

Ian Budd
Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Prif Swyddog (Addysg ac Ieuenctid)



All Stakeholders/Consultees

Your Ref/Eich Cyf

Our Ref/Ein Cyf

Date/Dyddiad 4th May 2016

Ask for/Gofynner am School Modernisation Team

Direct Dial/Rhif Union 01352 704134

Dear Stakeholder/Consultee,

Proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd (English medium community school) as of the 31st August 2016 with pupils transferring to other schools in the local area subject to parental preference

On Tuesday 19th April 2016, Flintshire County Council's Cabinet determined the proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd as of 31st August 2016 with existing pupils transferring to other schools in the local area subject to parental preference. Cabinet considered the proposal, the statutory objections received, and the local authority response in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2013. The Cabinet decided to approve the proposal.

The decision made by Cabinet was however subsequently called in on Thursday 28th April 2016 the decision was considered discussed and robustly debated by the Education and Youth Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Having considered the decision, the Education and Youth Overview and Scrutiny Committee was satisfied with the representations made and decided to implement the decision on the 28th April 2016.

In determining the proposal, Cabinet were satisfied that the proposal will:

- Maintain the current standard of education in the area and provide at least an equivalent standard of provision for the existing pupils of Ysgol Llanfynydd
- Reduce surplus places;
- Lead to a fairer and more equitable distribution of pupil funding to the benefit of all pupils in the area; and
- Maintain access and parental preference for English medium provision in the area.

It was noted that there were 78 objections from parents, staff, the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanfynydd, community members and pupils. A summary of the objections are

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6ND
www.flintshire.gov.uk
Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug. CH7 6ND
www.siryfflint.gov.uk

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to correspondence received in Welsh without delay.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg. Ymatebwn yn ddi-oed i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



detailed within the objection report which is available on the Flintshire County Council website via the following link (should hardcopies be required in either Welsh or English please email 21stcenturyschools@flintshire.gov.uk with the postal address);

<http://tinyurl.com/zw6azub>

The reasons for the decision in respect of the factors outlined within the School Organisation Code are as follows:

1) Quality and Standards in Education

1. The view of Estyn is that the proposal would at least maintain the current standard of education in the area should the proposal be implemented.
2. A range of contextualised data has been provided regarding Ysgol Llanfynydd and other possible alternative schools (Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn, Abermorddu CP School, Ysgol Estyn, Hope and Bwlchgwyn CP School, Wrexham).
3. Data has also been provided relating to assessed cohorts at the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, Estyn reports and commentary regarding current provision at all the schools subject to the proposal.
4. During the transition stage following the determination, the Council will take all practicable steps to minimise disruption for all pupils by working closely with receiving schools.
5. For pupils with additional learning needs, transition will be managed by specialist additional learning needs education officers. Additional support will be provided if required to assist pupils with the transition.

2) The need for places and the impact on accessibility of schools

1. The proposal will contribute towards ensuring the area will retain a balance of provision for English and Welsh medium education.
2. The proposal will reduce surplus places within the area.
3. The alternative school-based provision will have sufficient capacity and provide accommodation of at least equivalent quality.
4. The Council has demonstrated that for most pupils the journey time would decrease, for some pupils the journey time would increase, however given the proximity of the alternative schools are within the guidance as per the Welsh Governments Learner Travel Measure.
5. Home to school transport will be provided for pupils in accordance with the Home to School Transport Policy of a family's home local authority.

3) Resourcing of education

1. The proposal will lead to a fairer and more equitable distribution of pupil funding to the benefit of all pupils in the area.
2. Savings derived from the proposal will be retained and reinvested within the Council's School Modernisation Plan to deliver its priorities including investment

- in school buildings.
3. Pupil funding follows the pupils to the school in which they would be continuing their education.
 4. Additional transport costs generated as a result of this proposal will be funded out of the net savings generated.

4. Specific factors in the consideration of school closures

1. The proposal has considered any equality issues identified through the completion of the equality impact.
2. Objectors have stated that the proposal will have a detrimental impact on the community. These have been considered in the community impact assessment. There are alternative community facilities within the nearby location of Llanfynydd. There is also a community village hall facility in the nearby village of Ffrith.
3. Objectors have stated that the alternatives to closure should be explored. This specifically included pursuing a federation with Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn. However, no such proposal was put forward, with no willing partner schools being identified. The Governing Body of Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn set out their reasons for not pursuing federation, but instead offering transitional support for learners.
4. Objectors raised the following concerns during the objection period:
 - concerns about the consultation document, accuracy of data & evidence (including cost of repair work);
 - concerns that the Council haven't followed process;
 - impact on the community/future use of site should the school close;
 - opinion that federation is a viable option and opinion that the Council is not actively encouraging federation;
 - opinion that closing schools should not be about money;
 - traffic and transport;
 - admission and transition arrangements;
 - potential housing developments not taken into consideration;
 - impact on children;
 - parental preference "being taken away"; and
 - opinion that there are not sufficient places in other schools in the area.

The concerns raised have been directly addressed in the Council's Objection Report.

Objectors responses also appropriately focussed on the strengths of the school, i.e. standards of provision, the school remaining stable through the consultation process, professional staff, being a 'close knit' school and being valued by the community.

Following the determination, the Council is committed to working with families, staff and Governors of Ysgol Llanfynydd to support learners through the period of transition ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Budd', written in a cursive style.

Ian Budd
Chief Officer, Education & Youth