done by volunteers.

1,825 properties were visited to warn against *rogue trading and scams* during the emergency period. Joint visits with Dyfed Powys Police were carried out at No Cold Calling Zones as part of a multi-agency response to the reported increase in rogue trading, fraud Informative flyers were used to transmit essential information to residents.

1,500 businesses were e mailed advice on COVID-9 related scams.

Extensive research was undertaken into the safety and suitability of PPE being supplied to the authority, including face masks, sanitiser and body temperature scanning equipment.

Responding to enquiries received from traders and internal departments, we provided advice and support on a variety of product safety matters.

We also facilitated the testing of hand sanitiser through liaison with a laboratory and expedited the process to achieve a result within 48 hours. Labelling advice was given, and we examined certifications and test results provided by prospective suppliers. We helped many local suppliers maintain their ability to trade by ensuring that the products they were offering were safe which allowed them to remain competitive.

Given the unprecedented nature of these regulations, we maintained a proportional response to enforcement, we sought to advise and guide businesses while being sympathetic to the hardships that they were enduring. As restrictions are gradually lifted and we begin to ease out of lockdown, officers continue to work tirelessly to provide businesses with coherent advice and the most up to date guidance so that they can restart and rebuild while maintaining compliance with the necessary regulations to ensure continued public protection.

We are up and running, and business is good so far.

Thank you for passing my email on to Public Protection Dept, they phoned me and was most helpful and gave us lots of advice.

We are trading from the front door with a table and shield up for now. The interior of the shop has already been kitted out but for now we feel better serving from front door. We are also trying to work to timed appointments, so it limits the amount of people at the shop at any one time.

Thank you also with regards to this year's fee, that is a nice gesture. I have to say Carmarthenshire County Council have been brilliant in every way since lockdown.

We had our grant money within 8 days, and they have kept us informed with emails all the way through. Big thank you to you all.

The scheme has been brilliant for us and really makes you stand out from our competition.

Compliment Received from Carmarthen Electronics



GOVERNANCE

Local Government has traditionally held its democratic meetings as physical meetings in its Chambers. On 28th February 2020 the first COVID-19 case in Wales was confirmed. Democratic meetings continued for a while after this, with County Council meeting on the 10th March, and Executive Board on the 16th March, although in the intervening period 2 cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed in Carmarthenshire.

On the 12th March 2020 Officers moved into Gold Command mode and on the 18th March 2020 the Chief Executive had to take the decision to suspend most democratic meetings as a precaution.

On the 19th March a decision had to be taken to close the Authority's administrative buildings to the public to protect staff.

On the evening of the 23rd March 2020 the Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced a '**lockdown**' in an attempt to halt the spread of the virus. He gave an instruction to the nation to stay at home except for limited purposes, including travelling to and from work, but only where absolutely necessary and the work could not be done from home.

On the [10th June, County Council](#) meetings were restored via digital means.

During the lockdown we have taken the opportunity to invest in new technology with enhanced audio and visual facilities in the Council Chamber at County Hall.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The internet dominates so much of what we do in life these days and it is having an increasing impact on public services too. We were determined to embrace the digital revolution and to ensure that we were in a position to take full advantage of the major changes brought about by new technology. Our [Digital Technology Strategy](#) set out a new approach that would underpin just about everything we do as a Council and when the pandemic struck we were in a good state of preparedness.

We had been taking advantage of new digital platforms so that our residents and businesses can find information or complete their dealings with the local authority in ways that are convenient to them and also saved public money. This vision and investment put us in a favourable position at the onset of the to move services on-line and to facilitate home working.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY AIM

A Cloud First Approach

- This allowed the rapid development of cloud- based solutions during the pandemic
- This enabled staff to work from the best possible locations

Resilient Data and Voice Network

- The network is the foundation of everything we do in terms of technology

Modern Digital Workplace

- Our work on empowering our workforce to be as efficient and effective as possible in the right place, at the right time based on the needs of citizen service delivery paid us dividends in the pandemic.

- Our **Agile Working programme** had already seen **80% laptops and 20% desktops** – an agile workforce must be able to work from the most appropriate location at the most appropriate time. The implementation and installation of Microsoft Teams and the move to paperless meetings all made business sense but when ‘side-lined’ by the pandemic proved crucial preparedness.

Secure and resilient data centres

- The consolidation of servers, data and applications, improved overall performance through the adoption of the latest high-speed storage, making best use of technology and preparing us for cloud migration.

We did not foresee some of the demands required by the pandemic but were in a very good position – nevertheless staff stepped up and demonstrated great creativity and commitment

The following equipment has been provided:

- 1,603 devices to students at home
- 241 mobile connectivity devices to students at home
- 80 iPads to care home residents to keep in touch with their loved ones
- We made sure all members could attend virtual Council Meetings

“Well done, distributing iPads to care homes in Carmarthenshire. I applaud you.” Compliment received

15,539 new sign ups to My Account during the period mid-March to mid-June 2020.

(This enables our customers to manage recent requests, their Council Tax and make bookings and payments etc.)

<https://myaccount.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/en>



This is a **186%** increase on the same period last year

Additional on-line services have been made available due to operating differently due to COVID-19:

- Household Waste Recycling Centres slot bookings
- Free School Meals Direct Payments
- Library Collection Bookings
- Business Fiscal Stimulus Package applications

Due to more of the workforce working from home, Business mileage during April-June reduced from 1,037,697 Miles to 567,772 Miles (45.3%) and mileage payments over the same period reduced from £445,388.63 to £255,507.18 (42.6%). **A saving of £189,881.45 over the 3 months and 139 tonnes of CO₂ emissions (47%).**

What is the short, medium and long-term impact?

Long term, the massive increase in the incidence of working from home provides a valuable testing ground for the adoption of flexible working solutions and service delivery beyond the current emergency.

Digital Solutions will play an ever-increasing role in our planning and delivery models.

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

COMPLIMENTS are up by 150%

During the period April – June 2020 we received **265 Compliments** compared to 106 in the same period last year. This demonstrates significant levels of customer satisfaction with services received, including those relating to COVID-19, as well as an appreciation of the Council's efforts to continue delivering core services during lockdown.

COMPLAINTS are down by 47%

There has been a significant decrease in the number of complaints, with 163 received during the period April – June 2020 compared to 310 during the same period last year (*although these two periods are not comparable due to the pandemic*).

COMMUNICATIONS

"Knowledgeable, informative, helpful and useful for residents of Carmarthenshire" Compliment

WEB SITE VISITS ARE UP NEARLY 50%



701,000 people visited our website between March and June 2020 compared to 469,000 for the same period last year with a 62% increase in the number of pages viewed.



20% increase in the number of telephone calls between the start of lockdown and the end of July compared to the same period last year.

Our Contact Centre staff dealt with almost **105,000 calls** during this 4-month period. Dealing with nearly 6,500 COVID-19 related enquiries from vulnerable and shielding customers and businesses, as well as queries on newly introduced processes due the pandemic such as the Household Waste Recycling Centre Appointment Booking. These types of calls can be lengthy with the average call taking longer than normal, despite this, the calls were answered far quicker than usual.

Freedom of Information requests are down 48% for the March/July period this year from 689 last year to 357 this year so far.



HOW WE WORK POST COVID-19

In May, **2,543 (32%)** of our staff across all departments took part in a survey on the new way of working following the COVID-19 outbreak, the results will help shape the future way of working.

How have you found the new way of working? (i.e. lockdown restrictions)

- **46% said good / 24% said very good**
- **25% said unsure**
- **4% said bad / 1% said very bad**

THE POSITIVES:

- Seamless transition due to the quality of IT communication systems which are available (Skype, Microsoft Teams, Email).
- No 'pointless travel' to a location of work every day.
- Improved work/life balance.
- Less distraction / more relaxed environment which boosted productivity.
- Improved level of trust given by managers
- Money saved on childcare
- Managers ensured adequate workstations
- Online/digital facilities eased the transition from teaching within classrooms to home.
- It has been easy to keep in contact with pupils and colleagues.
- More time to prepare resources and lessons, professional development and admin.
- Clear instructions from headteachers has been beneficial.

94% received communication from their direct line manager at least once a week and 79% from other managers.

THE NEGATIVES:

- Missing face to face contact with colleagues.
- Can be lonely.
- Work and home life seem to blend into one.
- Some roles are not possible due to restrictions.
- Balancing childcare, home teaching and home working is stressful.
- Non home-working staff working in high risk conditions without PPE.
- Some inconsistency / insufficient information from managers.
- Workloads unfairly shared causing distress.
- Home working environment is not up to standard, causing musculoskeletal issues.
- Lack of PPE equipment for those working in Hubs.
- Difficult to ensure social distancing in some Hubs due to overcrowding.
- Difficult to ensure all pupils are engaging with lessons/work set.

53% said they faced barriers in their new way of working

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

- We are currently looking at our longer-term working arrangements and will be involving staff in what the future looks like.
- We have created a number of online tutorials along with a range of other IT help and advice.
- All those working at home have been supported to undertake their own workstation assessments to ensure they are working safely and have been provided with additional equipment where necessary.
- We have set up a dedicated Infection Control post which aims to ensure all PPE requirements are provided in line with Government Guidance.
- Going forward we will be looking at providing digital solutions for a range of learning opportunities.
- We are working hard to ensure all our schools; office buildings and depots are ready for staff to return to.
- The Coronavirus pandemic has helped to reduce the silo working as we have worked together to ensure services continue throughout COVID-19. We are working to ensure this continues.

HOW OUR STAFF WORKED THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A number of our staff were re-deployed to various jobs such as Childcare Hubs, distributing food packs, working in our care homes and adult social care, refuse collection and supporting schools in on-line working.



EQUALITY

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published a briefing on Education, Social Care, Open Spaces, Accessibility of Public Spaces and Employment to outline considerations in resetting services in recovery (- [Council File Plan link to be replaced by www link](#)). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to inevitable widespread changes to the way in which services are delivered by local authorities. However, this means that it is even more critical that Local Authorities respect the needs of all service users.

FINANCE

Overall, we forecast an end of year **overspend of £7,605k** on the Authority's net revenue budget with an overspend at departmental level of £8,205k.

This unprecedented position is due to a combination of additional irrecoverable costs due to COVID-19 activity, foregone income from closed services which may not be fully recompensed by Welsh Government (WG) and planned savings proposals which have been undeliverable due to the pandemic.

This forecast does not include any allowance for a reduction in Council Tax collection. Whilst Carmarthenshire experienced a marked reduction in payments during the first quarter, it is not clear how much of this is due to financial hardship of residents versus the restrictions of lockdown. *This area is being monitored closely by the Director of Corporate Services as every 1% reduction in collection is worth nearly £1m.*

The full year forecast includes known financial positions up to the point of writing as well as assumptions of future levels of WG COVID-19 funding. As such, figures are acutely sensitive to changes in these assumptions. Currently the Authority is submitting a monthly hardship claim for additional COVID-19 expenditure. The majority of costs are being refunded, though some are deemed ineligible and it is not clear how long this funding mechanism will continue. Likewise, WG have confirmed recompense of some key areas of lost income such as *Waste, Leisure, Culture, Parking and School Meals* for April – June, though again the full picture is unclear at present.

On 17th August, WG announced *an additional £260m financial support for Local Authorities*, taking the total support to around half a billion pounds, however detail of what is included or deemed ineligible is not yet clear.

Broadly it is assumed that services will gradually return to normal activity levels over the course of the financial year and that WG support for additional costs reduces over time. Specifically, no provision is made for addition costs or further loss of income from either a localised lockdown or second wave over the winter months.

RESET

It is not going to be a case of restarting and getting back to the way we were. This is an opportunity to refresh and renew as we mean to go on. One thing is evident, we cannot and will not be returning to the pre COVID-19 “*status quo*”.

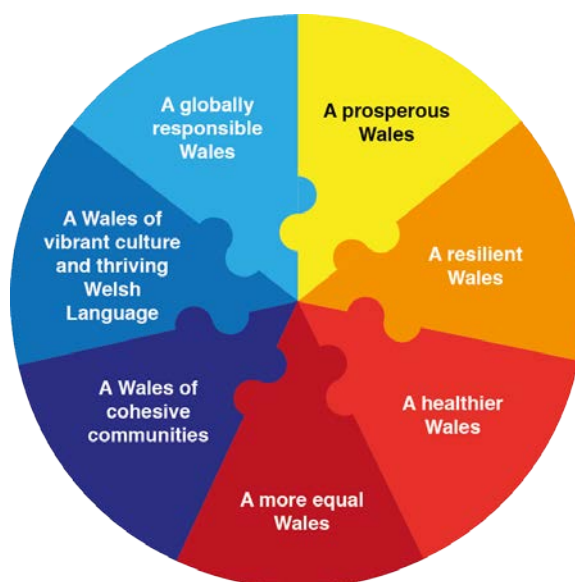


1. We must make sure that we learn from this unprecedented experience as we reintroduce our services and re-set our strategic and operational priorities. We must identify our key learning points at an organisational level and across the breadth of our services. To achieve this our Transformation and Innovation and Change Team is undertaking a strategic evaluation.
2. We will also need to reset our ‘*Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire 5 Year Plan*’, *Corporate Strategy* and revisit our *Well-being Objectives*.
3. We will need to reconsider our 2020-21 business plans, what we monitor throughout the remainder of 2020/21 and begin to shape our 2021/22 Business Planning approach.
4. Our pre-COVID-19 UK economy prioritised economic growth, forced many people into poverty, and in turn created an unhealthy population that is particularly susceptible to global crises such as pandemics. It’s vital that the reset addresses things we can’t afford to ignore – such as the current health crisis, the economic crisis the pandemic has triggered and the ongoing climate and nature crises. We have an opportunity to lead the way with visionary ideas and transformative investment, to a future based on well-being.
5. In May, the Future Generations Commissioner published her report on the progress of the future Generations Act and made a number of recommendations for the future that we must consider across all services. [Link to the Future Generations Report 2020](#)
6. The *Future Generations Commissioner* has made some post pandemic recommendations for public bodies in Wales:
 - I. Develop an economic stimulus package that leads to job creation and supports the decarbonisation of homes, through building new low carbon affordable housing and investing in a national programme to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes.
 - II. Invest in better ways to connect and move people through improving digital connectivity, active travel and public transport.
 - III. Invest in skills and training to support the transition to a better future, creating new greener jobs.
 - IV. Invest in nature and prioritise funding and support for large-scale habitat and wildlife restoration, creation and connectivity throughout Wales –including for natural flood defences, to implement the new national forest, and to ensure land use management and agriculture supports secure local food chains and distribution.
 - V. Invest in the industries and technologies of the future, and support for businesses that will help Wales to lead the low carbon revolution and lock wealth and jobs into local areas with investment in the foundational economy.
7. Digital solutions will play an ever-increasing role in shaping what we do.

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT (WALES) 2015

This is an Act introduced by the Welsh Government which will change aspects of how we work. The general purpose of the Act, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales, take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales, in accordance with sustainable development principles. The law states that: -

- a) We must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The sustainable development principle is **'... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'**
- b) We must demonstrate 5 ways of working:
Long term, integrated, involving, collaborative and preventative
- c) We must work towards achieving all of the 7 national well-being goals in the Act.
Together they provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards.



For the first time in Wales, the Well-being of Future Generations Act, provides a shared vision for all public bodies in Wales to work towards. Each public body in Wales is required by law to set and publish Well-being Objectives that maximise our contribution to these national Well-being Goals.

In Carmarthenshire we have incorporated these Well-being Objectives into our Corporate Strategy 2018-23 which we refresh annually. Our approach is: -

'Life is for living, let's start, live and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment'

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keep Wales Safe:

- always observe social distancing
- wash your hands regularly
- if you meet another household, outside your extended household, stay outdoors
- work from home if you can

Stay at home and **get tested** if you or anyone in your extended household has **symptoms**

[Keeping Carmarthenshire SAFE](#)

World Health Organisation

[Pandemic Influenza Risk Management](#)

[A checklist for Pandemic influenza risk and impact management](#)

Children's Commissioner for Wales

[No Wrong Door: bringing services together to meet children's needs - June 2020](#)

[Coronavirus and me Survey Results June 2020](#) -June 2020

Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales

[Leave no one behind Action for an age-friendly recovery](#)

Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner

Commissioner's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: [Summary infographic](#) | [Full Report](#)

[Information Commissioners Office Regulation during COVID-19](#)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)

[Link to Council File Plan – Equality briefing on COVID-19 Recovery Considerations by Service type](#)

[COVID-19 Health Inequalities slides](#)

[Welsh Language Commissioner](#)

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Agenda Item 5

Education and Children Scrutiny Committee
23rd November 2020

**Subject- The Education and Children's Services
Strategy 2020-2025**

Purpose: To consider and provide feedback on the draft strategy.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

To comment on the draft strategy in terms of content, clarity and fitness for purpose identified prior to submission to the Executive Board.

Reasons:

To ensure a sound basis for our business planning and clarity for stakeholders in terms of the vision for Education and Children's Services in Carmarthenshire a strategy has been developed which outline-

- What is our Purpose?
- Our vision and values
- Priorities for 2020-2025 and
- Policy Background

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: - Cllr. Glynog Davies

Education and Children's Services	Designations:	
Name of Head of Service:	Director of Education and Children's Services	01267 226522
Gareth Morgans		EDGMorgans@sirgar.gov.uk
Report Authors:		
Departmental Management Team		

Executive Summary
Education and Children Scrutiny Committee
23rd November 2020

**Subject- The Education and Children's Services
Strategy 2020-2025**

Purpose: To consider and provide feedback on the draft strategy.

Local authorities have many roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of education and children's services. The powers and duties of a local authority are in some cases general and in other cases quite specific. In regard to Education, Local Authorities operate within a statutory framework that places upon them, amongst others, the following general powers:

- Local authorities must contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the people in its area
- Local authorities must secure that their education and training functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential.
- Local authorities must also secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for its area.
- Local authorities play a key role in the financing of schools.
- Local authorities have statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

The primary statutory role of safeguarding the welfare of children in Wales lies with local authorities as defined by Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#).

As a County Council we therefore have defined responsibilities to deliver high quality services to meet the needs of all of our children and young people. We need to build on the improving practice which is already evident in order to deliver the same opportunity for all learners and consistently excellent outcomes. This strategy sets out a clear, shared vision for the role that education and children's services plays in the future development of vibrant communities and a prosperous economy in Carmarthenshire.

Our new proposed vision is ***Making sure every child and young person is valued and valued equally.*** This vision is hopefully clear and concise and based on the principles of equality and equity.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

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:

Edwyn Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

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

Legal- there will be a requirement to adhere to Welsh Government legislation in regard to maintaining standards and safeguarding. In addition, Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, and CSSIW will be inspecting us.

Finance- The strategy is to be delivered within our current resources.

Risk Management Issues- If we do not meet our duties and responsibilities in regard to children and young people, there are risks in regard to the inspection by Estyn and CSSIW.

Staffing Implications- The strategy is to be delivered within our current resources.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed:

Edwyn Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

The Strategy has been drafted as a result of workshops with Senior Managers within the Education and Children's Services Department.

It is proposed to share the draft Strategy, following CMT with PEB and then to engage with-

- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee via Cllr Darren Price for comment.
- Engage with Headteachers for their views/comments
- Relevant Partners- ERW.
- Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

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

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Referenced in the Strategy's Appendix.

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Education Sir Gâr 2030

The future direction of Education Services in
Carmarthenshire

2020 - 2030



carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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Our Strategic Pyramid, Vision, Purpose and Values	3
Priorities	4
Appendix- Policy Background	7

DRAFT

On behalf of Carmarthenshire County Council's Executive Board, I am pleased to present this plan outlining the future direction of Carmarthenshire's Education Services.

Although local government is facing an uncertain time, due to Covid-19 and related financial challenges, we continue to provide hundreds of services on a day to day basis to our residents. Due to careful planning and strong leadership I firmly believe that we are in an excellent position to further develop and ensure the County's future prosperity.

As an Executive Board, we have identified a number of key projects and programmes that we will strive to deliver. We believe that by delivering these projects and programmes we can contribute towards making Carmarthenshire the best place to live, work and visit.

Our ambitious plan seeks to continuously improve economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being in the County and by doing this we will ensure that our residents, communities, organisations and businesses are supported and enabled to develop and thrive for the benefit of our County. Where appropriate, and in the best interests of Carmarthenshire, we will work in partnership with relevant partners locally, regionally and nationally.

Our Corporate Strategy has been developed in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and incorporates the key priorities within this plan. I look forward to realising the opportunities that this will bring.

A strong education system is one of the cornerstones for vibrant and cohesive communities and a prosperous economy and society. Our education system has been responding to all the changes being introduced focusing on-

- **high-quality education services profession**
- **Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards**
- **Strong and inclusive schools and services committed to excellence, equity and well-being, and**
- **Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system**

There are over 27,000 pupils registered in the County's schools. The Council has a vital role to provide the highest quality services to children, young people, families and learners in ways that best meet their specific needs. We will work to deliver the four purposes in order that all our children and young people will be:

Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.

Enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work.

Ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.

Healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

We want to support our young people to fulfil their learning potential and we will continually strive to offer high standards of comprehensive education, increasingly in modern environments that are fully equipped for 21st century learning. We also want to enable our pupils to become fully bilingual in Welsh and English. We will work to protect children and young people from harm by working with the whole family to address any issues.

Cllr. Glynog Davies,

Executive Board Member with responsibility for Education and Children

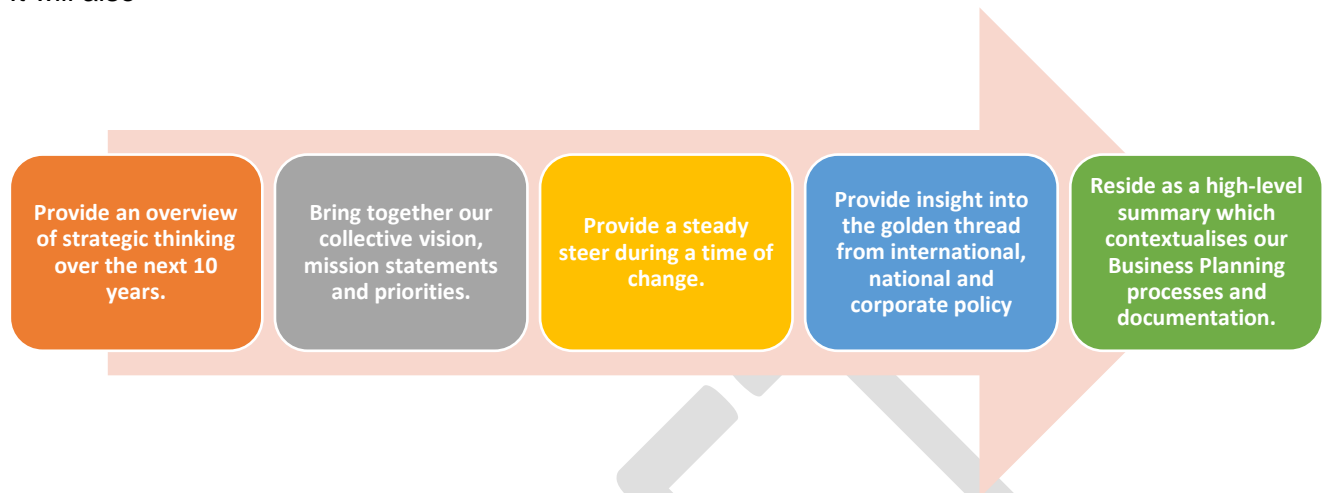


What is our Purpose?

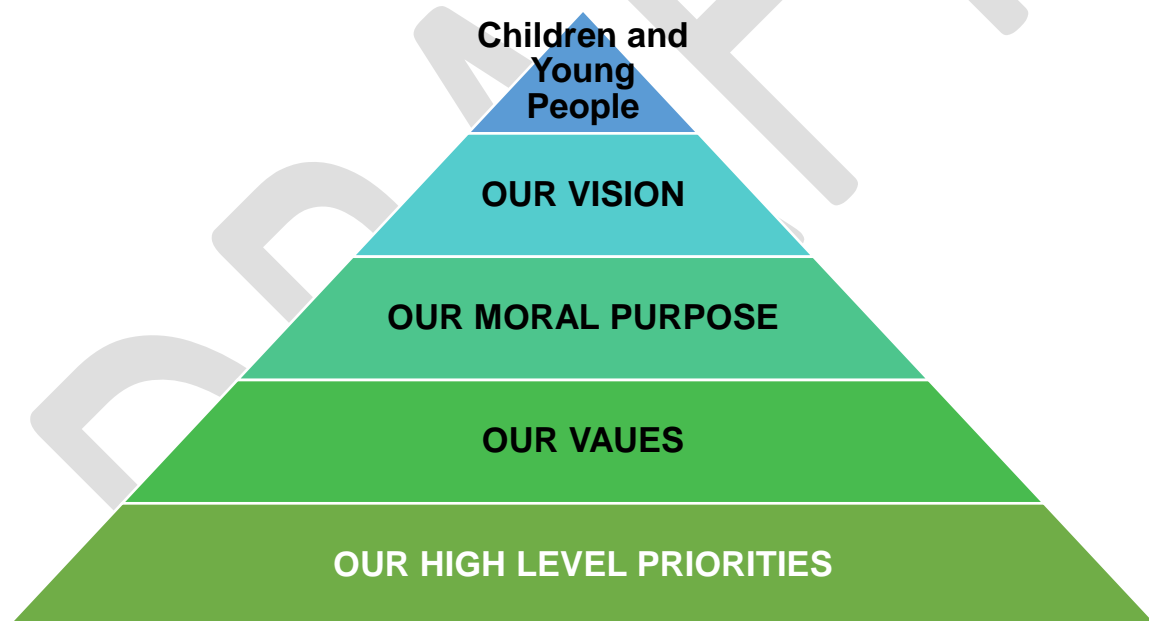


We need to build on the improving practice which is already evident in order to deliver the same opportunity for all learners and consistently excellent outcomes. This strategy sets out a clear, shared vision for the role that education services plays in the future development of vibrant communities and a prosperous economy in Carmarthenshire.

It will also-



OUR STRATEGIC PYRAMID



Vision to 2030

We will support all the children and young people of Carmarthenshire. We will achieve this by becoming the best we can be and be highly regarded locally, whilst also earning national and international recognition ensuring our children and young people are happy, safe, thrive, and fulfil their personal, social and learning potential.

Our collective moral purpose

Making sure every child and young person is valued and valued equally.

CORE VALUES

Our values underpin and guide the way that we work, the way we improve and the way we make decisions in our community.

Working as one team

We recognise that by working together and making constructive connections we can make the best use of our resources for our communities

Focus on our customers

We work to improve the lives of the people in our communities this is our focus and key purpose

Listen to improve

We will listen and engage with our communities, partners and all stakeholders to inform our improvement plans.

Strive for excellence

We will remain vigilant and ensure that we deliver to the best of our abilities and always explore ways to improve what we do.

Act with Integrity

We will actively think about what is the right thing to do when presented with choices in a work situation

Take personal responsibility

We will all consider how we support and apply these values so they actively underpin and guide the way we work.

Our High-Level Priorities- as a Department we have clear priorities for 2020-2030 focused around 4 key themes, tied into *Wales: Our National Mission*:

Developing a high-quality education services profession

Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards

Strong and inclusive schools and services committed to excellence, equity and well-being

Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020-2025

In Carmarthenshire we strive to provide our learners with the best possible education experience. We endeavour to develop the whole child/young person equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need for the next step in their learning or career pathway.

We are trying to achieve this at a time of increased demands on our resources and an increased focus on improving outcomes and attainment. Ultimately, we want to ensure that our learners are-

Well Educated



Well Informed



Well Qualified



A Carmarthenshire Learner

Developing a high-quality education and children's services profession

1. We will ensure that every service self-reflects and self-reviews on a regular basis to ensure continuous positive and sustained change for improvement. **(MF¹- 29, 42)**
2. We will ensure that high standards are the norm in every service ensuring satisfied customers who have had their needs met; **(MF- 29)**
3. We will develop a high-quality workforce by providing effective support and development opportunities for all staff and regular and robust performance management; **(MF- 93, 97)**
4. We will implement our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, promoting the benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism, and contribute to the 'A Million Welsh Speakers' challenge; **(MF- 31, 86)**
5. We will create a self-improving system where every child and young person, in 21st Century learning environments, is engaged and motivated to gain the skills and qualifications they need. **(MF- 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 62)**

Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards

1. We will ensure we have well qualified, experienced and inspirational leaders at all levels who work collaboratively for the benefit of our children and young people. **(MF- 29)**
2. We will ensure we have inspirational and resilient leaders that are well prepared and supported to lead their organisations through the changes ahead. **(MF- 29, 35, 93)**
3. We will have a self-improving system where leaders ensure that every child and young person is engaged and motivated to gain the skills and qualifications they need. **(MF- 25, 34, 43)**
4. We will develop a relevant local curriculum, suited to the economic needs of the future, which ensures that our children and young people are both 'Well Educated, Well Informed and Well Qualified' **(MF- 28, 30, 32, 34, 43)**

Strong and inclusive schools and services committed to excellence, equity and well-being

1. We will make sure that all children and young people are respected, safe and live healthy lifestyles and are challenged to achieve the best that they are capable of, while being supported to overcome barriers that inhibit their learning. **(MF- 28, 42, 70)**
2. We will ensure that we will take account of and respond to the unique challenges that present themselves to individuals or groups of learners. **(MF- 28, 37, 39, 42, 58, 75)**
3. We will strengthen partnership working to improve the early childhood experiences of our children ensuring a widespread understanding of the importance of the first thousand days in a child's life. **(MF- 39, 40, 41, 42, 82)**
4. We will help develop robust and resilient families by providing successful programmes of intervention and support **(MF- 40, 41, 52, 56, 57)**
5. We will review our primary education provision, considering our minimum requirements for a primary school- **(MF- 36)**

- *Have sustainable leadership, with leaders who are free to lead and manage, with no Headteacher having a permanent teaching commitment*

¹ **'Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire- the next 5 years'**- Carmarthenshire County Council

- *Have no more than 2 year groups per teaching class*
- *Not have teaching classes that span the key stages of the curriculum e.g. the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2*
- *Have sufficient pupil numbers to sustain the above structural arrangements*
- *Be financially viable under the Local Management of Schools (LMS) funding framework and able to operate for the long-term without a budget deficit*
- *Have outdoor teaching facilities as required for the Foundation Phase and to support other areas of learning and physical well-being*
- *Be fully inclusive and accessible for all*
- *Be equipped with modern facilities to support digital learning*
- *Have a high quality learning environment to support the wellbeing of all learners and to enhance learner progress and their achievements across a wide range of skills and curriculum areas*

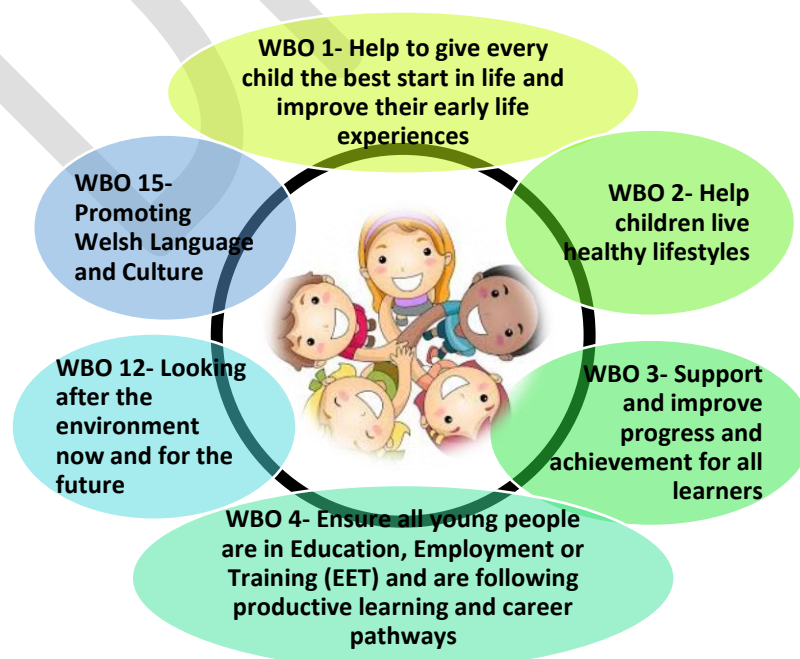
6. We will review our Post 16 provision in order to create a sustainable provision and curriculum which meets Carmarthenshire's local needs. **(MF- 37, 38)**

Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system

1. We will ensure that we track and monitor the progress and performance of our learners and our services using an appropriate suite of indicators **(MF- 29)**
2. We will ensure regular and robust scrutiny of progress and performance via the Council's systems; **(MF- 28)**
3. We will continue to improve the progress and achievement of all learners; **(MF- 28, 34, 38, 39, 42)**
4. We will be a key partner, working for the common good, influencing at a regional and national level and sharing effective practice and learning from others; **(MF- 34, 43)**
5. We will work towards successful Inspection outcomes **(MF- 29)**

Link to Well-being Objectives

Our Strategic Priorities will help address Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being Objectives (**WBO**) incorporated within the Corporate Strategy 2018-2023 namely:



Appendix 1: Towards 2025: Policy background

- a) **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**, or UNCRC, is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history. Although all articles need to be viewed together due to their interdependence and equal worth, articles 3,12,13,14,19 28, 29 and 31 are particularly relevant in this current context.
- b) **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are a collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations in 2015. Goal 4, '*ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning*' has been entrusted to UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialised agency for education. UNESCO leads and coordinates the Education 2030 agenda. The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments. The 2017 publication, '*A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*'¹ is intended to support education policy-makers in embedding inclusion and equity in educational policy. The guide assists in reviewing how well equity and inclusion currently figure in existing policies and help to assist with identifying which actions are needed to improve and develop policies. This guide informs thinking in this area of evolving policy.
- c) **The Council's New Corporate Strategy, 2018-2023: Moving forward in Carmarthenshire:** This strategy sets out the direction for the local authority over the next five years, incorporating our improvement and well-being objectives as defined by legislation. It also includes the Executive Board's key projects and programmes for the next five years, a set of almost 100 priority projects and areas recently announced by Leader Cllr Emlyn Dole in his 'Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire' plan. The strategy outlines the council's vision for the future in 15 new objectives under four key themes- to support residents to start well, live well and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment.
- d) **The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) (WBFGA)**⁸ has been embraced by Carmarthenshire Local Authority as a vitally important overarching strategic document, in discharging its wellbeing duties. Carmarthenshire County Council's Wellbeing objectives map out our progress towards each of the 7 wellbeing goals. Departmentally, we contribute to a number of the Wellbeing objectives and take a lead in a number, e.g. as described in the 'Start Well' component of Carmarthenshire County Council's new Corporate Strategy 2018-2023⁹ (June 2018). For Example, The Education Department takes a lead on Wellbeing Objective 4: Reduce the number of young adults that are Not in Education, Employment or Training.
- e) **Education in Wales: our national mission (action plan 2017-21)**⁵ is Welsh Government's plan for ensuring that every young person in Wales has an equal opportunity to reach the highest standards via the new transformational curriculum currently being developed nationally. Four key enabling objectives are offered in pursuit of a transformative curriculum. These enablers are infused in our departmental working.
- f) **Professor Graham Donaldson's Successful Futures Report (2015)**⁷ provides the architecture for the new curriculum for Wales. Realising this initiative is integral to the reform Journey Wales has embarked upon and is strongly referenced in the national mission and in the work of the department.

- g) **Cymraeg 2050** aspires to realise a million Welsh Speakers by 2050¹⁰. Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to 2020 lays the local foundations for this ideal. Within the context of equity, the WESP argues that all learners in all learning settings should derive benefit from the opportunity to become fluently and equitably bilingual. This is viewed as being inclusive for all learners in the respect that we aspire for all to be able to derive benefits from confident bilingualism.
- h) **Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**- The purpose is to detail how we aim to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in their Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). The WMES sets out the Welsh Government's vision for an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education. The aim is to facilitate an increase in the number of people of all ages able to use the Welsh language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. Carmarthenshire's WESP is a key vehicle for creating an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education.
- i) The **Social Services and Wellbeing Act** came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. The fundamental principles of the Act are:
 - o **Voice and control**- putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control overreaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.
 - o **Prevention and early intervention**- increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.
 - o **Well-being**- supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.
 - o **Co-production**- encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23/11/2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO SHORTEN THE INTERNAL SCHOOL ORGANISATION DECISION MAKING AND DETERMINATION PROCESS

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- ❖ Considers the proposal as outlined in the report below.

Reasons:

- ❖ In order to be able to continue to progress with school re-organisation proposals in an effective and timely manner following the delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ❖ To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee Consulted: Yes – 23/11/2020

Executive Board Decision Required Yes – 21/12/2020

Council Decision Required Yes – 13/01/2021

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Directorate:
Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:
Simon Davies

Report Author:
Sara Griffiths

Designations:

Head of Access to
Education

Modernisation Team
Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23/11/2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO SHORTEN THE INTERNAL SCHOOL ORGANISATION DECISION MAKING AND DETERMINATION PROCESS

Background Information

School Organisation Code 2013

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and School Organisation Code 2013 came into effect as of the 1st October 2013 and significantly changed responsibilities for the determination of school organisation proposals. The Act provided all Local Authorities with greater decision making powers and allowed Local Authorities to determine all school organisation proposals with the exception of those which affect sixth form education; or those that have been made by a proposer other than the relevant local authority and an objection has been made by that local authority.

In 2015, following the publication of the School Organisation Code 2013, Carmarthenshire County Council approved a new “School Organisation Decision Making and Determination Process” which reduced the timescale to complete and approve statutory proposals in relation to school re-organisation. This process allowed the Executive Board to approve Stage 1 (Permission to Consult) and Stage 2 (Permission to Notice) with County Council approving Stage 3 (Permission to Implement).

School Organisation Code 2018

On 30th June 2017, following three years of operation, Welsh Government published a consultation on a review of the School Organisation Code. The consultation was based on the reflection of feedback and learning during the period and stakeholders were asked to submit their responses by 30th September 2017.

The most substantial change proposed, was to strengthen the Code in respect of a presumption against closure of rural schools. The “Consultation – summary of response” published on 2nd July 2018 noted that *“when considering whether closure is appropriate the current Code states that special attention should be given to alternatives to closure and when consulting on proposals the consultation document must contain a description of any alternatives and the reasons why they have been discounted. We believe that considering all the possible alternatives should be a two-stage process. The proposer should do this before they even reach a decision to consult on a proposal to close, and should also consider any further options or suggestions that emerge during the consultation process. The aim is to ensure that the decision to propose and consult on a closure of a rural school is taken only after all alternatives to closure have been considered, including federation.”*

In light of the expected publication of the new School Organisation Code, Carmarthenshire County Council had to ensure that its process for proceeding with and approving statutory procedures fell in line and adhered to the necessary requirements. As a result, the Local Authority amended its “School Organisation Decision Making and Determination Process” to include Stage 0 and this was approved by the Executive Board Member for Education and Children in September 2018. It is believed that the inclusion of Stage 0 will result in a more open and transparent system, as required by Welsh Government and will demonstrate that the Local Authority has considered all possible options for the schools under review without presuming closure. (The full process can be seen in the attached flow chart).

The new School Organisation Code, which includes the presumption against closure of rural schools, was published in November 2018.

COVID – 19 Pandemic

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Modernising Education Programme team were about to undertake the following:

- Full scale review of the Modernising Education Programme;
- Identify suitable MIM (Mutual Investment Team) projects as part of the review;
- Progress with a number of statutory school re-organisation proposals and federations.

As a result of the pandemic, all members of the MEP team were fully redeployed (for a period of around 4 months) to other critical areas within the Education Department and as such were only able to complete very limited amounts of project work. Prior to the pandemic, the team had planned to undertake around 6 statutory consultations (in relation to school reorganisation or federation matters) with imminent commencement, all of which have had to be postponed with

rescheduled dates to be confirmed. This is without including any statutory school re-organisations that would have been brought forward as a result of the conclusion of the MEP review. Whilst the team were redeployed for a period of around 4 months, the realistic delay to school re-organisation proposals has been around 6 months due to the need for establishing new timelines for each proposal and updating all documentation with the most recent data sets.

With regards to Carmarthenshire County Council's investment programme, all projects with contractors on site at the time of initial lockdown were shut down and closed, with re-commencement dates continually being approved to allow works to continue. As a result, it is expected that the pandemic will have significant impact on the MEP programme in terms of funding and timelines.

Moving Forward

The MEP team are now in the process of undertaking all of the work planned prior to the pandemic and are working on developing the MEP Review and developing new timescales for the postponed statutory consultations. It is hoped that all relevant project related matters can still be undertaken within a timescale as close to the original as possible, however it is expected that there will be some delay to determination and implementation.

As such, and in order to be able to progress with any school re-organisation proposals (that could be linked to investment projects), consideration has been given to reducing the Internal School Organisation Decision Making and Determination Process once more. Whilst it is accepted that reducing the process will not wholly alleviate the delays incurred due to the Covid -19 pandemic, it will go some way in helping the MEP team to re-prioritise required consultations in an effective and timely manner.

As can be seen from the Illustrative Flow Chart (Current Version), consultation is required with the ECS Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Board at Stages 1 and 2 with the addition of full County Council at Stage 3 to determine the proposal.

Proposal

As can be seen from the Illustrative Flow Chart (Proposed Version), it is proposed to:

- Remove consultation with the ECS Scrutiny Committee from Stages 2 and 3.

This is due to the Executive Board being able to approve Stage 2 and County Council being able to approve Stage 3. This would reduce the process by approximately 2 months. Consultation will then progress as follows:

Stage 1 – ECS Scrutiny Committee and Executive Board

Stage 2 – Executive Board

Stage 3 – Executive Board and County Council

The proposal still ensures that the ECS Scrutiny Committee can formally consider the proposal before any public consultation is agreed and also allows members of the ECS Scrutiny Committee to determine the outcome of the proposal as members of the full County Council. They will also be consulted with during the formal 6 week consultation period (if permission to consult is granted by the Executive Board).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the ECS Scrutiny Committee endorses the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board to progress with the amended process for progressing statutory proposals and consultations as detailed in the attached illustrative flow chart (the removal of consultation with the ECS Scrutiny Committee at Stages 2 and 3).

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	Yes – Illustrative Flow Chart (Current Version) Illustrative Flow Chart (Proposed Version)
----------------------------------	---

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
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

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

2. Legal

For all school re-organisation proposals, appropriate consultation will need to be initiated in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures and School Organisation Code 2018, regardless of the outcome of the determination of this proposal. Approval of the proposal to shorten the process for approving statutory proposals / consultations will ensure that team can maximise opportunities to engage in consultations following the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Finance

School delegated budgets are in a net deficit and the current number of schools within the LA is a significant contributory factor. The majority of schools that will be taken through the statutory process are in deficit and therefore timescales are paramount in progressing the necessary changes. The Department budget includes many services providing support to schools and so the main budget efficiency proposals reply on a reduced number of primary schools in order to operate on a more efficient basis in a timely manner. There are also implications for the capital programme (and therefore WG funding) if schemes are delayed.

5. Risk Management Issues

Should the proposal to shorten the internal democratic process for approving statutory proposals / consultations be declined, there is a potential risk that officers will not be able to complete the relevant school organisation consultations (which could be linked with other investment projects) within the relevant timescales as governed by the School Organisation Code. Failure to complete school organisation proposals within appropriate timescales could not only result in delays with the construction development of projects but could also result in financial delays with grant claims etc. For schools, that are not subject to capital investment there are other risks that should be considered such as: premises maintenance costs, staffing and budgetary pressures which will have been accounted for within the overall proposal.

6. Staffing Implications

During the Covid-19 pandemic the whole of the Modernising Education Programme team were re-deployed for 4 months to other critical areas within the Department for Education. As a result of this, the team were unable to progress with any project / school re-organisation work during this time, which has inevitably caused delays with workloads. Shortening the internal democratic process for approving statutory proposals / consultations will ensure that staff can continue to prioritise and complete workloads within the appropriate timeframes as governed by the School Organisation Code etc.

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** – Will be consulted on 23/11/2020.
2. **Local Member(s)** – Not applicable
3. **Community / Town Council** – Not applicable
4. **Relevant Partners** – Not applicable
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** – Not applicable

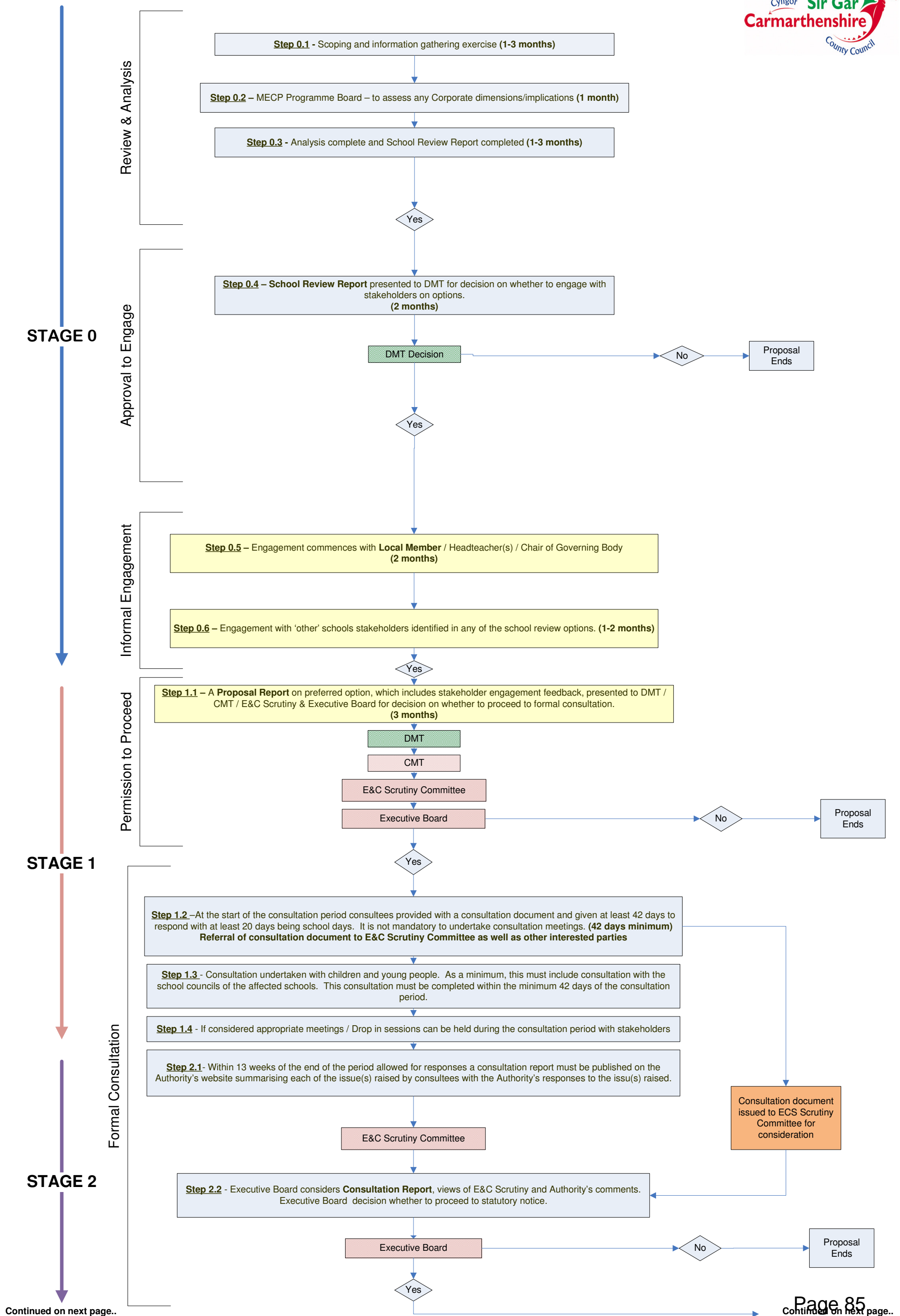
EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	Yes
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
School Organisation Code 2018	https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf
School Organisation Decision Making and Determination Process (Inclusion of Stage 0 in 2018) – Executive Board Member Report	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/documents/s24828/Summary.pdf
School Organisation Decision Making and Determination Process (Reduction in Length of Process in 2015) – County Council Report	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/documents/s790/MEP%20cover%20and%20exec%20summary.pdf
School Organisation Code 2013	https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-organisation-code.pdf
21 st Century Schools Website	www.21stcenturyschools.org

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Department for Education & Children Modernising Education Programme
Illustrative Flow Chart for Strategic Review and Statutory Proposals



Continued from page 1..

STAGE 2

Statutory Procedure

STAGE 3

Implementation

Step 2.3 - Proposals published on Authority website and posted in the named and neighbouring schools and within the locality giving opportunity for statutory objections. One month period provided for written response period. **(28 days)**

Step 2.4 - If objections received an objection report must be published providing a summary of the objections and the Authority's responses to them.

E&C Scrutiny Committee

Step 3.1 - Executive Board considers objection report, views of E&C Scrutiny Committee and Authority's comments. Executive Board recommendation to County Council for decision whether to approve proposal.

Executive Board

Step 3.2 – An **Objection Report** presented to County Council to consider any objections received in writing or e-mail and Authority's responses. County Council makes decision to proceed or withdraw proposals.

County Council decision

No

Proposal Ends

Yes

Step 3.3a - If the proposal requires determination by the Welsh Ministers (Sixth form education), the proposer must send to the Welsh Ministers within 35 days of the end of the objection period. The Welsh Ministers will normally determine proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period.

When a proposal affects 6th form education it is referred to Welsh Ministers regardless of any objections being received.

Step 3.3b - The local authority **must** issue a decision within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period. Within 28 days of the local authority's determination proposals may be referred to Welsh Ministers by the following:

1. Another local authority
2. The appropriate religious body for any school affected (the diocesan authority)
3. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school
4. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or foundation school
5. A further education institution affected by the proposals.

Yes

Referral to Welsh Ministers for decision

No

Proposal Ends

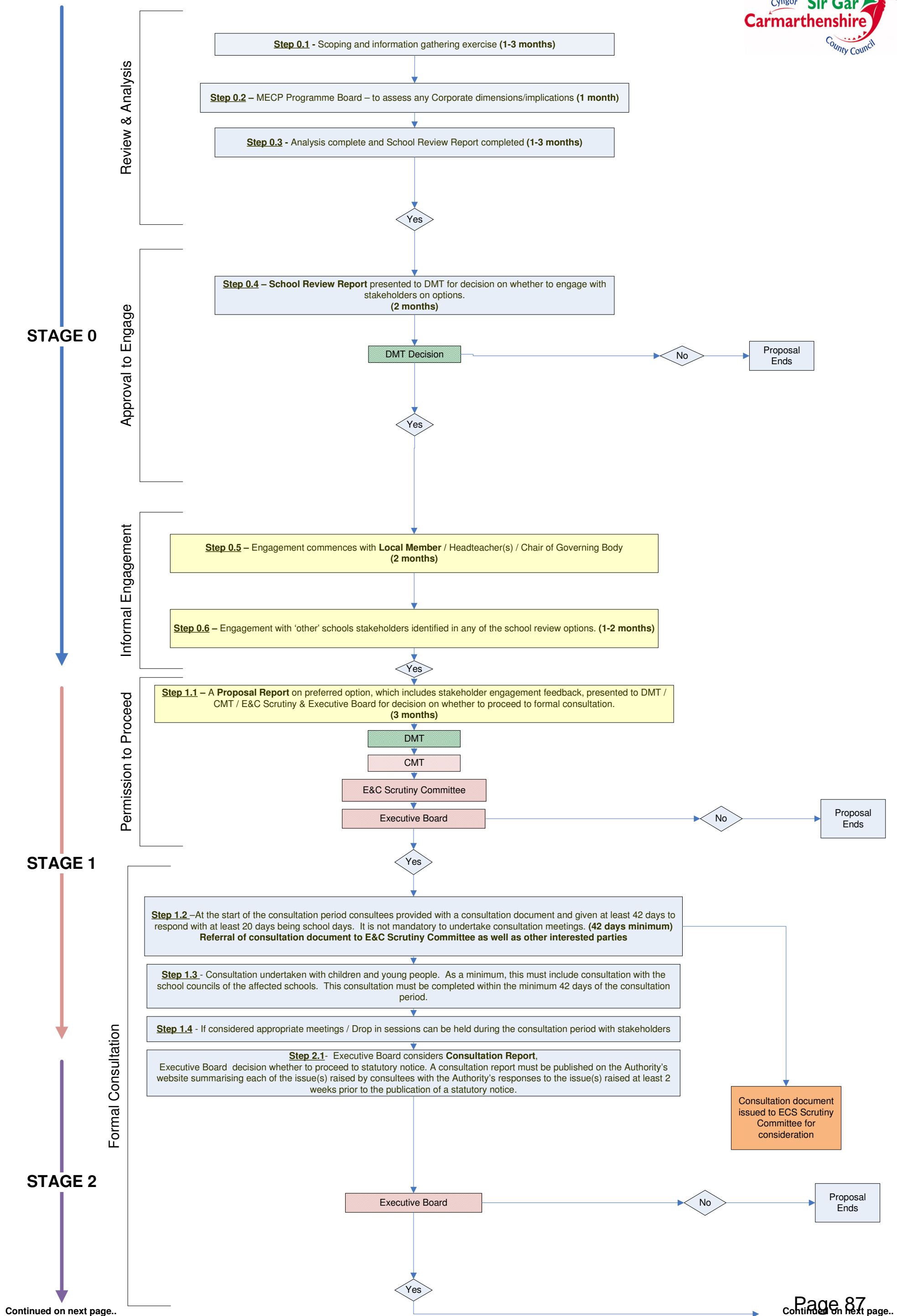
Yes

Step 3.4 – Decisions must be published electronically on the website and all stakeholders must be advised by letter or e-mail of the availability of the decision including the **objection report**. Decision letter must be published within 7 days of determination date.

Step 3.5 - Not mandatory - Parents/Guardians are notified of LA/Ministers decision one term before proposal can be implemented. (e.g. For a proposal to be implemented from the start of the Autumn term notification must be given before the end of the previous Spring term)

Step 3.6 - LA Implements Proposal in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date, usually at the start of the academic year in September

Department for Education & Children Modernising Education Programme
Illustrative Flow Chart for Strategic Review and Statutory Proposals



Continued from page 1..

STAGE 2

Statutory Procedure

STAGE 3

Implementation

Step 2.2 - Proposals published on Authority website and posted in the named and neighbouring schools and within the locality giving opportunity for statutory objections. One month period provided for written response period. **(28 days)**

Step 2.3 - If objections received an objection report must be published providing a summary of the objections and the Authority's responses to them.

Step 3.1 - Executive Board considers objection report.
Executive Board recommendation to County Council for decision whether to approve proposal.

Executive Board

Step 3.2 – An **Objection Report** presented to County Council to consider any objections received in writing or e-mail and Authority's responses. County Council makes decision to proceed or withdraw proposals.

County Council decision

No

Proposal Ends

Yes

Step 3.3a - If the proposal requires determination by the Welsh Ministers (Sixth form education), the proposer must send to the Welsh Ministers within 35 days of the end of the objection period. The Welsh Ministers will normally determine proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period.

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3. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school
4. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or foundation school
5. A further education institution affected by the proposals.

Yes

Referral to Welsh Ministers for decision

No

Proposal Ends

Yes

Step 3.4 – Decisions must be published electronically on the website and all stakeholders must be advised by letter or e-mail of the availability of the decision including the **objection report**. Decision letter must be published within 7 days of determination date.

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Step 3.6 - LA Implements Proposal in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date, usually at the start of the academic year in September

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee – Annual Report 2019/20

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That members consider and approve the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee's annual report for the 2019/20 municipal year.

Reasons:

- The Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to report annually on their work.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

Chair of Community Scrutiny: Councillor D. Price

Directorate

Chief Executives

Name of Head of Service:

Linda Rees-Jones

Report Author:

Michelle Evans Thomas

Designations:

Head of Administration & Law

Principal Democratic Services Officer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee – Annual Report 2019/20

The attached report has been prepared in order to comply with Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution which states that a scrutiny committee must:

“Prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committee's activities over the previous year.”

The report provides an overview of the workings of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee during the 2019/20 municipal year and includes information on the following topics:

- Overview of the forward work programme
- Key issues considered
- Issues referred to or from Executive Board / Other Scrutiny Committees
- Task & Finish Review
- Development Sessions
- Member attendance at meetings

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES

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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder & Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

2. Legal – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) - N/A

2. Community / Town Council – N/A

3. Relevant Partners - N/A

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED

N/A

**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
Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Reports and Minutes		https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report

2019 - 2020

Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire

carmarthenshire.gov.uk



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Chair's Foreword

As the Chair of the Committee I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year.

I would like to thank both the elected and co-opted members of the Committee for their input and dedication over the past year in scrutinising the authority's performance, and also in terms of proposing policy and service improvement ideas.

At the start of the year the Committee agreed to try and implement the guidance recommended by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) who had provided training on effective scrutiny in March 2019.

The CfPS principles underpinned the Committee's work throughout the year. We looked to limit the number of substantive items on the agenda to two or three items per meeting, which enabled the committee to look in greater detail at the reports presented. The Committee also considered the rationale and proposed outcomes of future items in greater detail, resulting in more focussed reports being presented by Officers.

The Committee also agreed to undertake site visits to divisions within the Education & Children's Services Department to hear directly from frontline staff with regards to the challenges of providing services, and suggestions for improvement. To this end members of the Committee undertook a visit to the Adoption Team located at Parc Dewi Sant in March, 2020.

Visits were also arranged to the Children's Services Teams based in Llanelli, including Fostering, Young Carers, School Safeguarding, and Childcare Teams. These visits were arranged for March and April, 2020 but unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the lockdown enforced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Committee scrutinised council performance and policy in a wide range of areas, including; the new curriculum; Departmental budget pressures; Mental Health Provision in Education; Examination and Teacher Assessment and School Attendance Data; Recruitment and Retention of Staff and the Youth Support Service.

We established a Task and Finish Group to review Additional Learning Needs Funding, and also held a one day investigative scrutiny review into the process of Federating Schools in Carmarthenshire.

We look forward to undertaking more one day scrutiny reviews, as this provided the Committee with an opportunity to focus on one issue in some depth, and provided members with an opportunity to hear directly from Head teachers and Governors.

I would again like to thank Democratic Services and Education and Children's Services Officers for their input and for their professionalism in supporting the work of the Committee.

The Education and Children's Service has put in a remarkable effort over recent months in responding to the Covid pandemic and I look forward to working with Members, Co-opted Members and Officers to ensure that we do all that we can to ensure that education and children's services in Carmarthenshire meet our aspirations both now and into the future.



Councillor Darren Price
Chair of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee

DRAFT

1. Introduction

The Scrutiny function is a key element of the County Council's governance arrangements and decision-making process. Although not a decision-making body, Scrutiny is at its most effective when it grasps the potential to influence and inform decisions made by both the Council and partner bodies across the county.

Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution requires all Scrutiny Committees to "*prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committee's activities over the previous year*".

The main aim of the report is to highlight the work undertaken by the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20. It aims to provide members with an opportunity to reflect on the achievements during the year and to identify what worked well and where improvements could be made. This analysis is instrumental in developing scrutiny. Additionally, the report may also facilitate discussion on items which could be identified for inclusion within future work programmes.

The Committee is chaired by Councillor Darren Price and is made up of 14 Elected Members and 5 voting Co-opted Members (3 elected parent governor members, 1 representative from the Church in Wales and 1 representative from the Roman Catholic Church). Support is provided by the Democratic Services Unit and other Council officers, as and when required.

2. Overview of the Work of the Committee in 2019/20

2.1 Number of Meetings

The Scrutiny Committee held seven formal meetings during the 2019/20 municipal year. The meeting scheduled to be held in April 2020 was cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The meeting scheduled to be held in December to discuss the budget was cancelled due to the delay in receiving details of the budget settlement from Welsh Government. The budget consultation reports were considered by the Committee at its meeting held in January 2020.

At its meeting held in January, 2020 the Committee reviewed the Forward Work Programme and considered that some items would need to be moved due to operational deadlines. It was decided that the items scheduled to be considered at the February meeting could be moved to future meetings and the formal meeting be cancelled, with the date utilised for an informal workshop and planning session instead.

The meeting scheduled to be held on 27th April, 2020 was cancelled as the UK was placed in an enforced lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic.

2.2 The Forward Work Programme

The Scrutiny Committee develops its own Forward Work Programme (FWP). In March and June 2019 the Committee met to consider its 2019/20 FWP and identified items to be considered during the forthcoming municipal year. This involved the inclusion of standard items such as performance, budget and action plan monitoring reports. Additional reports were also requested by members at those meetings and throughout the year and the FWP was amended accordingly. In the main, meeting agendas were consistent with those outlined in the FWP, as confirmed by the Committee at its meeting held on the 4th July, 2019.

The concept and development of the Forward Work Programme and the process for its agreement has allowed each Scrutiny Committee to determine its own agendas. The benefits of such an approach has led to an improved level of debate and input during Scrutiny Committee meetings.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 placed long term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered and it places emphasis on public bodies to work in partnership with each other and the public to prevent and tackle problems.

The Education & Children Scrutiny Committee's key responsibilities are:

- Educational Standards & School Performance
- Inclusion & Additional Learning Needs
- Welsh Medium Education
- School Modernisation
- Adult Community Learning
- Youth Services
- Youth Offending
- School meals
- Children's Services including Social Services & Family Support Services

To compliment the work undertaken during formal meetings, the Committee also undertakes other scrutiny functions such as Task and Finish, One Day Scrutiny, visits to establishments falling within its remit together with member development sessions.

In March 2019 Members received scrutiny training provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). At its Forward Work Programme planning meeting the Committee agreed that they would use the CfPS principles going forward, one element of which was to ensure the focus of overview and scrutiny and its work programme is balanced and effective. Consequently, during the 2019/20 municipal year the number of items on the agenda was limited to two per meeting, thus enabling the Committee to look in greater detail at the reports presented and allowing more time for debate. To assist in this process, a "Gateway" document was created which assisted the Committee to focus and

rank items suggested for inclusion in the FWP. The Committee also considered the rationale and proposed outcomes of future items and agreed that reports previously presented 'For Information only' would be e-mailed to members outside of the formal committee process.

2.2.1 Reports Circulated Outside of the Formal Committee Process

In line with the decision made by the Committee to receive some reports via e-mail rather than through the formal committee process, the following reports were circulated to the Committee during the 2019/20 municipal year:-

- Budget monitoring reports
- Digital Schools Strategy Update 2019/20

2.3 Performance Monitoring / Strategic Issues

Performance Monitoring Reports - One of the principal roles of Scrutiny Committees is to monitor the performance of services and functions within its remit. They undertake this work mainly through the consideration of performance monitoring reports and various action plan monitoring reports. The performance monitoring reports provide a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas.

2.3.1 Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report

2018/19 - As part of its performance monitoring role, the Committee received relevant information from the Council's key strategies and plans. In September 2019 the Committee considered the Council's draft Annual Report for 2018/19 which included extracts for its service remit and which had been produced in accordance with the requirements of both the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales Act 2015). The Committee considered the following sections within the Annual Report which were relevant to the remit of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee:-

- **WBO 1** – Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences
- **WBO 2** – Help children live healthy lifestyles
- **WBO 3** – Continue to improve learner attainment for all
- **WBO 4** – Reduce the number of young adults that are Not in Education, Employment or Training

Outcome

County Council approved the Council's Annual Report for 2018/19 at its meeting held in October 2019.

2.3.2 Education & Children Draft Departmental Business Plan

2020/21-23 – In January 2020 the Committee considered the Education & Children Departmental Draft Business Plan 2020/21-23 which detailed the department's aims and objectives over that timeframe. This provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider

and comment upon the priorities outlined for the department for the three year period.

2.3.3 Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the effectiveness of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2018/19

- In July 2019 members received the Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire for 2018/19. Members noted the statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to Council on the delivery, performance and risks, as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services. It was noted that the presentation of this report to scrutiny members was an important element within the development of the final document.

Outcome:

The report was subsequently approved by both the Executive Board and Council at their respective meetings in September and October, 2019.

2.3.4 Actions & Referrals - During the course of the municipal year several requests for additional items/information are made by members of the Committee to assist them in discharging their scrutiny role. Actions & Referrals updates are presented to Committee which provide an update on progress in relation to these requests. The Committee received these updates at the meetings held in September 2019 and March 2020.

2.4 Revenue & Capital Budgets

2.4.1 Budget Monitoring Reports - The Committee received quarterly budget monitoring reports on the departmental and corporate revenue and capital budgets. These reports enabled members to monitor the level of spend in each area and the progress made in connection with any capital works and to raise any concerns at the formal meeting, in accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

At the meeting held on 15th October 2019 the Committee reviewed its Forward Work Programme and considered those reports circulated outside of the committee process since the last meeting, including the budget monitoring reports and requested an update on the forecast overspend of the Education & Children's Services Department at the next meeting. The Committee duly received an update report at the meeting held on 25th November, 2019 providing an overview of the current position and detailing measure already undertaken to overcome the current pressures

2.4.2 Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 - As well as monitoring the current budget, the Committee was also consulted on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23. The report provided the Committee with the current proposals for the revenue budget for

2020/21 together with the indicative figures for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

Outcome:

As part of the widespread consultation undertaken on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23, the Committee considered the budget proposals. A number of comments were raised but the Committee did not put forward any recommendations to change any of the proposals.

2.5 Schools

2.5.1 Modernising Education Programme – At various meetings during the 2019/20, as part of the Modernising Education Programme, the Committee was consulted on the following school proposals for change:-

- to change the nature of provision at Ysgol y Ddwylan, Ysgol Griffith Jones, Ysgol Llangynnwr and Ysgol Llys Hywel;
- to change the nature of provision at Ysgol Rhys Pritchard;
- to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120.

Outcome:

The first two MEP proposals were endorsed by the Committee and subsequently considered by the Executive Board on the 23rd September, 2019 and Council on the 8th January, 2020 where it was resolved to implement the proposals. The third MEP proposal was endorsed by the Committee and subsequently considered by the Executive Board on the 18th November, 2019 where it was resolved to initiate the formal consultation during the Spring Term 2020 and a report be submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period.

2.5.2 ALN Transformation Programme Update (Additional Learning Needs) – In June 2019 the Committee received a report providing an overview of progress and developments in relation to the ALN Transformation Programme. Members noted that the funding of ALN was a consistent overspend for the department and this issue was considered a suitable topic for the next Task & Finish Group review.

Outcome:

Agreed that the report be received and that a scoping document on ALN funding be presented to the next meeting on 4th July, 2019.

2.5.3 Music Service Update – The Committee received a report providing an update on the operation of the Carmarthenshire Music Service. Members noted the difficulties being faced by the service and the confines of the budget.

Outcome:

Agreed that the Executive Board be requested to sufficiently support the service financially in order to continue and maintain the current standard of service; that consideration be given to providing Governing Bodies with clearer guidance in relation to charging for use of the Music Service, particularly in relation to pupils in receipt of Free School Meals and that the Music Service be supported by the TIC team to identify efficiencies.

The Executive Board Member raised the Committee's request with the Executive Board. Guidance in relation to charging for use was reviewed and re-confirmed with Governing Bodies during the Autumn Term 2019 and an approach has been made to the TIC team for support.

2.5.4 Mental Health Provision in Education – In October 2019 the Committee considered a report identifying any areas of concern or possible areas of improvement in relation to mental health provision in education. The Committee had previously identified this area as one which needed scrutiny.

2.5.5 Provisional Examination and Teacher Assessment Results and Provisional School Attendance Data – In October 2019 the Committee received the provisional examination and teacher assessment results together with the provisional school attendance data.

2.5.6 Recruitment and Retention of Staff – In October 2019 the Committee considered a report on the recruitment and retention of staff. The report provided details of staff training and recruitment processes, challenges for staff in school and the steps being taken with regard to retention of staff.

2.5.7 Carmarthenshire Youth Support Service Business Plan 2019/20 – In November 2019 the business plan which provided information about the Youth Support Service structure, governance arrangements and resources available to the service (finance and staff). The plan identified the principal risks associated with children and young people in the youth justice system, the development of the workforce and the possible risks to future service delivery.

2.5.8 Approval to Implement Federation Proposals – In January 2020 the Committee considered a report outlining proposals for the Executive Board Member for Education & Children to determine the outcome of federation proposals, in order for the consideration and determination of federation proposals to be concluded in a timely manner.

Outcome:

At its meeting held on 3rd February, 2020 the Executive Board resolved that the approval of the implementation of school federation proposals be delegated to the Executive Board Member for Education & Children.

2.5.9 New Curriculum – In March 2020 the Committee received an update on developments regarding the implementation of the new curriculum for 3-16 year olds. The report highlighted the principal changes to the school curriculum and drew attention to actions taken in Carmarthenshire to prepare for the implementation of the new curriculum.

2.5.10 Referral from the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee – Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring – In November 2019 the Committee considered a request from the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee to reverse its decision to receive revenue and capital budget monitoring reports via e-mail, outside of the committee process.

Outcome:

The Committee noted the referral and made reference to the fact that the decision taken by the Committee was in line with the training provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny in March 2019 which advised members to consider the timeliness of reports presented to Scrutiny. The Committee had also reviewed the main stresses on the revenue budget through Task & Finish Groups, reports and briefings.

2.6 Additional Reports Requested

The Committee did not request any additional reports during the year. However, at its meeting held on 15th October, 2019 the Committee requested an update on the forecast overspend of the Education & Children's Services Department which was presented for consideration at the meeting held on 25th November.

2.7 Public Engagement

Scrutiny provides the opportunity for the public to become involved in the Council's activities. Any member of the public can request that an item be placed on the agenda and if they are a resident of Carmarthenshire or own a business or are employed within Carmarthenshire they may ask questions at Scrutiny meetings.

In order to promote public awareness of Scrutiny Committees and the ability of the public to put forward topics for discussion, the Forward Work Programmes of each of the five Scrutiny Committees and details of how the public can become involved are published on the Authority's website:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/committees-meetings/scrutiny/#.Xp7Am6aQxMs>

The Media & Marketing Division also advertise details of any forthcoming items which may be of interest to the public.

Also, a letter is sent to all Town & Community Councils on behalf of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum promoting the work of Scrutiny

Committees within Carmarthenshire and inviting participation by suggesting future topics for consideration and/or attending meetings to observe.

Whilst the Committee did not receive any suggestions of possible topics from the public during 2019/20, the Committee's Forward Work Programme included a range of topics which required public consultation/participation.

3. Other Scrutiny Activity

3.1 Task and Finish

At the meeting held in July 2019 it was agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to review Additional Learning Needs Funding. The key aims and objectives for the review were detailed in a planning and scoping document endorsed at that meeting along with the membership of the Task and Finish Group, as follows:-

Councillor Darren Price (Chair)
Councillor Edward Thomas (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Kim Broom
Councillor Gary Jones
Councillor Shahana Najmi
Councillor Dorian Williams
Mr James Davies

Outcome:

The group agreed on a number of principles that should underpin any new formula, and the process involved in applying the formula, and asked that these should form the basis of discussions between the Department of Education and Children's Services and Schools.

3.2 One Day Scrutiny Inquiry

At the Committee's Forward Work Programme development session held on the 5th June, 2019 members asked for a focused scrutiny review to be undertaken on the federating of schools. At its meeting held on the 4th September, 2019 the Committee agreed that a one day investigative scrutiny review into Federating Schools in Carmarthenshire be held on the 6th November, 2019.

The key aims and objectives for the review were detailed in a planning and scoping document endorsed at that meeting along with the membership of the Task and Finish Group, as follows:-

Councillor Darren Price (Chair)
Councillor Kim Broom
Councillor Ieuan Davies
Councillor Dot Jones
Councillor Jean Lewis
Mrs Melanie Jones

Outcome:

The Task & Finish Group's findings following the One Day Scrutiny Inquiry were incorporated in a draft report which included a good practice guide in relation to the federating of schools. This report was considered by the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23rd January, 2020. The Director of Education and Children's Services advised that good practice identified within the report would feed into future guidance on federating. The possibility of using the Group's findings to create a toolkit for federating schools was discussed and the Committee was advised that the Welsh Government was looking at creating a federating toolkit.

3.3 Site Visits

3.3.1 Schools

The programme of school visits commenced in the 2009/10 municipal year and by the end of the October 2015, the Committee had visited all the county's primary, secondary and special schools, along with the 3 integrated family centres. In 2016/17 the Committee began re-visiting schools, linking in with the School Improvement Panel's work programme and the Authority's Modernising Education Programme proposals. It was felt that the visits tended to focus on premises issues and in November 2017 the Committee considered a report on Scrutiny School Visits Framework which proposed that the school visits programme's focus be realigned to facilitate broader discussion on aspects chosen as greater priorities e.g. leadership, teaching, learning and outcomes. However, it was not intended to preclude or ignore any elements of premises related issues which may arise and require attention.

For the 2019/20 municipal year as part of the pilot scheme using the CfPS principles, the Committee reviewed all aspects of its FWP including the termly school visits. The Committee agreed that although the site visits in their current format were very useful and would continue where the Committee thought relevant, it was felt that a more focused approach should be considered. To this end the Committee decided to focus on inviting more schools to address the Committee on identified areas of their work relevant to the Committee's FWP or areas of interest. No school visits were undertaken during the 2019/20 municipal year.

3.3.2 Divisional Site Visits

At its Forward Work Programme planning sessions for the 2019/20 municipal year the Committee agreed to undertake site visits to divisions within the Education & Children's Services Department. To this end members of the Committee undertook a visit to the Adoption Team located at Parc Dewi Sant in March, 2020.

Visits were also arranged to the Children's Services Teams based in Llanelli, including Fostering, Young Carers, School Safeguarding, Attendance and the Llanelli East and West Childcare Teams. These

visits were arranged for the 27th March and 28th April, 2020 but unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the lockdown enforced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4 Development Sessions

On 19th February, 2020 the Committee held workshops providing an overview of the ERW Business Plan and School Categorisation. In addition, the following all-member development sessions/seminars were held during 2019/20 to which all Committee members were invited:-

- Digital Skills for Members Drop-In Session – May 2019
- Mod.Gov New App Training – May 2019
- Swansea Bay City Deal Seminar – June 2019
- County Lines & Counter Terrorism Seminar – June 2019
- Conservation & Biodiversity Seminar – June 2019
- Digital Skills for Members Drop-In Session – July 2019
- Mod.gov Training Drop-In Session – July 2019
- School Budgets – July 2019
- Life Science & Wellbeing Village Seminar – July 2019
- Code of Conduct Training – July 2019
- Canfod Cartref/Home Finder – July 2019
- Carmarthenshire 50+ Annual Forum Event – September 2019
- Digital Skills for Members Drop-In Session – October 2019
- School Budgets/Education Grants – October 2019
- Digital Skills for Members Drop-In Session – November 2019
- Digital Connectivity Seminar – December 2019
- Budget Consultation Seminars – January 2020
- Net Zero Carbon Plan Seminar – January 2020
- Budget Consultation Seminars – February 2020
- Dyfed Pension Fund Governance & Investments – March 2020

In addition, several departmental budget seminars were held during the year.

4. Future Work

The Committee made significant progress throughout 2019/20 and will continue to concentrate on topics where members' input will result in positive outcomes to drive forward service improvement. To ensure that the best use is being made of meeting time, the Committee is keen to continue implementing the principles of the Centre for Public Scrutiny in order to achieve a more streamlined and focused scrutiny process.

The future work of the Committee will be considered regularly as part of the monitoring of the Forward Work Programme during the course of the year, together with the Executive Board Forward Work Programme.

In order to enhance Scrutiny, members will continue to attend development sessions, seek officers' advice where appropriate and make full use of informal pre-meeting discussion. The Committee will also continue to seek topics for discussion from Town and Community Councils and promote public engagement.

5. Challenges

The main challenge for the Committee during 2019/20 was embracing a new way of working by implementing the principles of the Centre for Public Scrutiny going forward. The Committee embraced this new method of preparing the Forward Work Programme and saw positive results in that the Committee was able to look in greater detail at the reports presented and allow more time for focussed debate.

Another challenge encountered during the 2019/20 municipal year was the fact that the April meeting and all scheduled visits had to be cancelled due to the enforced lockdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Education & Children Department was placed under significant pressure during the Coronavirus pandemic, however, staff performed over and above expectations to ensure that schools and pupils were well looked after.

6. Support for the Scrutiny Function

Support for Carmarthenshire County Council's Scrutiny function is provided by the Democratic Services Unit, based within the Administration & Law Division of the Chief Executive's Department.

Support for the Scrutiny function includes:

- Formulating, in accordance with the FWP, and despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of 4 working days prior to the meeting;
- Providing support and constitutional advice to the Scrutiny Committees and to members of those Committees as well as producing minutes of their meetings and ensuring any issues arising from those meetings are actioned;
- Giving support and advice in relation to the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to executive and non-executive members of the Council and its officers;
- Managing the strategic development of Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire through engaging in national and regional Scrutiny networks and initiatives, supporting the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum and meetings of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs with the Executive Board;
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as and when guidance is published;
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny Committees' Forward Work Programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny Committee members;
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the administration of scrutiny Task and Finish Groups, assisting in writing reports in conjunction with the groups and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews;
- Assisting with the Scrutiny member development programme.

For more information on Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire including Forward Work Programmes, Task and Finish reports and annual reports, visit the County Council's website at: www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/scrutiny.

To contact the Democratic Services Unit, please call 01267 224028 or e-mail scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk.

7. Attendance

Attendance by members of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee during the 2019/20 year is shown in the table below. A total of 7 meetings were held during the 2019/20 municipal year.

Scrutiny Committee Member	Meetings Attended	%
Cllr. Liam Bowen	5	71%
Cllr. Kim Broom	7	100%
Cllr. Ieuan Wyn Davies	4	57%
Cllr. John Jenkins	1	14%
Cllr. Betsan Jones	7	100%
Cllr. Dot Jones	7	100%
Cllr. Gary Jones	7	100%
Cllr. Jean Lewis	7	100%
Cllr. Shahana Najmi	2	29%
Cllr. Darren Price	7	100%
Cllr. Emlyn Schiavone	6	86%
Cllr. Bill Thomas	5	71%
Cllr. Edward Thomas	4	57%
Cllr. Dorian Williams	5	71%
Parent Governor Representatives	Meetings Attended	%
Mrs Georgina Cornock-Evans	1	14%
Mr James Davies	6	86%
Mrs Melanie Jones	7	100%
Church Representatives	Meetings Attended	%
Mrs Vera Kenny	7	100%
Rev D. Richards	2	29%
Substitutes	Meetings Attended	
Cllr. Sue Allen	2	
Cllr. Mansel Charles	1	
Cllr. Deryk Cundy	1	
Cllr. Tyssul Evans	1	
Cllr. Carys Jones	1	
Executive Board Member	Meetings Attended	
Cllr. Glynog Davies	6	

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 2020/21

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That the Committee confirm its Forward Work Programme for 2020/21.

Reasons:

- The County Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to develop and publish annual forward work programmes that identify issues and reports to be considered during the course of the municipal year.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: **NO**

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- NOT APPLICABLE

<p>Directorate: Chief Executive's</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees-Jones</p> <p>Report Author: Michelle Evans Thomas</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Head of Administration & Law</p> <p>Principal Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</p> <p>01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01267 224470 MEEvnasThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 2020/21

Purpose of the Forward Work Programme

Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution states that: *"Each scrutiny committee is required to develop and publish an annual forward work programme, identifying issues and reports to be considered during the course of a municipal year"*.

The development of a work programme:

- Provides an opportunity for members to determine the priority issues to be considered by their scrutiny committee over the course of the next year.
- Provides a focus for both officers and members and is a vehicle for communicating the work of the Committee to the public. The programme (see attached report) will be published on the council's website www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/scrutiny and sent to key stakeholders for information. It will also be updated on a quarterly basis.
- Ensures agreement of provisional agendas for scheduled scrutiny meetings within the council diary. The Programme is a flexible document that can be amended to reflect additional meetings and agenda items during the course of the year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES – Draft Forward Work Programme 2020/21

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: Linda Rees Jones

Head of Administration & Law

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

2. Legal – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) - N/A

2. Community / Town Council – N/A

3. Relevant Partners - N/A

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

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Education & Children Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2020/21

23 rd November 2020	18 th December 2020	28 th January 2021	17 th March 2021	21 st April 2021
Covid-19 Position Statement including Support for Learning and Learners since March 2020	Education support for vulnerable learners	Revenue Budget Consultation 2021/22 – 2023/2	WESP	E&CS Departmental Business Plan 2021/22 – 23-24
Education Strategy 2020-2030	Staff and pupil wellbeing and mental health	Proposal to relocate Ysgol Dewi Sant (tbc)	Department Self-evaluation (Link to Business Plan tabled for April 21 st)	Curriculum Development
Proposal to shorten the internal democratic process for approving statutory consultations	Task & Finish Group Final Report – ALN Funding	Corporate Strategy	Proposal to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa and to increase its capacity (Stage 3)	Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau and to increase the capacity and change the nature of provision at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie (Stage 2)
Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019/20	Financial challenges facing schools – including analysis of grants and ALN funding	Estyn report and Internal Review report on Covid response	ALN Transformation Action Plan	Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors (Stage 2)
Education & Children Scrutiny FWP 2020/21	AFTERNOON SESSION: Proposal to change the nature of provision at approx. 4 schools (Stage 1)			Proposal to change the age range at Ysgol Swiss Valley (Stage 2)
Proposal to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa and to increase its capacity (Stage 2)				Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynydd y Garreg (Stage 2)
Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau and to increase the capacity and change the nature of provision at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie (Stage 1)				Scrutiny School Visits Framework
Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors (Stage 1)				
Proposal to change the age range at Ysgol Swiss Valley (Stage 1)				
Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg (Stage 1)				

For information/update reports circulated to the Committee via e-mail throughout the year:-

- Budget Monitoring 2020/21

Additional reports requested by the Committee:-

- Staff health & wellbeing and mental health
- Financial challenges facing schools and ALN
- Estyn report and Internal Review report
- Effect on NEETS (European funding)
- Vulnerable learners

Reports to be allocated in the FWP:-

- Tackling NEETS (& impact of possible loss of European funding)

Workshops to be arranged during the year:-

- Review of the Modernising Education Programme

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
– as at 26/10/2020 (Period Oct 20 – Oct 21)

Introduction

This plan is published to encourage and enable greater understanding between the Executive, all Councillors, the public and other stakeholders. It assists the Scrutiny Committees in planning their contribution to policy development and holding the executive to account.

The plan gives the public and stakeholders a chance to see the forthcoming major decisions to be made by the Executive Board over the next 12 months. It is reviewed and published quarterly to take account of changes and additional key decisions.

WORKING DRAFT

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
– as at 26/10/2020 (Period Oct 20 – Oct 21)

EDUCATION & CHILDREN				
Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
SCHOOL UPDATE REPORT- COVID 19, SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN AND FINANCE	Gareth Morgans – Director of Education and Children	Education & Children	N/A	
LA EDUCATION SERVICES SELF EVALUATION	Aneirin Thomas – Head of Education and Inclusion	Education & Children	tbc	Tachwedd 2020
UPDATE ON NEW CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS	Aeron Rees – Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing	Education & Children	tbc	October 2020
POST 16 EDUCATION	Aeron Rees – Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing	Education & Children	tbc	TBC
RESULTS OF 2020 EXAMINATIONS	Aneirin Thomas – Head of Education and Inclusion	Education & Children	N/A	TBC
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL GYNRADD BLAENAU AND TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY AND CHANGE THE NATURE OF PROVISION AT YSGOL GYNRADD LLANDYBIE (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	YES	21/12/20 (Stage 1) 10/05/21 (Stage 2) 05/07/21 (Stage 3)
ALN TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN	Aneirin Thomas – Head of Education and Inclusion	Education & Children	28/01/20	tbc
CHILDREN’S SERVICES PAPER- TBC	Stefan Smith - Head of Children’s Services	Education & Children	N/A	tbc
CARMARTHENSHIRE 10 YEAR STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION	Gareth Morgans – Director of Education and Children	Education & Children	23/11/20	October 2020
PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA AND TO INCREASE ITS CAPACITY (STAGE 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	YES)	21st December

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
– as at 26/10/2020 (Period Oct 20 – Oct 21)

Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL RHYDYGORS (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	YES	21/12/20 (Stage 1) 10/05/21 (Stage 2) 05/07/21 (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE AT YSGOL SWISS VALLEY (TBC) (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	YES	21/12/20 (Stage 1) 10/05/21 (Stage 2) 05/07/21 (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL GYNRADD MYNYDD Y GARREG (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	YES	21/12/20 (Stage 1) 10/05/21 (Stage 2) 05/07/21 (Stage 3)

WORKING DRAFT

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Wednesday, 11 March 2020

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair)

Councillors:

K.V. Broom, I.W. Davies, B.W. Jones, D. Jones, G.R. Jones, M.J.A. Lewis, S. Najmi, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, B. Thomas, D.T. Williams, J. Davies, M. Jones, Rev. D Richards, V. Kenny and G. Davies

Co-opted Members:

J. Davies	-	Parent Governor
M. Jones	-	Parent Governor
V. Kenny	-	Roman Catholic Church Representative
D Richards	-	Church in Wales Representative

Also in attendance:

Councillor G Davies, Executive Board Member for Education and Children
Anna Bolt, Head of Curriculum Reform & Innovation - ERW
Dr Llinos Jones, Headteacher - Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin
Dr Caryl James, Headteacher - Ysgol Penboyr

The following Officers were in attendance:

G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services
A. Rees, Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing
L. Jenkins, Executive Board Support Officer
A Thomas, Head of Education Services and Inclusion
M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer
J. Laimann, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP - 10.00 am - 12.40 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Bowen, E. Thomas and J. Jenkins.

The Chair noted that this would be the last meeting for Parent Governor Representatives who had reached the end of their term of appointment. He thanked them for their time and their hard work and commitment and wished them well.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.

There were no declarations of personal interest

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

4. NEW CURRICULUM

Members received presentations on the New Curriculum and raised the following matters –

In response to a question on how a class of 30 pupils can be focused on individually for the purposes of a learner/child led curriculum, Members were advised that the main aim of the new curriculum was to provide the best education for all children. The curriculum itself is not an individualised curriculum however the focus will be on the individual and not the end result, with more emphasis on moving the learner forward. Members referenced lower attaining pupils and were advised that the new curriculum offered a learning experience for individuals across a broader range of subjects.

Members were concerned that Religious Education could be lost within humanities in the new curriculum, however the Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing advised that this was not likely. He further advised that it remains a statutory requirement to provide Religious Education and that Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education were involved in the development of the new curriculum. Religious Education would also form part of the curriculum focusing on citizenship and culture.

Members noted that as School Governors data is used to scrutinise and identify issues, with the new curriculum this may not be possible. The Head of Curriculum Reform and Innovation advised that results-based data would not reflect the learning of a pupil, only how hard they worked on a particular exam, however, the new curriculum aimed to create people who can better perform in the workplace not just at a GCSE. In future, scrutiny would need to focus on progress and distance travelled which may require a more practical review process within school governance arrangements. ERW are developing governor training in relation to the new curriculum.

Members raised concerns in relation to the amount of preparation time allotted for schools to prepare for the new curriculum, noting that the time amounted to one week. The Director of Education and Children's Services advised that there was a general consensus that the time allocated was insufficient, however legislation dictates how many days per year a child is required to be in school, and therefore how many days staff can spend planning without being in a classroom. The Director further advised that he would raise the issue with Welsh Government.

In relation to the previous point Members asked whether schools were engaging with preparations for the new curriculum and were advised that approximately 55% of schools had attended recent ERW events and a clear majority of school leaders were glad that a new curriculum was being implemented.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

5. ACTIONS AND REFERRALS

Members were advised that the incorrect report had been provided. Updated information noting that all actions and referrals had been completed and was circulated to Members.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

Members reviewed a report outlining the reasons for the non-submission of reports as noted in the Forward Work Programme.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. FORTHCOMING ITEMS AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the items due at the next meeting of the Committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2020

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 23rd January 2020 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

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EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA TO A NEW SITE AND INCREASE ITS CAPACITY FROM 75 TO 120

To consider and comment on the following issues:

1. The observations received and the Local Authority's responses following the consultation period (Consultation Report attached);
2. The publication of a statutory notice to implement the proposal.

Reasons:

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.
- To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

To be referred to the Executive Board : YES 21/12/20

To be referred to County Council for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Directorate: Education & Children Name of Head of Service: Simon Davies Report Author: Sara Griffiths	Designations: Head of Access to Education Modernisation Team Manager	Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses: 01267 246471 SiDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 246618 SMGriffiths@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME
PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA TO A NEW
SITE AND INCREASE ITS CAPACITY FROM 75 TO 120

Background

Ysgol Heol Goffa is a special school located in Llanelli and is maintained by Carmarthenshire County Council. The school caters for 75 pupils between the ages of 3-19 years old who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) or profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Individual Development Plan (IDP).

Ysgol Heol Goffa is currently over-subscribed and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. There is increased demand for places which is putting significant pressure on the Local Authority to place pupils. The current capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa is 75 with 101 pupils on roll as at January 2020 PLASC.

As a result, the Local Authority are currently developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa to 120 places for pupils aged 3-19 who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) or profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site. The proposed new site is located next to the recently completed Ysgol Pen Rhos.

The Proposal

The proposal is to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120. In accordance with Executive Board's instructions on the 18th November 2019 (link to the consultation document and report provided) a formal consultation exercise was undertaken from 21 September 2020 to 1 November 2020. The results of the consultation exercise are contained in the attached Consultation Report.

The E&C Scrutiny Committee are provided the opportunity to offer comment and a recommendation to the Executive Board whether or not to publish a Statutory Notice. Should the Executive Board grant permission to proceed to Statutory Notice, the intention is to publish on 11th January 2021.

If approved, following the end of the Statutory Notice period, an objection report which summarises any objections received by stakeholders, will be presented to the E&C Scrutiny Committee; the Executive Board and ultimately County Council for determination.

Recommendation

That the E&C Scrutiny Committee endorses the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board the publication of a Statutory Notice.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED

**YES: Consultation Document
Consultation Report**

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
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

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

2. Legal

Appropriate consultation was initiated in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures and School Organisation Code 2018.

3. Finance

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

4. ICT

None

5. Risk Management Issues

Continuing with the current capacity of the school would not address the capacity issues. The statutory consultation is required to relocate and increase the capacity of the school.

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. Physical Assets

As a result of the scheme to provide Ysgol Heol Goffa with a new school building, the school will re-locate to a new building with a capacity of 120 places.

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** – Consulted on 15 October 2019 and during the formal consultation period.
- 2. Local Member(s)** – The local members are aware of the proposal and have been consulted during the formal consultation period.
- 3. Community / Town Council** – Consulted during the formal consultation period.
- 4. Relevant Partners** – Consulted during the formal consultation period.
- 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** – Consulted during the formal consultation period.

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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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
Stage 1 (Permission to Consult) – Executive Board Report	http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=2079&Ver=4
Stage 1 (Permission to Consult) – ECS Scrutiny Committee Report	http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=153&MId=3552&Ver=4
Consultation Document	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1223723/proposal-to-relocate-ysgol-heol-goffa-and-increase-its-capacity.pdf
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/
MEP Biennial Review	www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk Executive Board 20 th June 2016
21 st Century Schools Website	www.21stcenturyschools.org

Proposal to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120

Consultation Document



carmarthenshire.gov.uk



School Modernisation Section

Sara Griffiths, Modernisation Team Manager

If you require this information in large print, Braille or on audiotape please contact the Department for Education & Children

Email: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01267 246476

As part of its statutory obligation to keep the number and type of school places under review, the County Council has adopted a wide-ranging programme designed to improve school buildings and enhance opportunities for learning. The strategy reflects the vision and policies established by the County Council which embrace the requirement to deliver services, to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic and effective means. In our drive to continually improve on the services made available to all learners, we must maximise the finite resources available to the Council, and continue to work in partnership with all those who have a contribution to make to the process of learning and the wellbeing of both children and their families. Schools of the future will need to serve as a focus for a wide range of services dedicated to serving the needs of the community through a joined up approach.

Carmarthenshire is blessed with many very able education leaders and teachers but the continuing changes to the curriculum places a heavy demand on their skills to meet the wide ranging demands of all children. Although the processes of learning, and skills of teaching, are extremely important, deep subject knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential if learners with their various gifts in different areas are to discover and develop their talents to the full.

Schools designed to meet current demands are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through high quality and inspirational teaching. In the planning of new provision it will be important to ensure that our schools are properly equipped to enhance opportunities for social inclusion, sustainable development, equal opportunities and bilingualism. In practical terms we need to ensure that provision reflects the changing patterns of population, with schools based in the right location with accommodation and facilities fit to serve the needs of all learners in the twenty first century.

Consultation will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties. The information set out in this document is intended to clarify the proposals for your school and support the consultation process.



Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Glossary of Abbreviations

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AN	Admission number
CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
CP	Community Primary
DS	Dual Stream
EM	English medium
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
LA	Local Authority
MCSW	Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
NOR	Number on Roll
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census Data
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
PT	Part time
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WM	Welsh medium

Content

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1. Introduction / Background / Rationale for Change

Current Provision/ Status Quo/ Background

Carmarthenshire County Council makes primary and secondary SLD/PMLD provision in the East and West of the county through specialist settings attached to mainstream schools however Ysgol Heol Goffa is the only standalone Special School for PMLDs / SLD within Carmarthenshire.

Ysgol Heol Goffa is a special school located in Llanelli and is maintained by Carmarthenshire County Council. The school caters for 75 pupils between the ages of 3-19 years old who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) or profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Individual Development Plan (IDP). Ysgol Heol Goffa is the only special school within Carmarthenshire that caters for pupils with SLD and PMLD and therefore the catchment area for the school is the whole of Carmarthenshire.

Learners are taught in 10 class groups and a typical class would have one teacher and three teaching assistants for eight pupils however the school has to be flexible to meet the needs of the children. The adult/pupil ratio ensures that the individual care and educational needs of the pupils can be met. The school is supported by the physiotherapy, occupational therapy service and the speech and language therapy service. The Local Authority's sensory impairment team, educational psychologist and behaviour teams also work with the school. The school facilities include a purpose built PMLD classroom, sensory rooms, a soft play area, outdoor sensory gardens, rebound therapy facilities, an adventure play area and outdoor learning areas.

Rationale for Change

Ysgol Heol Goffa is currently over-subscribed and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. There is increased demand for places which is putting significant pressure on the Local Authority to place pupils. The current capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa is 75 with 101 pupils on roll as at January 2020 PLASC.

As a result, the Local Authority are currently developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa to 120 places for pupils aged 3-19 who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) or profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site.

The proposed new site is located next to the recently completed Ysgol Pen Rhos which is approximately 3.8 miles from the current school site. The site is within the ownership of Carmarthenshire County Council.

The current site and layout of Ysgol Heol Goffa is poor, this is highlighted by the overcrowded mini bus collection and drop off at the start and end of each school day and the lack of sufficient car parking at the front of the school.

A more recent Estyn inspection completed in March 2017 reported that the Learning Environment was 'adequate' noting that areas of the school building in particular the school hall and teaching areas for the post 16 pupils limit significantly the range of learning opportunities that can take place on site. The lack of an on-site hydrotherapy pool was also reported as a shortcoming.

The proposed new school building would overcome these difficulties noted by Estyn by providing 21st Century Facilities to meet the needs of children with more complex needs and profound special educational needs. The proposed development would provide additional space and better provision for teaching post 16 pupils with life skills and vocational skills as well as more space and better play provision on the proposed new school site.

The proposed investment will be funded (75% Welsh Government, 25% Local Authority) subject to business case approval by Welsh Government.

The new school will have the following benefits:

- Increase places available for pupils in the area with complex and profound special educational needs;
- 21st Century School facilities to meet the needs of children with more complex needs and profound special educational needs;
- Hydro pool facility integrated within the school building;
- New facilities with the required resources such as sensory rooms, specialist therapy rooms, therapeutic external learning environments etc.
- Better learning environment for the children and young people attending the new school;
- More space and better play provision on the school site;
- More space and better provision for teaching young people life skills and vocational skills;
- Specialist provision and specialist resources with therapy rooms available at the new school site;
- A range of learning experiences to develop independence and life skills in preparation for adulthood; and
- Opportunity to share resources with the newly opened Ysgol Pen Rhos adjacent to the proposed new site.

2. The Consultation Process

The Consultation Process

The consultation on this proposal will follow guidelines established by the Welsh Government as stated in the School Organisation Code (2018).

Who will be consulted?

This document will be sent to the following interested parties:

Staff (Teaching and Ancillary) – Ysgol Heol Goffa	Director of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Governors and Parents/Guardians – Ysgol Heol Goffa Primary School	Diocesan Director of Education Church in Wales and RC
Local County Councillors	Estyn
Community Councillors Llanelli Town Council	Regional Transport Consortium
Assembly Member (AM) / Regional Members / Members of Parliament (MP)	*All schools within Carmarthenshire
Welsh Ministers	All relevant unions
SEN Partners	Communities for Work
LA Special Educational Needs Division	Legacy
ERW – Education through Regional Working	Fusion
Families First Carmarthenshire	Public Services Board
Child Care / Early Years	Local Police and Crime Commissioner
Communities First Partnership	Flying Start
Welsh Language Commissioner	

* Consultation document sent to Headteacher and Chair of Governors of all Primary and Secondary Schools in Carmarthenshire.

Consultation Period

The consultation period for this proposal starts on 21 September 2020 and ends on 1 November 2020.

Consultees can submit their views in favour of or against a proposal. Responses received during the consultation period will not be treated as statutory objections. If consultees wish to object, they will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period outlined on page 10.

Considering your views

During the consultation period you can ask questions and express your views by writing a letter to the address below or by completing an online survey using the following link:

<https://carmarthenshire.researchfeedback.net/wh/s.asp?k=158099067725>

Letters should be sent to the following address by no later than noon on 1 November 2020.

Mr Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services,
Building 2, St. David's Park, Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen, SA31 3HB
Or E-mail to: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Drop in Session

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we have been advised to postpone all events where there is interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result there will not be a drop in session to discuss proposals. Should you feel strongly about discussing the proposals please contact Mrs Sharon James by sending an e-mail to DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and a virtual meeting can be arranged.

Consultation with Pupils

There will be an opportunity for the pupils of Ysgol Heol Goffa to participate in the consultation process during a session which will be conducted at the school.

The information gathered from the consultation with pupils will form part of the consultation report which will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration following the consultation period.

Consultation Report

A consultation report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks before a decision is made on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the observations submitted by consultees and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to these observations. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposal and details of consultation undertaken with the pupils.

The Executive Board of Carmarthenshire County Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

If the Executive Board decides to continue with the proposal Carmarthenshire County Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website and displayed at Ysgol Heol Goffa. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians, and staff members (the school may also distribute the notice by email).

Statutory Objection Period

The statutory notice will set out the details of the proposal and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within a period of 28 days. If objections are received an objection report will be published on the Carmarthenshire County Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to those objections.

Determination of Proposal

Carmarthenshire County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications. In doing so, the County Council will take into account any statutory objections that it received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

The Statutory Process Time-Table

The statutory process and timetable will be as follows:

21 September 2020	Issue of this consultation document to identified and other interested parties.
1 November 2020	Closing date for views on the proposal to be received by the Department for Education and Children.
22 December 2020	<p>A Consultation Report will be taken to the Executive Board for a decision on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. OR alternatively proposal ends.</p> <p>The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks prior to the publication of a statutory notice.</p> <p>If the decision is made to proceed then a statutory notice will be published. The notice will outline details of the proposal and be published on the Council's web site and be displayed near the entrance of the school and schools which are subject to the proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to parents, guardians and staff members.</p> <p>Following publication there will be a 28 day period during which time formal written objections will be invited.</p> <p>The statutory notice will give details on how you may record your objections to the proposal.</p>
February 2021	End of formal 28 day notice period for objections. County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications, in doing so the County Council will take into account any statutory objections received.

May 2021	<p>Deadline to notify parents of intention to implement proposal.</p> <p>Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.</p>
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3. School (s) affected by this proposal

The catchment area of Ysgol Heol Goffa covers the whole of Carmarthenshire therefore all schools will be notified of the proposal.

School Name		Ysgol Heol Goffa
School Location		SA15 3LS
County		Carmarthenshire
Age Range		3-19
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC]), Special		Special School
Language Medium Category		English Medium
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery	4
	Primary	42
	11 to 16	38
	Post-16	17
	Total	101
Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	95
	January 2018	86
	January 2017	76
	January 2016	75
Pupil Projections	January 2020	N/A
	January 2021	N/A
	January 2022	N/A
	January 2023	N/A
	January 2024	N/A
Capacity		75
Cost per pupil (2020-21)		£22,210
School Budget (2020-21)		2,110 (£k)
School Categorisation (2019)		GREEN
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn Inspection Report - Ysgol Heol Goffa
Building Condition Category		C

Estyn Inspections

As part of a national programme of school inspections, Estyn commissions reviews of all schools. The most recent Estyn inspection for Ysgol Heol Goffa took place in March 2017 and consultees may access the finding either via the Estyn website at www.estyn.gov.uk or you may request a copy from the Local Authority (for which a charge in respect of photocopying may be made).

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

- Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?
- Key Question 2: How good is provision?
- Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

More detail on the common inspection framework can be accessed via this link-
<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/inspection-explained/common-inspection-framework>

The inspection judgements for Ysgol Heol Goffa are shown in the following table:

Inspection Area	Judgement
How good are outcomes?	Good
How good is provision?	Excellent
How good are leadership and management	Excellent

4. The Proposal – Ysgol Heol Goffa

The Proposal

Due to the increase in demand for pupil places the proposal is to:

Relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120 from September 2023 when occupation of the new school building is proposed.

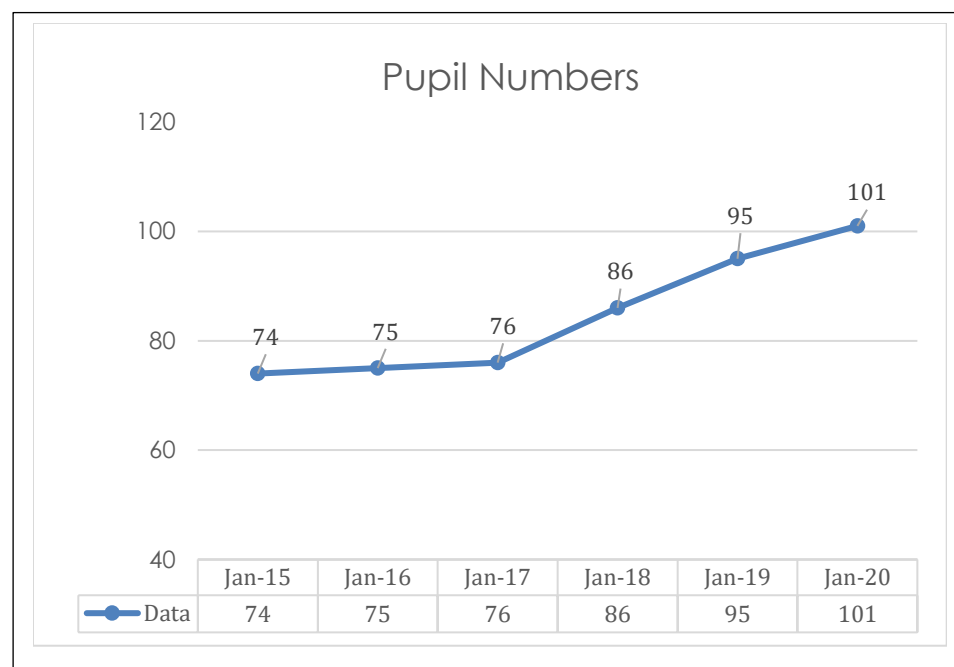
Background

Ysgol Heol Goffa is a special school located in Llanelli and is maintained by Carmarthenshire County Council. The school provides placements for pupils aged from 3 to 19 with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Rationale for Change

The current school is over-subscribed at present with 101 pupils on roll as at January 2020 and does not meet the needs of the learners, as a result the Local Authority are currently developing a scheme to provide Ysgol Heol Goffa with a new school building on a new site with facilities fit for the 21st Century.

The chart below shows the increase in pupil numbers attending Ysgol Heol Goffa between January 2015 and January 2020 (PLASC).



Capacity Information

	Jan 15	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Ysgol Heol Goffa Capacity	75	75	75	75	75	75
Pupil Numbers	74	75	76	86	95	101
Surplus	1	0	+1	+11	+20	+26

As can be seen from the table, Ysgol Heol Goffa has been over capacity for a number of years. This proposal will overcome these issues by providing a new school building with capacity for 120 pupils with facilities fit for the 21st Century.

School Catchment Area

The catchment area of Ysgol Heol Goffa covers the whole of Carmarthenshire. This will not change as part of this proposal.

Transitional Arrangements

There will be no change for pupils. Pupils will remain at the existing school site until the new build school is ready for occupation.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Proposal / Scheme

Advantages

- New build school with 21st Century Facilities
- Hydro Pool integrated within the school building
- Increase capacity to 120 places
- More space and better play provision on the new school site
- Opportunity to share resources with the newly opened Ysgol Pen Rhos adjacent to the proposed new site.

Disadvantages

- Increase in travelling for some pupils
- Approval of business cases from Welsh Government for 75% grant funding to build the new school required.

Risks and Counter Measures

Risk		Counter Measure
1.	Failure to obtain statutory approval to implement the proposal.	- Follow guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018.
2.	Demand for provision diminishes.	- This is unlikely as the demand for places outweigh the

		number of places currently available.
3.	Increased travelling times for some pupils.	- Transport will be provided in accordance with the requirements of a Statement of Special Educational Needs issued by the Authority or where a pupil/learner is the subject of the statutory assessment procedure where learning difficulties which the LA considers makes transport 'necessary'. Assessments will be subject to regular review. The type and nature of transport provided will be determined by a Risk Assessment.
4.	Integration of pupils into the new school building.	- The Authority will work with the pupils to ensure smooth transition and integration into the new school.

WESP

Ysgol Heol Goffa has been categorised as an English medium language category special school.

The Local Authority is committed to providing a bilingual service to Carmarthenshire's learners. The Authority recognises that bilingual provision in our Special Schools and Units is limited. We will work with these settings in developing bilingual provision to ensure that learners with complex additional needs can access bilingual provision and support in their chosen language.

The majority of pupils respond appropriately to Welsh greetings and can use common greeting words in the correct context. Nearly all pupils develop their understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales effectively.

The school plans suitably to develop pupils' Welsh language skills. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of Welsh culture and heritage, for example through the school's annual eisteddfod and residential trips to Llangrannog.

Financial Implications – Revenue

Ysgol Heol Goffa is funded in accordance with the County Council's Fair Funding policy and will receive resources on the same basis as any other school within the County Council, based on the new school's pupil numbers and facilities.

Admission Arrangements

Admission to Ysgol Heol Goffa is via an inclusion panel made up of Headteachers and representatives of the Authority. Referrals to the admissions panel are made by the Education Department via the placement panel following consultation with representatives from the Health and Social Services Departments.

Alternative options Considered

In developing a preferred option the Authority considered a range of alternative options.

Option 1	Status Quo	Discounted due to insufficient capacity for current number on roll, confined site.
Option 2	Refurbish / Remodel current school site	Insufficient outdoor area to develop current school site.
Option 3	New build 90 capacity school providing 21 st Century facilities with a 5 bed respite centre.	Capacity insufficient as there are 101 pupils on roll (January 2020).
Option 4 (Preferred)	New build 120 capacity school providing 21 st Century facility with a 5 bed respite centre and small hydro pool.	Preferred option for the medium to long term.
Option 5	New build 120 capacity school providing 21 st Century facility with a 6 bed respite unit and full size hydro pool.	Discounted due to the scope of the maximum option exceeding the requirements of the area.

Transport Impact Assessment

Transport will be provided in accordance with the requirements of a Statement of Special Educational Needs issued by the Authority or where a pupil/learner is the subject of the statutory assessment procedure where they have learning difficulties which the Local Authority considers makes transport 'necessary'. Assessments will be subject to regular review. The type and nature of transport

provided will be determined by a Risk Assessment. The site for the new school is approximately 3.8 miles from the current site of Ysgol Heol Goffa.

Capital Receipts

Any capital receipts received as a result of this proposal will be re-invested into the Modernising Education Programme.

Community Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix A of this consultation document for full details of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix B of this consultation document for full detail of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment undertaken.

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix C of this consultation document for full details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken.

5. Evaluation of Present Arrangements

Quality and standards in education

Standards

It is not appropriate to compare the standards that pupils achieve at the school with national averages or to analyse trends in overall performance over time because of the wide range of pupils' special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the performance of all pupils and that of boys and girls, those pupils eligible for free school meals or those who are looked after by a local authority.

By the time they leave the school, all leavers gain at least one or more qualifications in accredited courses that are well matched to their individual needs and abilities.

Teaching and learning experiences

The quality of teaching is consistently high across the school. All teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They challenge pupils appropriately to concentrate and complete tasks to the best of their ability.

Teachers and support staff work closely together as a strong and effective team. All staff manage challenging behaviour very skilfully and this enables pupils to remain engaged with their learning and to make progress.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils exceptionally well. Teachers plan collaboratively to make highly effective use of the school's resources and ensure stimulating and engaging learning experiences across the school.

There is a strong emphasis throughout the school on ensuring pupils develop the skills they need to become more independent. The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and residential experiences, including music, drama, netball and gardening. These are highly effective in developing pupils' confidence and the wider skills they will need in their future lives. Post-16 pupils have relevant opportunities to participate in work experience and enterprise activities which prepare them well for the world of work.

Care, support and guidance

The school provides a very high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils. The school's procedures to promote awareness of healthy lifestyles and to develop pupils' wellbeing are exemplary. There is extensive provision for pupils to engage in activities that develop their physical and emotional wellbeing.

The school works very effectively with professionals from a suitable range of agencies, which ensures effective collaborative planning for pupils' individual health needs.

The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop important life skills, such as learning how to be safe online, how to shop and how to prepare healthy meals.

There are highly effective policies and procedures in place for managing pupil behaviour, which staff apply exceptionally well. Staff build positive relationships with pupils and manage pupil behaviour skilfully.

Leadership and Management

The Headteacher and members of the senior leadership team provide exceptional leadership for the school. They communicate a clear strategic direction for the school that focuses well on developing pupils' academic and social skills through providing relevant, enjoyable and challenging learning experiences.

The senior leadership team are highly effective in developing the leadership skills of the many staff who have responsibility for co-ordinating subjects and leading school improvement projects.

Impact of the proposal

If approved, the proposal will provide a high quality learning environment in support of enhancing outcomes for all learners. Much research has demonstrated that learners achieve better outcomes when the learning environment is of the highest quality.

This proposal will ensure that the already excellent standards will be maintained and indeed improved as a result of this proposed investment.

Need for places and the impact on accessibility of schools

The County Council has considered the sufficiency of places and the likely demand for places in the future.

Resourcing of education and other financial implications

As can be seen on page 13 there is currently a shortfall of places available at the current Ysgol Heol Goffa. This proposal will ensure that there are sufficient pupil places in a special school for the medium to long term.

Surplus Places / Capacity Issues

The capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa is 75 however based on January 2020 pupil data there are 101 pupils on roll which is 26 places over capacity. To meet current and future demand an increase in capacity is required for the medium to long term. If provision is not increased pupils may have to travel out of county to receive the specialist care they require at a substantial cost to the Local Authority.

Transport Costs

Transport arrangements will be made in accordance with the County Council's home to school transport policy.

Capital Costs / Capital Receipts

If the proposal is approved the new school will address the current shortfall in capacity as part of the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme.

This investment will be funded (75% Welsh Government, 25% Local Authority) subject to business case approval by Welsh Government.

6. Appendix A- Community Impact Assessment

Ward Profiles – Ysgol Heol Goffa is currently within the Lliedi ward, the ward profile can be viewed by clicking on the following link [Ward Profile Lliedi](#)

The Lliedi ward is within a community's first area.

The new school site will be within the Tyisha / Glanymor ward.

Proposed Development

If approved the proposed new school improvements would bring significant benefits to pupils and the community as noted below:

- **Pupils**

This proposal seeks to ensure a high quality learning environment increasing places available for pupils in the area with complex and profound special educational needs. The improved facilities will directly enhance teaching and learning for learners developing a school with the necessary resources namely sensory rooms, therapy rooms, therapeutic external teaching environments etc. It would offer learners more space and better play provision and more space and better provision for teaching young people life skills and vocational skills. Pupils would benefit from sharing a 3G pitch with Ysgol Pen Rhos located adjacent to the proposed new site for Ysgol Heol Goffa.

- **The Community**

The proposed new school would benefit the community from the use of the specialist facilities outside of school hours.

- A range of easily accessible outdoor spaces (a useful learning and teaching environment invaluable for recreational, social and extended school and community use). The outdoor space will include access to a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area).
- Community use of ICT resources such as Braille keyboards for visitors as well as for the pupils and staff.
- Sharing of a 3G pitch with Ysgol Pen Rhos located adjacent to the proposed new site.
- A purpose built 5 bed respite centre.
- A hydro pool.

Secure access points will be designed into the scheme which will allow the community to access the school building and external hard play areas during the evenings and weekends in co-operation with the Headteacher.

7. Appendix B- Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council's vision is to provide a service, which will ensure access to high quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, this enabling the achievement of their full potential within the context of the unique bilingual nature of the county.

The language category of Ysgol Heol Goffa is English medium and English is the main language of nearly all pupils.

The majority of pupils respond appropriately to Welsh greetings and can use common greeting words in the correct context. Nearly all pupils develop their understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales effectively.

The school plans suitably to develop pupils' Welsh language skills. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of Welsh culture and heritage an example being the school's annual eisteddfod and residential trips to the Urdd camp in Llangrannog.

8. Appendix C- Equalities Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council

Assessing Impact

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

What is the general duty?

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all.

The duties are legal obligations. Failure to meet the duties may result in authorities being exposed to legal challenge.

Under equality legislation, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The Equality Act 2010 introduces a new public sector duty which extends this coverage to age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process. It is also important to note that public authorities subject to the equality duties are also likely to be subject to the

obligations under the Human Rights Act and it is therefore wise also to consider the potential impact that decisions could have on human rights as part of the same process.

Carmarthenshire's approach to Equality Impact

In order to ensure that the council is considering the potential equality impact of its proposed policies and practices, and in order to evidence that we have done so, every proposal will be required to be supported by the attached Equality Impact Assessment. Where this assessment identifies a significant impact then more detail may be required.

Reporting on assessments

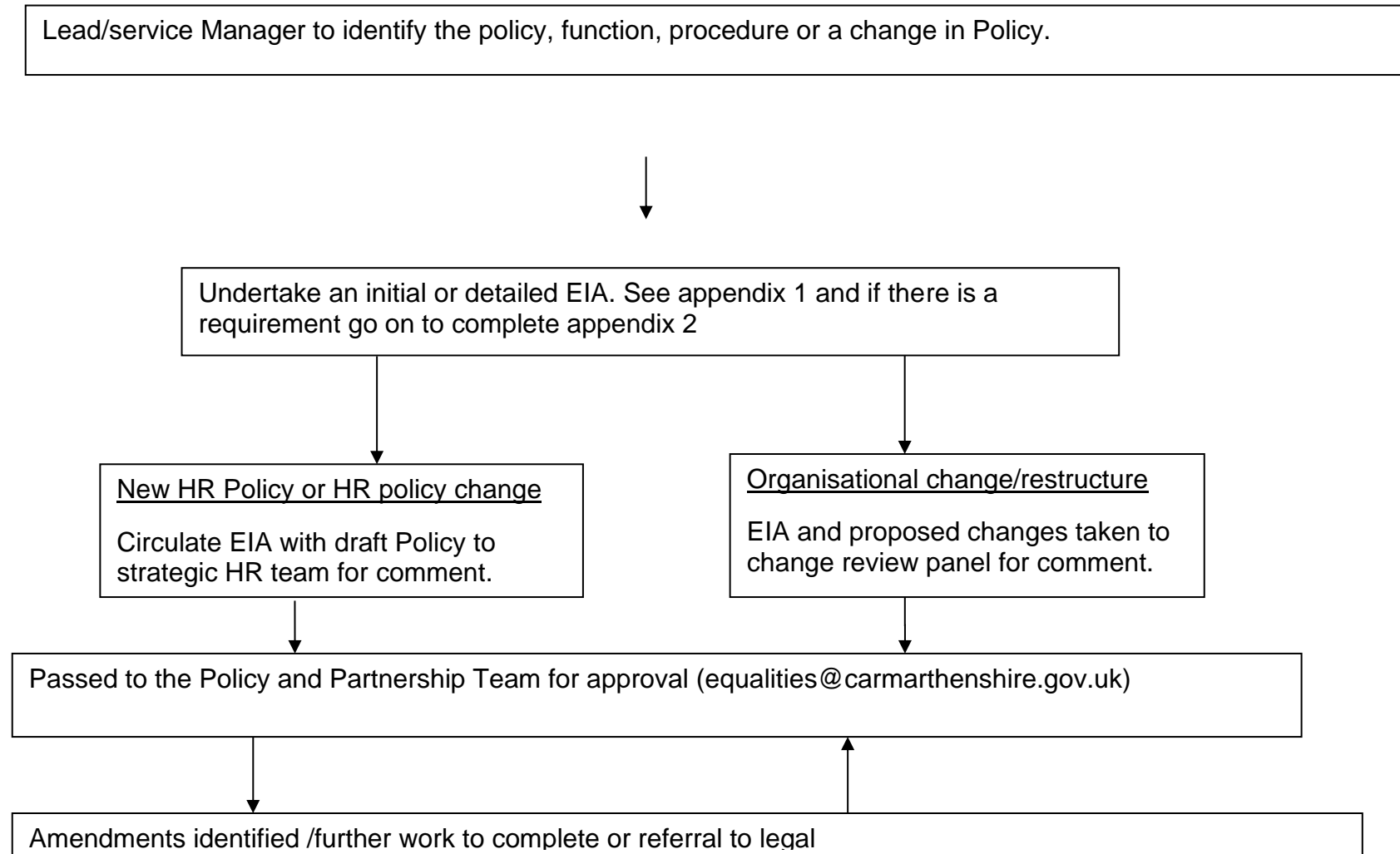
Where it is clear from the assessment that the likely impact on the authority's ability to meet the general duty is substantial, then it must publish a report.

Initial and Detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The initial EIA (appendix 1) is a simple and quick method of assessing the effect of a policy, function, procedure, decision including financial cuts on one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Service Manager responsible for the relevant new or revised policies, functions, procedures and financial decisions must undertake, at least, an initial EIA and where relevant a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2); EIA must be attached as background paper with reports to Executive and Scrutiny.

Equality impact assessment – Process to follow where HR implications have been identified



Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Appendix 1

Department: Education & Children	Completed by (lead): Sara Griffiths	Date of initial assessment: June 2020 Revision Dates: June 2021
Area to be assessed: (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision)	To increase the capacity of Ysgol Heol Goffa and re-locate to a new school site with 21 st Century Facilities.	
Is this existing or new function/policy, procedure, practice or decision?	School Re-organisation Proposal – Modernising Education Programme	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Programme • Modernising Education Programme • Welsh Government Guidance School Organisation Code 2018 • PLASC Data 2020 • The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the proposed function/policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.		To provide a new build 120 capacity special school for the pupils of Ysgol Heol Goffa on a new school site with 21 st Century facilities to meet the needs of children with more complex needs and profound special educational needs. The increase in capacity will benefit the special school by addressing the capacity issues experienced in recent years and will also ensure that the school can accommodate future demand. A 5 bed respite centre will also be located in the site of the new school and a small hydro pool facility.			
The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to:- (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (2) advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) foster good relations between different groups (see guidance notes)		2. What is the level of impact on each group/ protected characteristics in terms of the three aims of the duty? Please indicate high (H) medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each.	3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each of the group/protected characteristics?		4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact what mitigating factors have you considered? N/A
Protected characteristics Page 155	Age	M	Risk Neutral	The new school will cater for pupils aged 3-19	
	Disability	M	Risk Neutral	21 st Century Facilities for pupils with complex and profound special educational needs	
	Gender reassignment	N	Risk Neutral		
	Race	N	Risk Neutral		

	Religion/Belief	N	Risk Neutral		
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	Risk Neutral		
	Sexual Orientation	N	Risk Neutral		
	Sex	N	Risk Neutral		
	Welsh language	M	Risk Neutral		
	Any other area	N	Risk Neutral		

5. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?

YES ☒ Informal and formal consultation will be undertaken as stated in Welsh Government guidance. We will consult informally with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. As part of the Formal Consultation period key stakeholders will be consulted with as detailed on page 8 of this consultation document.

NO ☐

6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any? Ensure that parents, staff and governors are fully informed at each stage of the consultation.

7. Procurement

Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal, service.

Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice. N/A

8. Human resources

Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human resource implications to the activity, proposal or service? As there will be an increase in capacity, additional staffing may be required. However, this will be addressed as the scheme progresses and Human Resources will be fully consulted.		
9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function/policy/procedure/practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more H under section 2)	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved by: Head of Service	Simon Davies	Date: June 2020

Thank you for completing this assessment.

For further information regarding Assessing Impact, please contact the -

Policy & Partnership Team

Chief Executive's Department

01267 22(4914) / (4676)

equalities@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Please send a copy of the assessment to the above e-mail address upon completion.

LAST PAGE

Proposal to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120

Consultation Report



carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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1. Executive Summary
2. Summary of responses received and Local Authority related responses
3. Estyn's Observations regarding the Proposal
 - 3.1 Local Authority response to Estyn's observations
4. Consultation with the Pupils

1. Executive Summary

The Consultation Period

On the 21st September 2020 Carmarthenshire County Council published proposals to:

- Relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120.

The consultation period commenced on 21st September 2020 in line with the publication of the proposal and closed on 1st November 2020 with a total of 41 responses received (excluding the responses received from Estyn and the pupils' consultation) in response to the formal consultation.

Responses Received		
Online Survey	Email	Total
40	1	41

It must be noted that of the 41 observations received, all were received prior to the end of the consultation period.

Consultation Event

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we were advised to postpone all events where there was interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result a drop in session to discuss proposals was cancelled.

In the absence of a drop in session stakeholders were offered an opportunity to discuss proposals with an Education Officer via a virtual meeting. No stakeholders requested a virtual meeting to discuss proposals.

Responses Received

This proposal has been prepared due to Ysgol Heol Goffa being over-subscribed at present with 101 pupils on roll in January 2020, as a result the Local Authority are developing a scheme to provide the pupils of Ysgol Heol Goffa with a new condition A rated school building on a new site with facilities for the 21st Century.

Supportive

- Theme 1 – No reason
- Theme 2 – Support for proposal
- Theme 3 – Capacity
- Theme 4 – 21st Century School Design
- Theme 5 – Existing School Site

Concerns

- Theme 1 – No reason
- Theme 2 – 21st Century School Design
- Theme 3 – Existing School Site

Of the 41 respondents, they are categorised as follows:

- Parent (5)
- Staff Member (5)
- School Governor (6)
- Other (25)

Overall Summary

Supportive	93%	Not supportive	7%
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Workshops

Following the closure of the consultation period on the 1st November 2020 a workshop was held to analyse the observations received.

Next Steps

The Consultation Report will be presented to the Education & Children's Scrutiny Committee for comments and a recommendation and then ultimately to the Executive Board for determination on whether or not to proceed with the proposal and publish a statutory notice. Should the Executive Board decide to proceed to the next stage, a Statutory Notice will be published during the Spring Term 2021.

2. Summary of Observations received and Local Authority Responses

Point Number	Point Raised	Local Authority Response	Number of responses raising this point	% of responses raising this point
Supportive Comments Raised				
1.	No reason Some respondents did not provide a reason for their support.		22	54%
2.	Support for proposal Respondents supported the proposal to increase capacity to 120 places providing a new school build with 21 st Century facilities providing enhanced ALN opportunities with community facilities.	The Local Authority notes that due to an increase in demand for places a new school with 21 st Century facilities is needed. The support was noted.	12	29%
3.	Capacity Respondents questioned whether 120 places would be sufficient to meet future demand for places.	Specialist setting capacity across the Local Authority is being considered, as a result it is likely that increased capacity will be required in a number of settings according to projected need. It is not our intention to increase the Heol Goffa capacity any further as we feel that 120 places is sufficient and will provide a percentage of the SLD capacity required.	2	5%

4.	21st Century School Design Respondents noted the need for adequate drop off and pick up areas to be included in the scheme design. It was also noted that future expansion opportunities should be built into the scheme design.	School design are considered and developed by the design teams in consultation with the school and Governing Body representatives. Internal and external areas provided are being developed according to national guidelines Building Bulletin 104 for the design of special schools.	2	5%
5.	Existing School Site Respondents questioned the Authorities aspirations for the existing school site.	The Authority is undertaking of a full-scale review of the Modernising Education Programme over the coming months and this will include all of the county's schools including the current site of Ysgol Heol Goffa.	2	5%
Concerns Raised				
1.	No reason Some respondents did not provide a reason for their concerns.		1	2%
2.	21st Century School Design Concerns were raised regarding internal areas within the new school design.	School design are considered and developed by the design teams in consultation with the school and Governing Body representatives. Internal and external areas provided are being developed according to national guidelines	1	2%

		Building Bulletin 104 for the design of special schools.		
3.	Existing School Site Respondent questioned the need for building on a new site.	The existing school site is not sufficient to build and accommodate a 120 capacity special school with 21 st Century facilities. It would not offer value for money to operate 2 sites therefore a new preferred site has been identified next to the recently completed Ysgol Pen Rhos.	1	2%

3. Estyn's Observations regarding the Proposal

Estyn's response to the proposal to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120.

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is by Carmarthenshire County Council.

The proposal is to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120

Summary / Conclusion

The proposer has clearly outlined the benefits of the proposal in addressing the issue of an increased demand for provision and by improving facilities for pupils in a new build school.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain or improve the current standards of education and provision for pupils in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. It is to increase the capacity of the school to deal with a growing demand for places and to improve facilities and provision for pupils by providing a new building with 21st century facilities. The proposer has made suitable provision for people to respond to the proposal due to Coronavirus including the provision of virtual drop in sessions if requested. The proposer has appropriately considered the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposal as well as the risks and provided suitable counter measures.

The data shows that the school is currently over-subscribed and that this has been the trend for the last four years. The catchment area for the school covers the whole of Carmarthenshire. The proposer has suitably shown that the proposal to increase the capacity would mitigate the risk of possibly having to send pupils out of catchment to receive the provision they require due to lack of capacity at the current site. The proposer has appropriately shown that it has considered other alternatives to this current proposal including maintaining the status quo and refurbishing the existing site. It has clearly explained that the restrictions on the current site would not enable the proposer to increase the capacity of the school.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on learner travel arrangement due to the new site being 3.8 miles away from the current site. The proposer states that 'transport will be provided in accordance with the requirements of a Statement of Special Educational Needs issued by the Authority or where a pupil/learner is the subject of the statutory assessment procedure where they have learning difficulties which the Local Authority considers makes transport 'necessary''.

The proposer has completed an appropriate community impact assessment that clearly demonstrates the benefits of the new school site to the community in the ward. These include shared access to a 3G pitch with Ysgol Pen Rhos and community use of the specialist facilities outside of school hours.

The proposer has completed a suitable fairness and equalities impact assessment that clearly considers the impact of the proposals on pupils demonstrating the protected characteristics. This assessment also considers the impact of the proposals on the Welsh language. It recognises that bilingual provision in the authority's special schools and units is limited and that it will work with these settings, including Ysgol Heol Goffa, to develop a bilingual provision. However, it does not provide any details on how it proposes to do this.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer clearly explains that it is not appropriate to compare the standards that pupils achieve with national averages or to analyse trends over time because of the wide range of pupil's special educational needs. The proposer has provided appropriate data on the school's current performance such as comparing performance of groups of pupils and states that all school leavers gain one or more qualifications that are well matched to their individual needs and abilities. The proposer does not give an evaluation of pupil progress over time. The proposer provides a clear evaluation of how it views the school's provision and leadership and management to be highly effective. The proposer believes that the proposal will provide a high-quality learning environment for pupils that will maintain the current excellent standards and improve experiences for pupils. The

proposer has suitably demonstrated that it is minimising the disruption to learners by keeping them at the existing school site until the new school building is ready.

The school has been categorised as green that indicates that the school is highly effective and knows what it is doing well and what it needs to improve.

The proposer has also appropriately considered the most recent Estyn inspection (2017) outcomes for Ysgol Heol Goffa where the school was judged as excellent for its current performance and excellent for its prospects for improvement. It demonstrates how the proposal will address shortcomings identified in the Estyn report around the learning environment. These include providing additional space and better provision for teaching post 16 pupils with life skills and vocational skills and by the inclusion of an on-site hydrotherapy pool.

3.1 Local Authority Response to Estyn's Observations

As can be seen from Estyn's observations they are of the opinion that the proposal is at least likely to maintain or improve the current standards of education. Their observations include supporting statements as noted below.

Statements of support for this proposal by Estyn

The proposer has clearly outlined the benefits of the proposal in addressing the issue of an increased demand for provision and by improving facilities for pupils in a new build school.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain or improve the current standards of education and provision for pupils in the area.

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. It is to increase the capacity of the school to deal with a growing demand for places and to improve facilities and provision for pupils by providing a new building with 21st century facilities. The proposer has made suitable provision for people to respond to the proposal due to Coronavirus including the provision of virtual drop in sessions if requested. The proposer has appropriately considered the relative advantages and disadvantages of the proposal as well as the risks and provided suitable counter measures.

The proposer has suitably shown that the proposal to increase the capacity would mitigate the risk of possibly having to send pupils out of catchment to receive the provision they require due to lack of capacity at the current site.

The proposer has appropriately shown that it has considered other alternatives to this current proposal including maintaining the status quo and refurbishing the existing site. It has clearly explained that the restrictions on the current site would not enable the proposer to increase the capacity of the school.

The proposer clearly explains that it is not appropriate to compare the standards that pupils achieve with national averages or to analyse trends over time because of the wide range of pupil's special educational needs. The proposer has provided appropriate data on the school's current performance such as comparing performance of groups of pupils and states that all school leavers gain one or more qualifications that are well matched to their individual needs and abilities.

4. Consultation with the Pupils

School: Ysgol Heol Goffa

Date: 13th October 2020

Consultation undertaken by: Karen Draper – Educational Support Adviser

Interviewed: Members of the school council (conducted on-line due to coronavirus)

What do the pupils think about having a new school with capacity for more pupils?

Pupils are happy, excited, but also a little nervous. Some children are a little worried because they don't like change and some of the secondary aged pupils are sad at not being able to attend the new school.

Pupils are excited about the ski slope, Enterprise, the studio, the hydro pool, and the basket-ball hoops. But they also feel happy because there will be space for everyone, including their teachers.

They are also hoping to have:

A mud kitchen, a stage to perform on, sandpit, lots of outdoor spaces, quiet areas with blankets, picnic areas, trees, a rabbit, an obstacle course, trampoline, dens, swings, a climbing wall and a DIY workstation.

How will a hydro pool in school help them?

It is very important because pupils need to stretch their bodies, they won't need to travel so far, so will be in the pool for longer and more often and it helps with people's legs.

Is there anything they are unsure about?

The pupils were concerned that there was only one staffroom but were happy when they knew staff also had an outdoor space.

When looking at the plans they felt the pool looked quite small but were happy when they knew this was just for their use.

There was a question around the use of the pool by all pupils. It was explained by the current HT that pupils who have physical plans would be in there first.

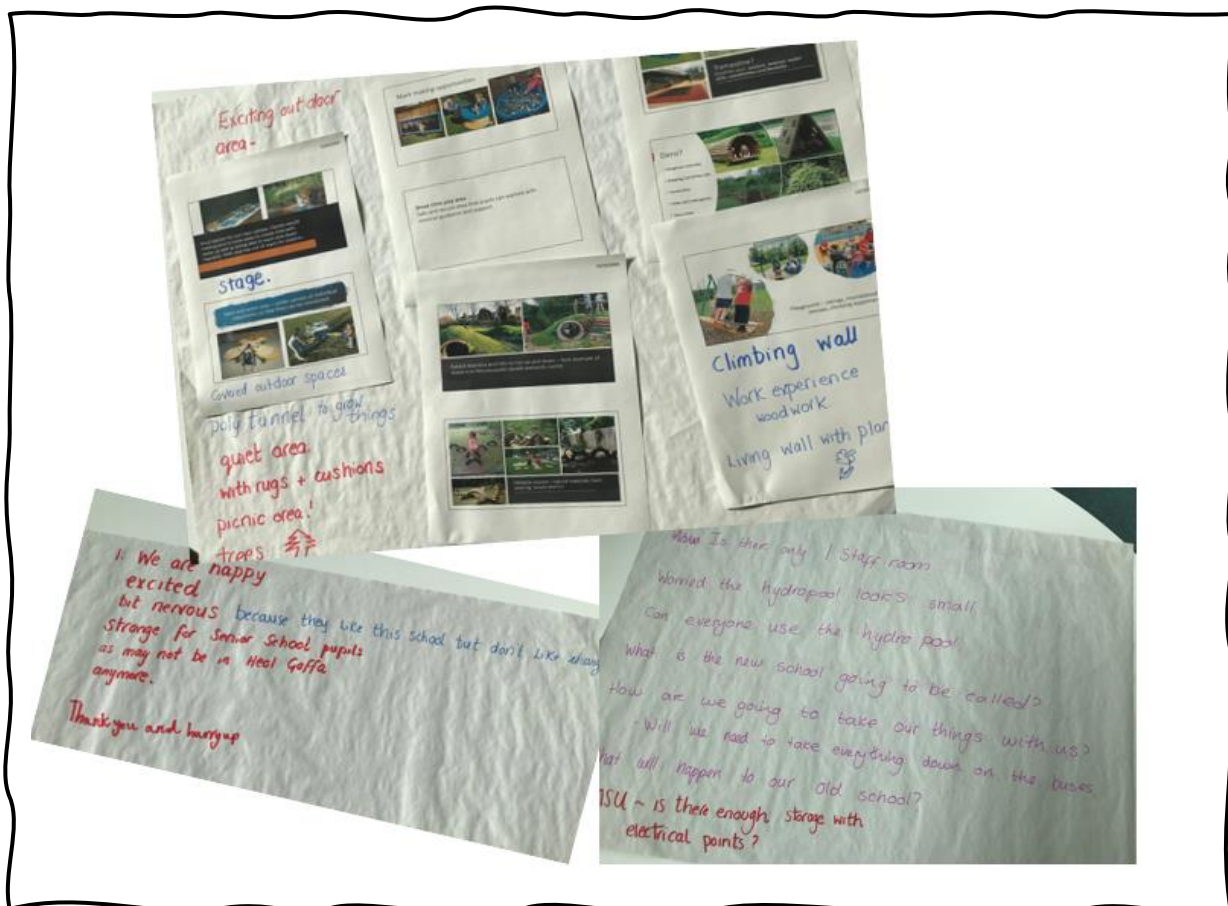
There was a question around the name of the new school-the current HT told the pupils that she had an idea, but it might be that LA officers would name it. The pupils were definite that they wanted to be part of the voting.

They also asked questions around transporting equipment down to the new school.

What would they like to say to the people who have helped this happen?

The pupils and staff want to say a huge thank you, but also a..." please hurry up."

All pupils were in agreement that the proposal should go through.



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EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23rd November 2020

<p align="center">MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE BLAENAU AND LLANDYBIE AREAS</p>		
<p>To consider and comment on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal as outlined below and in the attached consultation document; • Officers to initiate formal consultation on the proposal. • That a report is submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period. 		
<p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation. • To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration. 		
<p>Exec. Board Decision Required YES 21/12/2020</p>		
<p>Council Decision Required NO</p>		
<p>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)</p>		
<p>Directorate: Education & Children</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Simon Davies</p> <p>Report Author: Sara Griffiths</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Head of Access to Education</p> <p>Modernisation Team Manager</p>	<p>Tel: Email addresses:</p> <p>01267 246471 SiDavies@cararthenshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01267 246618 SMGriffiths@cararthenshire.gov.uk</p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY

COMMITTEE

23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE BLAENAU AND LLANDYBIE AREAS

Background

The Authority has a legal responsibility to review the number and type of schools it has in an area and whether it is making the best use of resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau is a Welsh medium, community primary school located in the village of Blaenau with capacity for 99 pupils aged between 4-11 years. In recent years, pupil numbers at the school have declined. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 34 pupils at the school meaning that there were 65 surplus places, or 66%. Welsh Government through the School Organisation Code advises local authorities to review their provision where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area.

Whilst there are 44 pupils living within Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau's catchment area **only 8 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 36 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend other schools.

Based on current pupil projections (2020) it is estimated that the pupil figures will remain low in the foreseeable future. Additionally, Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau's building condition is 'poor' and the school has been in deficit since 2011/12 and remains with a deficit of £83,895 for 2019/20. Their original funding allocation for 2020/21 was £149k and their forecast position for the year is an increase to the deficit balance.

From an educational perspective having such a small number of pupils and mixed age classes 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.

The culmination of these unavoidable facts presents a school model which does not represent a sound, stable educational model or best use of resources. With no prospect of there being a significant increase in pupil numbers for the foreseeable future consideration is required on the sustainability of the school.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie is a transitional (working towards Welsh medium) 3-11 primary school located in the rural village of Llandybie approximately two miles north of the town of Ammanford in Carmarthenshire.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie is a successful school which by January 2019 had reached its capacity and although there was a slight decrease in pupils at January 2020 this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future based on current pupil projections (2020). As a result the Local Authority are developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to 315 places with 45 nursery places by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site.

The project will re-locate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie from its current site to a new site which is within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie. The new school will provide a Welsh Government standard primary school building with capacity to accommodate 315 pupils and 45 nursery pupils between the ages of 3-11 years old and ensure that the school is able to deliver the full curriculum in modern, safe and inspiring learning environments with enhanced outside areas.

This proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space and provision in the existing school by providing a category **A** school with sufficient places for current and projected demand.

Over the last 5 years there has been a sustained increase in the number of pupils choosing to enter the Welsh medium stream and a fall in the number of pupils choosing to enter the English stream.

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide all pupils with the best education possible and believes that providing bilingual opportunities has a role to play in this. This aligns with Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020's objective of **ensuring "that all pupils are able to speak, read and write the Welsh language fluently by the end of Key Stage 2 in accordance with their expected stage of development."** The best way to create confident, bilingual individuals is through immersing pupils in the Welsh language and as a result the Local Authority is looking to change the nature of provision.

As a result of the ongoing challenges that both schools face, it is not possible to sustain current arrangements and a review of the education provision within the areas of Blaenau and Llandybie is required.

The Proposal

- Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau as of 31 August 2021.
- From 1 September 2021 all pupils will be registered at Ysgol Llandybie operating on both sites (Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie and the former Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau) increasing its capacity to 287 + 50 nursery places.

- Re-designate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie's catchment area to include that of the former Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau catchment area as of 1 September 2021.
- Change the nature of provision at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to Welsh Medium as of 1 September 2021.
- Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to a new school site and increase its capacity to 315 + 45 nursery places as of September 2024, when occupation of the new school is proposed.

The transitional capacity noted above (287 + 50 nursery places) combines both schools' current capacity including nursery places. As a result, the nursery places in the transitional capacity is greater than the final school's capacity. The final capacity figure (315 + 45 nursery places) meets the need and demand of the area for the longer term.

It is the Local Authority's intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language. It is important to note that there will be no change for current pupils attending Ysgol Llandybie

Recommendation

E&C Scrutiny Committee is requested to endorse the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board that a formal consultation be initiated.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES: Draft Consultation Document

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
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Developments are consistent with the Authority's Corporate 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

ICT colleagues will be consulted with in relation to the potential relocation of IT equipment.

5. Risk Management Issues

Continuing with current provision would see current problems being perpetuated with the education of children in the area being placed at unacceptable risk and the County Council failing to meet WG target that all buildings should be of an appropriate standard.

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. Physical Assets

- i. One redundant school site – Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau. Should the proposal be adopted the property will be transferred to Corporate Property Division of the Regeneration and Policy Department for the procedures outlined in the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned.
This policy has been developed to allow the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.
- ii. If the proposal is implemented to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau, Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie will proceed to operate on split sites occupying both current Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie and Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau locations until the proposed new Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie school building is ready for occupation.
- iii. Following the project completion of developing a new school building for Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie the current Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie will become redundant as point i above.

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 – Will be consulted on 23/11/2020.

2. Local Member(s) – The local members will be notified of the proposal and will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

3. Community / Town Council – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

4. Relevant Partners – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

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
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan		https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/
MEP Biennial Review		www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk Executive Board 20 th June 2016
21 st Century Schools Website		www.21stcenturyschools.org

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Proposal to Review Primary Education Provision in the Blaenau and Llandybie Areas

Consultation Document

DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Foreword

As part of its statutory obligation to keep the number and type of school places under review, the County Council has adopted a wide-ranging programme designed to improve school buildings and enhance opportunities for learning. The strategy reflects the vision and policies established by the County Council which embrace the requirement to deliver services, to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic and effective means. In our drive to continually improve on the services made available to all learners, we must maximise the finite resources available to the Council, and continue to work in partnership with all those who have a contribution to make to the process of learning and the wellbeing of both children and their families. Schools of the future will need to serve as a focus for a wide range of services dedicated to serving the needs of the community through a joined up approach.

Carmarthenshire is blessed with many very able education leaders and teachers but the continuing changes to the curriculum places a heavy demand on their skills to meet the wide ranging demands of all children. Although the processes of learning, and skills of teaching, are extremely important, deep subject knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential if learners with their various gifts in different areas are to discover and develop their talents to the full.

Schools designed to meet current demands are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through high quality and inspirational teaching. In the planning of new provision it will be important to ensure that our schools are properly equipped to enhance opportunities for social inclusion, sustainable development, equal opportunities and bilingualism. In practical terms we need to ensure that provision reflects the changing patterns of population, with schools based in the right location with accommodation and facilities fit to serve the needs of all learners in the twenty first century.

Consultation will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties. The information set out in this document is intended to clarify the proposals for your school and support the consultation process.



Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Glossary of Abbreviations

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AN	Admission number
CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
CP	Community Primary
DS	Dual Stream
EM	English medium
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
LA	Local Authority
MCSW	Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
NOR	Number on Roll
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census Data
PT	Part time
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WM	Welsh medium

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Introduction

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

As part of this process the Council has published its vision on how it sees the future for all of the primary and secondary schools in the County and this includes consulting on the future shape of education in Blaenau and Llandybie.

This consultation document outlines current provision and options to determine the optimum solution for meeting future need.

Schools subject to proposals

		Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie
School Location		SA18 3BQ	SA18 3JB
Age Range		4-11	3-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		Community	Community
Language Category		Welsh Medium	Transitional
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery Age	5	28
	Reception – Y.6	29	201
	Total	34	229
Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	36	238
	January 2018	38	235
	January 2017	50	230
	January 2016	55	223
Pupil Projections	January 2021	31	237
	January 2022	33	236
	January 2023	32	236
	January 2024	34	219
	January 2025	35	228
Capacity (including nursery age)		99	238
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£4,379	£3,732
School Budget (2020/21)		£149k	£823k
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn	Estyn
Building Condition Category		C	C

Background

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau is a Welsh medium, community primary school located in the village of Blaenau. The school provides education to pupils between the ages of 4-11 years old.

In recent years, pupil numbers have declined which has resulted in pupils being taught in mixed age classes with up to four year groups. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 34 pupils at the school and 65 surplus places.

Whilst there are 44 pupils living within Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau's catchment area **only 8 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 36 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend other schools.

Based on current pupil projections it is estimated that the pupil figures will remain low in the foreseeable future.

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau's building condition is poor. To modernise the building and provide the facilities which the Council would wish to provide, would be considerable and could not be justified having regard to the low and declining pupil numbers.

The school's most recent Estyn inspection completed in January 2016 judged the school's current performance and prospects for improvement to be 'adequate'.

Additionally, having such low pupil numbers at a school impacts on school budget allocation. The school has been in deficit since 2011/12 and remains with a deficit of £83,895 for 2019/20. Their original funding allocation for 2020/21 was £149k and their forecast position for the year is an increase to the deficit balance.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie is a transitional (working towards Welsh medium) 3-11 primary school located in the rural village of Llandybie approximately two miles north of the town of Ammanford in Carmarthenshire.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie is a successful school which had reached its capacity by 2019 and although there was a slight decrease in pupils at January 2020 this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. As a result the Local Authority are developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to 315 places with 45 nursery places by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century with enhanced outside areas on a new site within the current catchment area to replace the current condition C building.

This proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space and provision in the existing school by providing a category **A** school with sufficient places for current and projected demand.

A more recent Estyn inspection completed in September 2013 noted that the school currently utilised facilities at the local village playing fields for their sporting activities. The new school building will have its own MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) as well as a sport pitch built into the new school design.

Over the last 5 years there has been a sustained increase in the number of pupils choosing to enter the Welsh medium stream and a fall in the number of pupils choosing to enter the English stream.

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide all pupils with the best education possible and believes that providing bilingual opportunities has a role to play in this. This aligns with Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020's objective of **ensuring "that all pupils are able to speak, read and write the Welsh language fluently by the end of Key Stage 2 in accordance with their expected stage of development."** The best way to create confident, bilingual individuals is through immersing pupils in the Welsh language and as a result the Local Authority is looking to change the nature of provision.

Rationale for Change

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau has experienced a significant decline in pupil numbers over the last five years. Pupil numbers declined from 55 in January 2016 to 34 in January 2020.

As a result of declining pupil numbers, surplus capacity at the school has increased. Current surplus at the school (January 2020) is 66% or 65 places.

As stated in the School Organisation Code (2018) document published by Welsh Government;

*Where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall, local authorities **should** review their provision and **should** consider whether to make proposals for their removal if this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of provision. A significant level of surplus provision is defined as 25% or more of a school's capacity (as defined in circular 21/2011) and at least 30 unfilled places.*

If this proposal is implemented, it will have a significant positive impact on surplus places in the area.

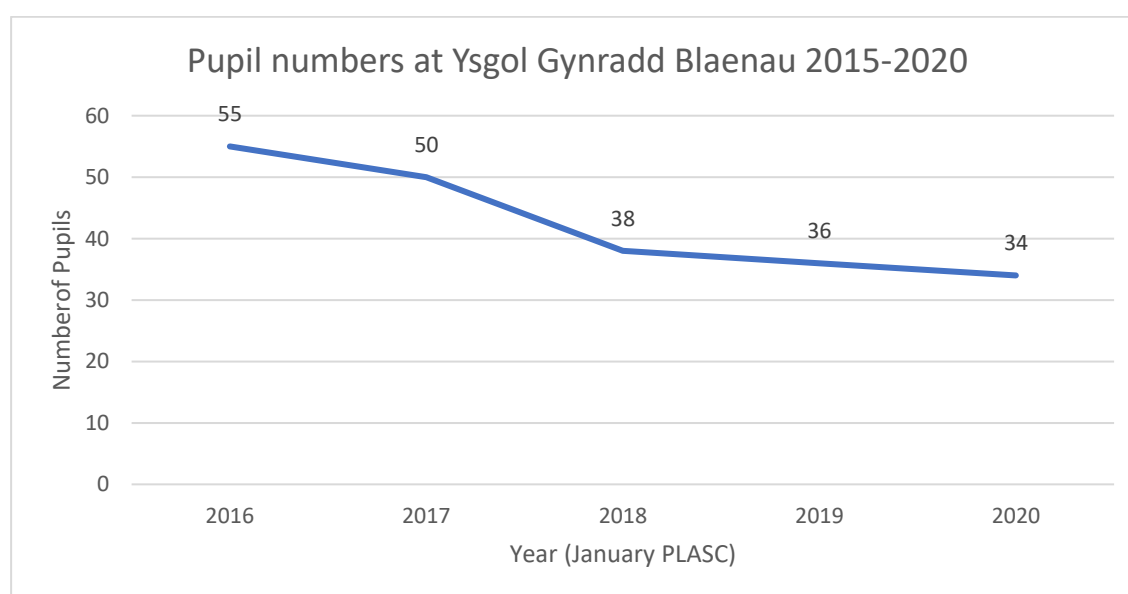
Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau is funded in accordance with the County Council's funding formula. Under the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010, the Individual Schools Budget must be allocated amongst schools maintained by the authority in the form of budget shares, using a locally determined funding formula. The regulations require that at least 70% of the funding is to be distributed on the basis of pupil numbers. The current funding formula provides support for smaller school via a lump sum supplement and a federation supplement for schools that are in a formal or informal federation. The school also receives additional grant support due to the low pupil numbers.

The school has been in deficit since 2011/12 and remains with a deficit of £83,895 for 2019/20. Their original funding allocation for 2020/21 was £149k and their forecast position for the year is an increase to the deficit balance.

The deficit budget, reduction in pupil numbers and budget cuts has placed the school in an extremely difficult financial position.

Declining pupil numbers and increasing surplus places has been a challenge for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau in the last five years.

The graph below highlights the decline in pupil numbers at the school over the last five years.



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 require to fully develop.

Capacity Information

Historical surplus places for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau are shown in the following table:

	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	99	99	99	99	99
Total Capacity					
Pupil Numbers	55	50	38	36	34
Surplus	44	49	61	63	65
% Surplus	44%	49%	62%	64%	66%

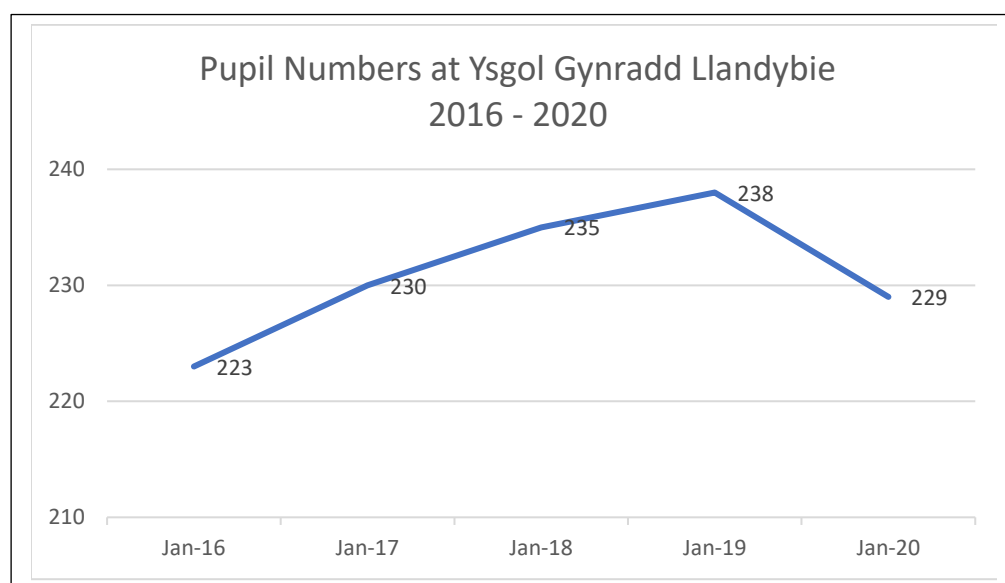
As can be seen from the table, Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau has experienced a significant % surplus in the last five years. Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau's % surplus in the last five years has exceeded 25% surplus places which the Welsh Government considers to be 'significant'. Welsh Government advises local authorities to review their provision where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

This proposal has been prepared in response to the increase in pupils attending Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie, Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). The Local Authority has a vision for a bilingual Carmarthenshire and a commitment in providing category A schools with sufficient places for current and projected demand with facilities fit for the 21st Century.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie had reached its capacity by 2019 and although there was a slight decrease in pupils at January 2020 this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, as a result the Local Authority are developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to 315 places with 45 nursery places by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site as the current school building to replace the current condition C building. The proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space in the current school by providing a new school on a new site with 21st Century facilities.

Pupil Numbers (January PLASC figures)



As can be seen from the graph above, there has been a steady increase in pupils attending Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie over the last five years. By January 2019 the school had reached its capacity of 238 pupils and although pupil numbers have declined slightly by January 2020 to 229 pupils the school only has 4% surplus places.

Capacity Information

Historical surplus places for Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie are shown in the following table:

	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie					
Total Capacity	302	246	238	238	238
Pupil Numbers	223	230	235	238	229
Surplus	79	16	3	0	9
% Surplus	26%	7%	1%	0%	4%

As can be seen from the table above, there is only 4% surplus capacity at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie by January 2020.

Whole School English / Welsh Split – Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

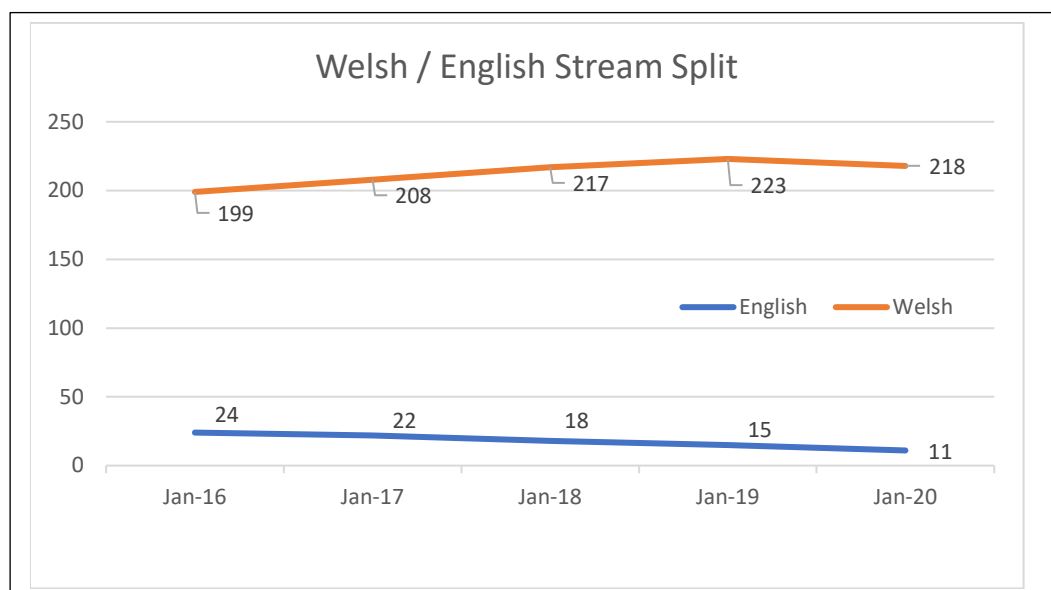
		Foundation Phase Part Time	Foundation Phase Full Time	Key Stage 2	Total
2020	English medium	0	0	11	11
	Welsh Medium	17	85	116	218
	Total	17	85	127	229
2019	English Medium	0	0	15	15
	Welsh Medium	17	107	99	223
	Total	17	107	114	238
2018	English Medium	0	0	18	18
	Welsh Medium	11	120	86	217
	Total	11	120	104	235
2017	English Medium	0	0	22	22
	Welsh Medium	0	132	76	208
	Total	0	132	98	230
2016	English Medium	0	4	20	24
	Welsh Medium	0	126	73	199
	Total	0	130	93	223

(January PLASC Data)

As can be seen from the table above, the number of pupils attending the English stream has declined from 24 in 2016 to 11 in 2020.

Over the last 5 years there has been a sustained increase in the number of pupils choosing to enter the Welsh medium stream and a fall in the number of pupils choosing to enter the English stream.

The following chart shows the number of pupils within the language streams at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie between January 2016 and 2020 (PLASC).



As can be seen from the chart there was only 11 pupils attending the English stream in January 2020.

The Proposal

- Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau as of 31 August 2021.
- From 1 September 2021 all pupils will be registered at Ysgol Llandybie operating on both sites (Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie and the former Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau) increasing its capacity to 287 + 50 nursery places.
- Re-designate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie's catchment area to include that of the former Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau catchment area as of 1 September 2021.
- Change the nature of provision at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to Welsh Medium as of 1 September 2021.
- Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to a new school site and increase its capacity to 315 + 45 nursery places as of September 2024, when occupation of the new school is proposed.

The transitional capacity noted above (287 + 50 nursery places) combines both schools' current capacity including nursery places. As a result, the nursery places in the transitional capacity is greater than the final school's capacity. The final capacity figure (315 + 45 nursery places) meets the need and demand of the area for the longer term.

Location of new school building

As part of the 21st Century Schools Modernising Education Programme a proposed preferred site for the location of the new school building has been identified. The location of the proposed preferred site is within a mile of the current Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie but is over a mile in distance from Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau. Whilst the proposals noted within this document are subject to County Council approval and the future capital investment subject to business case approval by Welsh Government, consultation on relocating Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie is required in order to satisfy the School Organisation Code (2018).

Advantages and Disadvantages of the proposal

Advantages

- Sufficient Welsh medium places to meet current and projected demand.
- Improved 21st century facilities to allow for a full delivery of the modern curriculum.
- Increased access to learning, sporting and cultural opportunities.
- Deliver primary education in buildings that meet the aspirations of the Local Authority's 21st Century Schools strategic outline programme.
- To ensure more efficient use of financial resources.
- Improved energy efficiencies of the estate.

- Reduces surplus places in an area to ensure the Local Authority makes best use of its resources and facilities.
- More fulfilling teaching environment improves morale.
- More effective staffing structures management and support.
- More opportunity for teachers professional and personal development.
- Learners will have an environment that will motivate their learning.
- Enhance community use of school facilities
- Enhanced external areas with purposeful outdoor play areas
- Fit for purpose nursery facilities in accordance with the Foundation Phase requirements,

Disadvantages

- Requires a statutory process to instigate change.
- Dependent on business case approval to secure funding for investment.
- Increased travelling time for some pupils.
- Community of Blaenau lose presence of school within their immediate community/area.

Risks and Counter Measures

Risk		Counter Measure
1.	Failure to obtain statutory approval to implement process.	- Follow guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018
2.	Failure to gain approval of business cases	- Follow guidelines as set out in the 21 st Century Schools and Education Funding Programme business case guidance 2018
3.	An unsatisfactory consultation with the community	- Develop communication strategy and consult on a regular basis to address concerns

School Catchment Area

The current catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie will be extended to accommodate the current catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau (should the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau be implemented).

Secondary School Transfers

There will be no change to the current transfer arrangements for pupils in respect of Secondary education.

Staffing

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

The Local Authority has staffing policies and procedures in respect of school reorganisation and these will be implemented if required. The Authority will support school staff in securing suitable alternative employment if at all possible, through redeployment processes should this be necessary.

Additionally, it will provide linguistic support for teaching and support staff at an appropriate level and according to individual need to ensure that all staff have the skills needed to deliver the curriculum in Welsh.

WESP

This proposal seeks to increase Welsh language provision in the Llandybie area by formalising the schools' progress along the Welsh language continuum. If the proposal is implemented the school will move from being transitional to Welsh medium. This supports the targets as outlined in the LA's approved Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and support's Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers' aim. It also supports the new county Welsh Language Targets set by WG for the 10 year Welsh in Education Strategic Plans as well as aligning with the future new School Designations.

Financial Implications - Revenue

Both Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau and Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie are funded in accordance with the County Council's Fair Funding policy and will receive resources on the same basis as any other school within the County Council, based on pupil numbers and facilities.

Capital Receipts

Any capital receipts received as a result of this proposal will be re-invested into the Modernising Education Programme.

Land and Buildings

One redundant school site – Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau. Should the proposal be adopted the property will be transferred to Corporate Property Division of the Regeneration and Policy Department for the procedures outlined in the ‘Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned. This policy has been developed to allow the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.

Transitional Arrangements

During the transitional period pupils will remain on their existing school sites under the management of Ysgol Llandybie until the new build is ready for occupation to accommodate all pupils from Ysgol Blaenau and Ysgol Llandybie.

It is the Local Authority’s intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language. It is important to note that there will be no change for current pupils attending Ysgol Llandybie.

Admissions Arrangements

The County Council is the Admissions Authority for Ysgol Blaenau and Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie.

The School Admissions Unit,
Carmarthenshire Local Authority,
Department for Education and Children,
Block 2,
Main Building,
St. David’s Park,
Carmarthen. SA31 3HB
Tel No: 01267 246449

E-mail: admissions@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Transport Impact Assessment

Transport will be provided in accordance with the Council’s School Transport Policy. If the proposal is implemented. The distance from Ysgol Blaenau to the new Llandybie school is approximately 1.3 miles.

Llandybie’s new school building will be designed to incorporate safe areas for the drop-off and collection of pupils. If the proposal is approved, safe routes to school will be looked at as part of the Transport Impact Assessment for the new school building.

Community Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix A of this consultation document for full details of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix B of this consultation document for full detail of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment undertaken.

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix C of this consultation document for full details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken.

Alternative Options Considered

In developing a preferred option the Authority considered a range of alternative options.

Status Quo no change to Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change to stakeholders	Pupils continue to be taught in a condition C building
No statutory process required	Not financially viable for the long term
Blaenau Community retain the presence of a school	Pupils continue to be taught in multi-age classes
	Pupils taught in classes which span the key stages
	Lack of sustainable leadership
	Declining pupil numbers and high surplus places
	Inadequate facilities with little or no outdoor teaching facilities
	Inadequate modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning

Status Quo no change to Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change to stakeholders	Pupils continue to be taught in a condition C school building
No statutory process required	Inadequate outdoor areas
No Business Case approval required	School has reached its capacity
	Inadequate modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning

	Inadequate facilities to share with the local community
	Limited space/opportunities to develop existing site without land acquisition

Federation- Formal federation between Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie and Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Opportunity to share management, governing body responsibility and curriculum expertise	Requires a legal process
Deliver greater value for money	Will not address deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau
Allows schools to pool resources and staff	Does not address falling pupil numbers and surplus places at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau
Extend the breadth and quality of education provision	Pupils continue to be taught in condition C buildings
Respond to pupils' wider needs	Does not provide pupils with modern 21 st century facilities
Widen opportunities for staff professional development	Managing headteacher time across two schools
	Requires the rationalisation of both governing bodies
	More work for governors in the first year of Federation

Status Quo remains for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau/New School building for Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau stakeholders	Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau pupils continue to be taught in a condition C school building
No increased travelling times for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	Does not address falling pupil numbers and surplus places at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau
Blaenau Community retain the presence of a school	Does not address deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau
Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie pupils are provided with new 21 st Century School building and facilities	Business Case approval required to secure funding for new school building for Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie
Addresses the capacity pressure at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	Statutory processes required to increase the capacity and change nature of provision at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie
Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie are provided with modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning	

Enhanced community facilities provided through investment for community of Llandybie	
Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie pupils are provided with high quality learning environment to support the wellbeing of pupils and to enhance learner progress	

Preferred Option	
Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau and include its catchment area within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau Pupils will remain in their current school building until occupation of the new school*	Blaenau community lose the presence of a school in their community when pupils occupy the new school building*
Addresses the surplus spaces at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau and capacity pressures at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	Statutory Process required
Ensures all pupils are educated in condition A schools	Business Case approval required
All pupils are provided with modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning	Change for stakeholders
Addresses the deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	
Delivers greater value for money	
Provides enhanced community facilities for use by both Blaenau and Llandybie communities	

***Business case approval/WG funding**

School(s) affected by this proposal

School Name		Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau	Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie	Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman	Ysgol Bro Banw	Ysgol Ffairfach	Ammanford Nursery	Ysgol Parcyrhun	Ysgol Gynradd Saron	Ysgol Gynradd Penygroes
School Location		SA18 3BQ	SA18 3JB	SA18 2NS	SA18 2NF (Infant pupils) SA18 2NS (Junior pupils)	SA19 6SY	SA18 2NS	SA18 3HB	SA18 3LH	SA14 7NT
County		Carmarthenshire								
Age Range		4-11	3-11	4-11	4-11	4-11	3-5	4-11	4-11	4-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Language Medium Category (PLASC)		WM	TR	WM	DS	WM	DS	DS	WM	WM
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery	5	28	18	13	3	12	16	17	6
	Reception – Y.6	28	201	270	402	95	93	195	240	165
	Total	34	229	288	415 (ex SEN Unit)	98	105	211	257	171

Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	36	238	296	409 (ex SEN Unit)	106	99	223	252	183
	January 2018	38	235	294	406 (ex SEN Unit)	98	95	216	175	182
	January 2017	50	230	277	399(ex SEN Unit)	102	78	214	229	181
	January 2016	55	223	276	413 (ex SEN Unit)	99	80	196	237	184
Pupil Projections	January 2021	31	237	304	415	98	-	214	249	175
	January 2022	33	236	306	409	99	-	214	251	172
	January 2023	32	236	303	412	96	-	217	254	165
	January 2024	34	219	313	402	96	-	212	256	168
	January 2025	35	228	324	401	95	-	206	246	170
Capacity (including nursery)		99	238	232	523	102	95	221	240	186
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£4,379	£3,732	£3,294	£5,650	£4,139	-	£4,636	£3,448	£3,468
School Budget (2020/21)		£149k	£823k	£949k	£2,740k	£406k	-	£978k	£886k	£593k
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn
Building Condition Category		C	C	A	B	B	B	B	B	B

Evaluation of Present Arrangements

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Estyn inspected Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau in January 2016, judging its performance to be 'Adequate' and its capacity to improve also to be 'Adequate.' The school's progress against the recommendations then witnessed its removal from the 'Estyn Monitoring' category in May 2017.

Since this time, pupil numbers have decreased resulting in the pupils being taught within two classrooms: one foundation phase class and one key stage 2 class.

Following the recent promotion of the previous headteacher, the foundation phase teacher has acted up as the headteacher since September 2019. As a result, the current staffing has been reduced significantly to 2 FT teachers and one FT teaching assistant. The acting HT has 0.2 non-contact time for leading and managing the school.

Standards

Literacy standards vary across the school which reflect the pupils' range of abilities. Towards the top of key stage 2 (KS2), the more able and talented are beginning write comprehensively, in both languages. These pupils are able to punctuate their work well using brackets, quotation and exclamation marks for effect, spell most words correctly and use a range of vocabulary to enrich their descriptive work. An example of quality writing is evident within their narrative work on Llyn y Fan. However, many KS2 pupils depend heavily on adult support especially with their writing tasks and their independent writing skills are poor on the whole. The opportunities to write at length, the quantity of writing and quality of presentation does not always reflect their age and ability. Writing work at foundation phase demonstrates that the majority of pupils spell well in line with their age with the very few showing good phonetic understanding. Upper FP pupils are beginning to use instructive writing well, for example, whilst writing instructions for an experiment – 'Y Crochan Hud' (the magic cauldron). The more able and talented at FP are beginning to vary their sentence openers and good examples are seen within their factual work on the squirrel. Welsh oracy standards have generally improved across the school with end of KS2 teacher assessment demonstrating that all pupils achieved the expected oracy level. However, around half did not achieve the expected level with their Welsh and English reading and Welsh writing. Standardised score results for both English and Welsh reading demonstrate that the daily reading sessions have not impacted on reading standards, especially across KS2.

The majority of pupils demonstrate appropriate understanding of mathematical concepts which are in line with their age and ability. However, the opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum is insufficient at KS2 and do not correlate with the level of work evident within their mathematical work. The very few more able and talented pupils at upper foundation phase are successfully working on higher outcomes. For example, by partitioning 4 digit numbers, recording money using

the digital point to demonstrate pounds and pence and by measuring to the nearest half centimetre.

Many pupils are developing suitable independent research skills. For example, whilst gathering information on hedgehogs. They can use a range of ICT resources and software to present their findings. For example, book creator, popplet, JiT, J2e and powerpoint. The majority of pupils demonstrate appropriate ICT skills and these are developing well at the foundation phase. However, at KS2, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' ICT skills. For example, pupils did not use the school's green screen equipment to record their Fireworks rules. Last year, the school had recognised the need to develop the use of spreadsheets and the interacting and collaborating strand of the DCF. However, the impact to date is very limited.

Teacher assessments demonstrate that nearly all foundation phase pupils make at least the expected progress from their starting points at school with their Welsh language and mathematical development. By the end of KS2, nearly all pupils make the expected progress or better with their maths and science development. However, the majority do not make the expected progress with their Welsh and English language.

The FPI has decreased this year from 100% to 66.7%. This demonstrates how the very small cohort of 3 can impact adversely on percentages. The CSI shows a decreasing trend and is the lowest it has been for 5 years. Performance at higher levels have remained similarly to last year's results in English and Science, however, performance at L5+ has decreased in maths and Welsh.

KS2 boys tend to underperform in both language and mathematics in comparison to the girls.

Teacher assessments demonstrate that the majority of eFSM pupils make the expected progress with their reading skills in both languages. However, the standardised scores of the national reading tests do not reflect the same progress.

By the end of KS2 nearly all ALN pupils achieved the expected level or better in maths and science. However, half of the ALN pupils did not achieve the expected level in English and Welsh. Progress of ALN pupils across the school vary according to teacher assessment.

Wellbeing Standards:

Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and as a result, nearly all pupils feel safe and valued at school. Pupils are generally happy and feel comfortable to talk to any teacher if needed. Relationships between adults and most pupils are positive, with many pupils interacting appropriately during lessons. The majority of pupils are engaged with their learning and contribute positively during lessons. However, many pupils depend heavily on adult support to complete tasks successfully. Most pupils' behaviour is routinely good across the school.

Most pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of the importance of healthy living and personal, social and wellbeing. However, pupils' physical skills are not being fully developed in line with the curriculum and the lack of facilities such as lack of adequate green area and the small tarmacadam area are partly responsible for this. Many pupils do not demonstrate good age related independency skills and they are not equipped with purposeful strategies to support their learning.

Teaching and learning experiences

Half of the teaching across the school is currently unsatisfactory and these pupils are exposed to poor teaching for 4 consecutive years across their education journey. Around half of the planning does not always meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils on the additional learning needs register. The school hasn't currently got the capacity to address and provide effective intervention to support the needs of all group of learners.

The school worked collaboratively with other schools last year to improve the outdoor learning provision, however, this has not developed effectively and as expected to date. This is beginning to impact on the foundation phase provision. The cluster's science project has improved science provision and expectations at key stage 2.

Care support and guidance

The ALNCo is fully trained in PCP and is aware of the new arrangements for ALN provision. One page profiles are in place for all pupils and the school has undergone IDP meetings. The school has an appropriate procedure in place to track pupil progress and analyse the wellbeing of a very few of its pupils. Provision for ALN pupils is limited due to current staffing levels. Attendance, behaviour and any other concerns are monitored suitably by the acting headteacher. Attendance has decreased slightly from last year from 95.5% to 94.29%. The attendance of eFSM pupils has also declined to 93.84%. The school collaborates relevantly with outside agencies.

Leadership and Management

The school has no headteacher in place and therefore the foundation phase teacher has acted up as the headteacher for the autumn term only. The acting Headteacher is currently partaking in the new and acting headteachers' training and as a result, her knowledge and understanding of the role is gradually developing. The acting headteacher has identified some areas for development, however, a few other significant areas need addressing.

Leaders across the school currently contribute insufficiently to the self-evaluation processes and the impact on standards and outcomes is limited. As a result, many areas for development during the year have made satisfactory progress and continue to be areas for development.

The school collaborates appropriately with the cluster of schools, however, no other collaborative partnerships with other schools have been established for this year with a focus on sharing good practice and improving standards for all learners.

Improved use is made of relevant assessments and data in order to recognise the progress and the needs of all of learners. However, specific and purposeful planning

to ensure that all pupils' needs are met and that all pupils move along the skills continuum remains an area for further discussion. Leaders have adapted and managed staff restructure well under the circumstances, however, the provision for all groups of learners is ineffective.

The school addresses some national priorities appropriately within the School Development Plan (SDP) and the previous headteacher introduced the new teaching and leadership standards to all teaching staff through performance management targets. However, this has not impacted effectively on provision and standards especially across KS2.

The acting headteacher, supported by the chair of Governors, continue to manage aspects of underperformance to ensure that all teaching and learning experiences are at least satisfactory. However, the pace of progress is restricted. The school is aware that the need to address the level of challenge across the school remains an area for development.

Impact of the proposal

Standards are decreasing rapidly at Blaenau therefore this proposal will have a positive impact on the standard of teaching and learning pupils receive.

Llandybie has a newly appointed head teacher who has ensured that a strong collaborative vision is developing across the school, focusing on raising standards and meeting pupils' specific needs well.

Additionally, teaching is good in many lessons. The process of sharing ideas and good practice has had a positive impact on ensuring a consistent approach to teaching across the school, thus reducing in school variation appropriately.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie was last inspected by Estyn in September 2013 where all three key questions were reported as Good.

Progress since this time is reported below:

Standards

During a recent learning walk, most pupils are able to speak confidently and can express opinions clearly. For example, in the foundation phase many pupils are able to explain their work with enthusiasm, as they develop their creative skills when creating a collage about castles. Many are able to recall the story, using Pie Corbett strategies and are confidently developing their independent writing skills, as they write a diary about Beti Bwt's day. A few are able to self-assess effectively as they read over their work to correct any errors.

Many pupils in key stage 2 are successful in planning to write a recount of their experiences following a trip to Parc Dinefwr. Many are able to confidently work on number patterns as they use the learning walls effectively to simplify fractions. However, nearly all pupils are able to explain what they are learning and show great pride in their work.

The school has improved its performance in the foundation phase compared with 2018. All foundation phase indicators have performed better than the Local Authority average apart from in language have made expected or better progress when considering their baseline. All eFSM pupils receive beneficial intervention support through effective use of the PDG grant and results indicate that many eFSM pupils perform as well as non-FSM pupils in the foundation phase, making good progress. In the foundation phase all pupils have made expected progress in all indicators including those with additional learning needs and those receiving free school meals.

Outcomes at key stage 2 have varied over the last 3 years. For example, performance at level 4 in English has improved over the last 3 years and Welsh has improved on last year's results, matching the previous year's data. Whilst L4 maths and science data has dipped this year, they remain above 2017 data. Performance at the higher levels has shown an improving trend over 3 years and is higher than the LA average in most indicators, apart from Welsh. Most pupils make the expected progress in most indicators apart from Welsh, where many make expected or better progress.

In all areas the gap between boys and girls attainment has been narrowed and at key stage 2 the boys outperformed the girls in the core subject indicator and science. In all areas the gap between boys and girls attainment has been narrowed and at key stage 2 the boys outperformed the girls in the core subject indicator and science.

Attendance percentage for 2018-19 was 94.78% which is an increase of 0.77% from last year. The school continues to implement robust processes to track monitor and improve pupils' attendance.

Teaching and Learning Experiences

Most pupils have a positive attitude towards learning and feel safe in the school. Pupils demonstrate good behaviour due to the high expectations set by the school. Nearly all pupils are engaged in lessons, as they experience exciting and interesting thematic work to support and develop their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills. In general, many pupils have more confidence when speaking English. However, many pupils' Welsh speaking skills are developing appropriately.

Nearly all teachers model effective language patterns and ensure pupils are actively involved in their learning, contributing their ideas on what and how they wish to learn. Teaching is good in many lessons and there is a clear focus to share good practice to ensure that all staff, including support staff, have opportunities to observe each other teach. The process of sharing ideas and good practice has had a positive impact on ensuring a consistent approach to teaching across the school, thus reducing within school variation appropriately. The head teacher manages underperformance in a robust and supportive manner.

Care, Support and Guidance

The school has formed strong and positive working relationships with parents, carers and the community as partners in the education process. For example, as they work closely on a regular basis with a care home, strengthening and further developing community links. This has contributed positively to pupils' wellbeing as well as the residents of the home. Also, the school has forged strong links with the local church this year and many pupils have contributed in a variety of different ways to church work, such as creating a flower display for the harvest festival, planting bulbs in the church grounds and a school choir has participated in a harvest service.

The school is making good progress with the ALN transformation Bill, as they focus on becoming a PCP school. As a result, nearly all pupils' emotional needs are addressed well, so that they develop in to becoming resilient confident learners.

Leadership and Management

The newly appointed head teacher has taken up post this autumn following a year as acting head teacher. She has ensured that a strong collaborative vision is developing across the school, focussing on raising standards and meeting pupils' specific needs well. Two senior teachers recently appointed as assistant head teachers are effectively building leadership capacity across the school.

Most staff reflect together on how to make their own learning more powerful. Many staff feel comfortable seeking advice from each other. Trust and mutual respect are core values within the school. The distributed model of leadership has provided good professional development opportunities for all staff across the school, who have a designated responsibility in line with the new areas of learning and experience. The

school is beginning to engage in forms of enquiry to investigate and extend their practice. For example, as they pilot the language to literacy project across the foundation phase and at key stage 2.

Structures for regular dialogue and knowledge exchange are working effectively. For example, afterschool meetings include sharing good practice and groups of staff work as a team moderating pupils' work. All staff regularly discuss and evaluate whether actions have the desired impact and change course if necessary. Whilst the staff have set up robust monitoring processes, further work is ongoing to ensure individual pupil skills' development are being more closely tracked and identified.

A few staff have begun to collaborate, learn and exchange knowledge with peers in other schools through networks and school to school work. For example, the foundation phase coordinator has shared good practice with other schools and there is ongoing informal collaborative networking across schools at key stage 2. The school is making sound progress as they develop as a learning organisation.

The school's self-evaluation processes show an accurate knowledge of the school and there is a clear link between self-evaluation processes and the school development plan. This in turn has led to improved pupil progress in most areas of learning.

Robust performance management systems are in place. Targets are linked to the SDP and the new professional teaching standards. Teaching is good in many lessons and there is a clear focus to share good practice to ensure that all staff, including support staff, have opportunities to observe each other teach. The process of sharing ideas and good practice has had a positive impact on ensuring a consistent approach to teaching across the school, thus reducing within school variation appropriately. The head teacher manages underperformance in a robust and supportive manner.

The head teacher provides the governors with regular updates on progress and a minority of governors skilfully challenge the school effectively. The school uses governor expertise successfully to inform others. This in turn is improving the capacity of all governors to challenge the school consistently.

Impact of the proposal

The pupils and staff would benefit greatly from a Carmarthenshire standard new build school with 21st Century facilities as the current school building is condition C rated with inadequate facilities.

A new site with improved resources will enhance pupils' learning experiences as well as improving staff and pupils' wellbeing.

Currently, staff room space is limited, and a new build will ensure effective collaborative work between staff and external partnerships.

The school is currently making good progress and a new build will certainly aid in sustaining and raising standards further.

The Consultation Process

The consultation on this proposal will follow guidelines established by the Welsh Government as stated in the School Organisation Code (2018).

Who will be consulted?

This document will be sent to the following interested parties:

Staff (Teaching and Ancillary)	Director of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Governors and Parents/Guardians	Diocesan Director of Education Church in Wales and RC
Local County Councillors	Estyn
Community Councillors	Regional Transport Consortium
Assembly Member (AM) / Regional Members / Members of Parliament (MP)	Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools
Welsh Ministers	All relevant unions
SEN Partners	Welsh Language Commissioner
LA Special Educational Needs Division	Local Police and Crime Commissioner
ERW – Education through Regional Working	Flying Start
	Child Care / Early Years
Communities for Work +	Public Services Board
Communities for Work	Legacy
Fusion	Families First Carmarthenshire

****Copies of the consultation document will be sent to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors of the surrounding catchment area of schools subject to proposals.***

Consultation Period

The consultation period for the proposals starts on 11th January 2021 and ends on 21st February 2021.

Consultees can submit their views in favour of or against a proposal. Responses received during the consultation period will not be treated as statutory objections. If consultees wish to object, they will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period outlined on page 30.

Considering your views

During the consultation period you can ask questions and express your views by writing a letter to the address below or by completing an online survey using the following link:

INSERT LINK

Letters should be sent to the following address by no later than noon on 21st February 2021:

Mr Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services,
Building 2, St. David's Park, Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen, SA31 3HB
Or E-mail to: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Drop in sessions

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we have been advised to postpone all events where there is interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result there will not be a drop in session to discuss proposals. Should you feel strongly about discussing the proposals please contact Miss Isabelle Mariani or Mrs Sharon James by sending an e-mail to DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and a virtual meeting can be arranged.

Consultation with Pupils

There will be an opportunity for the pupils of the schools subject to the proposals to participate in the consultation process during a session which will be conducted at the schools.

The information gathered from the consultation with pupils will form part of the consultation report which will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration following the consultation period.

Consultation Report

A Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks before a decision is made on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and provide Carmarthenshire County

Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposal and details of consultation undertaken with the pupils.

The Executive Board of Carmarthenshire County Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

If the Executive Board decides to continue with the proposal Carmarthenshire County Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website and posted at the schools subject to proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the schools to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians, and staff members (the schools may also distribute the notice by email).

Statutory Objection Period

The statutory notice will set out the details of the proposal and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within a period of 28 days. If objections are received an objection report will be published on the Carmarthenshire County Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to those objections.

Determination of Proposal

Carmarthenshire County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications. In doing so, the County Council will take into account any statutory objections that it received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

The Statutory Process Time-Table

The statutory process and timetable will be as follows:

11 th January 2021	Issue of this consultation document to identified and other interested parties.
21 st February 2021	Closing date for views on the proposal to be received by the Department for Education and Children.
27 th April 2021	<p>A Consultation Report will be taken to the Executive Board for a decision on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. OR alternatively proposal ends.</p> <p>The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks prior to the publication of a statutory notice.</p> <p>If the decision is made to proceed then a statutory notice will be published. The notice will outline details of the proposal and be published on the Council's web site and be displayed near the entrance of the school and schools which are subject to the proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to parents, guardians and staff members. Following publication there will be a 28 day period during which time formal written objections will be invited.</p> <p>The statutory notice will give details on how you may record your objections to the proposal.</p>
8 th June 2021	End of formal 28 day notice period for objections. County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications, in doing so the County Council will take into account any statutory objections received.
July 2021	<p>Deadline to notify parents of intention to implement proposal.</p> <p>Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.</p>

Appendix A – Community Impact Assessment

Each school has an area that it serves, referred to as the catchment area. Each school is expected to accommodate pupils from within its catchment area and schools must have regard for this ongoing demand.

Most parents send their child to their local school but parents have a right to state a preference for other schools.

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Catchment Area Analysis – January PLASC 2020 Data

Pupils attending the school from inside / outside the catchment

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, the geographical data in relation to the pupil distribution for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau catchment area indicated that of the 34 pupils on roll, 8 lived within the catchment area, whilst the remaining 26 were from outside the catchment area.

Pupils living in the catchment area attending other schools.

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, 36 pupils lived within the Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau catchment area attended other schools.

Taking into consideration the 8 pupils living within the catchment area attending Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau, and the 36 pupils living within the catchment area but attending other schools, a total of 44 pupils are living within the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau.

Other facilities or services provided by the school e.g. after school clubs/ community Library

The school currently hold a breakfast club for pupils, between 8:10am and 8:50am. Pupils also benefit from an after-school club, which is held between 3:30pm and 5:30pm on Thursday and Friday.

Mudiad Meithrin currently operates from the school between 9am and 3pm on weekdays. The Meithrin provides Welsh medium provision for pupils from the age of two years.

Community Impact

If approved, the proposal will enhance the community of Blaenau's access to 21st Century teaching and learning and community facilities.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

Catchment Area Analysis – January PLASC 2020 Data

Pupils attending the school from inside / outside the catchment

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, the geographical data in relation to the pupil distribution for Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie catchment area indicated that of the 229 pupils on roll, 180 lived within the catchment area, whilst the remaining 49 were from outside the catchment area.

Pupils living in the catchment area attending other schools.

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, 140 pupils lived within the Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie catchment area attended other schools.

Other facilities or services the school provides e.g. after school clubs / community library

The school currently hold a breakfast club for pupils during the weekdays between 8:10am - 8.40am.

Llandybie pupils also have access to 'Clwb Carco' which offers wrap around care Monday to Friday between 9am and 12pm.

The pupils also benefit from an after-school care club, which are held Monday to Friday between 3:15pm and 5:30pm.

Community Impact

If approved, the proposal will allow increased opportunities for access to Welsh medium education pupil places within the Llandybie area, in line with national and local policies.

Appendix B – Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council's vision is to provide a service, which will ensure access to high quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, this enabling the achievement of their full potential within the context of the unique bilingual nature of the county.

This proposal supports the Council's vision and aims for Welsh medium education as set out in Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017 – 2020. The proposal will allow greater opportunities for access to Welsh medium education within the Llandybie area and will ensure linguistic continuity from the nursery sector along the key stages to the secondary sector so that every pupil becomes fluent and confident in both Welsh and English languages.

Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau

Standards*

In Foundation Phase, pupils are assessed in different areas of learning. Based on 2019 data, 66.67% of pupils achieved at least Outcome 5 in 'Language, Literacy and Communication (in Welsh)', whilst 33.33% of pupils achieved at least Outcome 6. In Key Stage 2, pupils are assessed in each of the core subjects. Based on 2019 data, 57.14% of pupils achieved at least Level 4 in Welsh first language whilst 14.29% achieved at least Level 5.

After school activities which provide additional opportunities to use the Welsh language

The school have previously provided pupils with the opportunity to participate in Urdd club and 'friends club' which were aimed at supporting the Welsh language.

In addition, Mudiad Meithrin operates from the school, providing Welsh medium provision for pupils from the age of two years.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie

Standards*

School standards have improved in the foundation phase compared with previous years in Welsh language. Outcomes at KS2 have been varied however progress in Welsh have improved with many making expected or better progress.

After school activities which provide additional opportunities to use the Welsh language

School pupils are offered the opportunity to attend the Urdd Llangrannog summer camp which offers a range of activities.

Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie operates a 'Siarter iaith' initiative to encourage the use of Welsh language socially in school. The school is working towards a bronze, silver or gold award encouraging participation from every member of the school community – pupils, parents, school governors and the wider community.

*No National Teacher assessments were conducted in 2020 due to the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus outbreak. For this reason, 2019 data has been illustrated.

Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council Assessing Impact

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

What is the general duty?

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all.

The duties are legal obligations. Failure to meet the duties may result in authorities being exposed to legal challenge.

Under equality legislation, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The Equality Act 2010 introduces a new public sector duty which extends this coverage to age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process. It is also important to note that public authorities subject to the equality duties are also likely to be subject to the obligations under the Human Rights Act and it is therefore wise also to consider the potential impact that decisions could have on human rights as part of the same process.

Carmarthenshire's approach to Equality Impact

In order to ensure that the council is considering the potential equality impact of its proposed policies and practices, and in order to evidence that we have done so, every proposal will be required to be supported by the attached Equality Impact Assessment. Where this assessment identifies a significant impact then more detail may be required.

Reporting on assessments

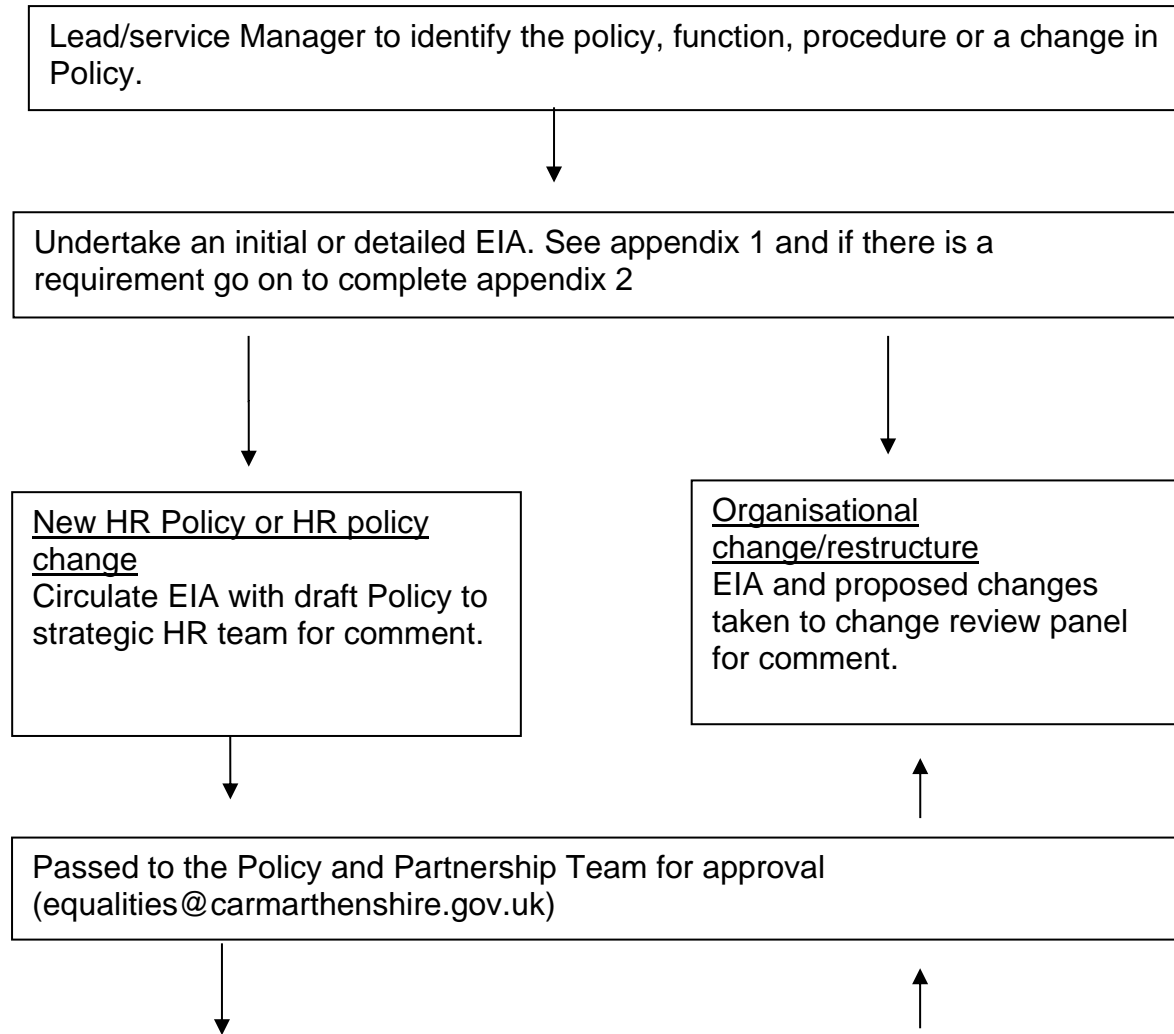
Where it is clear from the assessment that the likely impact on the authority's ability to meet the general duty is substantial, then it must publish a report.

Initial and Detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The initial EIA (appendix 1) is a simple and quick method of assessing the effect of a policy, function, procedure, decision including financial cuts on one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Service Manager responsible for the relevant new or revised policies, functions, procedures and financial decisions must undertake, at least, an initial EIA and where relevant a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2); EIA must be attached as background paper with reports to Executive and Scrutiny.

Equality impact assessment – Process to follow where HR implications have been identified



Amendments identified /further work to complete or referral to legal

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Appendix 1

Department: Education & Children	Completed by (lead): Sara Griffiths	Date of initial assessment: October 2020 Revision Dates: July 2021
Area to be assessed: (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision)	This proposal is to review primary education provision in the Blaenau and Llandybie areas. The scheme is to re-locate Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie to a new site with investment to provide increased capacity in a new school building with 21 st Century facilities and excellent outdoor areas. As part of this scheme, the proposal is to increase the capacity of the school to 315 with provision for 45 nursery places.	
Is this existing or new function/policy, procedure, practice or decision?	School Re-organisation Proposal – Modernising Education Programme	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Programme • Modernising Education Programme • School Organisation Code 2018 • PLASC Data 2020 • The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the proposed function/policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.	The aim of the proposal is to create sustainable primary education for the long term in the Blaenau / Llandybie areas with facilities fit for the 21 st Century with sufficient capacity for current and future pupils. This proposal will increase the capacity and number of Welsh medium places available at Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie and follow the objectives and actions as set out in Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The scheme will provide the pupils and staff of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie with a new school building and facilities which are suitable for teaching and learning in the 21 st Century.
---	---

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to:- (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (2) advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) foster good relations between different groups (see guidance notes)		2. What is the level of impact on each group/protected characteristics in terms of the three aims of the duty? Please indicate high (H) medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each.	3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each of the group/protected characteristics?		4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact what mitigating factors have you considered?
Protected characteristics	Age	L			The proposal will provide a new school building to accommodate pupils aged 3-11 within the school building.
	Disability	L			The new school building will be fully DDA compliant ensuring full accessibility for all.
	Gender reassignment	N	Neutral		
	Race	N	Neutral		

	Religion/Belief	N	Neutral		
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	Neutral		
	Sexual Orientation	N	Neutral		
	Sex	N	Neutral		
	Welsh language	L		The increase in capacity will allow greater opportunities for access to Welsh medium education within the Llandybie area in line with national and local policies.	
	Any other area	L		The increase in capacity of the school will not have an effect on schools surrounding the Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie catchment area.	

5. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?

YES

☒

NO ☐

The Project Officer has liaised with the Headteacher, Staff and Parents of Ysgol Gynradd Llandybie with regards to the proposal. All stakeholders will be fully consulted during the formal consultation period.

6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any? Ensure that all key stakeholders are fully informed throughout the statutory process.		
7. Procurement Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal, service. N/A Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice.		
8. Human resources Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human resource implications to the activity, proposal or service? As there will be an increase in capacity, additional staffing may be required. However, this will be addressed as the scheme progresses and Human Resources will be fully consulted.		
9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function/policy/procedure/practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more H under section 2)	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved by: Head of Service	Simon Davies	Date: October 2020

Appendix D - Bilingualism

Advantages of Bilingualism

What does being bilingual mean?

The ability to live your everyday life using two languages.

Being able to switch from one language to another fluently and confidently at any given time.

The advantages of being bilingual

Education

- Bilingual children tend to be more successful in education. They tend to perform better in tasks.
- Bilingual people find it easier to learn additional languages.
- Children in Welsh medium education do just as well, if not better, in English as children in English medium education.

Evidence:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/English%20in%20key%20stages%202%20and%203%20-%20June%202014.pdf>

Career

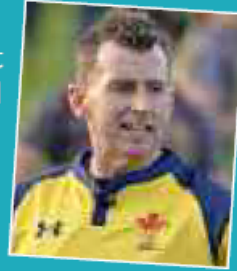
- Speaking two languages is an extra skill to put on your application form and CV.
- Bilingual people earn an average of 11% more income.
- Employers need bilingual workforces in Wales, because services need to be offered bilingually in accordance with the Welsh Standards Paper.

Evidence: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/welsh-speakers-more-likely-top-6335953>

Nigel Owens

“Without my Welsh education in School I would not have had all the opportunities to present and perform and I would not have been encouraged to start as a referee at 16 years old.

I carry Welsh with me wherever I referee in the world. Before each game I listen to Welsh music. I'm lucky enough to have two languages and Welsh is an important part of who I am. ”



Alex Jones

“Having a bilingual education has been pivotal to me in so many ways. It meant that I had twice as many opportunities, it doubled my capacity to learn other languages, it enhanced my ability to communicate and therefore make friends, and most importantly, it gave me a strong sense of belonging and of our heritage. Starting out as a broadcaster in Welsh gave me the vast experience I needed to move forward to my dream job. Without a bilingual education, I'd be in a very different place. ”



Health

- Research shows that being bilingual delays the onset of Dementia and other symptoms of Alzheimer disease.

Evidence: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3033609/>
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/science-news/12005837/Bilingual-people-twice-as-likely-to-recover-from-a-stroke.html>

Life

- Speaking two languages widens your horizons.
- Being able to speak Welsh gives you access to many aspects of Welsh culture, history and identity.
- Speaking Welsh can provide a key to rich community life.

- Being able to speak Welsh gives you a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- Being able to switch from one language to the other with confidence gives the individual self-confidence and pride.
- Speaking many languages can make people more tolerant towards other cultures.

Evidence: http://www.assembly.wales/NAfW%20Documents/paper_3_-_prof._colin_baker.pdf%20-%202002092010/paper_3_-_prof._colin_baker-English.pdf

Common parental concerns

‘How can I help my child with homework if I don’t understand much Welsh myself?’

Welsh schools set homework instruction in Welsh and in English so there will be no problem in understanding what your child is being asked to do at home. The schools themselves will be happy to provide educational advice and the parents evening will be in your chosen language.

Work set will be appropriate to the pupil’s age and ability level and therefore should be within your child’s reach.

Developing increasingly as independent learners, you may find that your child is happy to progress without extra parental guidance as they get older.

‘Will pupils who struggle with Welsh medium education have to move to an English medium school?’

It is the Local Authority’s desire that all pupil receive the opportunity to become bilingual in both Welsh and English languages. In Welsh medium schools, pupils will receive their education principally through the medium of Welsh, with English being taught as a subject in Key Stage 2 and used as a medium for instruction. Sufficient support will be provided to all pupils as required through a range of mechanisms and tailored to the individual’s needs.

‘Will my child’s thinking be affected by being bilingual?’

‘The answer is “yes”, and probably for the better. The presence of two languages in the operating system of the brain is likely to produce a more richly-fed thinking engine (Baker, 2000:66-67).

‘Will my child be able to cope with learning through the medium of Welsh?’

School and staff are fully committed to providing the necessary support to all pupils and parents through a wide range of mechanisms: open door policy; homework provided bilingually; support by The Athrawon Bro Service; bilingual school website

etc. Staff are also required to differentiate the curriculum and make reasonable adjustments when required to meet the needs of every pupil.

‘Should the Welsh language be forced?’

International evidence, cited by the Welsh Government, confirms that the most effective way of developing bilingual children is to immerse them in the less common language whilst also developing their skills in the more common language. This is consistent with national policy to expand Welsh medium education in order to develop increasing numbers of fully bilingual young people and to enable more children to benefit from the advantages of bilingualism, gathered through international research.

‘Will learning through the medium of Welsh affect later life opportunities?’

Yes, but probably for the better. It is the belief of the department, based upon international evidence and local experience, that children benefit from a truly bilingual education, which provides wider skills developments, such as cognitive ability, task understanding and flexibility, enhanced powers of concentration etc. and that all children should receive these opportunities. Being bilingual or multilingual also broadens individuals’ cultural experiences and can enhance career prospects. Bilingualism will increasingly over time become an employment skill and possessing Welsh language skills will increasingly over time give individuals a competitive advantage when seeking employment.

‘Does learning through the medium of Welsh segregate English speaking pupils/families?’

On the contrary, learning through the medium of Welsh provides all children with opportunity to become fully bilingual with the skills to be able to read, write and speak in both Welsh and English languages by the time that they leave primary school. In Welsh medium schools, children receive their education principally through the medium of Welsh with English being taught as a subject in Key Stage 2 and used as a medium of instruction. Learning through the medium of Welsh also helps family/community members with the opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills.

‘Will children with additional learning needs be able to learn through the medium of Welsh?’

Carmarthenshire County Council’s policy is that all its schools should be inclusive, with children with additional learning needs being educated in a mainstream setting alongside their peers wherever possible. In the vast majority of cases, this is achieved, with all children benefitting. All pupils with additional learning needs have specific individual plans based on their circumstances and a tailored support programme is provided according to need. Generally, an additional learning need is not a barrier to learning two languages. There will be rare instances, however where a child may be diagnosed with a condition that is not conducive to a fully bilingual education. In these circumstances a package of support is identified by professional practitioners and discussed with parents.

Carmarthenshire Language Learning Centres

Due to the nature of the county we need to provide a language service to all latecomers so that they can become fully assimilated into our bilingual communities and are steeped in Welsh language and culture. In order to achieve this, we need to address the importance of dedicated facilities to support latecomers to a level where they can easily integrate into the day to day timetable in Welsh medium schools. Thorough research shows that this can be more easily achieved through intensive language courses. Language centres are the vehicles needed to ensure that this becomes a reality. As alluded to above, the language centres will also provide language support for parents and pupils and will also have provision for professional learning and Welsh for Adults.

Bilingualism in Carmarthenshire

Further information can be found using the following links:

- **Cymraeg gyda'r plant / Welsh with your kids- give it a go!**

<http://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/media/1214148/gd4808-taflencymraegiplant4-002.pdf>

Within this booklet you will find a number of useful Welsh words and phrases which can be used to practise the Welsh language with young children. This will help them to speak naturally and confidently.

- **Bod yn Ddwylieithog... yn Sir Gâr / Being Bilingual... in Carmarthenshire**

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1216432/being-bilingual.pdf>

This booklet details what it means to be bilingual whilst highlighting the advantages that can be achieved from being bilingual in areas such as education, career, health and life. In addition, within this booklet you will find the answers to many common parental concerns regarding the Welsh language.

- **Welcome to Wales Welcome to Carmarthenshire Welcome to Welsh**

<http://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1216436/welcome-pack.pdf>

[This booklet has been prepared by Carmarthenshire County Council to welcome newcomers to its bilingual County. Within the booklet you will find information on how the Welsh language is used in Carmarthenshire along with details on where you can find Welsh language support and useful websites to visit to develop your Welsh language sk](#)

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EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

RECONFIGURE AND REMODEL BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT SERVICES AT YSGOL RHYDYGORS TO IMPROVE PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- The proposal as outlined below and in the attached consultation document;
- Officers to initiate formal consultation on the proposal.
- That a report is submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period.

Reasons:

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.
- To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

Executive Board Decision Required Yes – 21/12/2020

Council Decision Required NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Directorate:
Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:
Simon Davies

Report Author:
Sara Griffiths

Designations:

Head of Access to Education

Modernisation Team Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

**RECONFIGURE AND REMODEL BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT
SERVICES AT YSGOL RHYDYGORS TO IMPROVE
PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Background

Following a strategic review of the Local Authority's Behaviour Services, the LA aims to move from a silo focus on behaviour to a more universal approach to include pupil wellbeing and engagement. To achieve this the LA has developed a Four Phase Model of its behaviour services which includes providing behaviour and engagement support on four levels. Support ranges from intervention and support in mainstream schools to specialised respite or residential placements.

This proposal supports the realisation of the Four Phase Model. Currently, the Local Authority have a range of settings in which pupils with SEBD are supported. This includes Ysgol Rhydygors, Carmarthenshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Unit for secondary pupils), Canolfan Bro Tywi (Pupil Referral Unit for primary pupils) and Canolfan y Gors (Pupil Referral Unit for secondary pupils with significant anxiety and/or emotional wellbeing and mental health issues requiring the support of CAMHS-Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

The vision of the four-phase model includes encouraging each of these settings to work together as one Specialist Behaviour and Wellbeing Support Service Team. One of the principal ways of achieving this is to create consistency in the type of provision offered at each of the settings and to create a system ensuring that links with mainstream schools.

At the current time, once a child is placed in Rhydygors, the historical evidence suggests that the young person remains there until they are 16 with no further mainstream experience.

The new Four Phase Model is developing behaviour support services to allow easier access to early intervention so that schools have direct access to a link Behaviour Support Service team member who will be trained in restorative approaches, trauma informed practices and have continuous professional development to support the needs of their cluster of schools. Members of the Behaviour Support Community team are supported by their line Manager, the Lead Officer for Behaviour Support Services and PRUs and an ECP with senior responsibility for behaviour to address any young people that they feel they need advice, support and guidance with so that any training will be approved to meet the needs of the young learners and the schools they attend.

As the Behaviour Support Community Team and PRUs will come under Phase 3 management there will be consistency in training programmes, ethos development, curriculum offer and the development of trauma informed practitioners in a trauma informed setting and psychological informed environments (PIE).

By having regular and link access to Behaviour Support Community Team staff we will have greater opportunity to work with our learners at an earlier stage for intervention and allow us through multi-agency meetings and possibly TAPPAS (Teams Around Pupils Parents and Settings), currently a pilot project in the local authority, we will be able to develop creative and innovative support packages at the earliest possible time too keep our learners in mainstream if this is the most appropriate setting.

There are always learners who have complex needs and require robust support packages outside of mainstream provision but our ethos supports inclusivity and developing needs led support and services. Within the Four Phase model when a child is recommended for a place in Phases 3 or 4 there should always be the opportunity for transition back to mainstream, or even access mainstream for subjects that they engage with positively and the learning of others is not negatively impacted, when the young person can regulate emotions and engage in their education in a positive and safe manner. This can be undertaken by continuous monitoring and assessment and with close, transparent and trusting relationships with our mainstream schools.

For the reasons of consistency, access to highly specialist support, access to a broad and balanced curriculum with a range of accreditation options and the offer of individual and bespoke education plans offered in the current PRUs through the 3 Tiered approach, there is a requirement to discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors as a special school and establish it as a Pupil Referral Unit. This proposal will initiate this change.

Whilst it is acknowledged that Ysgol Rhydygors has been providing education for pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) in the form of a special school for a number of years, it is recognised that an enhancement of the PRU model will more appropriately cater for the needs of society and its young people providing consistent opportunities across the county.

The Proposal

1. In line with the School Organisation Code (2018) the Local Authority proposes to:
Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors Special School as of the 31st August 2021

All former Ysgol Rhydygors pupils will continue to receive their education on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school. If approved, instead of receiving provision in a special school, pupils will be educated in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Whilst the proposal should be considered as a whole. This consultation document relates to Point 1 only. Points 2 and 3 noted below will be undertaken via separate procedures.

2. Should the above (Point 1) be approved, the Local Authority will establish a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school as of the 1st September 2021
3. Additionally, should Point 1 be approved, the Local Authority will establish a Children's Home/Respite Centre on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school/Residential Unit as of the 1st September 2021.

All former Ysgol Rhydygors pupils who have an element of residential education as part of their SEN Statement will continue to receive this on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school.

Recommendation

E&C Scrutiny Committee is requested to endorse the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board that a formal consultation be initiated.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES: Draft Consultation Document
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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:



Head of Access to Education

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 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

None.

5. Risk Management Issues

If the proposal is not implemented the local authority will continue to provide inconsistent SEBD provision to pupils across the County.

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. Physical Assets

The Ysgol Rhydygors site will continue to be used for Education purposes. It will be the location of the Pupil Referral Unit and Children's Home/Respite Centre.

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 – Will be consulted on 23/11/2020

2. Local Member(s) – The local members will be notified of the proposal and will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

3. Community / Town Council – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

4. Relevant Partners – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

**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
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/
MEP Biennial Review	www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk Executive Board 20 th June 2016
21 st Century Schools Website	www.21stcenturyschools.org

Reconfigure and remodel Behaviour Support Services at Ysgol Rhydygors to improve provision for children and young people

Consultation Document

DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Foreword

As part of its statutory obligation to keep the number and type of school places under review, the County Council has adopted a wide-ranging programme designed to improve school buildings and enhance opportunities for learning. The strategy reflects the vision and policies established by the County Council which embrace the requirement to deliver services, to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic and effective means. In our drive to continually improve on the services made available to all learners, we must maximise the finite resources available to the Council, and continue to work in partnership with all those who have a contribution to make to the process of learning and the wellbeing of both children and their families. Schools of the future will need to serve as a focus for a wide range of services dedicated to serving the needs of the community through a joined up approach.

Carmarthenshire is blessed with many very able education leaders and teachers but the continuing changes to the curriculum places a heavy demand on their skills to meet the wide ranging demands of all children. Although the processes of learning, and skills of teaching, are extremely important, deep subject knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential if learners with their various gifts in different areas are to discover and develop their talents to the full.

Schools designed to meet current demands are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through high quality and inspirational teaching. In the planning of new provision it will be important to ensure that our schools are properly equipped to enhance opportunities for social inclusion, sustainable development, equal opportunities and bilingualism. In practical terms we need to ensure that provision reflects the changing patterns of population, with schools based in the right location with accommodation and facilities fit to serve the needs of all learners in the twenty first century.

Consultation will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties. The information set out in this document is intended to clarify the proposals for your school and support the consultation process.



Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Glossary of Abbreviations

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AN	Admission number
EM	English medium
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
LA	Local Authority
MCSW	Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
NOR	Number on Roll
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census Data
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
SEBD	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
SS	Special School
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WM	Welsh medium

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Introduction

Carmarthenshire County Council has a legal responsibility to review the number and type of schools it maintains in the area and whether it is making the best use of the resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

As part of this process the Council has published its vision on how it sees the future for all of the primary and secondary schools in the County and this includes consulting on the future shape of education in Ysgol Rhydygors.

This consultation document outlines current provision and options to determine the optimum solution for meeting future need.

School(s) affected by the proposal

The catchment area of Ysgol Rhydygors covers the whole of Carmarthenshire therefore all schools will be notified of the proposal.

		Ysgol Rhydygors
School Location		Llansteffan Road Johnstown Carmarthenshire SA31 3NQ
Age Range		7-16
School Category		Special School
Language Category		English Medium/Bilingual
Number of pupils January 2020 (of which are residential pupils)		37 (4)
Number of pupils previously on the register (of which are residential pupils)	January 2019	45 (6)
	January 2018	46 (7)
	January 2017	46 (11)
	January 2016	38 (12)
Pupil Projections	January 2021	N/a
	January 2022	N/a
	January 2023	N/a
	January 2024	N/a
	January 2025	N/a
Capacity		46
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£44,049
School Budget (2020/21)		£1,982,000
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn
Building Condition Category		C (Poor)

Estyn Inspections

As part of a national programme of school inspections, Estyn commissions reviews of all schools. The most recent Estyn inspection for Ysgol Rhydygors took place in November 2019 and consultees may access the finding either via the Estyn website at www.estyn.gov.uk or you may request a copy from the Local Authority (for which a charge in respect of photocopying may be made).

Estyn use a four-point judgement scale to evaluate a provider's effectiveness:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths.

The inspection judgements for Ysgol Rhydygors are shown in the following table:

Inspection Area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Adequate and needs improvement
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Current Provision/Background

Ysgol Rhydygors is a purpose built maintained residential special school in the town of Carmarthen. It is important to note that Ysgol Rhydygors is the only special school within the region providing education for pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). The school provides special education for pupils between the age of 7 and 16 years old. There is capacity to cater for up to 46 pupils with significant social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) requiring a specialised long-term day or residential placement.

Currently there are 37 pupils on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an individual development plan (IDP) principally for social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. Many pupils attend the school from within the local authority and a few come from neighbouring local authorities. Nearly all pupils are from English-speaking backgrounds. Around 54% of pupils receive free school meals. Less than 20% of pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The school provides a personalised and adaptive curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to access purposeful learning opportunities develop engagement. The school continues to improve its approach to developing the skills of the pupils through this curriculum.

The school's most recent Estyn inspection, November 2019, judged the school to be 'adequate and needs improvement' in all five inspection areas. The school was placed in Estyn Review.

The current leadership structure of the school includes an acting headteacher, who was appointed in September 2018, and a senior leadership team that is made up of a pastoral lead, a business manager a head of care and an assistant head teacher.

Capacity Information

	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Total Capacity	46	46	46	46	46
Pupil Numbers*	38*	46*	46*	45*	37*
Residential pupil numbers	12	11	7	6	4
Surplus	8	0	0	1	9
% Surplus	17%	0%	0%	0.2%	20%

*Includes residential pupils

As can be seen from the table above, surplus capacity at Ysgol Rhydygors has been limited in the last five years which demonstrates that demand for SEBD provision is high within the Carmarthen area.

Rationale for Change

Following a strategic review of the Local Authority's Behaviour Services, the LA aims to move from a silo focus on behaviour to a more universal approach to include pupil wellbeing and engagement. To achieve this the LA has developed a Four Phase Model of its behaviour services which includes providing behaviour and engagement support on four levels. Support ranges from intervention and support in mainstream schools to specialised respite or residential placements.

This proposal supports the realisation of the Four Phase Model. Currently, the Local Authority have a range of settings in which pupils with SEBD are supported. This includes Ysgol Rhydygors, Carmarthenshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Unit for secondary pupils), Canolfan Bro Tywi (Pupil Referral Unit for primary pupils) and Canolfan y Gors (Pupil Referral Unit for secondary pupils with significant anxiety and/or emotional wellbeing and mental health issues requiring the support of CAMHS-Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

The vision of the four-phase model includes encouraging each of these settings to work together as one Specialist Behaviour and Wellbeing Support Service Team. One of the principal ways of achieving this is to create consistency in the type of provision offered at each of the settings and to create a system ensuring that links with mainstream schools.

At the current time, once a child is placed in Rhydygors, the historical evidence suggests that the young person remains there until they are 16 with no further mainstream experience.

The new Four Phase Model is developing behaviour support services to allow easier access to early intervention so that schools have direct access to a link Behaviour Support Service team member who will be trained in restorative approaches, trauma informed practices and have continuous professional development to support the needs of their cluster of schools. Members of the Behaviour Support Community team are supported by their line Manager, the Lead Officer for Behaviour Support Services and PRUs and an ECP with senior responsibility for behaviour to address any young people that they feel they need advice, support and guidance with so that any training will be approved to meet the needs of the young learners and the schools they attend.

As the Behaviour Support Community Team and PRUs will come under Phase 3 management there will be consistency in training programmes, ethos development, curriculum offer and the development of trauma informed practitioners in a trauma informed setting and psychological informed environments (PIE).

By having regular and link access to Behaviour Support Community Team staff we will have greater opportunity to work with our learners at an earlier stage for intervention and allow us through multi-agency meetings and possibly TAPPAS (Teams Around Pupils Parents and Settings), currently a pilot project in the local authority, we will be able to develop creative and innovative support packages at the earliest possible time to keep our learners in mainstream if this is the most appropriate setting.

There are always learners who have complex needs and require robust support packages outside of mainstream provision but our ethos supports inclusivity and developing needs led support and services. Within the Four Phase model when a child is recommended for a place in Phases 3 or 4 there should always be the opportunity for transition back to mainstream, or even access mainstream for subjects that they engage with positively and the learning of others is not negatively impacted, when the young person can regulate emotions and engage in their education in a positive and safe manner. This can be undertaken by continuous monitoring and assessment and with close, transparent and trusting relationships with our mainstream schools.

For the reasons of consistency, access to highly specialist support, access to a broad and balanced curriculum with a range of accreditation options and the offer of individual and bespoke education plans offered in the current PRUs through the 3 Tiered approach, there is a requirement to discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors as a special school and establish it as a Pupil Referral Unit. This proposal will initiate this change.

Whilst it is acknowledged that Ysgol Rhydygors has been providing education for pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) in the form of a special school for a number of years, it is recognised that an enhancement of the PRU model will more appropriately cater for the needs of society and its young people providing consistent opportunities across the county.

It is the Authority's intention to establish a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) on the former Ysgol Rhydygors site as an alternative means of provision. It must be noted, that the establishment of a PRU (in place of Ysgol Rhydygors Special School) should be considered separate to this consultation and will be carried out via separate procedures following the necessary determination of the proposal described within this consultation document.

The Proposal

1. In line with the School Organisation Code (2018) the Local Authority proposes to: **Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors Special School as of the 31st August 2021**

All former Ysgol Rhydygors pupils will continue to receive their education on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school. If approved, instead of receiving provision in a special school, pupils will be educated in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Whilst the proposal should be considered as a whole. This consultation document relates to Point 1 only. Points 2 and 3 noted below will be undertaken via separate procedures.

2. Should the above (Point 1) be approved, the Local Authority will establish a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school as of September 2021
3. Additionally, should Point 1 be approved, the Local Authority will establish a Children's Home/Respite centre on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school/Residential Unit as of September 2021.

All former Ysgol Rhydygors pupils who have an element of residential education as part of their SEN Statement will continue to receive this on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school.

To coincide and further develop the proposals, the Local Authority are currently in the process of progressing an ICF funding application to develop a new, 21st century children's home. This will hopefully enhance the children's home model and provision available and will meet the needs of children both locally and regionally. Whilst the application is in the very early stages of conception, early indications are initially positive due to the need for provision development.

What does the proposal mean?

Should the proposal described in this consultation document be approved, Ysgol Rhydygors will close as a Special School. The school site will be used for the provision of a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) which will be established (via separate procedures) subject to the determination of the proposal described within this document. In addition, the Local Authority will establish a Children's Home/Respite centre on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors for current Ysgol Rhydygors residential pupils and future pupils at the proposed PRU will continue to have the option of accessing a residential educational component as part of their education plans.

Canolfan Bro Tywi (PRU for primary aged pupils) and the Behaviour Support Community Team who are co-located on the site will not be affected by the proposal outlined in this consultation document.

What is a PRU?

A PRU is a type of school established and maintained by a local authority to provide suitable education for children and young people who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, may not receive such education (section 19 of the Education Act 1996).

More detail on the management of PRUs can be found in the following document:
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/statutory-guidance-the-education-pupil-referral-units-management-committees-etc-wales-regulations-2014.pdf>

The LA are responsible for the resourcing, organisation and maintenance of a PRU.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the proposal

Advantages

- The Behaviour Support Team can ensure that referrals to our provision will be on the basis of a comprehensive assessment of the pupil's needs and aspirations, with input from the pupil and his/her parents or carers, to ensure that the selected provision is a good match.
- Provision will be an individualised package often involving more than one provider (the school and the PRU) as even pupils with similar socio-economic backgrounds or with ALN can vary enormously in their needs.
- Assessment will include understanding pupils' aspirations for post-16 to ensure that the academic and/or vocational offer supports their progression. This will mean effective collaboration between the PRU, school and wider providers.
- Teachers will adapt programmes and tasks to the individual needs and learning styles of pupils.
- The behaviour support service will support a curriculum that include core skills, including maths, Welsh and English, along with a vocational offer involving work placements.
- The behaviour support service will offer a curricula which provide opportunities for engagement with the wider community which are beneficial and motivating for pupils.
- Partnership approaches with mainstream schools will support successful reintegration as well as having the potential for the two types of schools to learn from each other.
- Working as part of a wide behaviour service will allow pupils to be given appropriate choices enhances the capacity of young people to act independently and make positive choices
- Th wider behaviour support team will focus on delivering specialised emotional wellbeing interventions to help students develop the self-management skills they need to make successful transitions back into mainstream schools, into work or further education.
- The wider behaviour service will be able to provide a wide range of specialist staff who are well trained, caring and knowledgeable with the confidence and competence to make positive relationships and effect change

- An integrated model with the mainstream school will ensure that teachers have expertise in the subjects they are teaching.

Disadvantages

- Initially schools will be nervous that a long-term school provision will not be available in more complex cases.
- Delays in obtaining all the relevant information from referring schools meaning that some students start without the most effective provision in place for them.

Impact on SEN

The creation of a PRU to cater for the needs of a diverse range of pupils of all ages with SEBDs on one co-located site will support the improvement in the quality and standards of provision by enabling an alignment in the quality and standard of provision offered to pupils with SEBDs across the Authority. Joint professional development opportunities for teaching staff and behaviour support practitioners will strengthen the LA's specialised SEBDs provision offer and it will support innovative behaviour practice, widen the range of relationship interventions and approaches and enhance opportunities for the development and provision of a pupil-led personalised curriculum and opportunities for meaningful family engagement.

The proposal will strengthen the LA's behaviour outreach element of provision to form strong and effective links to mainstream schools and support pupils to reengage with mainstream education as quickly as change has been affected. It will build capacity in mainstream schools to make inclusive provision for pupils with complex behaviour difficulties and meet the needs of SEBDs pupils within their local community.

WESP

The Local Authority is committed to providing a bilingual service to Carmarthenshire's learners. The Authority recognises that bilingual provision in our Special Schools and Units is currently limited. We will work with these settings in developing bilingual provision to ensure that learners with additional learning needs can access bilingual provision and support in their chosen language. This meets section 63 of the ALN Act 2018 but also meets the expectations of ALNET.

Risks and Counter Measures

Risk		Counter Measure
1.	Failure to obtain statutory approval to implement process.	- Follow guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018
2.	An unsatisfactory consultation with the community	- Develop communication strategy and consult on a regular basis to address concerns

Staffing

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

The Local Authority has staffing policies and procedures in respect of school reorganisation and these will be implemented if required. The Authority will support school staff in securing suitable alternative employment if at all possible, through redeployment processes should this be necessary.

Financial Implications

Ysgol Rhydygors is funded in accordance with the School Funding Regulations 2010 (Wales) and the County Council's Scheme for Financing Schools, receiving an annual delegated budget based on previous years costs and budget allocations and amended for any changes in provision agreed in advance with the LA. As with all school delegated budgets the schools carry forward their surplus / deficit school balances into the next financial year.

A PRU is a centrally managed resource and therefore a new budget allocation will need to be agreed from within existing resources or from reducing the schools' delegated budget as a result of the closure of Ysgol Rhydygors.

Admissions Arrangements

Whilst the Local Authority is highly committed to inclusion and to educating as many of its children and young people within their local communities there are some pupils who present with significant, persistent challenges relating to their Social, Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties ("SEBDs") and require specialised long-term day or residential SEBD provision in Ysgol Rhydygors. Admission is considered for pupils in KS2, KS3 and KS4.

All requests for admission to Ysgol Rhydygors are considered on behalf of the Director at the LA's Inclusion Panel. This Panel recommends placements in Ysgol Rhydygors

and is the only route by which a child or young person can enter Ysgol Rhydygors. This panel meets fortnightly and is chaired by an Additional Learning Needs Manager. The Inclusion Panel additionally comprises Inclusion Department Officers, an Educational and Child Psychologist, ALNCo and Head Teacher representatives of special and mainstream schools. Attendance is on a rotational basis. Papers are distributed in advance of the panel meeting electronically and all evidence, including parental and children and young peoples' views, is considered prior to a placement being recommended.

In making a decision the Inclusion Panel considers whether the SEBDs of the child or young person meet the criteria for entry to Ysgol Rhydygors evidenced by a Statement of SENs or an Individual Development Plan that includes an Educational and Child Psychologist Consultation Record outlining SEBD and parental agreement.

This admissions process to attend PRUs is through the same process requiring inclusion panel documentation to be completed with consent and agreements from schools, parent(s)/carer(s) and pupils and requires a consultation with the schools link ECP to recommend a PRU placement. The placement panel requests are discussed and agreed in the Inclusion Panel and signed off by managers and the Director before a place is formally offered.

Transitional Arrangements

If this proposal is implemented pupils registered at Ysgol Rhydygors Special School prior to the implementation of the proposal will automatically be admitted to the PRU from 1st September 2021.

Pupils currently attending Ysgol Rhydygors Special School will be sole registered at the PRU. From September 2021 those pupils with statements at annual review will be transferred to IDPs in line ALN Reform and the governments transference timetable which is yet to be published.

Alternative Options Considered

In developing a preferred option, the Authority considered a range of alternative options.

Option 1	Status Quo	Does not address the variation in provision for pupils with SEBD in Carmarthen.
Option 2	Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors and provide for pupils in the current Carmarthenshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Centre	Insufficient capacity in Carmarthenshire's Secondary Teaching and Learning Centre to accommodate Ysgol Rhydygors pupils.
Option 3	Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors and cater for pupils in mainstream schools	Schools will require specialist support that cannot be delivered in mainstream.
Option 4 (Preferred)	Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors and provide for pupils in a new Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) on the Ysgol Rhydygors school site.	Creates consistency in the quality and standard of provision on offer for pupils with SEBD in Carmarthenshire and limits disruption for pupils.
Option 5	Discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors and provide no alternative provision	Does not cater for the needs of pupils with SEBD in Carmarthen.

Transport Impact Assessment

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

Community Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix A of this consultation document for full details of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix B of this consultation document for full details of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment undertaken

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix C of this consultation document for full details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken

Evaluation of Present Arrangements

Overall, the standards pupils achieve at Rhydygors are adequate and in need of improvement.

R1: Raise standards and improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills

Many pupils make steady progress in developing their skills, with the development of physical skills a strength. The planning and teaching of skills across the curriculum is satisfactory, particularly in literacy and when developing problem-solving skills. There is minimal evidence of impact.

The wellbeing and attitudes to learning at Rhydygors are adequate and need improvement.

R2 Improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning

Working relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Most pupils feel safe in school. The majority of pupils behave, follow routines and apply themselves appropriately. However, the behaviour of a few older pupils is a concern for younger pupils. A minority of older pupils and a few younger pupils do not always engage well with their learning.

Teaching and learning experiences at Rhydygors are adequate and need improvement

R3 Improve the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of assessment

As a result of trusting relationships, pupils build their confidence and respond to challenge. However, a minority of staff do not employ behaviour strategies that support engagement and progress. Pupils are provided with a good range of learning experiences. However, provision for skills across the curriculum is at an early stage. The school is beginning to act but whole school impact is not yet evident. Most teachers' subject knowledge ensures that planning meets pupils' needs. However, in a minority of classes, teachers do not plan well enough and limits progress.

Care, support, and guidance at Rhydygors are adequate and need improving.

Leadership and management at Rhydygors are adequate and needs improvement

R4 Strengthen improvement planning

Monitoring activities to establish strengths and areas for development are appropriate. The school tracks and monitors pupils' behaviour efficiently. However, the impact of analysis has not had sufficient impact for a minority of pupils.

The governing body is developing a broader understanding of the support needs required to ensure a positive impact. However recent evaluation of action plans evidence insufficient improvement. There is still insufficient understanding of how to use support effectively and the pace of change remains slow.

R5 Improve the learning environment

The school communicates its vision and values. However, the expertise of staff and the learning environment requires consideration. There has been recent improvement in terms of safety and access to the outdoors.

Impact of the proposal

The discontinuation of Ysgol Rhydygors and the creation of a PRU to cater for the needs of a diverse range of pupils of all ages and stages of development on one co-located site will ensure a consistent approach to the relevant teaching strategies across all key stages, including the foundation phase. Key consideration to how all pupils to access the outdoors and the wider community will be aligned under the local authority's vision for an improvement in the quality and standards of provision and greater aspiration for the learning and progress of all pupils.

This will be underpinned by the local authority's specialist behaviour practices and family engagement programmes, including greater links to support and collaborate with mainstream schools. There will be greater opportunities for early identification and planned bespoke programmes that focus on reintegration where possible. It will build capacity in mainstream schools, so that systemic change leads to improvement.

Whilst we develop our specialist team and work closely with mainstream schools, we will be developing further our relationship models around the consistent use of restorative practices and ethos in our schools and settings. Closer working with mainstream schools and the PRUs and specialist behaviour support services will also allow for increased opportunity to develop intensive and robust training opportunities for schools to train alongside specialist staff to develop trauma informed practice for those complex learners who find regulating their emotions a daily challenge.

Consistent professional development opportunities for teaching and support staff will be planned from national, regional, and local expectations and coherently monitored for impact by a range of multi-agency officers.

The Consultation Process

The consultation on this proposal will follow guidelines established by the Welsh Government as stated in the School Organisation Code (2018).

Who will be consulted?

This document will be sent to the following interested parties:

Staff (Teaching and Ancillary)	Director of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Governors and Parents/Guardians	Diocesan Director of Education Church in Wales and RC
Local County Councillors	Estyn
Community Councillors	Regional Transport Consortium
Assembly Member (AM) / Regional Members / Members of Parliament (MP)	*All schools within Carmarthenshire
Welsh Ministers	All relevant unions
SEN Partners	Welsh Language Commissioner
LA Special Educational Needs Division	Local Police and Crime Commissioner
ERW – Education through Regional Working	Flying Start
	Child Care / Early Years
Communities for Work +	Public Services Board
Communities for Work	Legacy
Fusion	Families First Carmarthenshire

** Consultation document sent to Headteacher and Chair of Governors of all Primary and Secondary Schools in Carmarthenshire.*

Consultation Period

The consultation period for the proposals starts on 11th January 2021 and ends on 21st February 2021.

Consultees can submit their views in favour of or against a proposal. Responses received during the consultation period will not be treated as statutory objections. If consultees wish to object, they will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period outlined on page 19.

Considering your views

During the consultation period you can ask questions and express your views by writing a letter to the address below or by completing an online survey using the following link:

INSERT LINK

Letters should be sent to the following address by no later than noon on 21st February 2021:

Mr Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services,
Building 2, St. David's Park, Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen, SA31 3HB
Or E-mail to: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Drop in sessions

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we have been advised to postpone all events where there is interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result there will not be a drop in session to discuss proposals. Should you feel strongly about discussing the proposals please contact Miss Isabelle Mariani by sending an e-mail to DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and a virtual meeting can be arranged.

Consultation with Pupils

There will be an opportunity for the pupils of the schools subject to the proposals to participate in the consultation process during a session which will be conducted at the schools.

The information gathered from the consultation with pupils will form part of the consultation report which will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration following the consultation period.

Consultation Report

A Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks before a decision is made on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposal and details of consultation undertaken with the pupils.

The Executive Board of Carmarthenshire County Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

If the Executive Board decides to continue with the proposal Carmarthenshire County Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website and posted at the schools subject to proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the schools to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians, and staff members (the schools may also distribute the notice by email).

Statutory Objection Period

The statutory notice will set out the details of the proposal and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within a period of 28 days. If objections are received an objection report will be published on the Carmarthenshire County Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to those objections.

Determination of Proposal

Carmarthenshire County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications. In doing so, the County Council will take into account any statutory objections that it received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

The Statutory Process Time-Table

The statutory process and timetable will be as follows:

11 th January 2021	Issue of this consultation document to identified and other interested parties.
21 st February 2021	Closing date for views on the proposal to be received by the Department for Education and Children.
27 th April 2021	<p>A Consultation Report will be taken to the Executive Board for a decision on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. OR alternatively proposal ends.</p> <p>The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks prior to the publication of a statutory notice.</p> <p>If the decision is made to proceed then a statutory notice will be published. The notice will outline details of the proposal and be published on the Council's web site and be displayed near the entrance of the school and schools which are subject to the proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to parents, guardians and staff members. Following publication there will be a 28 day period during which time formal written objections will be invited.</p> <p>The statutory notice will give details on how you may record your objections to the proposal.</p>
8 th June 2021	End of formal 28 day notice period for objections. County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications, in doing so the County Council will take into account any statutory objections received.
July 2021	<p>Deadline to notify parents of intention to implement proposal.</p> <p>Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.</p>

Appendix A – Community Impact Assessment

Ysgol Rhydygors is located within the Carmarthen Town South ward, the ward profile can be viewed by clicking on the following link [Carmarthen Town South Ward](#)

Community Impact

If the proposal is implemented there will be no change for the community. Ysgol Rhydygors school site will continue to be used for education purposes and be maintained by the Local Authority.

Other facilities or services provided by the school e.g. after school clubs/ community Library

The school via the residential team offer after-school provision for primary aged pupils on a needs led basis. This is a wrap around service supporting the pupil and their family by providing afterschool care and support from 3-7pm.

Due to the residential element of the school being active from the end of the school day, the school is not offered for use by the local community outside of school hours.

Appendix B – Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council's vision is to provide a service, which will ensure access to high quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, this enabling the achievement of their full potential within the context of the unique bilingual nature of the county.

The language category of Ysgol Rhydygors is English Medium/Bilingual.

The school's most recent Estyn inspection (November 2019) noted that 'Many pupils develop basic Welsh language skills largely competently in different subjects. For example, in mathematics, the majority of pupils recognise numbers in Welsh and use them to give their answers correctly. Welsh first language pupils speak confidently on a range of topics in both Welsh and English. However, these pupils do not always extend their learning and achieve appropriate levels of accreditation because the focus in lessons is on materials suitable for Welsh second language.'

Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council Assessing Impact

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

What is the general duty?

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all.

The duties are legal obligations. Failure to meet the duties may result in authorities being exposed to legal challenge.

Under equality legislation, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The Equality Act 2010 introduces a new public sector duty which extends this coverage to age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process. It is also important to note that public authorities subject to the equality duties are also likely to be subject to the obligations under the Human Rights Act and it is therefore wise also to consider the potential impact that decisions could have on human rights as part of the same process.

Carmarthenshire's approach to Equality Impact

In order to ensure that the council is considering the potential equality impact of its proposed policies and practices, and in order to evidence that we have done so, every proposal will be required to be supported by the attached Equality Impact Assessment. Where this assessment identifies a significant impact then more detail may be required.

Reporting on assessments

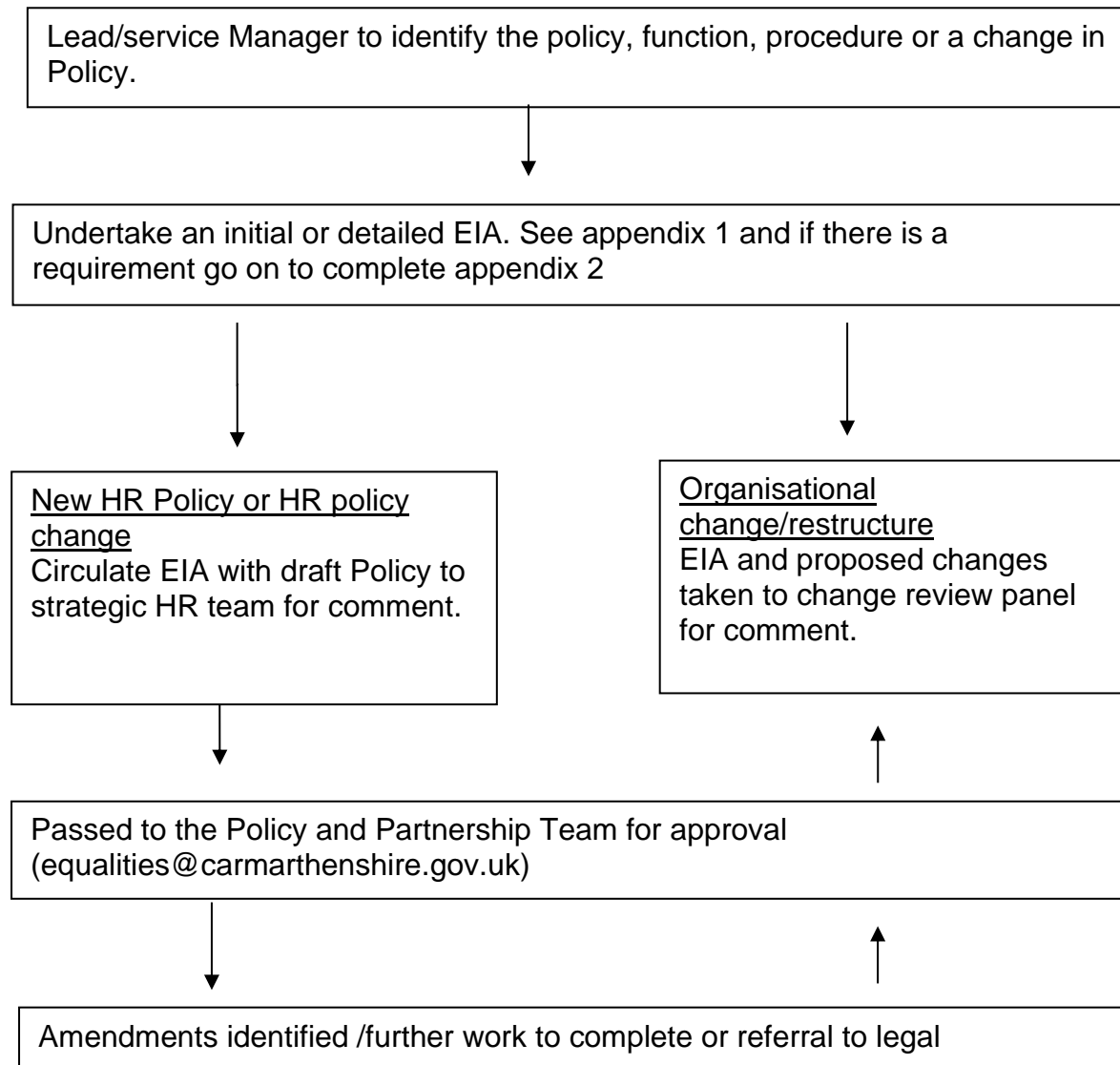
Where it is clear from the assessment that the likely impact on the authority's ability to meet the general duty is substantial, then it must publish a report.

Initial and Detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The initial EIA (appendix 1) is a simple and quick method of assessing the effect of a policy, function, procedure, decision including financial cuts on one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Service Manager responsible for the relevant new or revised policies, functions, procedures and financial decisions must undertake, at least, an initial EIA and where relevant a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2); EIA must be attached as background paper with reports to Executive and Scrutiny.

Equality impact assessment – Process to follow where HR implications have been identified



Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Appendix 1

Department: Education & Children	Completed by (lead): Sara Griffiths	Date of initial assessment: October 2020 Revision Dates: July 2021
Area to be assessed: (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision)	Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors. With reference to establishing a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Children's Home/Respite Centre as alternative provision (undertaken via separate procedures).	
Is this existing or new function/policy, procedure, practice or decision?	School Re-organisation Proposal – Modernising Education Programme	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Programme • Modernising Education Programme • School Organisation Code 2018 • PLASC Data 2020 • The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the proposed function/policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.	To discontinue Ysgol Rhydygors Special School. Separately, establish a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Children's Home/Respite Centre on the site of the former Ysgol Rhydygors school to cater for pupils with SEBD within Carmarthen. The proposal will support the improvement in the quality and standards of provision by enabling an alignment in the quality and standard of provision offered to pupils with SEBDs across the Authority.		
The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have "due regard" to the need to:-	2. What is the level of impact on each group/protected characteristics in terms of the three aims	3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each of the group/protected characteristics?	4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact what

(1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (2) advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) foster good relations between different groups (see guidance notes)		of the duty? Please indicate high (H) medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each.	Risks	Positive effects	mitigating factors have you considered?
Protected characteristics	Age	N	Neutral		
	Disability	L	Neutral	This proposal will ensure consistency and equity in the type of provision offered to pupils with SEBD across the County.	
	Gender reassignment	N	Neutral		
	Race	N	Neutral		
	Religion/Belief	N	Neutral		
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	Neutral		
	Sexual Orientation	N	Neutral		
	Sex	N	Neutral		
	Welsh language	N	Neutral		
	Any other area	N	Neutral		

5. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?

☒

YES

NO ☐

		<p>Informal and formal consultation will be undertaken as stated in Welsh Government guidance. As part of the Formal Consultation period key stakeholders will be consulted with as detailed within this consultation document.</p>	
<p>6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any? Ensure that all key stakeholders are fully informed at each stage of the consultation.</p>			
<p>7. Procurement Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal, service. N/A Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice.</p>			
<p>8. Human resources Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human resource implications to the activity, proposal or service? Discussions regarding the proposal will be undertaken with HR.</p>			
<p>9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function/policy/procedure/practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more H under section 2)</p>		<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>Approved by: Head of Service</p>	<p>Simon Davies</p>		<p>Date: October 2020</p>

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF SWISS VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 4-11 TO 3-11

To consider and comment on the following issue:

- The proposal as outlined below and in the attached consultation document.
- Officers to initiate formal consultation on the proposal.
- That a report is submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period.

Reasons:

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.
- To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

Exec. Board Decision Required: YES – 21/12/2020

Council Decision Required: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr. Glynog Davies
(Education & Children)

Directorate:
Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:
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Report Author:
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Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF SWISS VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 4-11 TO 3-11

Background

Ysgol Swiss Valley has been undertaking a pilot scheme to become a 3-11 school since 2013 which was initiated as part of a Welsh Government scheme to give parents flexibility and choice regarding nursery provision. However, as the school is currently advertised officially as a 4-11 school, parents are unaware or confused in regard to what nursery provision the school offers.

The proposal aims to provide equal provision within the Llanelli area, aligning Ysgol Swiss Valley with neighbouring schools that are already 3-11 schools. The governing body and head teacher are positive with the outcome of the pilot scheme and now wish to proceed with officially making the school a 3-11 school through statutory process.

The Proposal

The proposal is to change the age range of Swiss Valley Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1st September, 2021.

Recommendation

E&C Scrutiny Committee is requested to endorse the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board that a formal consultation be initiated.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES: Draft Consultation Document

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
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Developments are consistent with the Authority's Corporate Strategy and the Modernising Education Strategic Outline Programme as well as the Children and Young People's Plan.

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

NONE.

5. Risk Management Issues

The proposal may impact on the demand for school places at the school and surrounding catchment area schools. The situation will be monitored as part of the school admission process and ongoing data forecasting and analysis through the Authority's Modernising Education Programme.

6. Staffing Implications


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

7. Physical Assets

None.

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** – Will be consulted on 23/11/2020.
2. **Local Member(s)** - The local member is aware of the proposal and will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
3. **Community / Town Council** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
4. **Relevant Partners** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
YES

N/A

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
MEP Biennial Review	www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk Executive Board 20 th June 2016
21 st Century Schools Website	www.21stcenturyschools.org

Proposal to Change the Age Range of Ysgol Swiss Valley from 4-11 to 3-11

Consultation Document

DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Foreword

As part of its statutory obligation to keep the number and type of school places under review, the County Council has adopted a wide-ranging programme designed to improve school buildings and enhance opportunities for learning. The strategy reflects the vision and policies established by the County Council which embrace the requirement to deliver services, to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic and effective means. In our drive to continually improve on the services made available to all learners, we must maximise the finite resources available to the Council, and continue to work in partnership with all those who have a contribution to make to the process of learning and the wellbeing of both children and their families. Schools of the future will need to serve as a focus for a wide range of services dedicated to serving the needs of the community through a joined up approach.

Carmarthenshire is blessed with many very able education leaders and teachers but the continuing changes to the curriculum places a heavy demand on their skills to meet the wide-ranging demands of all children. Although the processes of learning, and skills of teaching, are extremely important, deep subject knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential if learners with their various gifts in different areas are to discover and develop their talents to the full.

Schools designed to meet current demands are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through high quality and inspirational teaching. In the planning of new provision it will be important to ensure that our schools are properly equipped to enhance opportunities for social inclusion, sustainable development, equal opportunities and bilingualism. In practical terms we need to ensure that provision reflects the changing patterns of population, with schools based in the right location with accommodation and facilities fit to serve the needs of all learners in the twenty first century.

Consultation will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties. The information set out in this document is intended to clarify the proposals for your school and support the consultation process.



Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Glossary of Abbreviations

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AN	Admission Number
CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
CP	Community Primary
DS	Dual Stream
EM	English medium
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
LA	Local Authority
MCSW	Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
NOR	Number on Roll
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census Data
PT	Part-Time
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WM	Welsh Medium

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Introduction

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

As part of this process the Council has published its vision on how it sees the future for all of the primary schools in the County and this includes consulting on the future shape of education in Ysgol Swiss Valley. The proposals for change included in this document are in line with that long-term objective.

This document seeks to stimulate the process of consultation by explaining the Authority's preferred option for the future provision of primary education for the pupils of **Ysgol Swiss Valley**. The document offers an opportunity for consultees to put forward any comments, observations or alternative proposals they wish to be considered.

Consultation on this proposal will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties.

The main purpose of this document is to provide information and to gather the views of identified interested parties.

School Subject to Proposal

School Name		Ysgol Gynradd Swiss Valley
School Location		SA14 8DS
County		Carmarthenshire
Age Range		4-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		Community
Language Medium Category (PLASC)		English with Significant Welsh
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery	14
	Reception – Y.6	222
	Total	236
Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	20 + 212 = 232
	January 2018	19 + 217 = 236
	January 2017	16 + 223 = 239
	January 2016	22 + 216 = 238
Pupil Projections	January 2021	240
	January 2022	246
	January 2023	241
	January 2024	238
	January 2025	242
Capacity (including nursery)		243
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£3,573
School Budget		£870K
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn
Building Condition Category		B

Background

Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to providing each child with the best possible start in life and meeting the aspirations of Welsh Government as set out in their strategic documents e.g. *Building a Brighter Future: The Early Years and Childcare Plan, Qualified for life: An education improvement plan.*

The provision of high-quality early years education is key to realising this ambition. Childhood experiences play a significant role in shaping our futures and are critical to the chances of leading a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling life. Carmarthenshire County Council aims to ensure that every child has access to the same, high quality support within schools.

The Welsh Government's launch of Early Childhood Education and Care Approach recognises that by the age of three, children from disadvantaged backgrounds can be as much as a year behind their peers. This attainment gap widens by the time children enter school. Therefore, it is the responsibility of local authorities to redress this imbalance and close the gap by providing access to quality early childhood provision.

Ysgol Swiss Valley is categorised as an English with Significant Welsh medium primary school for 4-11year olds within the Llanelli area. Ysgol Swiss Valley has been undertaking a pilot scheme to become a 3-11 school since 2013 which was initiated as part of a Welsh Government scheme to give parents flexibility and choice regarding nursery provision. However, as the school is currently advertised officially as a 4-11 school, parents are unaware or confused in regard to what nursery provision the school offers.

Current position within Carmarthenshire

Designated early years provision is offered in **40 schools** across the County. Carmarthenshire currently has a total of 96 primary schools.

Ysgol	Age Range
Betws	3-11 years
Bigyn	3-11 years
Bro Brynach	3-11 years
Bryn	3-11 years
Bryn Teg	3-11 years
Brynaman	3-11 years
Brynsierfel	3-11 years
Burry Port	3-11 years
Bynea	3-11 years
Cross Hands	3-11 years
Dafen	3-11 years
Dewi Sant	3-11 years
Gymraeg Ffwrnes	3-11 years
Griffith Jones	3-11 years

Gwenllian	3-11 years
Halfway	3-11 years
Johnstown	3-11 years
Llandeilo	3-11 years
Llandybie	3-11 years
Llangain	3-11 years
Llangennech	3-11 years
Llangynnwyr	3-11 years
Maes y Morfa	3-11 years
Model	3-11 years
Myrddin	3-11 years
Nantgaredig	3-11 years
Parc y Tywyn	3-11 years
Pembrey	3-11 years
Pen Rhos	3-11 years
Penygaer	3-11 years
Pwll	3-11 years
Richmond Park	3-11 years
St Mary's Llanelli	3-11 years
St Mary's Carmarthen	3-11 years
Stebonheath	3-11 years
Teilo Sant	3-11 years
Trimsaran	3-11 years
Ysgol y Bedol	3-11 years
Y Castell	3-11 years
Y Dderwen	3-11 years

This document sets out the proposal to formally change the age range of Ysgol Swiss Valley from 4-11 to 3-11, to enable the incorporation of nursery provision into the school.

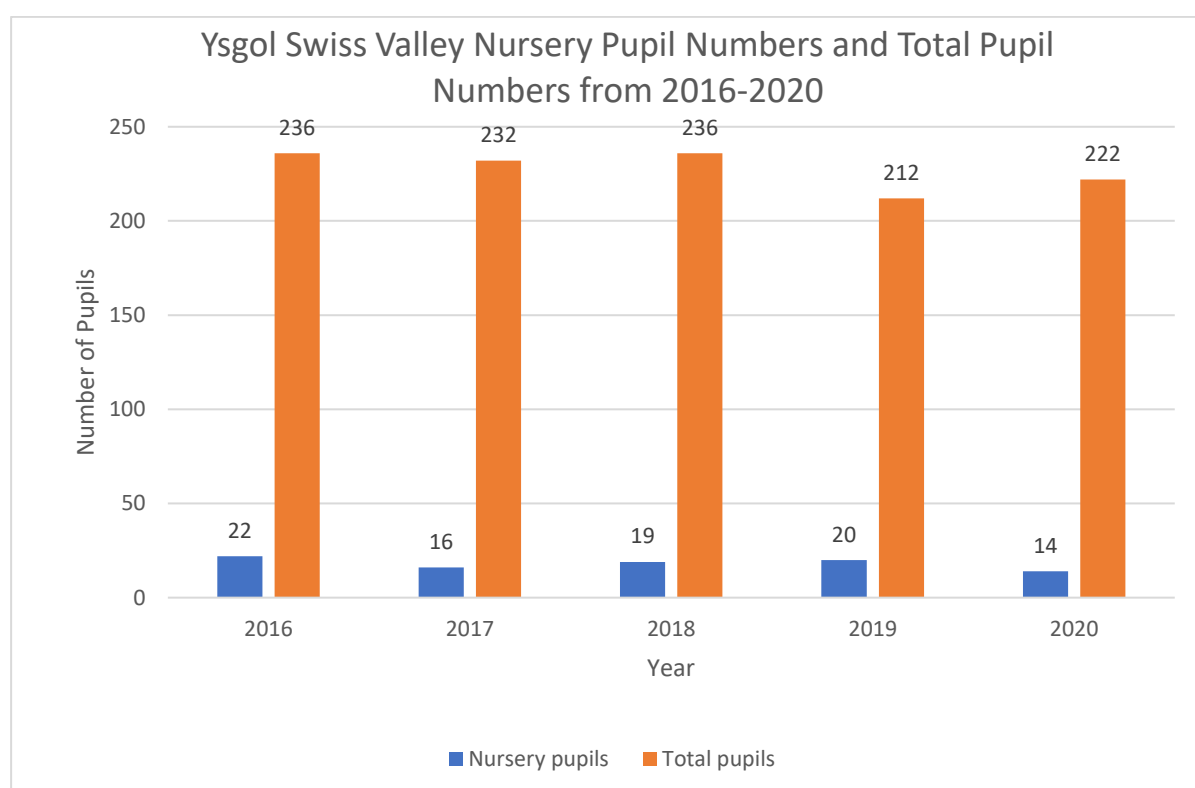
The County Council has a legal duty to look at the number and type of schools it has in Carmarthenshire and is required to make sure that they are located in the right place, have the right facilities for the future and have the right resources to deliver education and learning for pupils. We think that both our pupils and staff deserve nothing less.

Changes in the curriculum and the way in which children will be taught in the future also means that we have to look at whether or not, it is possible to review the age range of its schools to meet the future needs of the pupils.

Rationale for Change

The proposal to change the age range of Ysgol Swiss Valley from 4-11 to 3-11 has been prepared in response to feedback received from the school and parents of pupils within the school, regarding the current pilot scheme of becoming a 3-11 school. Parents are currently unaware and confused in regard to what provision the school is offering for nursery pupils, due to the school being officially advertised as a 4-11 school. The proposal aims to provide equal provision within the Llanelli area, aligning Ysgol Swiss Valley with neighbouring schools that are already 3-11 schools. The outcomes of the pilot scheme have been positive and the Local Authority now wish to proceed with a proposal to change the age range of the school to 3-11 through formal consultation.

Nursery Pupil Numbers have been remaining fairly consistent since 2016:



Pupil Capacity Information

	Jan 2020 (Actual Number)	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025
Projected Pupil Numbers	14 + 222 = 236	240	246	241	238	242
Capacity (Nursery + Primary)	30 + 213 = 243	30 + 213	30 + 213	30 + 213	30 + 213	30 + 213
Surplus	7	3	-3	2	5	1

The Proposal

To change the age range of Ysgol Swiss Valley from a 4-11 school to a 3-11 school from 1st September, 2021.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the proposal

Advantages

- Seamless transition from nursery into primary school.
- Parental confusion on what provision the school offers will be removed, as the school will be officially advertised as a 3-11 school.
- Gradual and supported transition for 3-year olds entering school, starting with half days and progressing to full school days.
- Opportunity for employment at Ysgol Swiss Valley.
- Standardisation of nursery provision in Llanelli area as Bryn, Dafen, Llangennech and Dewi Sant are already offering 3-11 provision.
- Reducing the attainment gap of 3-year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Disadvantages

- Reduction in the demand for places at the privately-run nurseries and childminders who currently provide provision.
- Unemployment due to the lack of demand at the private run nurseries and childminders.

Risks and Counter Measures

Risk		Counter Measure
1.	Failure to obtain statutory approval to implement the proposal	Follow guidelines set out in the School Organisation Code 2018
2.	Integration of pupils into the school	The authority will work with the pupils to ensure smooth transition and integration into the school.
3.	Effect on local economy through loss of numbers from private nursery providers resulting in possible job losses.	Consult with private providers openly and honestly in regard to the proposal.

Alternate Options considered

Status Quo no change to Ysgol Swiss Valley	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change to stakeholders	Pilot scheme can't continue indefinitely, therefore School will remain as a 4-11 school with no provision for 3-year olds.
No statutory process required	Parental confusion into what provision the school offers will continue

Provide Nursery Provision at Neighbouring Schools	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change to stakeholders at Ysgol Swiss Valley	Statutory process required for neighbouring school.
3-year old provision will be offered at neighbouring schools.	Pilot scheme can't continue indefinitely, therefore School will remain as a 4-11 school with no provision for 3-year olds.
	Parental confusion into what provision the school offers will continue

Provide Provision at Private Nurseries	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Increased employment for private childcare workers.	Expensive for parents in paying for private nursery provision and therefore not tackling the attainment gap between 3-year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds.
No change to stakeholders	Parental confusion into what provision the school offers will continue
No statutory process required	Pilot scheme can't continue indefinitely, therefore School will remain as a 4-11 school with no provision for 3-year olds

Staffing

Staffing arrangements will remain the same due to the current pilot scheme being in place, to support 3-year-old provision at the school.

WESP

This proposal will support the school to improve the provision of Welsh medium education for pupils from 3 years old. The proposal will also support targets outlined

in the LA's approved Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and supports Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers' aim. It also supports the new county Welsh Language Targets set by WG for the 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Financial Implications - Revenue

Ysgol Swiss Valley is funded in accordance with the County Council's Fair Funding policy and will receive resources on the same basis as any other school in the County Council, based on the new school's pupil numbers and facilities.

Admissions Arrangements

The County Council is the Admissions Authority for Ysgol Swiss Valley:

The School Admissions Unit,
Carmarthenshire Local Authority,
Department for Education and Children,
Block 2,
Main Building,
St. David's Park,
Carmarthen. SA31 3HB
Tel No: 01267 246449

E-mail: admissions@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

School Catchment Area

Ysgol Swiss Valley will remain located on the current school site therefore the designated catchment area will be based on that of the existing Ysgol Swiss Valley.

Secondary School Transfers

There will be no changes to the current transfer arrangements for pupils in respect of Secondary education.

School(s) affected by this proposal School(s) affected by this proposal

School Name		Ysgol Gynradd Swiss Valley	Ysgol Gynradd Llannon	Ysgol Gynradd Pum Heol	Ysgol Y Felin	Ysgol Gynradd Dafen	Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Bryn	Ysgol Gymraeg Llangennech	Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant
School Location		SA14 8DS	SA14 6AE	SA15 5EX	SA14 8BE	SA14 8LL	SA14 9TT	SA14 8YB	SA14 8RS
County		Carmarthenshire							
Age Range		4-11	4-11	4-11	4-11	3-11	3-11	3-11	3-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		Community	Community	Community	Community	Community	Community	Community	Community
Language Medium Category (PLASC)		English with Significant Welsh	Welsh Medium	Welsh Medium	Dual Stream	English Medium	English Medium	Welsh Medium	Welsh Medium
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery	14	3	7	17	24	25	57	79
	Reception – Y.6	222	96	80	205	130	189	371	392
	Total	236	99	87	222	154	214	428	471

Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	20 + 212 = 232	101	91	219	164	216	439	482
	January 2018	19 + 217 = 236	117	92	222	161	188	474	467
	January 2017	16 + 223 = 239	116	95	226	163	206	211/238	440
	January 2016	22 + 216 = 238	115	90	224	141	201	2213/236	434
Pupil Projections	January 2021	240	95	88	218	156	222	421	465
	January 2022	246	92	95	220	160	226	414	458
	January 2023	241	95	96	217	158	215	408	458
	January 2024	238	96	94	217	162	220	400	467
	January 2025	242	94	93	215	160	223	404	464
Capacity (including nursery)		243	112	101	240	163	255	480	419

Cost per pupil (2020/21)	£3573	£3730	£3688	£5125	£3707	£3792	£3680	£3357
School Budget	£870K	£369K	£321K	£1,338K	£550K	£781K	£1,524K	£1,504K
Estyn Inspection Result	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	(No Report)	Estyn
Building Condition Category	B	B	C	B	C	A	C	C

Private Nursery Providers (within 1 mile)

Name of Nursery	Type of Provision
Camau Tirion	Full Day Care
Brambly Hill Day Nursery	Full Day Care
Sarah Steadman	Childminder
Inky Pinky	Childminder
Swiss Valley Childminding	Childminder

Evaluation of Present Arrangements

Standards

On entry to the school, most pupils' skills are at the expected level for their age. Throughout the school, most pupils develop good oracy skills and listen well. In the foundation phase, most read a broad range of texts with good understanding. They pronounce unfamiliar words well, using phonic strategies and identify sounds and words that relate to different characters in stories. They are able to talk about and describe their favourite characters in their books confidently. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read a range of books successfully, with older pupils using their higher-order reading skills effectively.

Across the school, most pupils write well for different purposes and in a range of contexts. In the foundation phase, many write stories and poems well and these writing skills develop well for most pupils. However, occasionally the overuse of worksheets impedes the development of pupils' extended writing. Throughout the school, most pupils have positive attitudes to Welsh. In the foundation phase, pupils respond appropriately to instructions and reply to simple greetings confidently. By year 2, most use simple phrases and vocabulary successfully. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils ask and answer simple questions about their likes and dislikes and give a simple reason for their opinions. Many hold simple conversations with one another, using sentence patterns that they have rehearsed in Welsh lessons.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in developing their numeracy skills across the areas of learning. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils develop effective calculation strategies when tackling problems and confidently apply measuring, data and shape skills well. Many pupils use their reasoning skills skilfully. Many pupils develop their information and communication technology skills (ICT) well and their application of these skills develop well throughout the school. Most pupils understand how to search safely. Older pupils use databases confidently. Digital leaders (Tim Tec) have been instrumental in raising standards. These pupils use 'flipped' strategies to teach younger pupils a range of DCF friendly activities involving data handling and coding. New and developing technologies, such as drones, are being used to develop skills such as coding; and virtual reality headsets are used to give pupils experiences of environments that they would not otherwise be able to access. Google Classroom has been fully embedded in upper key stage 2 and this has developed improved skills in collaboration and independence. Most pupils develop their creative, problem solving and physical skills effectively during their time at Swiss Valley. They take an active part in a range of opportunities such as concerts, drama clubs, swimming, art competitions and girls' football.

Over time, by the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils attain outcomes which are equal to or better than those predicted at their baseline assessment in language (LLCE), mathematical development (MDT) and personal development (PSD). However, in 2019, progress in MDT was not as strong and this is something the school is monitoring closely. Nearly all pupils made good progress in English, with most pupils making good progress in mathematics and science. Most more able pupils made very good progress in mathematics and science, with slightly fewer making similar progress

in English. The school has recognised this is a key priority for monitoring. Nearly all pupils made good progress in Welsh throughout their time at the school. Pupils engage well in the Siarter Iaith and make additional progress in upper key stage 2 through additional voluntary provision from a link governor. A few pupils use their Welsh skills around the school confidently.

The school has demonstrated over time that nearly all learners within specific groups make at least good progress as they move through the school. The end of key stage 2 data has demonstrated that all pupils eligible for FSM attain at least the expected level. There is little difference over time between the performance of boys and girls. The number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is increasing, which is adding extra challenge to the school's context. More able pupils make very good progress and those pupils with sporting and creative talents excel within their fields.

Wellbeing

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and they know that they can speak to staff if they have any concerns or worries. Most pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. Most pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Nearly all pupils behave consistently well in lessons and at other times during the day. They move around the school in an orderly, calm manner. They are polite and considerate towards each other, staff and visitors. Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their work. They are enthusiastic learners who work harmoniously and stay on task over extended periods. Most pupils persevere well in lessons and show determination to learn new things. Most older pupils find appropriate ways to work through challenges. Pupils take their leadership roles very seriously and they talk enthusiastically about their work. Pupils take pride in the opportunities to support various charities and contribute to activities in the community. The attendance rate was 94.9% in 2018/19. The target for 2019-20 is 96% and the school is currently on track to achieve this. Most pupils respond well to the school's sustained focus on improving attendance and understand the importance of attending school regularly. Most are punctual at the start of the school day. However, term time holidays still provide a challenge to the school's overall attendance.

Teaching and Learning Experiences

A range of learning experiences ensures that all pupils are challenged and fully engaged. Memorable experiences and rich opportunities promote high quality learning and wellbeing. The principles of the Foundation Phase are fully adhered to and curriculum planning involves access to focused tasks, enhanced and continuous provision including access to a wide range of outdoor and indoor experiences. Working relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Teachers create a purposeful learning environment in which pupils feel confident to ask questions and share ideas. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively in lessons and, as a result, nearly all pupils are very respectful and attentive, supporting each other well in their learning.

Most teachers share learning objectives well with pupils and provide clear instructions that enable pupils to undertake their tasks confidently. They plan tasks and activities to meet the needs of pupils successfully and make effective use of plenary sessions to evaluate pupils' learning. There are well-planned opportunities to develop pupils'

literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in a wide range of contexts across the curriculum, including local and national contexts. Involvement in the Siarter Cymraeg Campus has re-focused the whole school and has helped to ensure that the school has a continuing bilingual ethos and environment. Teaching assistants support pupils very well and display strong professional initiatives to enable those pupils with additional learning needs to work effectively.

Teachers use questioning techniques purposefully to help pupils understand new ideas and to develop their knowledge and skills. Oral and written feedback helps pupils to know what they need to do to address weaknesses in their work. Opportunities for pupils to assess and reflect on their own performance and that of others are developing appropriately. The school reflects on the effectiveness of the curriculum regularly and takes good account of developments towards the new curriculum for Wales. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibilities for their learning. Where teaching is less effective, leaders take swift action to ensure that lesson objectives and differentiation are improved to maximise the progress for all learners.

Care, Support and Guidance

The school has robust systems in place to assess and track pupil progress. Staff use the comprehensive range of assessment data competently in order to identify pupils who would benefit from various intervention programmes. Assessments are valid, accurate and reliable across the school. The additional learning needs coordinator monitors and supports pupils with additional needs effectively. There is a comprehensive provision map in place which ensures that all members of staff have a detailed awareness of the support that individual pupils and groups of learners require. Teachers produce useful individual education plans that include suitable targets for improvement. Pupils and teachers, together with parents, regularly review progress against the individual targets.

Leadership and Management

Leaders and staff have developed a shared vision and there is a very clear strategy that has improved outcomes for nearly all learners. Leaders demonstrate a very strong capacity to plan and implement change and sustain improvement successfully in nearly all respects. They engage all staff and other partners very effectively in the change process. Self-evaluation is accurate, robust, systematic and well established. Self-evaluation is highly effective in contributing to improving standards, learning and teaching.

All leaders and nearly all staff are highly effective in their analysis and use of the available performance data and evidence about the quality of learning and teaching and pupils' work to identify strengths and set improvement priorities. Leaders and staff have a relentless focus on raising standards. Targets reflect high expectations for the future achievement of all pupils, and these are met consistently in nearly all cases. The school has a very good track record in raising the achievement of nearly all pupils, including vulnerable learners over at least a three-year period. Improvement planning at all levels is highly effective in addressing the areas in need of most improvement. Action, including the use of resources, has led to sustained improvement in outcomes

in key indicators for nearly all pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups.

The school gives good attention to national and local priorities and in general implements these effectively to improve standards and the quality of learning and teaching. Leaders and staff work very successfully with schools and other partners to enhance significantly their own and others' capacity to bring about improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Their work to support and challenge the school's performance is strong. However, a further increase in involvement in monitoring and planning across a greater number of governors would strengthen this important area. Leaders and staff have well defined roles and responsibilities and exhibit high professional standards. The school's leaders and governors give a high priority to developing the workforce: performance management and professional development are highly successful in improving pupils' progress and classroom practice. Governors and leaders deal with underperformance appropriately.

The quality of teaching across the school, and the impact on nearly all pupils' learning and progress, is consistently good and often excellent. Most staff have a shared understanding of the characteristics of excellent and good teaching and demonstrate these in classroom practice. Processes to lead, identify, validate and share effective practice achieve continuous improvement in the quality of learning and teaching across the school as a whole. Processes to track pupils' progress, identify needs and provide support are robust and effective in nearly all cases. Teacher assessment is consistent and accurate.

Overall, Swiss Valley is a well-led school that has a very good track record of improving learners' academic progress and wellbeing. Despite the reduction in the number of senior leaders, leadership across the school is strong. Leadership capacity at the school relies on the goodwill and significant experience of the staff. This needs to be addressed by governors and the local authority to secure the future direction and leadership of the school.

Impact of the Proposal

The change from 4-11 to 3-11 at Swiss valley will help secure and possibly strengthen pupil numbers in years to come.

The Consultation Process

The consultation on this proposal will follow guidelines established by the Welsh Government as stated in the School Organisation Code (2018).

Who will be consulted?

This document will be sent to the following interested parties:

Staff (Teaching and Ancillary)	Director of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Governors and Parents/Guardians	Diocesan Director of Education Church in Wales and RC
Local County Councillors	Estyn
Community Councillors	Regional Transport Consortium
Assembly Member (AM) / Regional Members / Members of Parliament (MP)	Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools
Welsh Ministers	All relevant unions
SEN Partners	Welsh Language Commissioner
LA Special Educational Needs Division	Local Police and Crime Commissioner
ERW – Education through Regional Working	Flying Start
	Child Care / Early Years/Private Providers
Communities for Work +	Public Services Board
Communities for Work	Legacy
Fusion	Families First Carmarthenshire

****Copies of the consultation document will be sent to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors of the surrounding catchment area of schools subject to proposals.***

Consultation Period

The consultation period for the proposals starts on 11th January, 2021 and ends on 21st February, 2021.

Consultees can submit their views in favour of or against a proposal. Responses received during the consultation period will not be treated as statutory objections. If consultees wish to object, they will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period outlined on page 28.

Considering your views

During the consultation period you can ask questions and express your views by writing a letter to the address below or by completing an online survey using the following link:

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=154832236066>

Letters should be sent to the following address by no later than noon on 21st February, 2021:

Mr Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services,
Building 2, St. David's Park, Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen, SA31 3HB
Or E-mail to: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Drop in sessions

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we have been advised to postpone all events where there is interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result there will not be a drop in session to discuss proposals. Should you feel strongly about discussing the proposals please contact Mrs Rhianydd Evans by sending an e-mail to DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and a virtual meeting can be arranged.

Consultation with Pupils

There will be an opportunity for the pupils of the schools subject to the proposals to participate in the consultation process during a session which will be conducted at the schools.

The information gathered from the consultation with pupils will form part of the consultation report which will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration following the consultation period.

Consultation Report

A Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks before a decision is made on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposal and details of consultation undertaken with the pupils.

The Executive Board of Carmarthenshire County Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

If the Executive Board decides to continue with the proposal Carmarthenshire County Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website and posted at the schools subject to proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the schools to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians, and staff members (the schools may also distribute the notice by email).

Statutory Objection Period

The statutory notice will set out the details of the proposal and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within a period of 28 days. If objections are received an objection report will be published on the Carmarthenshire County Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to those objections.

Determination of Proposal

Carmarthenshire County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications. In doing so, the County Council will take into account any statutory objections that it received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

The Statutory Process Time-Table

The statutory process and timetable will be as follows:

11 th January 2021	Issue of this consultation document to identified and other interested parties.
21 st February 2021	Closing date for views on the proposal to be received by the Department for Education and Children.
27 th April 2021	<p>A Consultation Report will be taken to the Executive Board for a decision on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. OR alternatively proposal ends.</p> <p>The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks prior to the publication of a statutory notice.</p> <p>If the decision is made to proceed then a statutory notice will be published. The notice will outline details of the proposal and be published on the Council's web site and be displayed near the entrance of the school and schools which are subject to the proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to parents, guardians and staff members. Following publication there will be a 28 day period during which time formal written objections will be invited.</p> <p>The statutory notice will give details on how you may record your objections to the proposal.</p>
8 th June 2021	End of formal 28 day notice period for objections. County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications, in doing so the County Council will take into account any statutory objections received.
July 2021	<p>Deadline to notify parents of intention to implement proposal.</p> <p>Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.</p>

Appendix A – Community Impact Assessment

Ysgol Swiss Valley

Catchment Area Analysis – January PLASC 2020 Data

Each school has an area that it serves, referred to as the catchment area. Each school is expected to accommodate pupils from within its catchment area and schools must have regard for this ongoing demand.

Most parents send their child to their local school, but parents have a right to state a preference for other schools.

Pupils attending the school from inside / outside the catchment

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, the geographical data in relation to the pupil distribution for Ysgol Swiss Valley catchment area indicated that of the 236 pupils on roll, 108 lived within the catchment area, whilst the remaining 128 were from outside the catchment area.

Pupils living in the catchment area attending other schools.

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, 78 pupils lived within the Ysgol Swiss Valley catchment area and attended other schools.

Taking into consideration the 108 pupils living within the catchment area attending Ysgol Swiss Valley, and the 78 pupils living within the catchment area but attending other schools, a total of 186 pupils are living within the catchment area of Ysgol Swiss Valley.

Other facilities or services provided by the school e.g. after school clubs/ community Library

Ysgol Swiss Valley currently offers private wrap around care on site for nursery pupils, as well as a breakfast club 7:30-8:45 and an after-school club 15:10-18:00. A holiday club is also provided during school holidays.

Community Impact

If approved, the proposal will increase educational provision for 3-year olds within the area of Ysgol Swiss Valley; contributing to the Welsh Government's Early years education and care approach in creating high-quality child-centred provision within the early years.

Appendix B – Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Ysgol Swiss Valley

Carmarthenshire County Council's vision is to provide a service, which will ensure access to high quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, this enabling the achievement of their full potential within the context of the unique bilingual nature of the county.

Standards*

Ysgol Swiss Valley is categorised as an English with significant use of Welsh school.

In Key stage 2 pupils are assessed in each of the core subjects. Based on 2019 data, 100% of pupils achieved at least level 4 in Welsh as a second language whilst 44.8% achieved at least Level 5.

After school activities which provide additional opportunities to use the Welsh language

There are currently no additional after school opportunities for learning Welsh.

(No National Teacher Assessments were conducted in 2020 due to the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus outbreak. For this reason, 2019 has been used.)*

Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council Assessing Impact

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

What is the general duty?

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all.

The duties are legal obligations. Failure to meet the duties may result in authorities being exposed to legal challenge.

Under equality legislation, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The Equality Act 2010 introduces a new public sector duty which extends this coverage to age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process. It is also important to note that public authorities subject to the equality duties are also likely to be subject to the obligations under the Human Rights Act and it is therefore wise also to consider the potential impact that decisions could have on human rights as part of the same process.

Carmarthenshire's approach to Equality Impact

In order to ensure that the council is considering the potential equality impact of its proposed policies and practices, and in order to evidence that we have done so, every proposal will be required to be supported by the attached Equality Impact Assessment. Where this assessment identifies a significant impact then more detail may be required.

Reporting on assessments

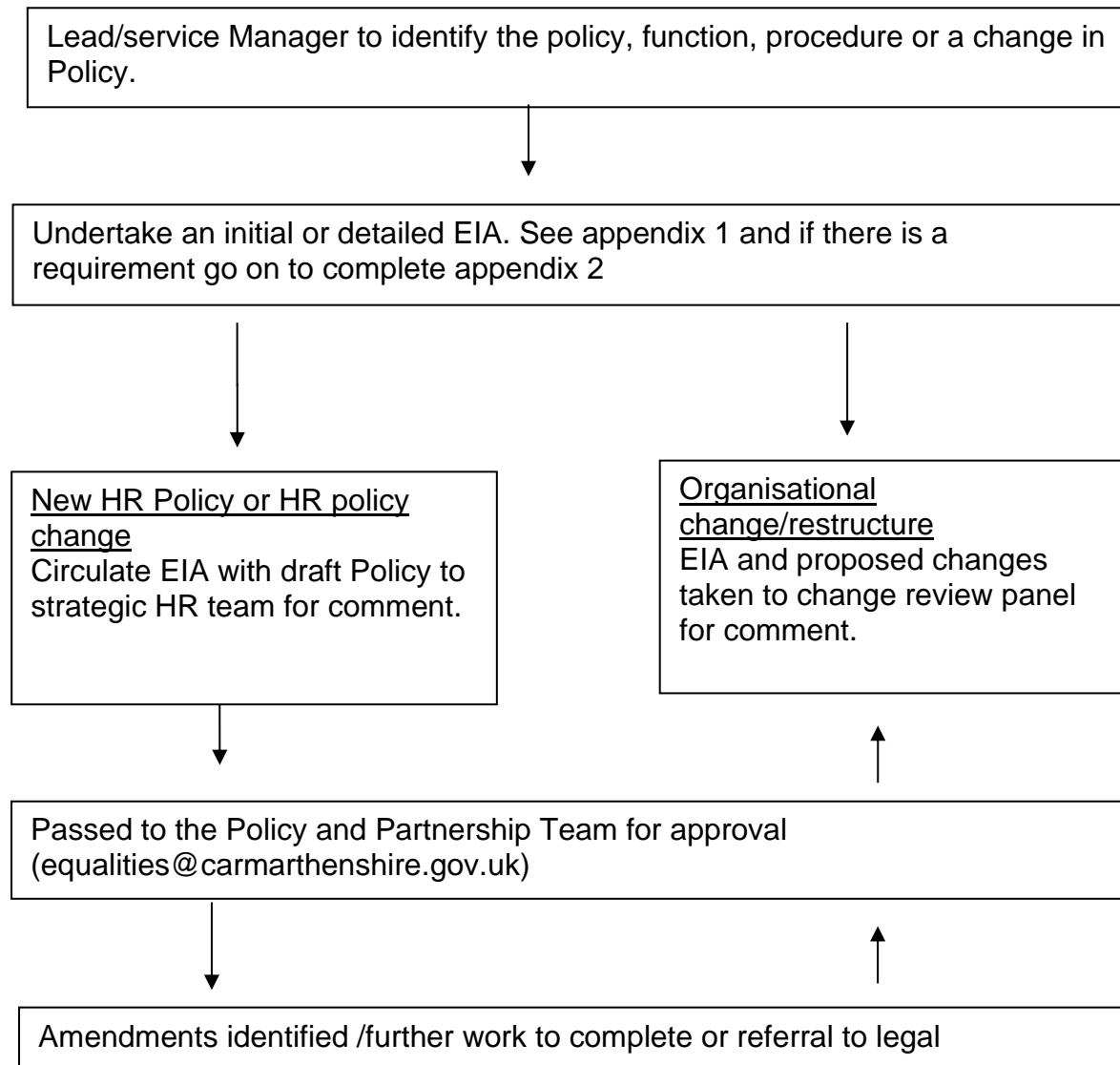
Where it is clear from the assessment that the likely impact on the authority's ability to meet the general duty is substantial, then it must publish a report.

Initial and Detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The initial EIA (appendix 1) is a simple and quick method of assessing the effect of a policy, function, procedure, decision including financial cuts on one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Service Manager responsible for the relevant new or revised policies, functions, procedures and financial decisions must undertake, at least, an initial EIA and where relevant a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2); EIA must be attached as background paper with reports to Executive and Scrutiny.

Equality impact assessment – Process to follow where HR implications have been identified



Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Appendix 1

Department: Education & Children	Completed by (lead): Sara Griffiths	Date of initial assessment: February 2020 Revision Dates: February 2021
Area to be assessed: (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision)	This proposal is to change the age range of Swiss Valley Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 through statutory process.	
Is this existing or new function/policy, procedure, practice or decision?	School Re-organisation Proposal – Modernising Education Programme	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Programme • Modernising Education Programme • School Organisation Code 2018 • PLASC Data 2019 • The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the proposed function/policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.	The aim of the scheme is to provide the pupils and staff at Swiss Valley Primary School with part-time nursery provision by legally changing the age range that pupils are admitted from 4-11 to 3-11. The authority is seeking to standardise nursery provision within the Llanelli area. This will ensure a seamless transition of nursery pupils into primary school.		
The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to:-	2. What is the level of impact on each group/protected characteristics in terms of the three aims of	3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each of the group/protected characteristics?	4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact what mitigating

<p>(1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (2) advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) foster good relations between different groups (see guidance notes)</p>		the duty? Please indicate high (H) medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each.	Risks	Positive effects	factors have you considered?
Protected characteristics	Age	L		The proposal will provide nursery age pupils with access to nursery provision within the school building ensuring a seamless transition from part-time to full-time education.	
	Disability	L		Nursery pupils with ALN will be accommodated and supported accordingly as and when required.	
	Gender reassignment	N	Neutral		

	Race	N	Neutral		
	Religion/Belief	N	Neutral		
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	Neutral		
	Sexual Orientation	N	Neutral		
	Sex	N	Neutral		
	Welsh language	L	The language category of the school will remain the same (EW) with significant use of welsh being promoted throughout the school.		
	Any other area	N	Neutral		

5. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?

YES

☒

NO ☐

The Project Officer will liaise with the Headteacher, Staff, Parents of Ysgol Swiss Valley pupils as well as private nurseries and childminders within the Swiss Valley area, with regards to the proposal. All stakeholders will be fully consulted during the formal consultation period.

6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any? Ensure that all key stakeholders are fully informed throughout the statutory process.

7. Procurement Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal, service. N/A Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice.		
8. Human resources Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human resource implications to the activity, proposal or service? As there will be an increase in capacity, additional staffing may be required. However, this will be addressed as the scheme progresses and Human Resources will be fully consulted.		
9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function/policy/procedure/practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more H under section 2)	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved by: Head of Service	Simon Davies	Date: October 2020

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EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE MYNYDDYGARREG AND GWENLLIAN AREAS

To consider and comment on the following issue:

- The proposal as outlined below and in the attached consultation document.
- Officers to initiate formal consultation on the proposal.
- That a report is submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period.

Reasons:

- To comply with statutory procedures and guidance in relation to school re-organisation.
- To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

Exec. Board Decision Required: YES – 21/12/2020

County Council Decision Required: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr. Glynog Davies
(Education & Children)

Directorate:
Education & Children

Name of Head of Service:
Simon Davies

Report Author:
Sara Griffiths

Designations:

Head of Access to Education

Modernisation Team Manager

Tel Nos./E-mail Addresses:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd November 2020

MODERNISING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PROPOSAL TO REVIEW PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE MYNYDDYGARREG AND GWENLLIAN AREAS

Background

The Authority has a legal responsibility to review the number and type of schools it has in an area and whether it is making the best use of resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg is a Welsh medium community primary school located in the village of Mynyddgarreg with capacity for 55 pupils between 4-11 years. In recent years pupil numbers have remained consistent but are still well below capacity. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 36 pupils at the school with 19 surplus places, or 35%. Welsh Government through the School Organisation Code advises local authorities to review their provision where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area.

Whilst there are 113 pupils living within Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg's catchment area **only 22 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 91 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend 16 other schools within the County, many being neighbouring catchment schools.

Based on current projections (2020) it is estimated that pupil figures will remain well below capacity for the foreseeable future. Additionally, Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg's building condition is 'poor' and the school has been in deficit since 2016/17 and remains with a deficit of £48,265 going into the 2020/21 financial year. Their original funding allocation for 2020/21 was £172k.

From an educational perspective having such a small number of pupils and mixed age classes 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.

The culmination of these unavoidable facts presents a school model which does not represent a sound, stable educational model for best use of resources. With no prospect of there being a significant increase in pupil numbers for the foreseeable future, consideration is required on the sustainability of the school.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is a Welsh medium 3-11 community primary school situated in the historical town of Kidwelly. In recent years, pupil numbers have remained consistent and slightly below the school's capacity of 140. However, based on current pupil projections (2020), pupil numbers are expected to increase the school is expected to be close to capacity by 2025 and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. As a result, the Local Authority are developing a scheme to provide a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site.

The project will re-locate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian from its current site to a new site which is within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian. The new school will provide a Welsh Government standard primary school building with capacity to accommodate 240 pupils (210 + 30 nursery places) between the ages of 3-11 years old and ensure that the school is able to deliver the full curriculum in a modern, safe and inspiring learning environment with enhanced outside areas.

This proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space and provision in the existing school by providing a category **A** school with sufficient places for current and projected demand.

As a result of the ongoing challenges that both schools face, it is not possible to sustain current arrangements.

The Proposal

- Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg as from 31st August, 2021.
- From 1st September, 2021 all pupils will be registered at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian operating on both sites (Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian and the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg) increasing its capacity to 178 + 17 nursery places.
- Re-designate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's catchment area to include that of the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's catchment area as of 1st September, 2021.
- Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to a new site and increase its capacity to 210 + 30 nursery places as of September 2023, when occupation of the new school is proposed.

Recommendation

E&C Scrutiny Committee is requested to endorse the proposal and recommends to the Executive Board that a formal consultation be initiated.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES: Draft Consultation Document

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
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Developments are consistent with the Authority's Corporate 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

ICT colleagues will be consulted with in relation to the potential relocation of IT equipment.

5. Risk Management Issues

Continuing with current provision would see current problems being perpetuated with the education of children in the area being placed at unacceptable risk and the County Council failing to meet WG target that all buildings should be of an appropriate standard.

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. Physical Assets

- i. One redundant school site – Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg. Should the proposal be adopted the property will be transferred to Corporate Property Division of the Regeneration and Policy Department for the procedures outlined in the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings' arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned.
This policy has been developed to allow the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.
- ii. If the proposal is implemented to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian will proceed to operate on split sites occupying both current Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian locations until the proposed new Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian school building is ready for occupation.
- iii. Following the project completion of developing a new school building for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian the current Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian will become redundant as point i. above.

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** – Will be consulted on 23/11/2020.
2. **Local Member(s)** - The local members will be notified of the proposal and will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
3. **Community / Town Council** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
4. **Relevant Partners** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** - Will be consulted during the formal consultation period.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
YES

N/A

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 inspection
Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan/
MEP Biennial Review	www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk Executive Board 20 th June 2016
21 st Century Schools Website	www.21stcenturyschools.org

Proposal to Review Primary Education Provision in the Mynyddygarneg and Gwenllian Areas

Consultation Document

DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Foreword

As part of its statutory obligation to keep the number and type of school places under review, the County Council has adopted a wide-ranging programme designed to improve school buildings and enhance opportunities for learning. The strategy reflects the vision and policies established by the County Council which embrace the requirement to deliver services, to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic and effective means. In our drive to continually improve on the services made available to all learners, we must maximise the finite resources available to the Council, and continue to work in partnership with all those who have a contribution to make to the process of learning and the wellbeing of both children and their families. Schools of the future will need to serve as a focus for a wide range of services dedicated to serving the needs of the community through a joined up approach.

Carmarthenshire is blessed with many very able education leaders and teachers but the continuing changes to the curriculum places a heavy demand on their skills to meet the wide ranging demands of all children. Although the processes of learning, and skills of teaching, are extremely important, deep subject knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential if learners with their various gifts in different areas are to discover and develop their talents to the full.

Schools designed to meet current demands are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through high quality and inspirational teaching. In the planning of new provision it will be important to ensure that our schools are properly equipped to enhance opportunities for social inclusion, sustainable development, equal opportunities and bilingualism. In practical terms we need to ensure that provision reflects the changing patterns of population, with schools based in the right location with accommodation and facilities fit to serve the needs of all learners in the twenty first century.

Consultation will follow the guidelines established by the Welsh Government and will involve identified interested parties. The information set out in this document is intended to clarify the proposals for your school and support the consultation process.



Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Glossary of Abbreviations

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AN	Admission Number
CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
CP	Community Primary
DS	Dual Stream
EM	English medium
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
LA	Local Authority
MCSW	Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales
MEP	Modernising Education Programme
NOR	Number on Roll
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census Data
PT	Part-Time
WESP	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WG	Welsh Government
WM	Welsh Medium

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The Consultation Process	29
Appendices	33

Introduction

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

As part of this process the Council has published its vision on how it sees the future for all of the primary and secondary schools in the County and this includes consulting on the future shape of education in the Mynyddgarreg and Gwennllian areas.

This consultation document outlines current provision and options to determine the optimum solution for meeting future need.

Schools subject to proposals

		Ysgol Gymraeg Gwennllian	Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg
School Location		SA17 4UT	SA17 4RL
Age Range		3-11	4-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		Community	Community
Language Category		Welsh Medium	Welsh Medium
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery Age	19	1
	Reception – Y.6	100	35
	Total	119	35
Number of pupils previously on the register	January 2019	117	35
	January 2018	120	32
	January 2017	129	29
	January 2016	136	33
Pupil Projections	January 2021	125	38
	January 2022	130	42
	January 2023	131	40
	January 2024	133	37
	January 2025	135	39
Capacity (including nursery age)		140	55
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£3,611	£4,768
School Budget (2020/21)		£412k	£172k
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn	Estyn
Building Condition Category		B	C

Background

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg is situated in the village of Mynyddygarreg near Kidwelly in Carmarthenshire. It serves the village and the surrounding rural area. The school provides education to pupils between the ages of 4-11 years old.

In recent years, pupil numbers have remained fairly consistent but have been below the school's capacity. Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes each spanning four year groups. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 36 pupils at the school and 19 surplus places.

Whilst there are 113 pupils living within Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's catchment area **only 22 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 91 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend other schools.

Based on current pupil projections it is estimated that the pupil figures will remain well below capacity for the foreseeable future.

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's building condition is poor. To modernise the building and provide the facilities which the Council would wish to provide, would be considerable and could not be justified having regard to the low and declining pupil numbers.

The school's most recent Estyn inspection completed in June 2014 judged the school's current performance to be 'adequate' and prospects for improvement as 'good'.

Additionally, having such low pupil numbers at a school impacts on school budget allocation. The school has been in deficit since the end of the 2016/17 financial year and has carried a deficit of £48,265 into the 2020/21 financial year.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is situated in the historical town of Kidwelly in Carmarthenshire. The school serves the town itself and the surrounding rural area. The school provides education to pupils between the ages of 3-11 years old.

In recent years, pupil numbers have remained fairly consistent but have been below the school's capacity. Pupils are currently taught in five classes – Nursery/Reception class, Year 1/ 2 class, Year 3 class, Year 4 class and a Year 5/6 class. January 2020 PLASC showed that there were 119 pupils at the school and 21 surplus places.

Whilst there are 262 pupils living within Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's catchment area **only 70 of those pupils attend the school**, meaning that 192 pupils living within the school's catchment area attend other schools.

The school's most recent Estyn inspection completed in April 2014 judged the school's current performance and prospects for improvement to be 'adequate'.

Despite the pupil numbers at the school declining slightly over the past three years, the school has a surplus budget of -£1,908 for the 2020/21 financial year.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's current building condition is poor. To modernise the building and provide the facilities which the Council would wish to provide, would be considerable and could not be justified.

Based on current pupil projections it is estimated that the pupil figures will increase over the next few years and are expected to be close to capacity by 2025. This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future and as a result the Local Authority are developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to 240 (210 + 30 nursery places) by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site.

The project will re-locate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian from its current site to a new site which is within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian. The new school will provide a Welsh Government standard primary school building with capacity to accommodate 240 (210 + 30 nursery pupils) between the ages of 3-11 years old and ensure that the school is able to deliver the full curriculum in modern, safe and inspiring learning environments with enhanced outside areas.

This proposed investment will address poor building condition and lack of adequate space and provision in the existing school by providing a category **A** school with sufficient places for current and projected demand.

The last Estyn inspection completed in April 2014 noted that the school currently utilised local facilities for their sporting activities. The new school building will have its own MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) as well as a sport pitch built into the new school design.

Rationale for Change

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg has experienced fairly consistent pupil numbers over the last five years. Pupil numbers have gradually increased from 33 in January 2016 to 36 in January 2020. However, current surplus at the school (January 2020) is 35% or 19 places.

As stated in the School Organisation Code (2018) document published by Welsh Government;

*Where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall, local authorities **should** review their provision and **should** consider whether to make make proposals for their removal if this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of provision. A significant level of surplus provision is defined as 25% or more of a school's capacity (as defined in circular 21/2011) and at least 30 unfilled places.*

If this proposal is implemented it will have a significant positive impact on surplus places in the area.

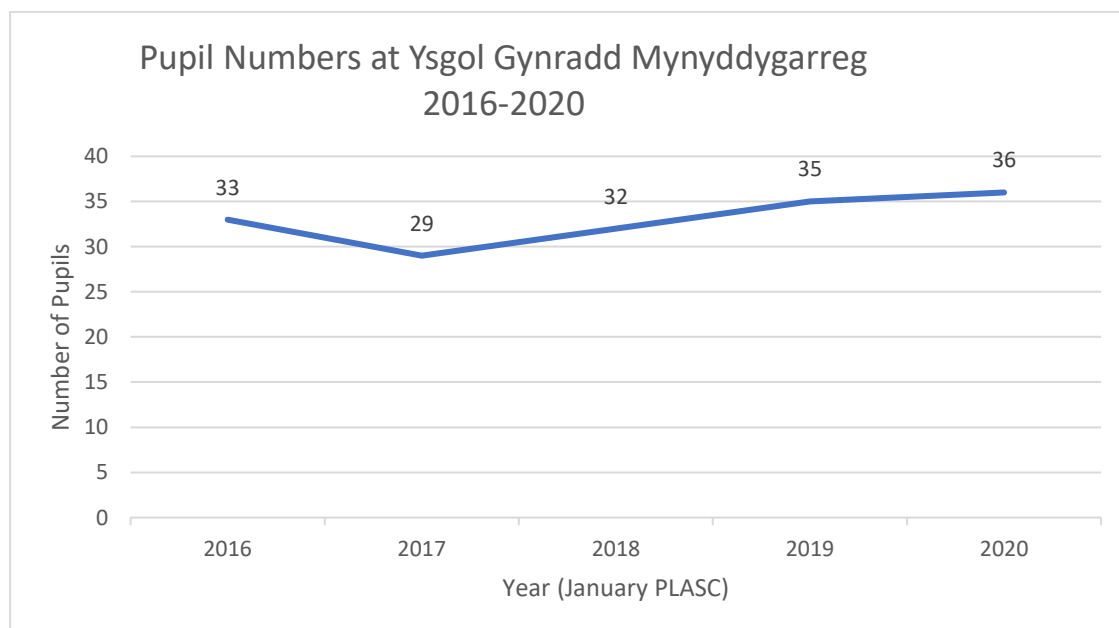
Having such low pupil numbers at a school impacts on school budget allocation. Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg is funded in accordance with the County Council's funding formula. Under the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010, the Individual Schools Budget must be allocated amongst schools maintained by the authority in the form of budget shares, using a locally determined funding formula. The regulations require that 70% of the funding is to be distributed on the basis of pupil numbers. The current funding formula supports such schools (pupils of less than 40) in providing additional funding through the small school supplement. The school also receives additional weighted grant support due to the low pupil numbers.

The school has been in deficit since the end of the 2016/17 financial year and remains with a deficit of £48,265 for 2020/21.

The deficit budget, low pupil numbers and budget cuts has placed the school in an extremely difficult financial position.

Low pupil numbers and a high percentage of surplus places has been a challenge for Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg in the last five years.

The graph below shows pupil numbers at the school over the last five years.

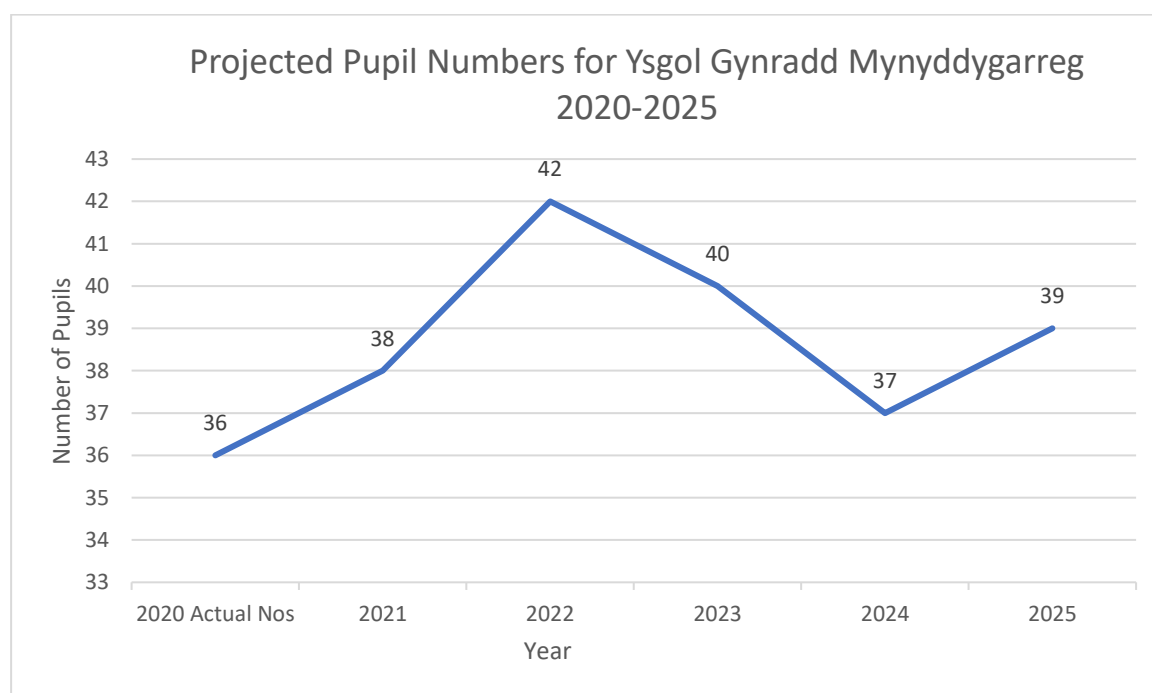


Capacity Information

Historical surplus places for Ysgol Gynradd Blaenau are shown in the following table:

	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg	55	55	55	55	55
Total Capacity					
Pupil Numbers	33	29	32	35	36
Surplus	22	26	23	20	19
% Surplus	40%	47%	42%	36%	35%

As can be seen from the table, Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg has experienced a significant % surplus in the last five years. Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's % surplus in the last five years has exceeded 25% surplus places which the Welsh Government considers to be 'significant'. Welsh Government advises local authorities to review their provision where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall. Projections do show that numbers are expected to increase gradually. However, even at a projected peak of 42 pupils in 2022 the school will still have 13 surplus places (23% surplus).

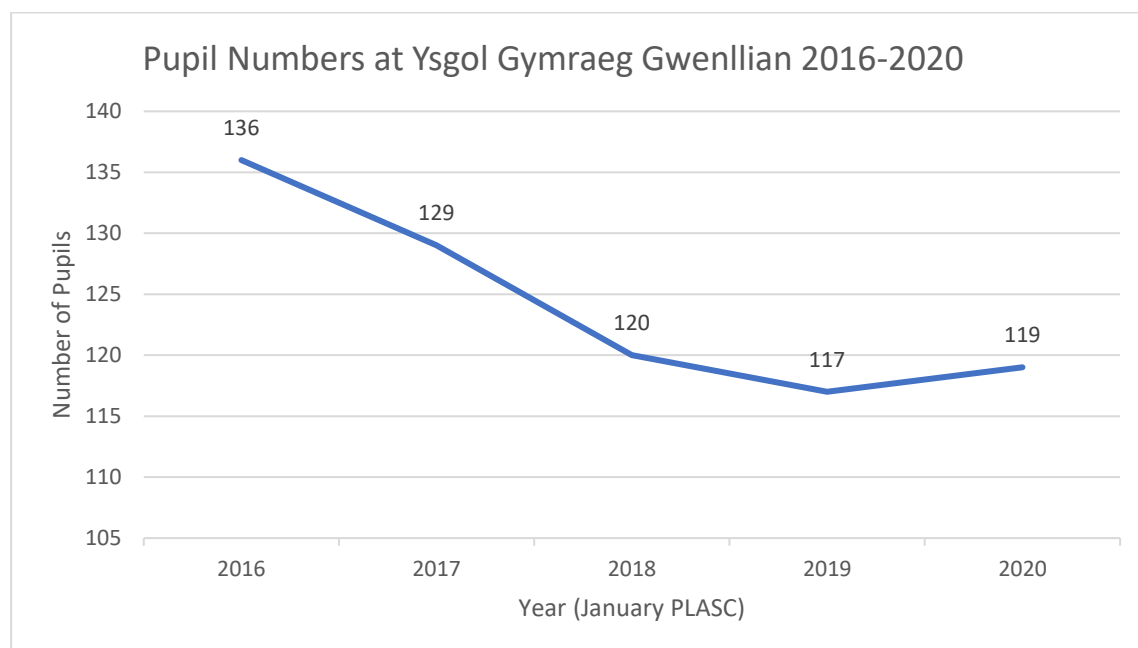


Ysgol Gymraeg Gwennllian

The Local Authority has a vision for a bilingual Carmarthenshire and a commitment in providing category A schools with sufficient places for current and projected demand with facilities fit for the 21st Century.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian pupil numbers have declined during 4 of the last five years but there has been an increase in demand for Welsh language education and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. As a result, the Local Authority are developing a scheme to increase the capacity of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to 240 (210 + 30 nursery places) by providing a new school with facilities fit for the 21st Century on a new site to replace the current condition B building. The proposed investment will address poor building condition and the lack of adequate space in the current school by providing a new school on a new site with 21st Century facilities.

The graph below shows pupil numbers at the school over the last five years.



As can be seen from the graph above, there has been a steady drop in the number of pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian over the last five years. However, numbers are now starting to increase and this trend is expected to continue.

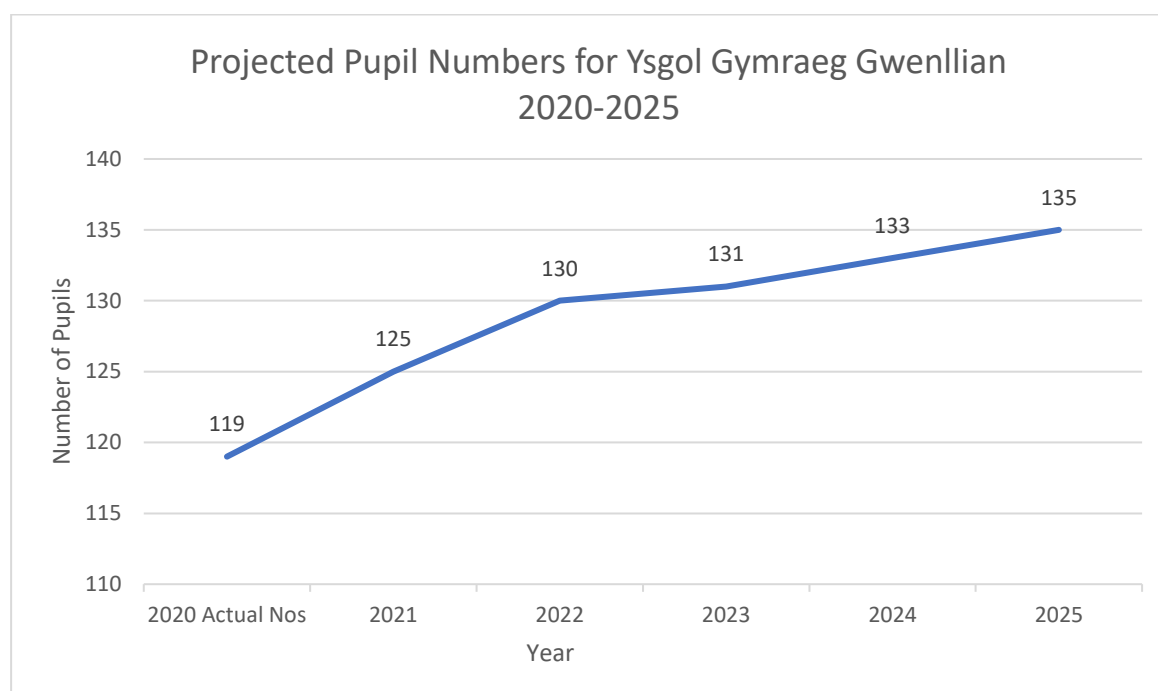
Capacity Information

Historical surplus places for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian are shown in the following table:

	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20
Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian					
Total Capacity	140	140	140	140	140
Pupil Numbers	136	129	120	117	119
Surplus	4	11	20	23	21
% Surplus	3%	8%	14%	16%	15%

As can be seen from the table, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's % surplus has increased during 4 of the last 5 years. However, projections do show that numbers are expected

to continue increasing gradually and by 2025 they are projected to have a small % surplus of only 3%.



The Proposal

- Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg from 31st August, 2021.
- From 1st September, 2021 all pupils will be registered at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian operating on both sites (Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian and the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg) increasing its capacity to 178 + 17 nursery places.
- Re-designate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's catchment area to include that of the former Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg's catchment area as of 1st September, 2021.
- Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to a new site and increase its capacity to 210 + 30 nursery places as of September 2023, when occupation of the new school is proposed.

Location of new school building

As part of the 21st Century Schools Modernising Education Programme, a proposed preferred site for the location of the new school building has been identified. The location of the proposed preferred site is within a mile of the current Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian but is over a mile in distance from Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg. Whilst the proposals noted within this document are subject to County Council approval and the future capital investment is subject to business case approval by Welsh Government, consultation on relocating Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is required in order to satisfy the School Organisation Code (2018).

Advantages and Disadvantages of the proposal

Advantages

- Sufficient Welsh medium places to meet current and projected demand.
- Improved 21st century facilities to allow for a full delivery of the modern curriculum.
- Increased access to learning, sporting and cultural opportunities.
- Deliver primary education in buildings that meet the aspirations of the Local Authority's 21st Century Schools strategic outline programme.
- To ensure more efficient use of financial resources.
- Improved energy efficiencies of the estate.
- Reduces surplus places in an area to ensure the Local Authority makes best use of its resources and facilities.

- More fulfilling teaching environment improves morale.
- More effective staffing structures management and support.
- More opportunity for teachers professional and personal development.
- Learners will have an environment that will motivate their learning.
- Enhance community use of school facilities
- Enhanced external areas with purposeful outdoor play areas
- Fit for purpose nursery facilities in accordance with the Foundation Phase requirements,

Disadvantages

- Requires a statutory process to instigate change.
- Dependent on business case approval to secure funding for investment.
- Increased travelling time for some pupils.
- Community of Mynyddygarreg lose presence of school within their immediate community/area.

Risks and Counter Measures

Risk		Counter Measure
1.	Failure to obtain statutory approval to implement process.	- Follow guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018
2.	Failure to gain approval of business cases	- Follow guidelines as set out in the 21 st Century Schools and Education Funding Programme business case guidance 2018
3.	An unsatisfactory consultation with the community	- Develop communication strategy and consult on a regular basis to address concerns

School Catchment Area

The current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian will be extended to accommodate the current catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg (should the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg be implemented).

Secondary School Transfers

There will be no change to the current transfer arrangements for pupils in respect of Secondary education.

Staffing

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

The Local Authority has staffing policies and procedures in respect of school reorganisation and these will be implemented if required. The Authority will support school staff in securing suitable alternative employment if at all possible, through redeployment processes should this be necessary.

WESP

This proposal seeks to increase Welsh language provision in the Mynyddgarreg and Gwennllian areas. This supports the targets outlined in the LA's approved Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and supports Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers' aim. It also supports the new county Welsh Language Targets set by WG for the 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Financial Implications - Revenue

Both Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwennllian are funded in accordance with the County Council's Fair Funding policy and will receive resources on the same basis as any other school within the County Council, based on pupil numbers and facilities.

Capital Receipts

Any capital receipts received as a result of this proposal will be re-invested into the Modernising Education Programme.

Land and Buildings

One redundant school site – Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg. Should the proposal be adopted the property will be transferred to Corporate Property Division of the Regeneration and Policy Department for the procedures outlined in the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned. This policy has been developed to allow

the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.

Transitional Arrangements

During the transitional period pupils will remain on their existing school sites under the management of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian until the new build is ready for occupation to accommodate all pupils from Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian.

Admissions Arrangements

The County Council is the Admissions Authority for Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian.

The School Admissions Unit,
Carmarthenshire Local Authority,
Department for Education and Children,
Block 2,
Main Building,
St. David's Park,
Carmarthen. SA31 3HB
Tel No: 01267 246449

E-mail: admissions@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Transport Impact Assessment

Transport will be provided in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. The distance from Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg to the new proposed site of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is over 1 mile.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian's new school building will be designed to incorporate safe areas for the drop-off and collection of pupils. If the proposal is approved, safe routes to school will be looked at as part of the Transport Impact Assessment for the new school building.

Community Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix A of this consultation document for full details of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix B of this consultation document for full detail of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment undertaken.

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to Appendix C of this consultation document for full details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken.

Alternative Options Considered

In developing a preferred option, the Authority considered a range of alternative options.

Status Quo no change to Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No change to stakeholders	Pupils continue to be taught in a condition C building
No statutory process required	Not financially viable for the long term
Mynyddygarreg Community retain the presence of a school	Pupils continue to be taught in multi-age classes
	Lack of sustainable leadership
	Low pupil numbers and high surplus places
	Inadequate modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning
	Opportunities for synergies will be lost.
	Higher cost option.

Federation- Formal federation between Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Opportunity to share management, governing body responsibility and curriculum expertise	Requires a legal process
Widen opportunities for staff professional development	Will not address deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg
Allows schools to pool resources and staff	Does not address low pupil numbers and surplus places at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg
Extend the breadth and quality of education provision	Pupils continue to be taught in condition B/C buildings

Respond to pupils' wider needs	Does not provide pupils with modern 21 st century facilities
	Managing headteacher time across two schools
	Requires the rationalisation of both governing bodies
	More work for governors in the first year of Federation

Status Quo remains for Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg/New School building for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Advantages	Disadvantages
No change Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg stakeholders	Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg pupils continue to be taught in a condition C school building
No increased travelling times for Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg	Does not address low pupil numbers and surplus places at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg
Mynyddygarreg Community retain the presence of a school	Does not address deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg
Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian pupils are provided with new 21 st Century School building and facilities	Business Case approval required to secure funding for new school building for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian
Addresses the expected capacity pressure at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	
Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian are provided with modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning	
Enhanced community facilities provided through investment for community of Kidwelly	
Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian pupils are provided with high quality learning environment to support the wellbeing of pupils and to enhance learner progress	

Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian and create a new area school

Advantages	Disadvantages
Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg pupils will remain in their current school building until occupation of the new school*	Mynyddygarreg community lose the presence of a school in their community when pupils occupy the new school building*

Addresses the surplus spaces and capacity pressures at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	Statutory Processes required which would involve discontinuing both existing schools and the proposal of a new Welsh medium primary school.
Ensures all pupils are educated in condition A schools	Business Case approval required to secure WG grant.
All pupils are provided with modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning	Change for stakeholders
Addresses the deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg	Statutory Processes required to discontinue both governing bodies and create a new governing body.
Provides enhanced community facilities for use by both Mynyddygarreg and Kidwelly communities	A lack of support from the community of Ysgol Gwenllian as they will lose their school identity.
All pupils would be located on one site under the leadership of one Headteacher.	Additional travelling time for some pupils from Ysgol Mynyddygarreg.
Increased age range offering early years provision.	

Preferred Option	
Discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and include its catchment area within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg pupils will remain in their current school building until occupation of the new school*	Mynyddygarreg community lose the presence of a school in their community when pupils occupy the new school building*
Addresses the surplus spaces and capacity pressures at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	Statutory Process required
Ensures all pupils are educated in condition A schools	Business Case approval required to secure WG grant.
All pupils are provided with modern facilities to support the new curriculum and digital learning	Change for stakeholders
Addresses the deficit budget at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg	Additional travelling time for some pupils from Ysgol Mynyddygarreg.
Ysgol Gwenllian will maintain its identity within the community.	No job security for some members of staff.
Provides enhanced community facilities for use by both Mynyddygarreg and Kidwelly communities	

All pupils would be located on one site under the leadership of one Headteacher.	
Increased age range offering early years provision.	

****Business case approval/WG funding***

School(s) affected by this proposal

School Name		Ysgol Gynradd Mynydd-y-garreg	Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian	Ysgol y Castell	Ysgol y Fro	Ysgol Gynradd Gwynfryn	Ysgol Gynradd Pontiets	Ysgol Gynradd Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru Glanyfferi	Ysgol Gynradd Carwe	Ysgol Gymunedol Trimsaran	Ysgol Penbre	Ysgol Gymraeg Parc y Tywyn
School Location		SA17 4RL	SA17 4UT	SA17 4TR	SA17 5BW	SA15 5SN	SA15 5UB	SA17 5TB	SA17 4HE	SA17 4BE	SA16 0TP	SA16 0NL
County		Carmarthenshire										
Age Range		4-11	3-11	3-11	4-11	4-11	4-11	4-11	4-11	3-11	3-11	3-11
School Category (Community [C], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		C	C	C	C	C	C	VC	C	C	C	C
Language Medium Category (PLASC)		WM	WM	EM	WM	WM	WM	WM	WM	WM	EM	WM
Number of registered Pupils (January 2020)	Nursery	1	19	25	2	1	0	2	4	39	37	39
	Reception – Y.6	35	100	208	26	60	37	37	54	151	194	223
	Total	36	119	233	28	61	37	39	58	190	231	262
Number of pupils previously	January 2019	35	117	257	28	62	41	40	55	184	241	270
	January 2018	32	120	263	33	64	44	44	48	171	235	270

on the register	January 2017	29	129	267	32	67	52	62	40	172	235	262
	January 2016	33	136	264	33	70	53	74	52	185	238	252
Pupil Projections	January 2021	38	125	235	27	58	35	36	60	203	229	257
	January 2022	42	130	232	29	55	33	36	63	209	225	263
	January 2023	40	131	229	28	53	27	36	59	208	229	268
	January 2024	37	133	233	28	49	28	33	59	205	221	260
	January 2025	39	135	233	24	50	27	34	57	214	223	256
Capacity (including nursery)		55	140	244	41	96	85	122	124	240	240	360
Cost per pupil (2020/21)		£4,768	£3,611	£3,998	£4,478	£4,297	£5,491	£4,423	£4,738	£3,871	£3,724	£3,627
School Budget		£172k	£412k	£906k	£125k	£262k	£209k	£173k	£275k	£705k	£827k	£908k
Estyn Inspection Result		Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn	Estyn
Building Condition Category		C	B	B	B	B	C	C	B	A	B	A

Evaluation of Present Arrangements

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg

Estyn inspected Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg in June 2014. The school's standards were judged to be 'Adequate'. As a result of this, the school was deemed as requiring monitoring. It's capacity to improve was judged to be 'good' and the school's good progress against Estyn's recommendations, following intensive support from the school improvement service, witnessed the school's removal from Estyn monitoring in December 2015.

The current Headteacher was appointed to his post in January 2020 in an informal federation with Ysgol Gwenllian. The previous Headteacher had been in post from September 2018 until December 2019.

Pupils are being taught within two classrooms: one Foundation Phase class and one Key Stage 2 class each spanning four year groups. There is currently a Headteacher (0.2) employed at the school along with 2 full time teachers and 2 full time Teaching Assistants.

Standards

- School baseline data confirms that most children start school at a level lower than expected when compared to the age appropriate behaviours. Nearly all the pupils at the school make the expected progress given their starting at the school. A few pupils make better than expected progress in terms of their age and ability.
- Most pupils listen attentively to adults and each other and speak confidently in a range of situations. Nearly all children progress in line with their age and ability in their oral, reading and writing skills and taking into account their starting points at the school.
- Many children develop number skills in line with their age and ability and use the correct methods to solve problems effectively. Many are able to use data effectively and use their number skills purposefully across the curriculum.
- Most pupils are confident in using information technology and successfully use HWB to enrich learning across the curriculum
- There is a variable trend in the results of assessments at the end of the foundation stage at the expected outcome over the past three years. At the higher levels, there is again a variable pattern. The effect of pupils with additional learning needs within all cohorts has a dramatic effect on the FPI and the CSI.
- At the end of key stage 2, there has been an upward trend in results across the subjects over the past two years. Tracking data showed that the boys are making good progress in line with age and ability and when considering their low starting point. This variability is also true of the eFSM cohort. However, nearly all pupils who are eligible for free school meals continue to make good progress from their starting points and this is reflected in the tracking data held by the school.

Wellbeing Standards

- School Attendance has improved over the past year as a result of effective interventions by the school. Statutory School Age attendance has increased by 2.88% points from 90.93% in 2017-18 to 93.81% in 2018-19. Whole school attendance has increased by 2.38% points from 91.84% in 2017-18 to 94.22% in 2018-19.
- Most pupils enjoy their learning. They have good attitudes to learning and benefit from the regular links with other schools.
- Most pupils' behaviour is good. They co-operate constructively in their groups and respond appropriately to the tasks that are set.

Teaching and learning experiences

- The effective use of Tric a Chlic in foundation phase is having a positive effect on raising standards as pupils progress from group to group at the expected rate. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have been grouped according to ability for Welsh and English reading sessions and the effective differentiated provision ensures that nearly all pupils are making purposeful progress. These sessions are delivered daily for 30 minutes. Pupils are assessed every ½ term and the school tracking procedures show that most pupils are making good progress from their starting points and in line with age and ability. Reading homework has been introduced to all children from nursery to year six. Parents meetings include the sharing of school strategies to improve reading and purposeful Individual target sheets were introduced at parents evening this year.
- Beneficial learning areas have been introduced to Key Stage 2 and this has resulted in pupils being able to choose their own learning activities during the challenges sessions. Tasks are effectively differentiated to cater for the broad range of ability within the class. School monitoring has shown that pupils are becoming more independent and selecting challenges that put them in the stretch zone. However, more work needs to be done in order to improve the learning environment to further facilitate independence.
- An effective new school planning system has been introduced using SharePoint and Excel. Teachers plan in collaboration with others in the federation to ensure effective skills development. Teachers have attended courses on effective planning for challenges / missions in Key Stage 2. And the impact of this professional learning activity is evident in the classroom practice. Staff responsibilities have been re-distributed in line with the new areas of learning. Staff have been involved in the observation of learning and scrutiny of pupils work and have created evaluative reports which have been shared with the governing body. Monitoring by staff is purposeful and in line with the school development plan.
- The school have successfully implemented strategies to increase the profile of the Welsh language. They have gained the bronze award and in order to move forward to work on the silver award, it was decided to keep the 'Cryw Cymraeg' in order to maintain consistency, before thinking about changing members in September. The Welsh crew were of the opinion that they did not want to be rewarded for speaking Welsh during the first year, but we have now decided to start rewarding effort, fluency and accuracy from September onward. Ynni Da

provided a session about Welsh music with everyone, followed by a disco of pedal power on the yard in the sunshine. As a result, the school has decided to choose a different Welsh band / artist for every fortnight. Their music will often be played, and the Cymraeg Criw Cymraeg 'will listen to FM Wales to conduct research. To succeed in the silver award, the school need to work with the community. and think it might be an idea to work as a cluster to promote the Welsh language in the Mynydd y Garreg and Kidwelly area.

Care support and guidance

- The school operates as a happy and caring community. High priority is given to pupils' wellbeing.
- The school tracks and monitors pupils' progress and wellbeing effectively, which includes attendance and behaviour data, as they move through the school. This information feeds purposefully into the self-evaluation processes.

Leadership and Management

- The current Headteacher was appointed to his post in January 2020 in an informal federation with Ysgol Gwenllian. The previous Headteacher had been in post from September 2018 until December 2019.
- The current and previous headteacher provides strong leadership and focuses successfully on raising pupils' standards. There is a clear vision for the school and this is communicated to all staff, pupils and parents. The whole school community works closely as a team for the benefit of all pupils and they ensure that pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of the school community.
- Governors have a good grasp of the school's standards. They are aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, they support the school effectively and challenge leaders purposefully.
- Self-evaluation procedures are effective and consider a wide range of first-hand evidence, such as data analysis, lesson observations and learning walks. Staff use the self-evaluation information well to identify the school's improvement priorities and to review progress against the priorities in the school development plan.
- The school development plan includes relevant and measurable actions for improvement, identifies clear milestones for monitoring and identifies the staff and governors that are responsible for each aspect.
- Procedures for managing staff performance are robust and link clearly with the school's development priorities and the staff's individual professional requirements. This helps ensure a consistency of approach and limits the effect of any in school variation in the standards of teaching and learning.
- The school has a specific focus on developing all of the staff's skills, and there is a valuable range of training opportunities and specific courses for them.
- The school tackles any instances of underperformance effectively through the Performance management system.
- Specific grants are used purposefully to ensure that specific groups of pupils make good progress. Good use is made of the pupil development grant to

improve provision to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils who are eligible for free school meals further. As a result, most pupils who are eligible make good progress in their reading skills from their starting points.

Impact of the proposal

The proposal will ensure a consistent approach to teaching across the school, thus reducing in school variation appropriately. The opportunity to share ideas and good practice will also have a positive impact on pupils and staff.

Staff welfare will also improve as they will be able to share responsibilities.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian was last inspected by Estyn in April 2014 when the school's standards and capacity to improve were judged as 'adequate'.

Pupils are currently taught in five classes – Nursery/Reception class, Year 1/ 2 class, Year 3 class, Year 4 class and Year 5/6 class. There is a Headteacher (0.8) employed at the school. There is also an Assistant Headteacher, 5 full time teachers (one of which is currently on Maternity Leave), 4 full time Teaching Assistants and 1 x 0.8 Teaching Assistant.

Standards

- Most pupils listen attentively to each other and adults in the classroom. Many foundation phase pupils develop consistently good Welsh oral skills at the expected levels for their age and ability. However, a few pupils have some difficulty pronouncing correctly, and are receiving support from an intervention program. Most KS2 pupils are able and ready to discuss their work comprehensively and work effectively during oracy tasks giving thorough reasons for their opinions. However, a few pupils tend to turn to English when communicating with their peers.
- Many pupils read at a level that is expected for their age and ability. Many pupils read accurately and have a clear understanding of the text. Many foundation phase pupils can identify letters and sounds effectively. Most upper foundation phase pupils are able to decode unfamiliar words successfully giving them an understanding. Many pupils across the school can predict what might happen next in stories purposefully. However, only around half of pupils read with fluency and expression to an audience.
- Many of the pupils' written work is appropriate to their age and ability. Spelling and grammar is consistently good in the majority of pupils' work. Many pupils' handwriting and presentation is consistent in style. However, a few pupils do not present their work well enough. There is a comprehensive range of genres in the pupils' work and many use effective punctuation to organise their work. Many KS2 pupils plan and re-draft parts of their work successfully in most classes. Many pupils also transfer their writing skills well to online and cross curricular tasks. The majority of KS2 pupils skillfully use a comprehensive vocabulary to engage readers.
- Most pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in different contexts. Evidence from the National tests show that most pupils have strong reasoning skills whilst many have strong numeracy skills. Many pupils have a comprehensive understanding of place value and many pupils in upper KS2 order decimals correctly consistently. Many pupils apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum effectively. For example, decoding problems from the Second World War. The majority of pupils can solve problems skilfully involving money and measures that are appropriate to their age and ability. Many pupils can be seen to use their good numeracy skills well in maths lessons and across the curriculum. Nearly all upper KS2 pupils participate in Money Wise (Financial Literacy)

activities and most are developing a strong understanding about wages, payslips, budgeting and borrowing money.

- Most pupils have valuable ICT skills for their age and ability. Many pupils use a comprehensive range of applications to support their learning across the curriculum. Many pupils create effective multimedia presentations about their work/theme/investigations that include QR codes, images and videos. Most pupils use the internet safely to thoroughly research information online and share their findings via J2e and Padlet. However, the DCF needs to have a greater focus to develop staff and pupils' skills further.

Wellbeing Standards

- Most pupils can work independently and give thorough reasons for their opinions. Most pupils build on their previous knowledge effectively and adjust their skills in new situations in order to make effective progress.
- Evidence from KS2 pupil questionnaires (Autumn 2019) show that nearly all pupils have positive attitudes towards healthy living. Nearly all pupils feel safe in the school and nearly all pupils know the name of the Senior Child Protection Officer
- Most pupils are happy to take responsibility for leading school groups and play a full part in school life. The School Council, Eco Council, Sports Ambassadors and Super Ambassadors (Children's Rights) play an important role in school life and are effective in making decisions. The School Council were an integral part and have made valuable contributions to the design of the new school building. The School Council also has a Suggestion Box to ensure that all pupils play a part in decisions regarding the school.
- Most pupils show care, respect and concern for others and take responsibility for their own actions. Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian is a school with a strong Christian ethos where pupils are encouraged to respect and care for all members of the school community and building.
- Nearly all pupils feel valued and participate fully in the school and wider community.
- There was a downward trend in attendance from 95.8% to 94.3% from 2015 to 2017. However, there has been an upward trend for the last two years, increasing this year to 95.25%.

Teaching and Learning Experiences

- Many of the teaching, and its impact on most pupils' learning and progress is consistently good. The characteristics of good and excellent teaching are well defined. However, within a minority of classroom practice they are applied inconsistently.
- The school takes account of national and local priorities. Staff and pupils' understanding of the four core purposes are developing well, and there has been good progress in outdoor provision within the foundation phase. However, there is room to develop this across the school further.

- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that is enriched with stimulating and challenging experiences that meet the needs of nearly all pupils. Lesson observations highlighted that the pupils received valuable challenge in many lessons.
- The school has worked successfully with other schools to share good practice, for example on See-Saw, to collect evidence and observations to improve teacher assessments and in-turn pupil standards. The school also works effectively in collaboration as part of a triad to share good practice across schools and work together to develop for example key stage 2 independent learning.
- All members of staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and professional standards are met successfully in most cases.
- There are successful strategies to identify and share effective practice. However, there is room for greater sharing of good practice internally within the school.
- Robust processes are in place to track pupils' progress and identify needs effectively in nearly all cases.
- Teacher assessment is consistent and accurate.

Care, Support and Guidance

- Nearly all pupils are tracked effectively with regards to their progress, wellbeing and attendance.
- The school tracks and monitors pupil progress effectively using an online tracking system, namely Incerts, and targets generated impact on pupils' needs or performance. Consequently, most pupils are effectively challenged and the needs of most pupils are met.
- Effective baseline assessments are made in the Nursery and Reception class to understand the true baseline of nearly all pupils starting at the school.
- Purposeful pupil voice is evidenced at the start and end of each term in the form of a spider diagram of ideas and an activity to evaluate strategies and content at the end of the term.
- Throughout the term pupils have valuable opportunities to plan, this is evidenced by activities noted in purple in the foundation phase continuous provision planning and 'meysydd mentro' in key stage 2.
- The use of Speakr and 'Saib a symud' are now fully embedded throughout the school.
- All ALN pupils have individual IDPs tailored to their needs and targets are set each term. One Page Profiles are designed to ensure that pupils have a voice, pupils contribute their views and needs to their IDPs.
- The school is developing as a Person Centred Planning School.
- The school has effective policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding pupils.
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed prior to and during new appointments as the Headteacher and Chair of Governors have received Safer Recruitment training. The school ensures that two references are received prior to the commencement of any new staff members.

Leadership and Management

- The head teacher is new to post from Autumn 2018. The head teacher and staff have a clear shared vision that has improved outcomes for most learners.
- The school has gone through a lot of change. The head teacher has planned and implemented change successfully in most respects. However, pace of engagement and participation in change in a very few aspects is slower than expected.
- The school has a purposeful self-evaluation timetable and strong self-evaluation processes in place. These processes effectively identify strengths and areas for development within teaching and learning. The wider SLT members are now becoming much more confident to lead these processes.
- Many leaders and staff analyse and use performance data well and have a clear understanding of strengths and improvement priorities. However, there needs to be less focus on end of key stage data.
- The school development plan has clear priorities. The school has a very good track record in raising the achievement of nearly all pupils including pupils eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups over a three-year period.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are highly effective in supporting and challenging the school's performance.

Impact of the proposal

The pupils and staff would benefit greatly from a Carmarthenshire standard new build school with 21st Century facilities as the current school building is condition B rated with inadequate facilities.

A new site with improved resources will enhance pupils' learning experiences as well as improving staff and pupils' wellbeing.

The proposal will ensure a consistent approach to teaching across the school, thus reducing in school variation appropriately. The opportunity to share ideas and good practice will also have a positive impact on pupils and staff.

Staff welfare will also improve as they will be able to share responsibilities.

The Consultation Process

The consultation on this proposal will follow guidelines established by the Welsh Government as stated in the School Organisation Code (2018).

Who will be consulted?

This document will be sent to the following interested parties:

Staff (Teaching and Ancillary)	Director of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Governors and Parents/Guardians	Diocesan Director of Education Church in Wales and RC
Local County Councillors	Estyn
Community Councillors	Regional Transport Consortium
Assembly Member (AM) / Regional Members / Members of Parliament (MP)	Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools
Welsh Ministers	All relevant unions
SEN Partners	Welsh Language Commissioner
LA Special Educational Needs Division	Local Police and Crime Commissioner
ERW – Education through Regional Working	Flying Start
	Child Care / Early Years
Communities for Work +	Public Services Board
Communities for Work	Legacy
Fusion	Families First Carmarthenshire

****Copies of the consultation document will be sent to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors of the surrounding catchment area of schools subject to proposals.***

Consultation Period

The consultation period for the proposals starts on 11th January, 2021 and ends on 21st February, 2021.

Consultees can submit their views in favour of or against a proposal. Responses received during the consultation period will not be treated as statutory objections. If consultees wish to object, they will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period outlined on page 28.

Considering your views

During the consultation period you can ask questions and express your views by writing a letter to the address below or by completing an online survey using the following link:

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=154832236066>

Letters should be sent to the following address by no later than noon on 21st February, 2021:

Mr Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services,
Building 2, St. David's Park, Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen, SA31 3HB
Or E-mail to: DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Drop in sessions

Due to the ongoing implications of the Coronavirus issue we have been advised to postpone all events where there is interaction between staff, parents and the wider community and as a result there will not be a drop in session to discuss proposals. Should you feel strongly about discussing the proposals please contact Mr Martin Jones or Mrs Rhianydd Evans by sending an e-mail to DECMEP@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and a virtual meeting can be arranged.

Consultation with Pupils

There will be an opportunity for the pupils of the schools subject to the proposals to participate in the consultation process during a session which will be conducted at the schools.

The information gathered from the consultation with pupils will form part of the consultation report which will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration following the consultation period.

Consultation Report

A Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks before a decision is made on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposal and details of consultation undertaken with the pupils.

The Executive Board of Carmarthenshire County Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

If the Executive Board decides to continue with the proposal Carmarthenshire County Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website and posted at the schools subject to proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the schools to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians, and staff members (the schools may also distribute the notice by email).

Statutory Objection Period

The statutory notice will set out the details of the proposal and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within a period of 28 days. If objections are received an objection report will be published on the Carmarthenshire County Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised and provide Carmarthenshire County Council's response to those objections.

Determination of Proposal

Carmarthenshire County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications. In doing so, the County Council will take into account any statutory objections that it received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

The Statutory Process Time-Table

The statutory process and timetable will be as follows:

11 th January 2021	Issue of this consultation document to identified and other interested parties.
21 st February 2021	Closing date for views on the proposal to be received by the Department for Education and Children.
27 th April 2021	<p>A Consultation Report will be taken to the Executive Board for a decision on whether or not to proceed to publish a statutory notice. OR alternatively proposal ends.</p> <p>The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least 2 weeks prior to the publication of a statutory notice.</p> <p>If the decision is made to proceed then a statutory notice will be published. The notice will outline details of the proposal and be published on the Council's web site and be displayed near the entrance of the school and schools which are subject to the proposals. Copies of the notice will be made available to the school to distribute to parents, guardians and staff members. Following publication there will be a 28 day period during which time formal written objections will be invited.</p> <p>The statutory notice will give details on how you may record your objections to the proposal.</p>
8 th June 2021	End of formal 28 day notice period for objections. County Council will determine the proposal. The County Council may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposal with modifications, in doing so the County Council will take into account any statutory objections received.
July 2021	<p>Deadline to notify parents of intention to implement proposal.</p> <p>Following determination of proposals all interested parties will be informed and advised of the availability of the decision which will be published electronically on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.</p>

Appendix A – Community Impact Assessment

Each school has an area that it serves, referred to as the catchment area. Each school is expected to accommodate pupils from within its catchment area and schools must have regard for this ongoing demand.

Most parents send their child to their local school but parents have a right to state a preference for other schools.

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg

Catchment Area Analysis – January PLASC 2020 Data

Pupils attending the school from inside / outside the catchment

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, the geographical data in relation to the pupil distribution for Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg catchment area indicated that of the 36 pupils on roll, 22 lived within the catchment area, whilst the remaining 14 were from outside the catchment area.

Pupils living in the catchment area attending other schools.

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, 91 pupils lived within the Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg catchment area attended other schools.

Taking into consideration the 22 pupils living within the catchment area attending Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg, and the 91 pupils living within the catchment area but attending other schools, a total of 113 pupils are living within the catchment area of Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg.

Other facilities or services provided by the school e.g. after school clubs/ community Library

The school currently hold a breakfast club for pupils during the weekdays between 8:00am - 8.45am.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the pupils also benefitted from an after-school care club, which was held every Tuesday and Thursday from 3.00pm – 5.30pm.

Community Impact

The Mudiad Meithrin currently use the Hall at Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Catchment Area Analysis – January PLASC 2020 Data

Pupils attending the school from inside / outside the catchment

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, the geographical data in relation to the pupil distribution for Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian catchment area indicated that of the 119 pupils on roll, 70 lived within the catchment area, whilst the remaining 49 were from outside the catchment area.

Pupils living in the catchment area attending other schools

Based on January PLASC 2020 data, 192 pupils lived within the Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian catchment area attended other schools. However, of these pupils, 130 pupils were attending Ysgol y Castell to access English medium education. Both Ysgol y Castell and Ysgol Gwenllian share the same catchment area.

Taking into consideration the 70 pupils living within the catchment area attending Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian, and the 192 pupils living within the catchment area but attending other schools, a total of 262 pupils are living within the catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian.

Other facilities or services the school provides e.g. after school clubs / community library

The school currently hold a breakfast club for pupils during the weekdays between 8:00am - 8.45am.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the pupils also benefitted from an after-school care club, which were held Monday to Friday between 3:00pm and 5:30pm.

The school also arranges classes for parents to enable them to assist their children to improve their Numeracy and Literacy skills.

Community Impact

Due to the lack of space at the school, no other organisations make use of the school building or facilities.

Appendix B – Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council's vision is to provide a service, which will ensure access to high quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, this enabling the achievement of their full potential within the context of the unique bilingual nature of the county.

This proposal supports the Council's vision and aims for Welsh medium education as set out in Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017 – 2020. The proposal will allow greater opportunities for access to Welsh medium education within the Kidwelly and Mynyddygarreg area and will ensure linguistic continuity from the nursery sector along the key stages to the secondary sector so that every pupil becomes fluent and confident in both Welsh and English languages.

Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg

Standards *

In the Foundation Phase, pupils are assessed in different areas of learning. Based on 2019 data, 83.3% of pupils achieved at least Outcome 5 in 'Language, Literacy and Communication (in Welsh)'. In Key Stage 2, pupils are assessed in each of the core subjects. Based on 2019 data, 75% of pupils achieved at least Level 4 in Welsh first language.

After school activities which provide additional opportunities to use the Welsh language

The school currently run Clwb yr Urdd for pupils. Pupils also take part in Eisteddfod yr Urdd, Eisteddfod Mynyddygarreg and Urdd Swimming Competition.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian

Standards *

In the Foundation Phase, pupils are assessed in different areas of learning. Based on 2019 data, 92.9% of pupils achieved at least Outcome 5 in 'Language, Literacy and Communication (in Welsh)'. In Key Stage 2, pupils are assessed in each of the core subjects. Based on 2019 data, 100% of pupils achieved at least Level 4 in Welsh first language.

After school activities which provide additional opportunities to use the Welsh language

The school currently run Clwb yr Urdd for Pupils. Pupils also take part in Eisteddfod yr Urdd, Eisteddfod Mynyddygarreg and various Urdd Sports Competitions (Rugby, Football, Cricket, Netball, Swimming and Gymnastics).

** No National Teacher assessments were conducted in 2020 due to the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus outbreak. For this reason, 2019 has been used.*

Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Carmarthenshire County Council Assessing Impact

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies and strengthens the law, removes inconsistencies and makes it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

What is the general duty?

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all.

The duties are legal obligations. Failure to meet the duties may result in authorities being exposed to legal challenge.

Under equality legislation, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The Equality Act 2010 introduces a new public sector duty which extends this coverage to age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process. It is also important to note that public authorities subject to the equality duties are also likely to be subject to the obligations under the Human Rights Act and it is therefore wise also to consider the potential impact that decisions could have on human rights as part of the same process.

Carmarthenshire's approach to Equality Impact

In order to ensure that the council is considering the potential equality impact of its proposed policies and practices, and in order to evidence that we have done so, every proposal will be required to be supported by the attached Equality Impact Assessment. Where this assessment identifies a significant impact then more detail may be required.

Reporting on assessments

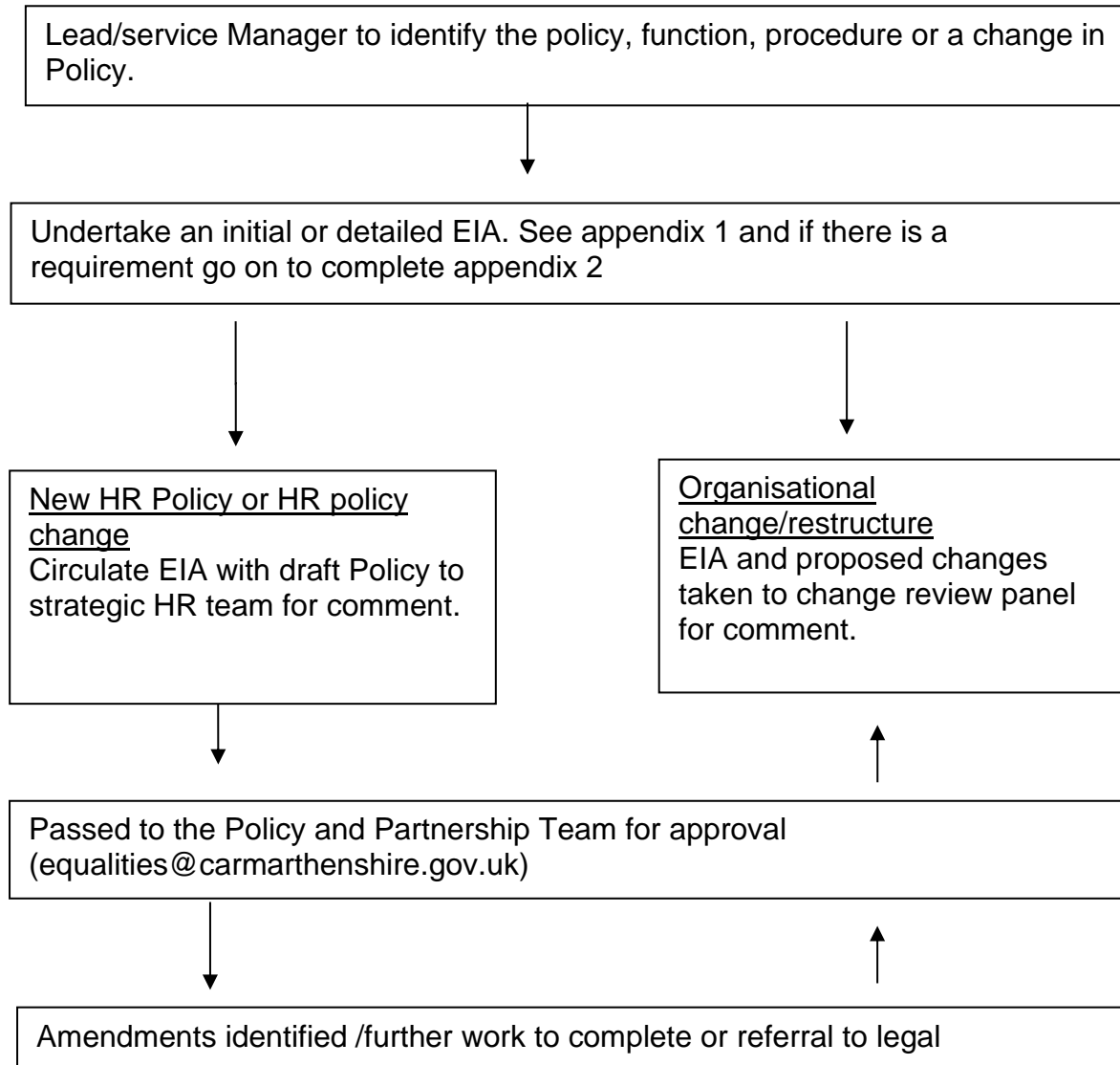
Where it is clear from the assessment that the likely impact on the authority's ability to meet the general duty is substantial, then it must publish a report.

Initial and Detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The initial EIA (appendix 1) is a simple and quick method of assessing the effect of a policy, function, procedure, decision including financial cuts on one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Service Manager responsible for the relevant new or revised policies, functions, procedures and financial decisions must undertake, at least, an initial EIA and where relevant a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2); EIA must be attached as background paper with reports to Executive and Scrutiny.

Equality impact assessment – Process to follow where HR implications have been identified



Initial Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Appendix 1

Department: Education & Children	Completed by (lead): Sara Griffiths	Date of initial assessment: February 2020 Revision Dates: February 2021
Area to be assessed: (i.e. name of policy, function, procedure, practice or a financial decision)	This proposal is to review primary education provision in the Mynyddygarreg and Gwenllian areas. The scheme will re-locate Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian to a new site with investment to provide increased capacity in a new school building with 21 st Century facilities and excellent outdoor areas. As part of this scheme, the proposal is to increase the capacity of the school to 240 (210 + 30 nursery places).	
Is this existing or new function/policy, procedure, practice or decision?	School Re-organisation Proposal – Modernising Education Programme	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Schools Programme • Modernising Education Programme • School Organisation Code 2018 • PLASC Data 2019 • The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the proposed function/policy, practice, procedure or decision and who is intended to benefit.	The aim of the proposal is to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddygarreg and include its catchment area within the current catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian. This proposal will increase the capacity and number of Welsh medium places available at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian and follow the objectives and actions as set out in Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The scheme will also provide the pupils and staff of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian with a new school building and facilities which are suitable for teaching and learning in the 21 st Century with sufficient capacity for current and future pupils.
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The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to:- (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (2) advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) foster good relations between different groups (see guidance notes)		2. What is the level of impact on each group/protected characteristics in terms of the three aims of the duty? Please indicate high (H) medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each.	3. Identify the risk or positive effect that could result for each of the group/protected characteristics?		4. If there is a disproportionately negative impact what mitigating factors have you considered?
Protected characteristics	Age	L			The proposal will provide a new school building to accommodate pupils aged 3-11 within the school building.
	Disability	L			The new school building will be fully DDA compliant ensuring full accessibility for all.
	Gender reassignment	N	Neutral		
	Race	N	Neutral		

	Religion/Belief	N	Neutral		
	Pregnancy and maternity	N	Neutral		
	Sexual Orientation	N	Neutral		
	Sex	N	Neutral		
	Welsh language	N	Neutral		
	Any other area	N	Neutral		

5. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> The Project Officer has liaised with the Headteacher, Staff and Parents of Ysgol Gynradd Mynyddgarreg with regards to the proposal. All stakeholders will be fully consulted during the formal consultation period.	
6. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any? Ensure that all key stakeholders are fully informed throughout the statutory process.			
7. Procurement Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any procurement implications to the activity, proposal, service. N/A Please take the findings of this assessment into your procurement plan. Contact the corporate procurement unit for further advice.			
8. Human resources Following collation of evidence for this assessment, are there any Human resource implications to the activity, proposal or service? As there will be an increase in capacity, additional staffing may be required. However, this will be addressed as the scheme progresses and Human Resources will be fully consulted.			
9. Based on the information in sections 2 and 6, should this function/policy/procedure/practice or a decision proceed to Detailed Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more H under section 2)		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved by: Head of Service	Simon Davies		Date: October 2020

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