

### Vale of Glamorgan Council

#### Consultation Report

#### Proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale

### 1. Background Information

#### 1.1. Outline of the consultation

This report presents the feedback received during the two consultation periods undertaken from 5 March 2018 to April 2018 and 21 May 2018 to 9 July 2018 in response to the Council's proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale.

In March 2018, the Council launched a consultation aimed at taking a holistic view of primary school provision in the Western Vale. The aim of the consultation was to inform the community about the school re-organisation proposal being put forward under section 2.2 of the School Organisation Code and referred to as regulated alterations as follows:

- a) a regulated alteration to Llancafarn Primary School to move the site of the school from Llancafarn to a newly constructed school building on land north of the railway line in Rhoose;
- b) a regulated alteration to increase the capacity of Llancafarn Primary School at the new site from 126 to 210 places; and
- c) a regulated alteration to alter the lowest age range of pupils through the addition of a new nursery class containing 48 part time places.

During the consultation members of the community raised a number of concerns regarding the impact to their local areas, as well as raising additional questions about the proposal, while seeking to ensure their views were understood.

As a result of feedback the Council undertook a second consultation that commenced on the 21 May 2018. The Council considered it important to include greater detail in the consultation document and to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to consider this within a new consultation timeline.

The feedback and views expressed in both consultations are considered in this consultation report. The Council welcomed any further or additional feedback from individuals or organisations on the additional information included in the second consultation before a decision is taken by the Council.

The consultation processes followed Welsh Government guidelines, in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The consultation processes gave local people the opportunity to learn about the proposal and for the Council to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be taken into account before any decisions are made.

Formal consultations were conducted through a consultation document and response form distributed electronically to prescribed consultees and published on the Vale of Glamorgan website on the 5 March for the first consultation and 21 May 2018 for the second. Consultees were also provided with an email link to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website.

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process for school reorganisation and is prescribed by Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code 2013. The consultation documents outlined the proposal being considered, the rationale for the proposal and the details of the consultation exercise. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete.

## **2. Consultation**

### **2.1. Publication of the consultation**

The bilingual consultation documents were published on 5 March 2018 for the first consultation and 21 May 2018 for the second and distributed online, through social media, and on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website.

Consultees were provided with an electronic copy of the documents and an email link to the Vale of Glamorgan website.

### **2.2. Stakeholder engagement**

Engagement for both consultations on the proposal was undertaken with prescribed consultees as contained within the School Organisation Code 2013.

The Council consulted with the following groups for both consultations:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Llancarfan Primary School                    | Governing Body of Llancarfan Primary School                         |
| Parents/Carers and Guardians of children attending Llancarfan Primary School      | Llancarfan Community Council  |
| Vale of Glamorgan Children and Young People's Partnership                         | Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP)       |
| Communities First Partnership   | Local Councillors   |
| Assembly Members (AM's)/ Members of Parliament (MP's) / Regional Assembly Members | Welsh Language Commissioner   |
| Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)                               | Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan |
| Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)   | Central South Consortium  |
| Estyn   | Trade Unions  |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Welsh Government Ministers          | Directors of Education –<br>All Neighbouring Authorities |
| Local Police and Crime Commissioner | Diocesan Directors of Education                          |
| Council's Transportation Department |  |

Consultees were invited to complete a formal consultation response form which could be completed in hard copy or online via the Council's website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/westernvalereconfiguration](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/westernvalereconfiguration)

### **2.3. Consultation meetings and drop in sessions**

Meetings for both consultations were held with the staff and governors at Llancarfan Primary School which were attended by Council officers. The main points of the consultation document were highlighted as well as an explanation of the statutory process.

Two drop in sessions for both consultations were held for all stakeholders in Llancarfan and Rhoose.

### **2.4. Consultation with children and young people**

Consultation sessions for both consultations were undertaken with the School Council of Llancarfan Primary School to engage the pupils in the consultation process. A report on the outcomes of these sessions can be found at Annex D.

## **Consultation Summary**

### **2.5. Consultation Questions**

Consultees for both consultations were asked for their opinion on a key question:

- Do you support the proposal to provide a new school building with a new nursery unit for Llancarfan Primary School from September 2021?

Consultees were also offered the opportunity to comment further:

- If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.
- Any other comments?

### **2.6. Results of the feedback from all stakeholders**

The authority received 1136 individual responses by the consultation closing dates of the 20 April and 9 July 2018. Of the total 1136 individual responses received, 82 were in favour of the proposal, 1046 were opposed, 8 provided no opinion either way. The governing body of Llancarfan Primary School, Rhoose Primary School and Estyn formally responded.

It has been noted that not all consultees provided a response to each of the questions and that some forms were not fully completed. In these cases we have accepted the responses to the questions that they have chosen to answer.

Feedback from consultation meetings and drop in sessions are not included in this report as it was stated clearly in the consultation document that the Council would only accept responses using the official consultation response form. Consultees were advised of this at the drop in sessions.

## 2.7 Profile of respondents

The Council received a total of 1136 responses. The table below provides a breakdown of the responses:

|                        | Total responses | Agree with proposal | Disagree with proposal | No opinion | Declaration of respondent from online response form | %    |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|---|------|
| Online Survey          | 1049            | 82                  | 961                    | 6          | Parent  | 28.5 |
|                        |                 |                     |                        |            | Pupil   | 5    |
|                        |                 |                     |                        |            | Governor  | 1.5  |
|                        |                 |                     |                        |            | Staff   | 2    |
|                        |                 |                     |                        |            | Local Resident                                      | 47   |
|                        |                 |                     |                        |            | Other   | 16   |
| Written Correspondence | 87              | 0                   | 85                     | 2          |   |      |

The authority also received a petition, Save Llancafarn Primary School from Closure, signed by 1959 people.

### Index of Annexes

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Annex A | A summary of key themes and issues raised by statutory consultees to both consultations and the response to those issues from the Vale of Glamorgan Council. |
| Annex B | A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal.  |
| Annex C | Comments to frequently asked questions.  |
| Annex D | Consultation undertaken with young people  |
| Annex E | Responses from the governing body of Llancafarn and Rhws Primary Schools.  |
| Annex F | Response from Estyn. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2013, a copy of the consultation document was sent to Estyn.        |
| Annex G | Llancafarn Parent Survey, conducted and analysed by local residents  |
| Annex H | Minutes from Llancafarn Primary School in relation to the consultation   |
| Annex I | Minutes of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee on the proposal   |

## **Consultation with statutory consultees**

### **1. Feedback themes**

The following summarises the key issues/concerns raised during the formal consultation period. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to Cabinet members.

#### **Issue 1**

##### **School transport arrangements**

Respondents expressed concerns about young children travelling on school transport up to 5 miles to the transferred school site and what form of transport would be provided. A respondent had also expressed concerns as not being able to walk children to school.

##### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

School transport would be provided in line with the Council's transport policy which provides free home to school transport for primary age children who live 2 miles or more from their designated catchment area or nearest suitable school. Free school transport is not provided for children attending a nursery unit at a school.

Any pupil attending Llanccarfan Primary School up to the move to the new site who lives 2 miles or more from the new school site would therefore be entitled to free school transport. Any pupils who no longer live 2 miles from the new Llanccarfan Primary School site as a result of the relocation would no longer be entitled to free school transport. The admission transition arrangements for existing pupils who would be on roll up to the move to the new site and siblings attending Llanccarfan in the future that were proposed as part of this consultation would be reflected in the provision of transport.

It is likely that two mini buses would serve the school, one from the Llanccarfan area and another serving Llanccadle and Llanbethery although the exact arrangements would be determined by the school transport department. Escort provision is generally provided on 16 seater minibuses and above in order to supervise children on their journey to and from school. The Council currently operates a number of buses to primary schools across the Vale of Glamorgan travelling in excess of 5 miles to a school. It is not unusual for young primary age children aged four to eleven to be travelling on school transport. Risk assessments, safeguarding training and processes and health and safety procedures are firmly embedded in the delivery of the service. The number of children that are currently able to walk to the school is small due to the narrowness of the lanes and the low number of pupils living within walking distance. Only 17 pupils live within the village itself. More pupils would live within walking distance of the new school site due to its close proximity to the new housing developments in Rhoose. Pupils from Rhoose currently attending Llanccarfan Primary School also live within walking distance of the proposed school site.

Whilst some parents will no longer be able to walk their children to school, the availability of a school bus would enable parents to utilise school transport and for children to travel together.

## **Issue 2**

### **Breakfast and after school/extra-curricular clubs**

Respondents were concerned that no transport would be available for breakfast and after school/extra-curricular clubs, this will mean additional driving for Llancarfan residents or the children miss out on these clubs. Childcare arrangements and work arrangements affected.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council has a legal duty to provide school transport for primary age children living 2 miles or more from their designated catchment area or nearest suitable school in order to facilitate the attendance for statutory education purposes. Transport would not be provided to a nursery and for breakfast and after school requirements.

Children's attendance at breakfast, after school curricular clubs and after school clubs are decisions for parents as well as childcare arrangements. The Council understands the concerns; a number of parents are in similar positions across the Vale of Glamorgan whose children attend schools in excess of 5 miles from their home.

Wraparound care facilities would continue at the school and be available to parents of children attending the school.

## **Issue 3**

### **Admission Arrangements**

Respondents were concerned about the feeder school arrangements and catchment areas for the school with particular reference to feeder links to Cowbridge Comprehensive School. Concerns were expressed about future numbers for Llantwit Major Comprehensive School.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

All catchment and feeder arrangements in place within the Vale of Glamorgan are subject to regular review and a widespread review is scheduled to take place during the academic year 2018/19. Any proposed changes would be reflected in a future admission arrangements consultation. If as a result of this process, any changes to admission arrangements take place, the following transitional arrangements would apply.

The Council's intention is to honour the feeder arrangements and catchment area links to Cowbridge for Llancarfan Primary School pupils following the move to a new site, up until they leave the school. Siblings of pupils attending the school up to the move to a new site will also have a high priority for admission to Llancarfan Primary School once they reach school age.

The Council will put transitional admission arrangements in place for pupils on roll up to the move to the new school site. These transitional arrangements would not apply to any pupils joining the school after the new building is operational unless they have a sibling already on roll at the school during the year they join and that sibling was on roll on the date of move to a new site.

The Council proposes to maintain the feeder and catchment area link to Cowbridge Comprehensive School for pupils on roll at Llancarfan Primary School up to the date of the move to a new site, and their siblings. The Council is not proposing to change the catchment area for Cowbridge Comprehensive School as part of this proposal but is proposing to change the catchment area of Llancarfan Primary School, Llanfair, Rhws and St Nicholas CIW Primary Schools.

On its new site, Llancarfan Primary School would feed either Whitmore High School or Llantwit Major High school for all new entrants to the school after the date of the move to a new site, apart from sibling connections of children already at the school as part of transitional admission arrangements who would maintain feeder or sibling links to Cowbridge Comprehensive School.

#### **Issue 4**

##### **Religious feeder schools**

Respondent expressed concerns that feeder school entry is biased towards religion and the proposal will reduce the number of non-religious feeder schools for Cowbridge Comprehensive School. Concerns were expressed that non faith choice is being removed.

##### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Cowbridge Comprehensive School has ten feeder primary schools serving the school of which four are Church in Wales Voluntary Aided schools who control their own admissions policy and admissions to the school. These schools are inclusive schools, and will have their own oversubscription criteria which will incorporate a religious aspect to allocate places where there are more applications than places available, if it is required. A further two feeder schools are voluntary controlled Church in Wales schools for whom the Council is the admissions authority and the admissions criteria for entry in the event of oversubscription are the same as the other 4 non-denominational primary schools.

All feeder schools are inclusive schools serving Cowbridge Comprehensive School with no considered bias toward religious beliefs. The denominational schools serve their local village and communities irrespective of faith and denomination. Parents have a choice for their children attending a Church in Wales primary school to either attend a denominational or a non-denominational secondary school.

#### **Issue 5**

##### **Drop in pupil numbers**

Respondents expressed concerns about a potential drop in numbers over the next few years as a result of the proposal.

## **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council believes this is a unique opportunity to not only move Llancafarn Primary School into a new 21st Century building but also accommodate children from the new housing development in Rhoose. Moving the school to a larger site, bigger building and with a new catchment area with sustainable numbers would enable the school to build on existing progress while catering for a greater school population. The proposal will ensure a sustainable balance between the supply and demand for school places for the long term.

The Council is projecting that surplus capacity will increase to 28 places (22%) over the next five year period. This does not take into account any impact of the proposed move of Llancafarn Primary School to the new site. There is a drop in the Llancafarn reception intake for September 2018 but this is not attributable to the proposal. The closing date for reception applications was the 8 January 2018 which was prior to the proposal being launched. Numbers could fall in the future as a result of the local campaign against the perceived closure of the school. This could result in some parents choosing alternative schools. In recognition of this the Council has offered funding protection to the Governing Body to sustain the school in the interim.

## **Issue 6**

### **Pupil projections and housing yield**

Respondents queried numbers requiring school places arising from the proposed housing developments and concerns that the formula used to determine pupil projections emanating from developments is excessive. No firm evidence to support the Council's pupil projections.

## **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council's pupil projection methodology follows Audit Commission guidance and is based on the application of Catchment/Feeder school ratios and cohort survival rates (the relationship between the number of pupils in one cohort in one school year, and the same cohort in the following school year). Pupil projections are evidence based and also take account of current and historic school data, birth rates, planned housing developments and cross catchment movement. A 2013 Estyn Inspection of the Vale of Glamorgan's Services for Children and Young People reported "The authority has appropriate systems in place for forecasting pupil numbers and the requirements for school places using a suitable range of data".

In terms of housing developments, the projected number of pupils emanating from a development is calculated using a formula derived from census data of householders in the Vale of Glamorgan. The formula is contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance for planning purposes. At nursery level this is calculated at 0.1 pupils per unit and at primary level 0.278 per unit. The developments of 350 houses would each yield 35 nursery and 97 primary age children. For the 700 units being built in total, the Council would expect around 70 nursery age children and 194 primary age children to be generated.



Residential units with a net gain of 10 or more dwellings are assessed to determine how many new pupils will be generated by a development. Studio apartments and one bedroom flats are excluded from any housing development calculations as is the case with the housing developments in Rhoose. The pupil yield factor from housing developments in the Vale of Glamorgan is comparable to the methodology employed by other local authorities. The yield dependent upon the demography of the Council area.

The Council's methodology for calculating pupil yield from housing developments and pupil projections is consistent and the Council is satisfied that it reflects current conditions for school place planning purposes. Periodical comparisons of actual pupil yield against estimated pupil yield have demonstrated that the pupil yield assumptions used by the Council are appropriate and recognise that some children may remain at their current schools.

For example, the Council's projections for pupil yield at Rhoose Point across nursery, primary and secondary sectors was 398. Compared against the actual pupil yield to date of 410, this represents a difference of only 3%.

## **Issue 7**

### **Development north west**

Respondents concerns that the north east development will not go ahead. Concerns that as the school would not be built until 2021, children from the North West development will already be in the system with the potential for surplus places at the new school.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council's pupil projections have taken into account the housing developments in Rhoose with an assumption that development in the north east will commence in 2020. It was considered to be more effective to plan for the non-confirmed housing development as part of the proposal, due to the length of time required to consult, agree and if approved build a new school, particularly with regard to the requirements put in place to access the necessary funding from Welsh Government.

If this proposal goes ahead, prior to the school being built, children emanating from the north west development may attend schools outside the area as a result of there being no available capacity within the Rhoose area. Parents would have an option to transfer to Llancafán Primary School when the new building is completed to enable attendance at a school closer to home.

## **Issue 8**

### **Housing demand in the surrounding area.**

Respondents felt that future housing development in the surrounding area at St Athan, Ministry of Defence personnel movement and Aston Martin moving into the area would facilitate demand at Llancafán. Developments in Sycamore Cross could also have an impact.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Any new development and movement into the St Athan area and subsequent demand for school places would be facilitated at St Athan Primary School. St Athan Primary School has the capacity to accommodate extra demand for school places in the area and any development of the school building required could be met through developer contributions to enable expansion of the school. Housing developments attract developer contributions to enable extra school capacity to be created in order to accommodate additional demand for school places.

The Sycamore Cross development is linked to St Nicholas CIW Primary School with development contributions available to expand the school where necessary to manage demand in the area at St Nicholas CIW Primary School. Children in the area would be linked to their local catchment area school, St Nicholas CIW Primary School.

### **Issue 9**

#### **Development in Llancafán**

Respondents commented that Llancafán is having houses built close to the existing school.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

An affordable housing pre application advice enquiry was received by the Council for around 10 qualifying units for pupil yield purposes but no official planning application has been received. The number of pupils yielded by such a proposed development of 1 nursery and 3 primary age pupils would not impact significantly on the number of pupils residing within Llancafán's catchment area.

### **Issue 10**

#### **Birth rates**

A respondent felt the assumptions about birth rates in the area were incorrect.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council regularly receives yearly extracts of birth data in the Vale of Glamorgan area from the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership. The birth data received is arranged into school catchment areas to support school place planning. The data provided to the Council shows that on average four children are born in the Llancafán catchment area each year. The following table shows the birth data in the Llancafán area for the three reception intakes September 2019 – 2021.

## **Llancarfan Primary School catchment area births**

| <b>Academic year</b>         | <b>No of births in academic year</b> | <b>Reception intake year for births</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| September 2014 - August 2015 | 3                                    | September 2019                          |
| September 2015 - August 2016 | 2                                    | September 2020                          |
| September 2016 - August 2017 | 6                                    | September 2021                          |

### **Issue 11**

#### **School transfer assumptions**

Respondent concerns about the Council's assumption that parents will transfer their children to the new school site. It is contended that they will apply to other schools with a more rural setting. There is doubt about the number of pupils likely to move to the new site.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The figures for the Llancarfan Primary School on a new site in Rhose are based on the current pupil numbers for Llancarfan Primary School. The Council acknowledges the survey undertaken to determine parents' wishes about moving to the school's new site. The survey can be viewed at annex G of this report. However, whilst parents have the right to express parental preference and to change schools, there is no guarantee that those preferences can be met. The acceptance of an application to transfer to an alternative school is dependent upon the availability of school places at other schools. Whilst it is hoped that all pupils will continue to attend Llancarfan Primary School following a move to a new site, it should be noted that availability of primary school places to facilitate a transfer to an alternative school is limited in the Western Vale.

### **Issue 12**

#### **Welsh medium provision**

Respondent questioned whether Welsh medium provision had been considered in the strategy.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Welsh medium education is an important aspect of the Council's Strategic Outline Programme for Band B. The Council was very successful in increasing Welsh medium primary sector capacity within the Vale of Glamorgan under Band A of the 21st Century School's Programme. In order to build on this success, a key priority for Band B is to increase capacity in the Welsh medium secondary sector as well as consideration of further developments at primary level. In order to ensure that the Council actively addresses the Welsh Government target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050, the Council will be undertaking an active programme of addressing need with regard to Welsh and English medium education as part of its programme.

The impact on Welsh medium education in this area of the Western Vale has been considered in the development of this proposal. The number of Welsh medium children anticipated from the development is around 14 primary aged children with sufficient capacity at the catchment area school, Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant, to accommodate demand.

### **Issue 13**

#### **Local Development Plan**

Respondent stated that Llancarfan is identified in the Council's Local Development Plan requiring future expansion

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Education Facilities Paper background paper published as part of the Council's Local Development Plan in September 2013 was based on primary school projections up to 2017/18. Since 2014 the number on roll at Llancarfan has decreased from 116 to 101 children. There are no planned housing developments for the Llancarfan area that would increase pupil intake and require expansion of the school, The school could not be expanded on its current site.

### **Issue 14**

#### **Nursery Provision**

Respondents had concerns about their being a requirement for 70 nursery places as a result of the development but only 48 being made available at the school. Respondent suggested that nursery provision could be established at Llancarfan Primary School.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The overall number of nursery places required will increase in the area by approximately 70 places taking into account the new housing developments planned.

The Council expects the additional demand to be accommodated at both Rhws Primary School and Llancarfan Primary School. There is available capacity at Rhws Primary School to accommodate an extra 22 nursery age children. It is not feasible to accommodate a nursery unit at Llancarfan Primary school due to site constraints. Even if an appropriate location could be found there is no funding available to provide a nursery unit in Llancarfan village.

Although some respondents have pointed out that a nursery could be accommodated at the village hall, this option would require modifications to the hall and outdoor space subject to Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) requirements and regulation. Nursery provision in the school hall would not provide for the full integration of children into the foundation phase and would not be a viable option due to the limitations of the building and its location in meeting the requirements of the Foundation Phase Framework.

## **Issue 15**

### **Changes to catchment areas**

Respondents expressed concern that new catchment areas will destroy the sense of community between the villages of Llancarfan, Llanbethery, Llancadle and Llanthrydd with pupils from each village going to different schools.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The majority of the existing catchment area of Llancarfan will be maintained within the school's new catchment area providing continuity for friendships and children attending the school. The only amendments are to the Tre Aubrey and Whitton areas that will be included in the Llanfair and St Nicholas school catchment areas. Currently 8 primary age children reside within these areas of which none attend Llancarfan Primary school.

## **Issue 16**

### **Consultation matters**

Respondents expressed concerns that the initial consultation presents a misleading case, that the consultation process is clearly flawed and biased, and the Council has failed to meet the requirements of School Organisation Code.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council understands the concerns of parents, residents and pupils in terms of the first proposal being put forward by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The Council is of the view that it has presented the case sufficiently to enable intelligent and responsible consideration.

A number of concerns were raised during the first consultation exercise regarding the impact on the local area as well as raising additional questions about the proposal. A second consultation exercise was therefore undertaken to address concerns and to provide greater detail in the consultation document on the proposal providing stakeholders with an opportunity to consider this within a new consultation deadline. Some of the additional information addressed matters such as the future of the school building, an updated Community Impact Assessment and reaffirming the regulated alteration of the school to a new site with greater detail on the alternatives that were considered. The Council is confident that the second consultation addressed many concerns raised in greater detail and provided some reassurance to the local community.

Estyn have been consulted on the proposal and have responded positively to the proposal indicating that the Vale of Glamorgan Council has presented a sound rationale for the proposal to create a new school building for Llancarfan Primary School with the addition of 48 nursery places for pupils on a part-time basis, on a new site in Rhoose. Estyn have also commented that the consultation document and proposal sets out the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal clearly.

Estyn comment further that :

*“The local authority has taken appropriate account of educational standards, school surplus places, pupil travel arrangements, accessibility of provision, the quality and sustainability of school accommodation, financial investment and running costs. The proposal has considered appropriately outcomes, provision and leadership at Llancafán Primary School. It has drawn on a suitable range of evidence to do this including a brief analysis of the school’s performance data over the past 3 years.”*

A full assessment of the response to the proposal by Estyn is included at Annex F of this document.

The consultation process has been undertaken in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation Wales Act 2013 and compliance with the School Organisation Code 2013. Legal advice was sought from the Councils legal department in the preparation of the document together with appropriate guidance from the Welsh Government where required. The proposal as published relates to a regulated alteration, i.e. the move to a new site not within 1.609344 km (one mile) of any of a main entrance of the school on its current site – para 2.2 of the School Organisation Code July 2013. When undertaking the second consultation exercise, consultees were advised that views expressed to date would be considered in the final consultation report on the proposal.

The Council is satisfied that it has followed the statutory requirements laid out in the School Organisation Code for consultation on the proposal that included consultation with pupils. The consultation process has provided sufficient reason and information to enable intelligent consideration and response.

## **Issue 17**

### **Presumption against closure of rural schools**

Respondents questioned whether the Council was aware of rules being introduced by Kirsty Williams setting out a presumption against closure of rural schools. Respondents considered the proposal to be a school closure rather than moving the school to a new site.

### **Council’s response to the concerns raised**

The proposal is a regulated alteration of a school contained under section 2.2 of the School Organisation Code as follows and is not a school closure.

- a) a regulated alteration to Llancafán Primary School to move the site of the school from Llancafán to a newly constructed school building on land north of the railway line in Rhoose;
- d) a regulated alteration to increase the capacity of Llancafán Primary School at the new site from 126 to 210 places; and
- e) a regulated alteration to alter the lowest age range of pupils through the addition of a new nursery class containing 48 part time places.

The 2013 School Organisation Code is the current code in force. The Council has consulted upon the proposals in respect of Llancarfan under the arrangements under the current code in force.

The Welsh Government consulted on a revised School Organisation Code between June and September 2017. This consultation included the introduction of a presumption against the closure of rural schools and listed schools that were considered as rural for this purpose. The National Statistics Urban – Rural Classification has been used for the purpose of designating rural schools. The consultation proposed that as a minimum, schools situated in categories 3 & 4 (“village in sparsest context” and “other sparsest context”) of the detailed classifications of the Urban-Rural Classification below should be designated as rural for the purpose of presumption against closure of rural schools in the sparsest areas of Wales.

1. Large town in sparsest context
2. Small town in sparsest context
3. Village in sparsest context
4. Other (hamlet or dispersed) in sparsest context
5. Large town in less sparse context
6. Small town in less sparse context
7. Village in less sparse context
8. Other (hamlet or dispersed) in less sparse context

The Vale of Glamorgan had no schools included in the initial list of designated schools.

Following the consultation, Welsh Government proposed extending the designation of rural schools to include a further category of “Other (hamlet or dispersed) in less sparse context”, element 8 of the urban-rural classification above. As a result, Llancarfan Primary School was brought within the designation of “rural”. Welsh Government sought comments from Local Authorities on the proposal to include an additional category in May 2018.

The initial consultation document explained why the change was being undertaken:

*“Local authorities and other proposers must comply with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and any mandatory elements within the School Organisation Code and must consider a range of factors when proposing substantial changes to schools, the prime consideration being the interests of learners.*

*There is currently no presumption in favour or against the closure of any type of school. The current Code recognises that the prime purpose of schools is the provision of education and any case for closure should be robust and in the best interests of education provision in the area. However, the current Code also recognises that in rural areas a school may also be the main focal point for community activity and its closure could have implications beyond the provision of*

*education, particularly if the school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community.*

*Closure of a rural school often means that children have to travel outside their local community to the next available school, while at the same time the community can lose the use of the school buildings and facilities. In some rural areas, a school may be one of only a few services still left in the community, functioning as a focal point for community activities. Closure could therefore have implications for the future sustainability of the whole community, far beyond the issue of provision of education.”*

As this proposal is a regulated alteration of the school from its current site in Llancarfan to a new site in Rhoose and not a school closure, the above paragraphs of the Code do not apply.

The Code recognises that local authorities are responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient schools providing primary and secondary education for their area. Schools are regarded as sufficient if they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education. In order to fulfil these duties, local authorities must ensure that they plan thoroughly for schools serving their areas. The Code also recognises that education must be the primary consideration. This is linked directly to a local authority’s duty to strive to raise standards of education.

It is these considerations which require local authorities to take into account wider factors such as the need to manage the school estate as efficiently and effectively as possible. This includes managing excessive numbers of surplus places which tie up resources unproductively – resources which are then unavailable for use in raising standards and quality of education for all pupils. This means that they must look to reduce excessive numbers of surplus places in schools that are significantly under-occupied. Although the Code encourages local authorities to manage surplus places, this does not necessarily mean closing schools. The Code encourages them to explore alternatives to closure including collaboration or federation, increasing community use of school buildings or co-location of local services within the school to offset costs.

The proposals set out in this consultation document seek to balance the legitimate wishes and concerns of rural communities and parents with the responsibilities of local authorities for the delivery of public services.

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*.

“A presumption against the closure of rural schools does not mean that rural schools will never close. However, it does mean that the case for closure must be strong and not taken until all viable options to closure have been conscientiously considered, including federation”.

As stated above, the proposal is a regulated alteration for Llancarfan Primary School and is not a school closure under section 2.2 of the School Organisation Code 2013. The revised elements of the new Code in respect of the presumption against the closure of small rural schools will not apply to this proposal.



Nevertheless, it is recognised that the removal of a school from its local community could have a similar impact as a school closure and this has therefore been considered in the Community Impact Assessment.

It is anticipated that the revised Code will be laid in the Assembly in the week commencing 17 September 2018. The Code must be laid for 40 days, during which time the Assembly can resolve not to approve the Code. If the Code is laid on 17 September, the 40 days will end on 26 October 2018. If the Assembly resolves not to approve the Code, it could come into force as early as 1 November 2018. However, it is possible that these timings could slip. If any amendments to the Code come into force, they will have transitional provisions in place for Local Authorities to follow. The Council will comply of course with any mandatory requirements of any amended Code as and when they come into force.

The list of rural schools only applies for the purpose of a presumption against the closure of rural schools. Whilst Llancafarn has been included on the rural list, it would only be considered under this category if it were being closed after the revised code came into force. This would not be the case for Llancafarn Primary School under both the current and revised Code.

## **Issue 18**

### **Labelling the proposal as a migration is misleading**

Respondents feel that the proposal is plainly a closure of the primary school and that moving the school 5 miles away is nonsensical. It is felt that the proposed transfer is not in keeping with the School Organisation Code. The proposed school cannot be called Llancafarn as it isn't in Llancafarn.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The term migration was used in the first consultation exercise. In recognition of some confusion being expressed with regard to this term, the second consultation exercise reaffirms the regulated alteration of Llancafarn Primary School with a transfer from the existing school site to a new site.

The Council is not proposing to close Llancafarn Primary School. The proposal is to move the existing school to a new site with an improved school building and increased capacity, as well as an extended age range. A regulated alteration of a school site is referred to as a regulated alteration under the School Organisation Code, statutory code document no: 006/2013. This proposal retains the existing school, its staff, pupils and governors. The name of the school would remain the same unless the school governing body choose to request a change of name which must be approved by the Council's Cabinet.

Whilst the proposed new location is approximately 4.7 miles away in Rhose from the existing school building, this proposal is not unique to the Vale of Glamorgan Council. A neighbouring local authority has successfully moved schools to new sites up to four miles away previously.

Currently, 35% of children at the school live in the Rhose area. This proposal would provide a shorter distance for them to travel. A further 37% of pupils currently attending Llancafarn Primary School live in Barry, Llantwit, Cowbridge and

outside the Vale of Glamorgan already make their own travel arrangements and would do the same to the new site. The 29% of pupils living in Llancafán who would need to travel to the new site would receive free school transport provided by the Council to facilitate their attendance at the school.

## **Issue 19**

### **Alternative options available**

Respondents questioned as to what alternative options to the proposal were considered and whether these included federation. A respondent queried an alternative option which is considered below.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Alternatives to the proposal were considered and were included in greater detail in the second consultation document as follows.

#### **Alternatives considered:**

##### **Extending Llancafán Primary School**

Llancafán Primary School would be expanded to a one form entry school with a 48 place nursery to accommodate the forecasted increase in pupil numbers within the Western Vale. This option would require expansion of the existing school on its existing site.

This model was identified as not being the preferred option for the following reasons:

- The site is a constrained site and too small to expand to meet requirements. Building Bulletin 99 (adopted by the Welsh Government for the 21st Century schools programme) provides a formula for calculating minimum school site areas. For 126 children the required site area should be from 6736m<sup>2</sup> to 7540m<sup>2</sup>. However the school site is smaller than the recommended site area at 3,700m<sup>2</sup>. This compares to the recommended 10,000m<sup>2</sup> for a 210 place school.
- The confined site is also sloping on a significant proportion of the site which further limits the possibilities to expand the school on the current site or to provide sports pitches or external learning areas on the school site. A multi-storey building could be built on the site but this is not in keeping with the area and is highly unlikely to be supported by the planning department, or local residents.
- The school is on a small site, slightly offset by the use of the adjacent tennis club courts. The four separate buildings and small sloping site do not meet 21st Century School design guidance standards for primary schools which have been used for all new builds completed through the 21st Century Schools programme.

- The additional space would be required to accommodate increasing pupil numbers from the Rhoose area. Travel to the school would be difficult and would contribute to congested access through the village and lanes leading to Llancarfan.
- 21st Century Schools comprise a fully accessible (Equalities Act 2010) one or two storey building providing all the required educational functions within a single building set in grounds meeting current outdoor curriculum needs. It would not be possible to achieve this with the existing site constraints in Llancarfan. In order to secure 21st Century School funding from Welsh Government, it is a requirement that the 21st Century school building protocols be met.
- There is insufficient access and space on the existing site to maintain the existing school whilst building works for a new school were undertaken.

### Extending Rhws Primary School

Rhoose Primary School would be expanded on its current site to include the addition of an 8 classroom extension and dining hall. This would require a further building to be built adjacent to the 2009 extension alongside the remodelling of existing class spaces and extension to the existing nursery facilities.

This model was identified as not being the preferred option for the following reasons:

- The additional buildings will be built on existing playing fields leaving the site looking and feeling overcrowded;
- Design restrictions and delay could be caused by the grade 2 listing of the existing school building;
- Initial feasibility work has highlighted that because of the limited outside space available at the school, the site will be deemed too small as calculated by Building Bulletin 99 Briefing Framework for Primary Schools Projects. The Bulletin states that the area required for a 630 capacity primary school plus nursery is 28,650 m<sup>2</sup>. The area of the Rhoose Primary School site is 14,600 m<sup>2</sup> and is therefore 14,050 m<sup>2</sup> short of the required space for a 630 place primary school. This would limit the design and site layout for any proposed extension;
- Under the Building Bulletin requirements, the Rhws Primary School site is currently too small for the current population of the school. A school with capacity for 375 children plus a nursery would require between 16,315 and 18,115 m<sup>2</sup>. The current area at Rhws Primary is 14,648, currently falling below the minimum standard.
- By extending capacity at the school the current traffic congestion in the village will increase at key points during the day;
- There is no opportunity to address half form entry challenges at Llancarfan Primary School, or the projected fall in pupil numbers;

- Building on the existing site would cause disruption to learning for at least 9 months as not all of the work could be undertaken during school holidays. This could affect learning outcomes;

The enlarged school would be too large causing a situation of surplus capacity in 2021 of 19%. Parents from the new developments may also choose to allow their children to remain at their existing schools. This would mean that not all of the predicted demand is realised in the short term which would increase the potential for surplus capacity in the school. When building or extending schools it is considered necessary to extend or build in multiples of 30 for a one, two and three form entry school of seven year groups, reception to year 6. This is a more efficient and sustainable model of delivery that better manages class organisation, school structure, curriculum planning, negates mixed age teaching and assists with managing statutory class size limits of 30 children.

### **Building a new school in Rhose while making no changes to Llancarfan Primary School**

A new 210 place school would be built on a 1 hectare site in the Rhose Point development.

No change would be required to the current facilities or capacity at the existing Rhws Primary School, but work would be undertaken to address the issues highlighted in the 2014 condition survey.

It is anticipated that the new school would be federated with the current Rhose Primary school. The federation would benefit from sharing a high quality Headteacher, leadership team and governing body, allowing for additional flexibility and resource sharing enabling additional cost savings. The schools would remain separate, maintaining their own individual budget allocations and would report results separately.

This model was identified as not being the preferred option for the following reasons:

- Given current projected demand of 135 children, a new 210 place school would introduce significant surplus spaces, and would not represent effective management of school places or resources.
- There is no potential to address half form entry challenges at Llancarfan Primary School.
- The creation of a federation between the new and existing school will require excellent leadership. Further succession planning will need to be incorporated to ensure that this relationship is sustained into the medium and long term.
- Leadership will need to manage the two schools across sites which would introduce additional complexity.

- Additional revenue funding of approximately £725k would be required to operate a 210 place school. This would need to be found from within the current Individual Schools' Budget, thereby reducing the funding available for other schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Maintaining the status quo**

Llancarfan is comprised of a Victorian school building with a separate block built in 2000 and two separate demountable classroom blocks. The school is situated on a small school site with difficult access. The school has no nursery provision in place and has an admission number of 18 that requires mixed age teaching.

The school is situated in the village of Llancarfan providing a small school ethos. Children attend from a number of different areas of which 29% live within the school catchment area. The school has a catchment population of 55 pupils compared to a capacity for 126 children. The school is categorised as yellow in terms of the Welsh Government's National School Categorisation system. The school has a high revenue cost per child compared to the Vale average.

Maintaining the status quo is not considered to be a viable option. Based on current projections, by 2023 there is an anticipated shortfall of 90 primary school places in the Rhoose area. In addition, the number of children living in Llancarfan is decreasing which will further challenge the efficiency and sustainability of Llancarfan Primary School. By law, the Vale of Glamorgan Council is required to ensure adequate provision of school places within its borders to meet demand. Given the above this option is not considered to be a viable alternative.

The proposal and preferred option of a new building and location would allow for further development of a curriculum filled with rich experiences that challenge children, raise attainment and develop interpersonal relationships. This will support the development of nursery provision extending the school to deliver education to pupils aged 3 – 11, allowing all learners to achieve success.

## **Issue 20**

### **Division in Rhoose**

A number of respondents in Rhoose are concerned about the potential impacts on the community of another school in the area. Respondents stated that the proposal will not benefit the whole of Rhoose and would split the community. The Council needs to consider the expansion of Rhws Primary School. Rhws Primary School will not see any S106 money.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council is under a statutory duty to manage the demand for school places in the Vale of Glamorgan area. The population of Rhoose is growing as a result of the development referred to in the consultation document. It is not a sustainable solution for there to be one English medium school serving a population of this size.

A school is therefore required in the Rhoose area in order to meet demand for school places emanating from the new housing developments in Rhoose. The

proposal also provides an opportunity to move Llancarfan Primary School to the location where around 35% of the children already in attendance currently reside.

S106 money is available to increase school places in an area such as expanding or building a new school. Section 106 money is not available for Rhws Primary School as it is unable to expand on its current site to accommodate the extra demand from the new housing development and for the following reasons:

- The additional buildings would be built on existing playing fields leaving the site looking and feeling overcrowded;
- Design restrictions and delay could be caused by the grade 2 listing of the existing School;
- Initial feasibility work has highlighted that because of the limited outside space available at the school, the site will be deemed too small as calculated by Building Bulletin 99 Briefing Framework for Primary Schools Projects. The Bulletin states that the area required for a 630 capacity primary school plus nursery is 28,650 m<sup>2</sup>. The area of the Rhoose Primary School site is 14,600 m<sup>2</sup> and is therefore 14,050 m<sup>2</sup> short of the required space for a 630 place primary school. This would limit the design and site layout for any proposed extension;
- All schools included within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme must meet Building Bulletin regulations. An extension of Rhws Primary on the existing site would not meet Building Bulletin 99 and would be ineligible for 50% Welsh Government funding;
- The cost of extending an operational school is significantly higher than building on a green field site. This is due to additional health and safety measures to ensure the safety of children, staff and parents, restrictions on delivery times and working hours and access restrictions. Building an extension could cost double per m<sup>2</sup> than a new build;
- Extending the school on the current site will increase the number of teaching and support staff at the school, this will necessitate additional car parking spaces that will reduce the area available for teaching and learning. This is included within the area guidelines of Building Bulletin 99;
- By extending capacity at the school the current traffic congestion in the village will increase at key points during the day;

A larger Rhws Primary School would be too large causing a situation of surplus capacity in 2021 of 19%. Parents from the new developments may also choose to allow their children to remain at their existing schools. This would mean that not all of the predicted demand is realised in the short term which would increase the potential for surplus capacity in the school.

The proposal is considered to benefit the community of Rhoose. Around 90 places are required for Rhoose residents living on the new development and together with the school on a new site would see around 60% of children attending the school living in the Rhoose area. Both schools would continue to serve the community of Rhoose.

The existing primary school, Rhws Primary School, would see continued investment in the school by the Council in line with its priority commitments and criteria for maintaining schools.

This is an opportunity for the schools to work together and to continue to serve the community. They would be encouraged to develop relationships together to ensure the community of Rhose is served well for the future, extending community involvement.

. As part of the consultation a respondent requested consideration of an option to reduce Rhws Primary School to 210 places, along with the addition of a new 210 place school in Rhws on the land north-west of the railway line, and leaving Llancarfan Primary School in Llancarfan.

The current capacity of Rhws primary is 375 places accommodated within 8 classrooms in the original school block, a two storey classroom block with four classrooms, a double classroom demountable and a separate nursery block. The current school number on roll is 374.

The capacity could be reduced to 315, one and half form entry school, by demolishing the demountable classroom building allowing this area to revert to a playground. The estimated cost would be in the region of £25k to remove the demountable.

When building or extending schools it is considered necessary to extend or build in multiples of 30 for a one, two and three form entry school of seven year groups, reception to year 6. This is widely acknowledged to be a more efficient and sustainable model of delivery that better manages class organisation, school structure, curriculum planning, negates mixed age teaching and assists with managing statutory class size limits of 30 children.

A further reduction in capacity could be achieved through re-designating existing small or less suitable classrooms in the main building to reduce capacity to 210. These former classrooms could be used for a school library, IT suite, PPA room, SEN/group rooms or for peripatetic teaching e.g. music.

The capacity of the stand-alone nursery building would also need to be reduced to align with a new 1 form entry school. This could be achieved through re-designating areas at no cost.

The costs to re-designate classrooms would depend on the extent of the works carried out but could be up to £80k for sundry alterations to four classrooms if additional IT and power points are required along with new fixed and loose furniture and resources.

As a consequence of reducing the capacity, the school budget would also reduce and although staffing costs would be less. The building running and maintenance costs would not significantly reduce even if the demountable was removed.

Fundamentally, the demand for primary school places in the Rhose area would not be met with insufficient primary school places to meet future demand. Based on current projections to include housing developments in Rhose on land to the north-

west and land north-east of the railway line, there would be a requirement for 465 school places to meet demand over the next 5 year period. The model would only realise 420 school places to serve the area. There would be insufficient places to meet demand from new housing development in the area.

A reduction in school capacity would require the Council to follow a statutory process in terms of consultation and statutory proposals. It would be problematic to justify a proposal that does not meet demand for school places in an area, and it would not meet Welsh Government's criteria for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding.

Federation of the two schools would not be considered viable; the experienced Headteacher at Rhws Primary school has retired with a new, permanent Headteacher due to take up the role in January 2019. Federation requires an experienced Headteacher due to the complexities of associated with 2 or more schools on different sites.

The option would not make the Llancarfan transfer proposal achievable. The school is operating with a surplus capacity of 25 places (19.8%) that is set to increase to 28 places (22%) over the next five year period. The Vale of Glamorgan is committed to reducing the number of surplus places in schools in order to meet an agreed target put in place as a requirement of Welsh Government in order to ensure education is provided efficiently. Within the primary sector, this equates to an agreed target of no more than 10%.

A reduction in pupil numbers will have an adverse effect on the school being able to manage its budget. Reducing the number on roll to 210 would reduce the schools budget by £397,815 based on the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit). The school has a number of fixed costs totalling £267,515 which would not reduce with fewer pupils. These include headteacher, administration, caretaker, premises, service level agreements and external contracts. It is acknowledged that there would be a small reduction in energy costs as a result of removal of the demountable building.

The school receives an additional £48,677k on top of the £267,515k in fixed costs towards for premises and grounds which is based on pupil numbers. As above, the reduction in pupil numbers would reduce this element however the premises itself will not change. As a listed building, the school is also subject to additional maintenance.

A 210 place school averages fixed costs at £189,282k. This is £78,233 less expensive than the cost of running Rhws Primary 210 places, given the existing site.

In order to accommodate the need for pupil places, Rhws Primary could be reduced to 255 places, rather than 210. This would still yield a reduction in the schools budget by £289,320k.

The following table demonstrates the revenue implications based on the mainstream schools funding formula between the current proposal of transferring Llancarfan into a new 210 place school site in Rhws, and maintaining Rhws Primary School with its current capacity of 375 places, versus the option of maintaining Llancarfan Primary School, reducing the capacity of Rhws Primary School on its



current site to 255 places and creating a new 210 place school in Rhoose to accommodate forecasted demand:

| <b>Current Proposal</b> | <b>Revenue Cost</b> | <b>Option Above</b> | <b>Revenue Cost</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Rhws Primary (375)      | £ 1,262,651         | Llancarfan Primary  | £ 544,631           |
| New 210 School          | £ 931,028           | Rhws Primary (255)  | £ 1,208,767         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>£ 2,193,679</b>  | New 210 School      | £ 931,028           |
|                         |                     | <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>£ 2,684,426</b>  |
| <b>Difference</b>       | <b>£ 490,747</b>    |                     |                     |

The table highlights that the option outlined above would increase revenue costs by £490,747 when compared to the current proposal of transferring Llancarfan Primary into a larger site in Rhoose and maintaining Rhws Primary with its current capacity.

- A reduction from 374 pupils on roll to a new capacity of 255 children at Rhws Primary can only be achieved through a phased reduction in the admission number from the reception intake. The scale of the reduction would not be realised until approximately 2026 following appropriate consultation on the School Admissions Policy.
- The current admission number of Rhws Primary is 53. If the school were reduced to 255 places the admission number would become 36. An admission number of 36 makes it difficult to manage class organisation, school structure, curriculum planning, and would necessitate mixed age teaching when considering statutory class size limits of 30 children.
- New catchment areas would need to be drawn to divide the Rhws pupil population to correlate with the new capacities in both schools, or both schools share the catchment area, with prioritisation given to the new school for newcomers to the catchment area.

## **Issue 21**

### **Traffic Congestion in Rhoose**

Respondents expressed concerns of increased traffic congestion in the Rhoose area.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council approved development in the Rhoose area as part of the Council's Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026.

If the proposal were to be implemented, traffic and transport implications would be considered as part of the Transport Assessment that would be required in order to achieve planning consent for the building works for the school. As part of the design process a transport management plan would be developed which will include input

from highway officers. Onsite parking provision would be considered in the design of the new school.

If the proposal were approved, a planning application will be submitted for the build of a 210 place school on the new development. The highways department are a statutory consultee for planning applications who will provide detailed impartial comments on the proposal. This would include recommendations if improvements to the road network are required particularly as school transport would be provided to the school from the Llancarfan, Llancadle and Llanbethery area.

The Council has already received developer contributions for highway works and sustainable transport facilities in respect of the north-west development. Sustainable transport facilities include information, facilities, services or projects which provide or improve access for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, motor cycles, taxis or car shares in the vicinity of the site and within the Rhoose ward boundary. This will include road safety measures in Rhoose.

As part of a planning application a traffic impact assessment would be carried out to look at what improvements would need to be made to the existing road infrastructure.

The new development and location of the proposed school is on the outskirts to the east of Rhoose whereas Rhws Primary School is located further to the middle of Rhoose on Fontygary Road. As the majority of children attending the school would reside within the Rhoose area and within walking distance of the school, it is anticipated that parents would consider walking their children to school. The school would develop a travel plan to mitigate travel by car.

The proposal would have a positive effect for Rhoose parents as some children attending Llancarfan Primary School who are currently being transported by parents would live within walking distance to the school's new site. Children living in Rhoose are within walking distance of the location of both Rhws Primary and the location proposed for the school's new site.

It is acknowledged that the move of Llancarfan Primary School to a new site would increase car traffic in the Rhoose area. However, the new road infrastructure surrounding the proposed site of the new school building is better equipped to handle the increased traffic than the narrow lanes surrounding Llancarfan.

## **Issue 22**

### **Infrastructure**

Respondents had concerns that more cars would be travelling to Rhoose. The village has a lack of infrastructure to support the increased traffic flow.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

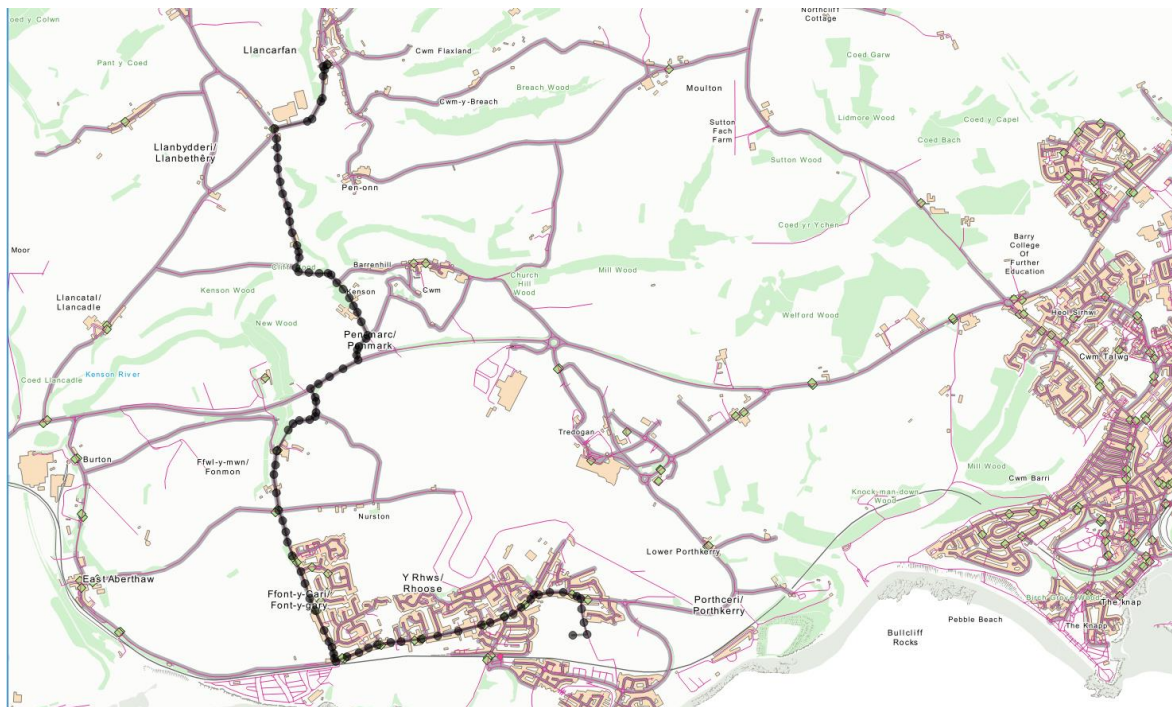
Traffic and transport implications would be considered as part of the Transport Assessment that would be required in order to achieve planning consent for the building works for the school should the proposal be implemented.

Section 106 developer contributions will support developments to the road infrastructure to mitigate the negative transport impacts of developments as a result of approved planning developments. This is a matter that the planning department would have considered when approving housing developments.

School transport would be provided for children residing in the Llancafán, Llanccadle and Llanbethery areas through the provision of two minibuses serving the areas to the school, parents from these areas would therefore not need to use their own transport to access the school in Rhoose. As 35% of pupils already attending Llancafán Primary School live in the Rhoose area, parents would be less likely to use car travel and consider walking their children to school. Currently 36 children attend Llancafán from outside the catchment area from Barry, Llantwit and Cowbridge and who are likely to continue to be transported by parents, this is considered to be of minimal impact to the area.

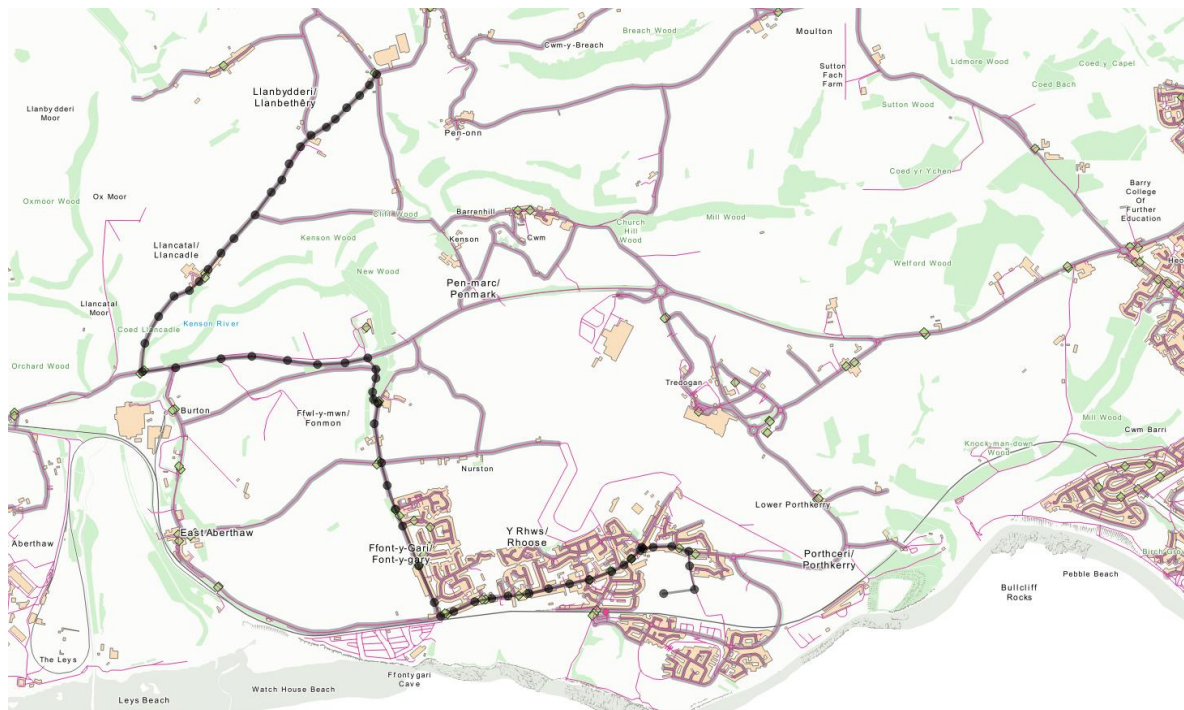
Suggested route maps have been included below:

Route from Llancafán to proposed site:



The distance from Llancafán to the proposed site is approximately 4.7 miles.

## Route from Llanbethery to proposed site via Llancadle:



The distance from Llancaelaf to the proposed site is approximately 4.9 miles.

The Council has received developer contributions for highway works and sustainable transport facilities in respect of the north-west development.

Sustainable transport facilities include information, facilities, services or projects which provide or improve access for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, motor cycles, taxis or car shares in the vicinity of the site and within the Rhoose ward boundary. This will include road safety measures in Rhoose. These measures would support the road infrastructure in the Rhoose area.

Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements are all ways of assessing and mitigating the negative transport impacts of development in order to promote sustainable development. They are a requirement for all developments which potentially generate significant amounts of movements.

### **Issue 23**

#### **Expansion on current site**

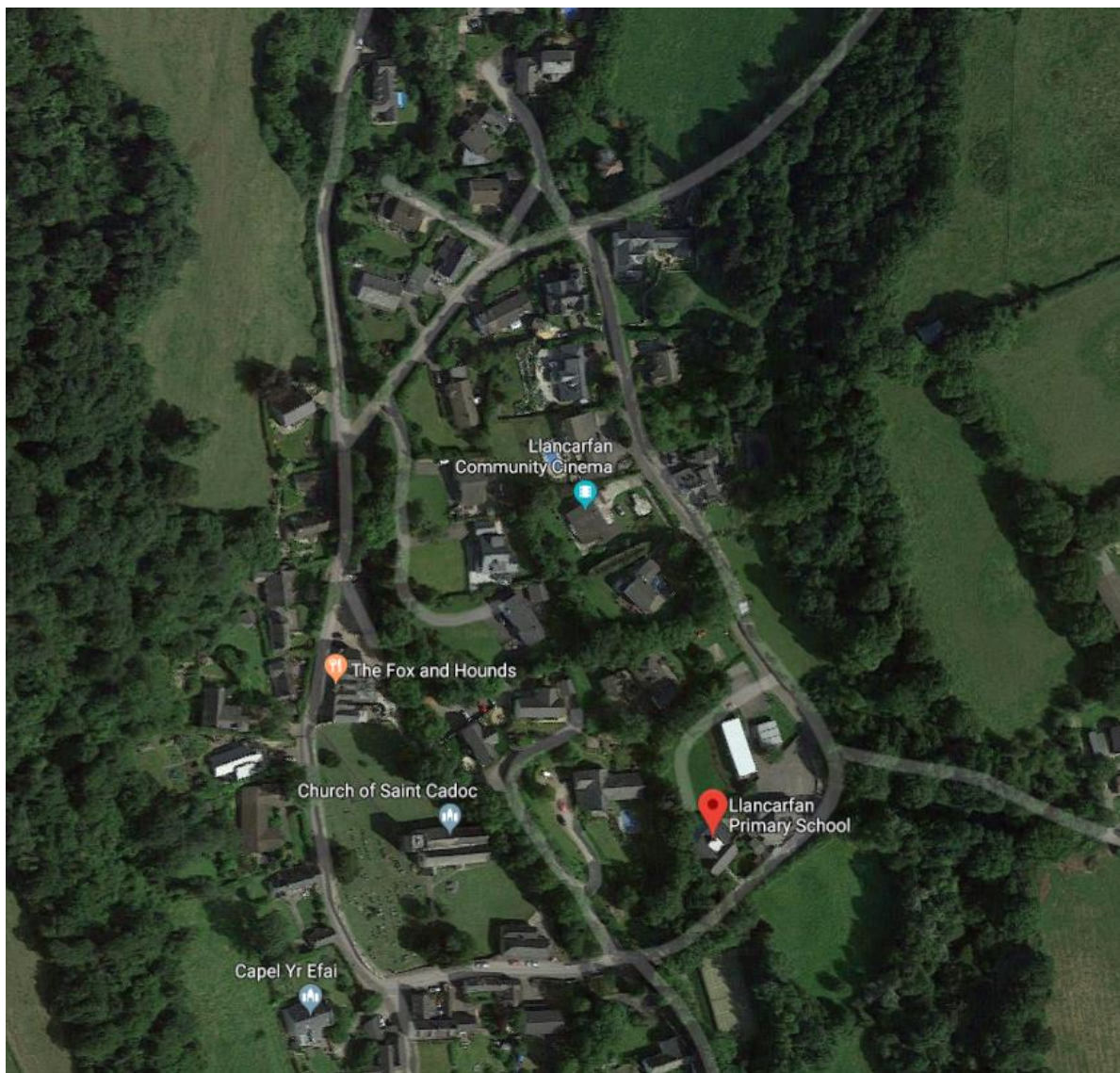
Respondents questioned why Llancaelaf can't expand on its current site. The consultation document states the building does not meet current building standards and suggests this is misleading, the school building is deemed good in the document.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Llancaelaf Primary School is comprised of an original Victorian school building containing two classrooms. The building has solid stone walls and a pitch slate covered roof. There are two separate demountable classroom blocks, one single and one double classroom, which are in good condition. In addition, there is a block

built in 2000 and extended in 2006 providing the hall, kitchens, a small classroom and staff accommodation.

The school is on a small site which is slightly offset by the use of the adjacent tennis club courts. The school does not meet current building standards and following consideration of the restricted size and location of the site, it is not possible to replace the school with a new build at its current location. An additional challenge relates to the difficult and congested access to the school through the village and the lanes leading to Llancarfan. The four separate buildings and small sloping site do not meet 21st Century Schools design guidance standards for primary schools which have been used for all new builds completed through the Council's 21st Century Schools programme. These schools comprise a fully accessible one or two storey building providing all the required educational functions within a single building set in grounds meeting current outdoor curriculum needs. An arial view of Llancarfan Village and the school grounds can be found below.



The school is not considered an option for expansion for the following reasons;

- The site is a constrained site and too small to expand to meet requirements. Building Bulletin 99 (adopted by the Welsh Government for the 21st Century schools programme) provides a formula for calculating minimum school site areas. For 126 children the required site area should be from 6736m<sup>2</sup> to 7540m<sup>2</sup>. However the school site is smaller than the recommended site area at 3,700m<sup>2</sup>. This compares to the recommended 10,000m<sup>2</sup> for a 210 place school.
- The confined site is also sloping on a significant proportion of the site which further limits the possibilities to expand the school on the current site or to provide sports pitches or external learning areas on the school site. A multi-storey building could be built on the site but this is not in keeping with the area and is highly unlikely to be supported by the planning department, or local residents.
- The school is on a small site, slightly offset by the use of the adjacent tennis club courts. The four separate buildings and small sloping site do not meet 21st Century School design guidance standards for primary schools which have been used for all new builds completed through the 21st Century Schools programme.
- 21st Century Schools comprise a fully accessible one or two storey building providing all the required educational functions within a single building set in grounds meeting current outdoor curriculum needs. It would not be possible to achieve this with the existing site constraints in Llancafán. In order to secure 21st Century School funding from Welsh Government, it is a requirement that the 21st Century school building protocols are met.
- There is insufficient access and space on the existing site to maintain the existing school whilst building works for a new school were undertaken.

## **Issue 24**

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Standard**

Respondents felt that many primary schools are similar to Llancafán in terms of not meeting 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Standard's.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The 21st Century Schools Programme is a long-term strategic investment in educational estate throughout Wales. It is a unique collaboration between Welsh Government, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), local authorities, colleges and dioceses.

Whilst Llancafán school building condition is good with a low level of investment required, it does not meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century school design requirements. Whilst other schools may also not meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century school standards, this proposal provides an opportunity to access funding to provide a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century school building for Llancafán Primary School. The Council is expected to receive Welsh Government

Band B match funding through the 21st Century School Programme for the proposal.

## **Issue 25**

### **School Size**

Respondents questioned whether a 210 place school was the minimum number for a WG 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant Application. Respondent expressed concern that the proposal could have detrimental effect of change on a child and for children with additional learning needs. Smaller class sizes better support children with special educational needs. Small school benefits children.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council has not implied that a 210 place school was the minimum to be eligible for a WG grant application. The Council understands that projects are considered on their merits and they must demonstrate that they are strategic, affordable, deliverable and aligned with Government objectives providing value for money. In rural counties such as Powys, where communities are a significant distance from a suitable school, a smaller school could be considered to be viable.

The Council considers that a 210 place building is the minimum size from an efficiency and sustainability perspective. A 210 place building would accommodate the projected increase in pupil numbers from the new housing development in Rhoose in addition to the projected pupil numbers from Llancafán Primary School.

Smaller schools generally face greater pressures in areas of leadership and management, staff development and curriculum planning. The smaller the school the more challenging it is often for the teachers to match work to all pupils learning needs.

The Council believes that moving the school to larger accommodation with a new catchment with sustainable numbers would;

- Enable the school to further improve while catering for a greater pupil population.
- Provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and will challenge and support children to reach their full potential.
- Increase the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities whilst meeting the needs of the school.
- Establish a nursery unit which offers a more efficient and sustainable model of delivery of education for the 21st Century that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings. The new building will meet BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standards and be built to an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) A rating.

- Develop the ethos and culture of the school in children from an earlier age, leading to effective interpersonal relationships and higher self-esteem.
- Provide a consistent approach from 3-11 years to promote and underpin continuity and progression for pupils, ensuring breadth and balance across the curriculum.
- All curriculum planning and resourcing would build successfully on previous pupil knowledge and experience and engage interest.
- Support pupils to develop their ability to learn new skills and apply their subject knowledge more positively and creatively across a continuum of learning.
- Improve the already good arrangements for the care, support and guidance of pupils from an earlier age.
- Extend and develop partnerships with families from the earliest opportunity to strengthen home / school transition.

The identification and support for children with additional learning needs would continue in the school. As the Council is not proposing to close the school, the staff from Llancarfan Primary would be very aware of the individual needs of pupils and would be in a position to work closely with the Council at the design stage in order to ensure that the learning environment is supportive of all pupils, including those who benefit from a quieter learning environment

Design elements would be incorporated into the school such as a small room between a pair of classrooms which could be used for individual / small group learning or could be used as a breakout space should a pupil need to retreat from the classroom. The school would be designed to have flexible spaces which could be adapted by the use of furniture for specific activities, which would include quiet areas for individual learning. The whole building would be designed to comply with current building regulations for disabled access.

Any evidence that smaller class sizes have an impact on attainment is limited. The attainment of pupils with Additional Learning Needs is influenced by the quality of teaching and learning and support they receive related to their needs. This is not influenced by class size or school size. In some instances where children have very complex needs they may require small class placements with high levels of adult support, however, in such cases they would require a placement at one of the LAs specialist resource bases.

## **Issue 26**

### **Inaccuracy in documents**

A respondent questioned an omission in the second consultation document to a change to St Athan catchment boundary referenced in the Community Impact



Assessment. Updated figures for St Nicholas and Llanfair are different in the second consultation.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

It was necessary to update all school data for the second consultation in order to ensure that the document contained the most up to date information. The data is an accurate reflection of the distribution of pupils living across the catchment areas of St Nicholas and Llanfair. There was an inaccuracy with regard to the data in the first document which explains the difference between the two figures. The data provided in the second consultation document is correct.

A minor cosmetic change is proposed to a small part of the north west boundary of Llancarfan Primary school catchment to support boundary changes to Llanfair catchment area to include St Athan. This area is not residential with no pupil population and is not a material consideration relevant to the proposal with no impact on pupil numbers at any school.

### **Issue 27**

#### **Yellow school already doing well**

A respondent queried the Welsh Government categorisation of schools. Llancarfan is Yellow. This is evidence that the School is doing well (above Welsh average). They expressed that they felt it was hard to see how the education at the school can be improved.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Llancarfan Primary School has been evaluated as being able to benefit from additional support from the Central South Consortium, Local Authority and other schools.

The school has the following targets for improvement:

- Continue work on increasing the number of pupils achieving Level 5
- Implement strategies to ensure the performance of pupils at Level 5 is above the median and in line with performance in English and science.
- Improve attendance to move into a benchmark position above the median
- Continue to work with cluster schools on moving Good teaching to excellent
- Update its Self-Evaluation report in line with up-to-date standards
- Develop improved transition for Year 6 pupils
- Engage with NACE to further improve More Able and Talented practice across the school.

Under the national categorisation system for schools, all schools are placed in one of four support categories (green, yellow, amber or green) and one of 4 groups for ability to bring about improvement (A-D) with A being the highest for improvement capacity. The support category determines the level of support the school receives from the Central South Consortium. In 2017-18, Llancarfan was placed in a yellow

support with the ability to bring about improvement judged as B, having previously been in an amber support category. In 2017-2018, 28 out of 56 schools in the Vale of Glamorgan were placed in a green support category. For further information about the categorisation scheme, please see Welsh Government's parents' guide to the National School Categorisation System:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150119-parents-guide-en.pdf>

## **Issue 28**

### **Poor justification for educational improvements**

A respondent commented that the biggest impact on the educational attainment of children is the quality of teaching not the facilities, not Wi-Fi access. There is poor justification for educational improvements provided.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The quality of teaching is of course very important and it is worth noting that the staff have been very successful in ensuring the learning environment available to them is the best it can be in the circumstances. An additional benefit to this proposal is that the learning environment would require less time, creativity and intervention from staff to make it work. This would enable them to have a greater focus on achievement, attendance and pedagogy, in line with the targets listed above.

The learning environment and infrastructure, including both indoor and outdoor facilities and learning space are key elements in supporting both teachers and learners. This is reflected in the aims of the national curriculum and Digital Competence Framework (DCF) and the Council's ambitions for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools with full access to 21<sup>st</sup> Century technologies. Wi-Fi was a point of discussion at recent consultation events due to the poor record of connectivity at Llancarfan School to date. However, the Council's ambition to improve opportunities to develop digitally competent learners is not just about improving Wi-Fi access. The DCF was produced in order to ensure the development of digital literacy, competency and skills from an early age. "Digital Competence is the set of skills and knowledge and attitudes that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems. It is essential for learners if they are to be informed, capable and have the potential to be successful in today's society." Classroom task ideas will need to "change and develop to reflect new technologies and the increasing experience and expertise within the digital learning field". From September 2018 schools are expected to:

- Have a clear vision for delivering digital competence in the classroom across the curriculum
- Have established staff responsibilities for embedding digital competence across the curriculum
- Review hardware and software requirements, and staff professional learning needs on an on-going basis
- Be mapping digital competence against department/ year of current curriculum

- Have planned for and be delivering staff professional development in respect of digital competence, working with regional consortia.

The DCF guidance June 2018 advises that “from January 2020, the new curriculum and assessment arrangements will be available. Digital expectations will be embedded in the new curriculum and settings and schools will be:

- comparing existing approaches to DCF implementation with the new curriculum
- embedding digital competence across the school curriculum
- sharing good practice within and outside the school
- engaging with the school council and pupil voice
- evaluating how the current approach to digital competence fits with the new curriculum.

From September 2022, settings and schools will be delivering digital competence on a cross-curricular basis. They will:

- have embedded digital competence across the school curriculum
- continue to adapt existing digital competence approaches to the new curriculum
- continue to review and refine their approach to digital competence.

Providing the appropriate resources and technologies to ensure we support learners to meet the objectives of the framework is therefore an important consideration in developing our plans for new school buildings as part of our strategy for Band B of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.

## **Estyn Report and Standards**

### **Issue 29**

Respondent queried that nothing in the Estyn inspection report suggests a move to new premises is required or would be beneficial in meeting the areas identified for school improvement.

### **Council’s response to the concerns raised**

Estyn have a responsibility to report on their findings at a school. They are not required to recommend a move to new premises. They have however acknowledged in their response to this proposal that “the school does not meet the standards set out in the statutory framework for school buildings and design in Wales and routes through the village and lanes to access the school are congested.” They also acknowledge that the “school site is restricted in size”.

### **Issue 30**

Respondent query- the latest Estyn report highlights that pupils make good use of the wealth of outdoor areas. The report states that “the learning environment is varied and stimulating”, while the Council’s own inspection of the school estate described the current Llancarfan site as being in “Good Condition”.

#### **Council’s response to the concerns raised**

It is acknowledged that the staff and pupils make full use of the resources they have available to them. The accommodation at Llancarfan is challenging however and there are examples of the teachers experiencing difficulties in managing curriculum delivery. ICT concerns have been outlined in issue 27, another example relates to sport. Feedback was received during the recent consultation event with regard to the difficulties in teaching some team sports, such as Cricket on a restricted tennis court. In addition, the constraints of the school site meant that during sports day, teachers had to place mattresses against the walls for health and safety reasons in order to prevent pupils from running into walls and injuring themselves during races. An additional benefit to this proposal is that the learning environment provided at a new school building would require less intervention from staff to make it work. This would enable them to have a greater focus on achievement, attendance and pedagogy.

### **Issue 31**

Respondent query- Moving to a new building is no guarantee that the quality of education standards will improve. A change risks unjustified damage to current good standards. A respondent commented that they would not want children’s education to be affected during the transitional period to a new build school.

#### **Council’s response to the concerns raised**

The Council has adopted an Optimum Build design model approach for the building of new schools across the Vale of Glamorgan. The quality of the environment where we learn has a very strong impact on the educational outcomes achieved by pupils at the school.

The optimised design approach puts the learning environment at the heart of the building whilst providing flexible solutions to classroom design and layout. The school design meets BREEAM Excellent requirements. The design of low carbon buildings minimises energy consumption through improved performance of the building envelope as well as maximising the use of natural day lighting and ventilation adding to the wider integration of a range of low and zero carbon technologies. The optimised design has the flexibility in design to create learning environments which not only supports and enhances learning experience and outcomes but is a cost effective solution to 21st Century school design.

### **Issue 32**

There is evidence that when schools merge standards often stall or regress. The Council cannot therefore guarantee that progress and educational standards will improve in the new school.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

There is some evidence to suggest that when two or more schools are amalgamated, there can be a dip in performance. This is not an aspect of this proposal. In the Vale of Glamorgan, our experience has been that when schools receive new buildings this has resulted in improved standards.

This proposal would support the school's leadership in continuing to be highly effective and consistent, developing approaches to support learners throughout the transition. This would include careful planning prior to and during the proposed transition period to avoid any risk of distraction that could impact on educational outcomes.

### **Issue 33**

The Auditor General's report on the 21st Century Schools Programme (Autumn 2017) reported that "the evidence on the extent to which the Welsh Government is achieving the wider benefits it intended is less clear [...] the evidence on attainment is unclear. It is difficult to establish a causal link between school buildings and educational attainment. Achievements of school are due to the small school, community feel and links with the beautiful village.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Welsh Government launched their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Capital Programme in order to create "learning environments designed to improve the delivery of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is a major, long term and strategic capital investment programme which they state is aimed to deliver:

- Learning environments in Wales that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better education outcomes
- Greater economy and efficiency for learning environments through better use of resources
- A sustainable education system in Wales that meets national building standards and reduces the recurrent costs and carbon footprint of education buildings.

The second wave of investment requires the Council to meet the following investment objectives:

- addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium education;
- reductions of surplus capacity and inefficiency in the system;
- expansion of schools in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- address condition of educational assets; and
- making assets available for community use where demand exists.

The statement from the auditor general referred to by respondents is made in his report on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme published in May 2017, which can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.audit.wales/system/files/publications/21st%20century%20school%20-%20English.pdf>

The relevant extract from the report is provided below:

*The Link between school condition and improving educational attainment is not clear but future investment could learn from emerging research in Wales and elsewhere.*

*2.26 The Welsh Government stated at the outset that the Programme should lead to improved educational attainment. At this stage, it is too early to assess what impact, if any, the programme has had on attainment. Many factors influence learners' attainment, in particular the quality of school leadership and teaching. As a result, the causal relationship between the quality of buildings and learning outcomes has been difficult to establish. However, recent academic research by Salford University – The Clever Classrooms project – has begun to provide evidence of a correlation between the physical teaching environment (lighting, colours, display work and so on) and the pupils' academic progress. The researchers showed that a well-designed classroom can boost learning progress in primary school pupils by up to 16 % in a single year. This research can inform the design of new schools going forward. The Welsh Government's proposed approach to post-occupancy evaluation will provide more evidence of any link between the school design and attainment by linking data about the school to educational outcomes.*

Clearly, the above observations are made in relation to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme rather than to individual Local Authority projects. The Vale of Glamorgan set post occupancy targets for the schemes it carried out under Band A of the programme and has monitored outcomes. The majority of targets were met for individual schemes although it is recognised that improved attainment is heavily dependent on effective leadership and the quality of teaching, it cannot be attributed solely to the school building.

The consultation document sets out the school's current targets for improvement and explains how the proposal would support the school to improve.

### **Issue 34**

A respondent expressed concerned relating to the education environment at the proposed site due to noise and air pollution from Cardiff Airport.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Noise and air quality are matters that were considered in the process of determining the planning application for the residential development and the new school - Application reference 2014/00550/OUT. Despite the area not being within an area of special air quality or noise quality control, an air quality assessment was submitted with the planning application along with a noise and vibration assessment. These documents were considered during the course of the

application and the Council's Environmental Health (Pollution Control) section (now Shared Regulatory Services) did not raise an objection to the development having considered the findings of these reports. The application, relevant documents and the officer's report can be viewed on the Council's Planning register at: <http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/Plastandard.aspx>

### **Issue 35**

#### **Nursery**

Respondents noted that Llancafán does not have a nursery and this has not affected the education of its pupils. Estyn comments that 'nearly all pupils make good progress from their starting points', therefore suggesting that the fact that the pupils come from varied nurseries does not impact on their education.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

This proposal will develop continuity and progression in children's learning from the age of three. A consistent approach to the planning and delivery of the foundation phase (nursery to year two) would be enhanced through the establishment of a nursery unit. The already well-developed holistic approach could be embedded from an earlier age.

Estyn have advised as part of their response to the consultation that "It is likely that extending the provision to include nursery would support continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences from pre-school age to statutory school age. The addition of outdoor facilities is likely to enhance pupils' wellbeing through providing better opportunities to develop their physical skills and health. In addition, access to high-quality outdoor provision is a key principle of foundation phase pedagogy".

### **Issue 36**

#### **Increased size**

A respondent commented that by increasing the number of children in a school, the Council hasn't given sufficient weight to the losses that will come with this bigger size. In a bigger school, these opportunities are spread over a greater number of children, so each individual will do less and will learn less.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The size of the proposed new school building is 210 pupils with a 48 place nursery. This is defined as a medium sized school in the Estyn report "School Size and Educational Effectiveness" December 2013 where it is noted that "small schools face greater pressures in areas of leadership and management, staff development and curriculum planning". A larger school will be able to provide a wider curriculum provision and a greater range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. From the Estyn report cited above, they recognised that performance at level 5 in KS2 is slightly better in larger schools than small schools; improving performance at level 5 is one of the school's key improvement priorities. In 2017-2018, there were 8

primary school inspections in the Vale. All 8 schools are classed as medium or large in size and excellent practice was identified in 6 out of the 8 schools.

### **Issue 37**

#### **Mixed age teaching**

Mixed age teaching can have many benefits. Many children thrive from mixed year groups in Llancarfan Primary School. Pupils benefited from the smaller environment that a village school offers with smaller classes.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

There is evidence of good performance and outcomes at Llancarfan which were referenced in the Consultation Report. However, it is acknowledged that mixed age range classes do bring challenges for teachers, particularly in smaller schools. Estyn have previously stated in their report, "School Size and Educational Effectiveness" (December 2013) that smaller schools "generally do not do so well as other schools in the areas of leadership and management, staff development and curriculum planning." They also concluded that "the smaller the school, the more challenging it often is for the teacher to match work to all pupils' learning needs." This is primarily as a result of mixed age range classes. By increasing the size of the school to a one form entry school with a published admission number of 30 per year group, the requirement for mixed age classes would be reduced as the school population grows.

### **Issue 38**

The school is at the heart of the community.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

It has been noted that some respondents felt that the school has strong links with the community. It is acknowledged that a small number of parents and local community members currently volunteer to support peer and individual reading sessions at the school and also volunteer to provide music classes. There was however no evidence of strong community links with the school in terms of community involvement and use of the schools facilities. Feedback received during the consultation has indicated that this may not continue due to the increased travel time between the school and the local community. The Council would encourage the school to maintain community links within the catchment area, including Llancarfan Village. A key aim of the 21st Century Schools Programme is to ensure school facilities are developed to meet the needs of the local community.

In terms of community use of the school premises, Llancarfan Primary School is available for use by the local community. However, the local community centre, which is separate to the school, is primarily used by the community with no community use of the school buildings being recorded by the School. The school has previously been used, in conjunction with the Village Hall, for the summer fete. It has been noted in the Community Impact Assessment that there would be a negative impact on the Community in 5 out of 8 areas. It should be noted however that the principle purpose of a school is to educate the pupils to the best standards



and it is not reasonable to expect schools and pupils to carry wider burden of the impact on the community. Ultimately, economic and social factors are not educational issues and cannot be allowed to compromise the education of children.

### **Issue 39**

#### **Small/ rural school ethos**

Concern was expressed about the removal of choice for parents requiring a small rural school education. The benefits of a rural schooling are well documented. The pupils make good use of the wealth of outdoor areas (e.g. woodland, farmland, pond dipping etc.).

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council fully appreciates that parents will have a multitude of factors they will wish to consider when applying for a school for their child. For parents wishing to access a rural school, there are other schools within rural locations that parents could choose to express a preference for such as Llangan, Llanfair, Pendoylan, Peterston-Super Ely, Llansannor, St David's, Wick & Marcross and St Brides C/W Primary School for example. Parents of course can express a preference for a particular school and the Council is very proud of the fact that over 90% of parents are successful in gaining a place at their first choice of school. However it cannot be guaranteed that all children will receive an offer of a place at their first preference, even if they apply on time.

As part of the design process for new school buildings, all new school sites are provided with forest areas in order to ensure that the learning experience makes full use of the outdoors. The Council would work with Forest School Wales to ensure that there is sustainable Forest School provision supported by a national network that will nurture the development of projects, offer advice, provide resources, guide best practice and provide continuing professional development at the school.

There are a number of examples of modern schools that have highly effective outdoor areas that are used extremely well to benefit pupils' learning and education. Within the Vale, Ysgol Y Ddraig is the most recently built primary school and, within less than two years, the school's leaders and staff have developed highly effective outdoor learning areas.

#### **New school building and improved educational outcomes**

### **Issue 40**

Reference was made to a speaker (Dr Chris Llewelyn) at the Welsh Assembly Public Accounts Committee saying that "it's difficult to establish a causal link between new schools and improved educational outcomes but....the more communities are involved in the life of a school in every way, then that does have a positive impact on outcomes." A respondent added that the Council are planning to ignore the robust evidence of educational attainment provided by community involvement by closing Llancarfan Primary School.

## **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Public Accounts Committee referred to was held on 11 June 2018. The Committee having considered the report from the Auditor General on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme requested evidence from Local Government. Dr Chris Llewellyn (Director of Lifelong Learning Welsh Local Government Association) and Paula Ham (Director of Learning and Skills Vale of Glamorgan Council) attended to answer questions. The session can be viewed via the link below: <http://www.senedd.tv/Meeting/Archive/de75bb6c-6118-4114-81eb-73cbb43d4eb9?autostart=True>

A member of the Committee had asked a question about access for pupils and community access to schools. She specifically wanted to know what barriers there are to making schools accessible and how can 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools overcome them. Paula Ham responded to this question.

A further question was directed at Dr Chris Llewellyn:

“Do you think the WLGA would welcome guidance from the Welsh Government about duties under the 2010 Equality Act to make buildings more accessible or do you think the situation is fine as it is”?

Dr Chris Llewellyn's response:

“I would have to reflect on that. In terms of community use, at the outset there was ambition within the programme because of the scale of the investment for many communities. A £5 million primary school or a £20 million secondary school is the biggest they will get in their community and you will want to squeeze as much value as possible from that investment and to try to combine as many pots of investment as effectively as possible. In the Auditor General's report, it is mentioned that it is difficult to establish a causal link between new schools and educational outcomes but there is evidence to show that the more that a community is involved in the life of a school in every way then that does have a positive impact on outcomes”.

Dr Llewellyn's comment refers to community use of schools. The Community Impact Assessment found that community use of the school is very limited (2 occasions a year). Although there are a small number of volunteers who help out at the school, community access and involvement is under developed.

### **Issue 41**

School will lose the support of volunteers from the village and surrounding areas

## **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Governing Body and senior leadership of the school would be encouraged to maintain these links with the community and organisations where they positively support the ethos and management of the school. Volunteers will still be able to support the school on its new site and would be encouraged to do so. The school has stated that with the exception of the Governing Body, there are very few volunteers who work within the school.

## **Issue 42**

The impact of the loss of school use of local facilities and events (duck race, village show etc.) was raised by many respondents. It was felt by some that the proposal would have an adverse impact on businesses, clubs and societies, including the church.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

It has been acknowledged in the Community Impact Assessment that there would be some negative impact within the community and local businesses. Please refer to the Community Impact Assessment for further information relating to this matter.

The Council is committed to supporting our communities and would look to work closely with the organisations identified in the Community Impact Assessment to minimise any negative impact. The Governing Body of the school would also be encouraged to maintain these links with the community organisations where they positively support the ethos and management of the school. Llanccarfan Primary School on its new site would be free to choose to continue the strong relationship with the Llanccarfan community to limit the impact. There are 8 governors at Llanccarfan Primary School who live within Llanccarfan village. This will assist in links to the community being maintained.

In order to mitigate any negative impacts, the Council would also work closely with the school and members of the community to support local businesses and events including, where appropriate, signposting through the school's website. The Council would continue to support the community of Llanccarfan through its Creative Rural Communities initiative, which sees the Council supporting communities and enterprises to develop innovative projects and ideas that will create long term social and economic benefits

The Strong Communities Grant Fund offers grants to Community Groups, the Voluntary Sector and Town and Community Councils towards the cost of initiatives within the Vale of Glamorgan which help to support the Council's vision of "strong communities with a bright future". The grant fund totals £672,000 over three years until March 2020. The fund aims to:

- Improve the resilience of organisations/groups or their activities by funding activities which add value to their current work and reduce their reliance on grant funding in the future.
- Provide seed corn funding towards initiatives that can demonstrate longer term sustainability.
- Undertake consultation, feasibility, design and other specialist work to develop proposals for future activity and funding bids.
- Meet the capital costs of schemes by purchasing plant, machinery, equipment or other assets.
- Undertake work that would enable services to be provided, for example, through increased income generation potential.

- Open up Section 106 funding to specific communities where developments have taken place. Funding for facilities and open space projects in specific areas will be announced when each round is opened for applications.
- Support small scale and innovative projects.

This proposal is an education proposal which aims to address specific issues of school place capacity within the Western Vale. The principle purpose of a school is to educate the pupils to the best standards and it is not reasonable to expect schools and pupils to carry the wider burden of the impact on the community. Ultimately, economic and social factors are not educational issues and cannot be allowed to compromise the education of children. The Council would however continue to support the communities involved, if this proposal is to progress, in various ways to ensure that any identified negative impact is minimised.

### **Strength of community feeling**

#### **Issue 43**

The Council is ignoring the depth of feeling and strength of community ties to the village school.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council fully understands the depth of feeling experienced by the community as a result of this proposal.

The Council has given due consideration to the impact on the community which is reflected in the Council's Community Impact Assessment and particularly in the context of educational provision in the area.

The primary function is the education of children to the best standards possible, providing school buildings that meet 21<sup>st</sup> century school standards. The proposal offers a more efficient and sustainable model to improve the delivery of education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Council has offered a variety of opportunities for interested parties to engage as part of the consultation process in order to seek feedback on this proposal. The feedback provided to date has been incredibly valuable, has been carefully considered and is summarised in this report and the Community and Equality Impact Assessment. All feedback from individuals or organisations on the additional information will be considered before a decision is taken by the Cabinet.

The Vale of Glamorgan is committed to ensuring that consultations are meaningful, relevant and appropriate for the communities that are involved, and the Council has a duty of care to ensure that proposals are clear, transparent and reflective of those affected. This is a vision that can only be realised by working in partnership with schools, governors, parents and the wider communities we all serve. The recent consultation exercise examining primary provision in the Western Vale has been valuable and important in informing the next steps.

## **School ethos and size**

### **Issue 44**

The small school ethos and size has attracted families to the area.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

It is acknowledged that some parents have chosen to send their children to Llancarfan due to its small school ethos and size. However, the challenges of surplus capacity are a very real concern. Over the last three years, an average of 4 children have been born in the Llancarfan Primary School catchment area each year compared to 18 places available at the reception intake. The school has a catchment area population of 55 primary age children set against a capacity of 126 places. Only 29 of the 55 primary aged children living in the catchment area attend the school. The school is operating with a surplus capacity of 25 places (19.8%) that is set to increase to 28 places (22%) over the next five year period. This proposal was made in order to address these capacity concerns but also to maintain the existing pupil, staff and governors, thereby retaining the existing values and ethos of the school.

## **House prices**

### **Issue 45**

The proposed move would have a detrimental effect on house prices.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council is not aware of any evidence that this would be the case.

The attraction of a rural location for some people is due to a multitude of factors. Feedback received as part of the consultation suggests that Llancarfan would no longer be desirable to families due to the new school site. However, the Council notes that there are a number of strong communities across the Vale of Glamorgan that are not within walking distance of a school that are highly desired by families and other residents. According to the 2011 census data, the population of Llandow, St Donats and Welsh St Donats has a similar mean age to Llancarfan despite there being no primary school within the village.

## **Council Services/ Council Tax**

### **Issue 46**

Removal of another service in the area (already pay high council tax)

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The provision of primary education will remain available to all residents; there is no withdrawal of this service. Llancarfan Primary School will remain the catchment school for Llancarfan village. As the community do not utilise the school building, the loss of the school as a community facility would have a negligible impact.

## Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

### Issue 47

A respondent felt that the Council had failed to consider the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The extent to which the respondent believes the proposal is not in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 is unclear. The Act sets out a framework of seven goals to develop and protect the social, economic, developmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales and five ways of working to achieve sustainable development.

The way in which the Council's well-being objectives contribute to the well-being goals for Wales is set out in the Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020. Four wellbeing goals provide the framework for the Council's programme of activity. The School Reorganisation and Investment Programme falls within the wellbeing outcome: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale – All Vale of Glamorgan Citizens have opportunities to achieve their full potential. Two objectives sit under this outcome: Raising overall standards of achievement and valuing culture and diversity. The school modernisation programme is identified in the Plan as one of 9 key actions contributing to raising overall standards of achievement.

How the proposal reflects the 5 key ways of working:

| <b>Ways of Working</b> | <b>Commentary</b>   |
|------------------------|---|
| Long term              | <p>The proposal seeks to develop a long term solution which will sustain Llancafarn school in the future as well as meet the projected increase in demand for school places in the area.</p> <p>It would equip the school to deliver the new curriculum and facilitate the school's implementation and embedding of the Digital Competence Framework.</p> |
| Prevention             | <p>The proposal supports wider national policy aims of early years intervention including using the school to provide community facilities for families. The proposal is to provide a school building which can deliver the modern curriculum and support attainment thereby preparing pupils for life.</p>   |
| Integration            | <p>The proposal seeks to integrate the school building programme with the demand for school places and with wider educational needs. The opportunities</p>  |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
|                      | <p>associated with community activity and additional lifelong learning stemming from new facilities and a built-for-purpose design offer greater integration with learning opportunities for a wider audience.</p>  |
| <p>Collaboration</p> | <p>The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme is a collaboration between Welsh Government and Councils in which both parties provide 50% of the funding for the scheme. The design of the school building and site is done in collaboration with the school and governing body. A programme of collaboration between the developers and pupils in terms of planning, progress and learning opportunities during the development and building phases has been successful in other programmes and would be replicated under this proposal. Community use of the new facilities would be a factor for development and collaboration with community groups to understand demand and need would be an integral part of the development phase.</p> |
| <p>Involvement</p>   | <p>Should the proposal be approved, design and implementation of the scheme would be carried out in consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders. The Governing Body, staff and pupils will have considerable input in line with our practice on all schemes delivered to date. The community will be engaged in terms of identifying unmet community needs which could potentially be met through the new school building.</p>   |

### **Extra funding for repairs**

#### **Issue 48**

Welsh Government has released extra funding for repairs so the upkeep of the school is not coming from the Council.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Welsh Government awarded a one off revenue grant directly to schools in the 2017/18 financial year to support the costs of maintaining school premises. The total grant awarded to Vale of Glamorgan Schools was £610,807, of which £5,238 was allocated directly to Llancafarn Primary School. There has been no indication from Welsh Government that this funding will be made available in future years.

The responsibility for school repairs and maintenance is outlined in section 11 of The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Fair Funding Scheme for Financing Schools. Generally, where schools are not Voluntary Aided, the Council is responsible for works of a capital nature which is in line with the CIPFA code of Practice on Council accounting. However, as identified in the Fair Funding Scheme, it is the governing body that is responsible to fund the revenue costs of repairs and maintenance from the schools delegated budget share

A full list of the categories of work which Governing Bodies can expect to finance from school's delegated budgets is identified in Appendix 4 of The Fair Funding Scheme.

### **Issue 49**

#### **County Treasure**

Respondent commented that the original school building is recognised as a positive building and a County Treasure. There is no reason to close it.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The proposal is a transfer of a school to a new site and is not a school closure.

Llancafarn Primary School is situated within the Llancafarn Conservation Area and is identified in the Llancafarn Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a 'positive building' as it contributes to the character or appearance of the conservation area in a positive manner. The building has been identified and included in the Council's 'County Treasures' list.

As such any development proposal relating to the site would need to be considered in terms of the policies in place, for example the requirement to "preserve and where appropriate enhance the architectural and/or historic qualities of buildings, or conservation areas, including locally listed buildings."

Any future planning proposals with regard to the school building would be subject to consideration of its status as a County Treasure alongside clear adherence to the policies and regulations in place with regard to buildings with this status.

### **Issue 50**

#### **Community hall and after school club provision**

Respondent concerned for the community hall in respect of after school club provision.



After school provision could still operate and be available from the community hall. As school transport would be provided for children from the Llancarfan, Llanbetherry and Llancadle areas to the transferred school, it is possible on the return journey home that children could be dropped off at the community hall to continue with their after school club provision.

This section provides comments raised during the formal consultation period by those in favour of the proposal. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All Written responses have been made available to cabinet members.

### **Consultation comments received from first exercise undertaken**

- Rhws Primary is bursting at the seams. A new school in Rhoose would be perfect for us.
- Please ensure Rhoose School receives the updated facilities it needs.
- It would be fantastic for the children and staff.. everything purpose built.. flat playground and playing field. Better roads and designated parking areas. Modern but still relatively small. Only twice the size of the current Llancarfan school with regards to pupil numbers.
- The current schools future development is limited. There is little ability to expand on the current site whilst it is a beautiful little school it's not fit for the future , the sports facilities are not fit for purpose and limited going forward into high school
- It's a step in the right direction and believe that the new school will benefit the pupils both academically and physically with the new surroundings and equipment.
- Financially it makes sense. It also keeps the 106 money within Rhoose where it is meant to be spent and for the benefit of the new house residents.
- Rhoose needs another school desperately. It makes total financial sense.
- Rhoose needs a second school.
- Rhoose is a growing community and another school is required.
- I am supportive in principle of the improvements that will be made to the education of the children of Llancarfan and the consequential impact on children residing in Rhoose
- Most of the children in Llancarfan are from Rhoose, this will provide a better teaching facility for all at a lower cost per child.
- With all the developments in Rhoose the current school will not cope with the demand of new residents.

- A school environment that is fit for 21st century education is what we all aspire to for our children. Adding a nursery is sensible and honouring the Cowbridge comp. link for existing school pupils only seems fair.
- Old school is not fit for purpose a new school is needed.
- The current cost per pupil at Llancarfan and gradual reduction in intake are taking Llancarfan PS to the point where it will soon become economically not viable to continue without further budgetary reductions reducing the overall support and quality of education at this fantastic school. A move will maintain a fairly close school in terms of family and familiarity with a relatively small capacity and better facilities for sports etc. with the prospect of longer term stability and quality of operation for pupils and staff alike. The school will be able to operate at one class one year group, which leads to better cohesion for the classes which are currently split.
- It would create a school of a more efficient size, in a new building which meets modern requirements and located closer to the population which it serves. Fundamentally Llancarfan village does not have a population large enough to sustain a primary school. The budget for schools in the Vale is already stretched and ratepayers need school provision to be rationalised where necessary. Continued access to Cowbridge Secondary school seems a key consideration for parents but measures to protect the position of existing pupils seem sufficient to deal with this issue. Overall this seems like an excellent proposal which will be of benefit to the pupils of the school and will have some beneficial effects for neighbouring schools which will have enlarged catchments.
- Job security for all staff currently employed at Llancarfan school primarily. Gain better outdoor facilities. Less disruption for parent parking. Provision for nursery.
- The new building offers a sustainable way forward that safeguards the jobs for the current hard-working dedicated staff against a dwindling school attendance from the area and a high cost per pupil. The newer premises will offer a more cohesive school where single entry classes will improve overall pupil outcomes. The sporting facilities will allow a safer playing and sporting environment, without reliance on local tennis courts where hitting games are problematic due to ball loss and restricted playing area. There is also problematic parking for parents and this has been an ongoing area of friction with elements of the village. The introduction of a nursery unit will increase what Llancarfan is able to offer the local population and help develop a smooth induction from starting school age instead of competing for pupils from the foundation phase, when many are already settled.
- This will secure the staff jobs and ensure the pupils all stay together.
- Job security • Greater outdoor learning environment • Straight year group classes.

- New building and expanding excellence in standards already established by staff in existing school.
- Rhoose needs a new school. It will also join the villages together.
- As a Governor with a long-standing involvement at the school, I fully appreciate that the school is an integral part of the community in Llancarfan and the migration will undoubtedly have an impact on the village. The small rural environment it offers has enabled us to achieve high standards with a caring nurturing ethos. However, the falling numbers on role are a cause for concern with the subsequent impact on our budget and sustainability. With good financial planning and a reduction in the established members of staff, as a school we have been able to successfully balance the budget. However, the projected continued fall in role will put a substantial strain on the budget and will result in a reduction in staff numbers which will have a detrimental effect on the standards achieved at the school. Migration as a whole school would enable us to maintain our current staff and continue the caring nurturing ethos of the school to be “the best we can be”
- Offering a nursery class will improve the school's standing, providing opportunity for pre-school children to attend the primary school and boost numbers! School children will benefit from a 21st century school and facilities.

### **Consultation Comments received from second exercise undertaken**

- The children would benefit from the new building. Better access and facilities. Also better roads for the school run.
- Llancarfan building now too small Not enough parking Poor disabled access.
- Something needs to happen. Not everyone will be pleased but the volume of children approaching school age in Rhoose will become a critical problem for our children's learning if another school isn't built. Difficult decisions need to be made
- The proposed site for the new school is on the new housing development that we are moving to later this year. We have a 2 year old daughter so this will be very convenient for us when she is of school age.
- Current buildings are inadequate.
- Rhoose is forever growing and a new school is much needed.
- Rhoose needs extra capacity.
- If you keep building all these new housing estates in Rhoose, we need more facilities, a school included, Rhws Primary can't take any more when taking into account the volume of residents.

- This will benefit Rhoose massively and will give the pupils new state of the art equipment and facilities.
- More nursery places are needed, and a new building will benefit the children.
- I support a new school in Rhoose due to the expanded population of Rhoose.
- The school is the heart of the community and keeping it open will attract more people to come to the primary school in the future. It's vital to the surrounding areas as it's a school that brings people together from different areas and backgrounds to help round children for the future.
- I don't see an alternative. The Taylor Wimpey development will generate more families and therefore children in the area and they will all need schools. I seriously doubt the current school in Rhoose can cope with this increase. I really worry about the traffic impact however and predict the new development with the school will be a nightmare in the school run times. Possibly requiring traffic lights onto Rhoose road from the new development. Not a good thing!
- More than happy with new proposal. For something proposed to actually be followed through would be nice. Schools, golf course, pubs, shops.
- Population is increasing, new facilities would be beneficial.
- Both my children received a wonderful education at the small village school of Llancarfan with all the opportunities that a small school can bring. However, as a long-standing Governor at the school and recognising the changes to the curriculum, pressures on budgets and a falling role, particularly from those children in the catchment area, the school in its existing form may be unsustainable. I feel that to preserve the stability, culture and ethos of the school it would be beneficial to move to the new site. The teaching staff could continue their excellent work building on the opportunity the 21st Century school building would bring. There would be less disruption to the education of the children that the continual falling numbers, potential loss of staff would bring.
- In a perfect world I would love nothing more than this wonderful village school to stay open to allow children to continue to receive a fabulous and unique education experience but I realise the falling numbers of pupils attending LPS will unfortunately lead to inevitable viability issues and ultimate closure of the school anyway. As a result of what I believe the future for LPS to be I am in favour of the school migrating to Rhoose. I find it difficult to argue the point that children will benefit from a better education in a new school in Rhoose as the education and experience children have at LPS is excellent but I have no doubt children will benefit from improved facilities such as a flat area to play outdoor sports and more indoor space. The ethos of the school, the excellent teaching practice and the passion and commitment to education from the staff will no doubt continue and be

professionally transferred to a new school building and I hope that parents and the community will embrace the opportunity for children to receive a new and different educational experience along with the staff they know and respect rather than see LPS close and children be disbanded around the Vale to other schools that can accommodate them.

- To provide the extra new build, with a nursery, would be excellent as it would enhance the fantastic start primary school pupils already enjoy, but with this new facility it will provide younger children, from 3, that great start.
- It would be excellent to have 3-11 age range.

This section provides comments to frequently asked question in relation to the proposal.

### *Are you planning to close Llancafarn Primary School?*

We are not proposing to close Llancafarn Primary School. This proposal is a regulated alteration of Llancafarn Primary School to move it to a new site together with an increase in the capacity of the school and age range. These elements are referred to as regulated alterations under the School Organisation Code, statutory Code document no: 006/2013 that require publication. The proposal seeks to move the existing school into a new, larger school building in line with Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme. The proposal is not a closure of Llancafarn Primary School. The proposed new school building for Llancafarn Primary School would also be able to accommodate an increase in demand for pupil places in the Western Vale, primarily from new developments in the Rhoose area. Existing staff, governors and pupils at Llancafarn Primary School would move into the new building.

### *Can you build a new school in Llancafarn?*

There are a number of inherent limitations associated with the existing Victorian school building itself and the land upon which it sits, that would prevent a new build. Llancafarn has a small catchment population compared to its overall capacity to accommodate children. The existing Rhws Primary School is approaching maximum capacity, and over one third of children attending Llancafarn come from the Rhoose area. Only 29% of the pupil population at Llancafarn come from within the Llancafarn catchment area. 71% come from outside the catchment area.

### *How would Rhws Primary School cope with having another primary school in the area?*

This proposal provides a unique opportunity to not only move Llancafarn Primary School into a new 21st century school building but also accommodate children from the new housing development in Rhoose. The existing Primary School in Rhoose is nearing its maximum capacity and will be unable to accommodate these children. Rhws Primary School is approximately a mile away from the proposed location of the new school site. There are no plans as part of this proposal for an amalgamation with Rhws Primary.

### *What commitment for existing children at Llancafarn Primary School will be honoured?*

It will be proposed as part of the consultation for the new school building and as part of consultations on future admission arrangements that transitional arrangements will apply to existing Llancafarn Primary School pupils and their siblings up to the move to a new site. The Council's intention is to honour the feeder arrangements and catchment area links to Cowbridge for existing Llancafarn Primary School pupils up to the move to a new site and until they leave the school. Siblings of pupils attending the school up to the move to a new site will also have a

high priority for admission to Llancafarn Primary School once they reach school age. This will be part of the oversubscription criteria in place.

***Would the same rights apply to pupils admitted to the school between a decision being taken to move Llancafarn Primary to the new school building and the actual transfer?***

Subject to the outcome of statutory consultation, the intention would be to honour the existing feeder school arrangements for pupils on roll on the date of the move to a new site and their siblings. Children on transfer and their siblings will automatically retain the feeder links to Cowbridge currently operating for entry to the school as is the case now. With the exception of siblings, any pupils joining Llancafarn Primary School after the move to the new site would be subject to the agreed admission arrangements in place at that time. Siblings being admitted after the move to the new site who are affected by the change in catchment areas would have a high priority for admission under the council's admission arrangements policy.

***Would pupils from the current Llancafarn Catchment area still retain rights to admission to Cowbridge Comprehensive or would the Cowbridge Comprehensive Catchment Area be changed to exclude the catchment area of the school in its new site?***

Catchment areas are traditional boundaries that are put in place to ensure that local schools service their community. This consultation does not propose a change to the catchment area for Cowbridge Comprehensive School. Any change to the catchment area for Cowbridge Comprehensive School would only take place after a review of catchment areas and the required consultation. Parents will of course always have the ability to specify their preference.

***Will there be a new Headteacher?***

All staff would maintain their positions at Llancafarn Primary School and move to the new site.

***What would the admission arrangements be?***

As this consultation does not propose the closure of Llancafarn Primary School, all children will stay at Llancafarn Primary School and move to the new building automatically. Applications for a school place after the move to the new site from siblings of pupils on roll at the school on the date of admission would be considered a high priority. The Council's admission criteria would reflect this by establishing transitional arrangements for children with siblings who are affected by the change in catchment areas to ensure that if requested by parents both siblings can attend Llancafarn Primary School wherever possible providing they are on roll at the same time.

***Will the school have a new name?***

We are proposing to provide Llancafarn Primary School with a new, larger, vastly improved building, extending the age range of the school. Llancafarn Primary



School will not be closing therefore there would be no need for the school to change its name, ethos or identity, only its location.

***Will the policies of the school change to reflect the new site and the nursery age children?***

This will be a decision of the governing body and the Headteacher of the school. The school will need to consider reviewing its policies following the move to the new building and the establishment of a nursery unit to ensure that all children in the school are covered by the school's policies.

***When would staff and pupils transfer to the new school building?***

The proposal is that the new school will open in September 2021.

## **Consultation with young children**

**Consultation on behalf of Vale of Glamorgan Council on the proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale re. Llancarfan Primary School.**

**Discussion undertaken with Llancarfan Primary School's School Council with Teaching Assistant in attendance (28 March 2018)**

### **Background and Aim**

- In their Consultation document on the above proposal the Vale of Glamorgan Council note the importance of making suitable arrangements to consult with pupils and where possible those pupils likely to attend the school: ' The Council firmly believes that the pupils of Llancarfan Primary School should be given the opportunity to make their views known about this proposal'.
- A consultation workshop was arranged with the school council of Llancarfan Primary School to gather their views about the proposal.
- The information gathered from this session will be included in the final consultation report. The full report will be submitted to the Council's Cabinet for consideration following the consultation period.

### **Methodology**

- An interactive methodology was incorporated so that all pupils were allowed an opportunity to discuss, share and voice their own ideas.
- It started with a discussion on the meaning of consultation and why it was important to talk to pupils.
- Further discussion continued on what made a good discussion/consultation and ground-rules were established to ensure that this process would be successful.
- The main aspects of the consultation were explained to them, including the background and timetable to ensure that they were up to speed with the relevant information.
- The pupils were divided into 2 groups to discuss and form their own opinions on the strengths and possible weaknesses of the proposal.
- The groups then merged to share their findings, incorporating the rules of engagement as agreed at the beginning of the session.
- The pupils were given an insight into the advantages and disadvantages listed in the Consultation document.
- A vote was taken at the end of the session to sum up responses.

## **Pupils' responses**

### **What makes a good discussion?**

- Co-operation
- Be kind
- Stand up for yourself
- Courage
- Sensible
- No fear
- Respect others
- Got to listen
- Don't be shouty or interrupt
- Contribute
- Listen to opinions – give everyone a chance to speak
- Patience
- Have good ideas
- Never stop trying
- Meet in the middle

### **Benefits of the proposed plan**

- The new school will have better facilities
- The school will be bigger
- New place, new things
- The school may be closer
- Class sizes will be bigger
- New pupils from different areas
- More parking space
- More people would live here
- Local businesses get more money
- More facilities, children, sporting areas, parking, safer
- Less traffic, complaints
- Bigger classrooms
- Don't have to combine years – we get our own class
- Better education for group work
- You can make new friends
- More space
- The school may be closer
- Better education
- New teachers – will they be soft?
- House prices & taxes might go down [there was no further clarification on these comments when probed a little further]

### **Possible pitfalls of the proposed plan**

- Everyone will miss the school – it has been here for ages
- It will probably get knocked down if they move and it's a very old building
- It might not be named Llancarfan School; school name might change
- It's a great school
- No litter picks or duck race events when people get together
- Missing close atmosphere/relationship/community

- Get busier
- Worried because people might not want to live here
- Less business for local pubs/shops
- People living in local area will have to drive to school
- Does it make sense to call it Llancarfan
- Keep 'Cerys' place where it is'; take care of Cerys' place
- Could be arguments with two Rhoose schools
- Catchment area might change (i.e. for Cowbridge Comprehensive School)
- It will be a lot harder to get to; might have to travel further
- Need a road
- Dangerous car fumes – not good for children
- Traffic

### **Workshop Vote:**

A continuum was arranged for them to place themselves on the Yes, No or Not sure part of the continuum. The result was:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Yes:    | 3 |
| Unsure: | 2 |
| No:     | 6 |

### **Additional Comments from Llancarfan Pupils in years 5 & 6:**

'I think the school shouldn't move because it will bring traffic and lots of noise into the village'

'I am against the school moving because next year's Reception that start won't want to come because they know they'll be leaving in 2 years'

'My opinion is that it would benefit the school because having more space and better facilities would encourage children and improve their social skills by talking to new pupils'

'I think it's a bad idea because I feel emotionally attached because of previous generations going to this school'

'I am against the school leaving because the school has been in Llancarfan for a long time, since 1879 I think, and it would be a shame to see it more'

'I think the school should not move to Rhoose because I live in the village and I won't get to know new people who move in'

'I am against the school relocating to Rhoose because we have memories at this school. Also, I don't want the school to move as it causes hassle for people who have to move and, depending on when the school is moving, my brother will be affected by the move'

'My opinion is that it is a good idea because it will have better facilities and I have a little sister so I want what's best for her'

'My opinion of the school moving is that it is a good idea because there will be less traffic congestion and there will be more open space'

'My opinion is that the school should move because the land could be used for something better and there would be more land'

'I don't think Llancafarn School should be knocked down because there are crowds of kids that will want to be in this school'

'I am for the school moving because there will be a new school for little ones and new facilities'

'I think that Llancafarn School moving to Rhose is bad because of the pollution'

'I think that it is a bad idea because of its effect on Llancafarn'

'I think it is not a good idea because I think there is no point because it's fine how it is'

**Class Vote:**

2 – for moving the school

9 – against moving the school

10 - Abstaining

**Consultation (2<sup>nd</sup>) on behalf of Vale of Glamorgan Council  
On the proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale re.  
Llancarfan Primary School**

**Discussion undertaken with Llancarfan Primary School's School Council with  
Teaching Assistant in attendance (15 June 2018)**

**Background and Aim**

- As with the initial consultation. The Vale of Glamorgan Council note the importance of making suitable arrangements to consult with pupils and where possible those pupils likely to attend the school, to make their views known about this proposal.
- A consultation workshop was arranged with the school council for 15<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the proposal and obtain their views on it.
- The information gathered from this session is gathered in this report.

**Methodology**

- An interactive methodology was incorporated again, so that the school council representatives were allowed an opportunity to discuss share and voice their own ideas.
- We re-established pupils names and hobbies and went on to a Quiz section which aimed to recap on the meaning of consultation, who was being consulted on this occasion, what the subject matter was and why it was important to have pupils' view on such matters.
- We then proceeded to get everyone's views on what made a good discussion/consultation in order to establish some ground-rules to ensure that the process would be successful.
- The main aspects of the consultation were explained to them, including the background and timetable to ensure that they were up to speed with the relevant information. This included reference to the advantages and disadvantages listed in the Consultation document, the FAQs as well as reference to the Community Impact Assessment document.
- The pupils were divided into 2 groups to discuss and form their own opinions on the strengths and possible weaknesses of the proposal.
- The groups then merged to share their findings, incorporating the ground-rules as agreed at the beginning of the session.
- Pupils voted at the end of the session to sum up responses.

## **Pupils' responses**

### **What makes a good discussion?**

- Co-operate
- Sensible
- Listening
- Listen to everyone's opinions
- Have good suggestions
- Say your opinion
- Consider everyone's views
- Include everyone
- Think of ideas
- Have good questions

### **Reasons given as advantages of the proposed plan**

- Better education
- The new school will have better facilities
- More classrooms
- Bigger classrooms
- More tech
- More space
- Earn more money from the school fayre
- More 'up to date' things
- Make new friends
- Flatter land
- Have new teachers
- More after-school activities, clubs etc.
- More opportunities to do a range of activities

### **Reasons for being against the proposed plan**

- Won't have small school privileges e.g. duck race
- No point
- It should stay here as it's been here for a long time
- Don't like the new plan
- No adventure trail
- People prefer a small school
- No small school atmosphere in the new school
- Generations of family members have been to the current school

### **Quotations from pupils:**

'I want newer things, bigger, one-aged classes. It will be easier'

'From the pictures that I have seen of the new school it looks like it will not pan out'

'The school shouldn't move because the school has been here for years and it would be a shame to close it'

'I think it's a good idea, we'll have better education and more space. Everything's new'

'We should not close the school because I like it here'

'No, I just don't think we should move'

'My friend has had 6 generations of her family come here'

'I like small schools'

'I think it's a great idea for many reasons, flatter land, more space, better facilities. Also, new friends and a generally better atmosphere of still a small school'

### **Workshop Vote:**

After discussion of both sides of the argument a final vote was taken on the subject. The result was:

Agree with the proposal: 5 (although one of the 5 kept changing his mind from 'agree' to 'unsure' to 'disagree')

Unsure with proposal: 1

Disagree with proposal: 6



## **Governing Body Response**

### **Governing Body of Llancafarn Primary School**

#### **First Consultation Response**

Hayley Hughes Vice Chair of The Governing Body of Llancafarn Primary School

#### **Not in Favour**

The proposal starts with: “The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils within the Vale have every opportunity to attain the best possible outcomes. In order to achieve this ambition it is essential that we ensure schools remain sustainable, reflect the needs of the local community and are equipped with the best possible learning environments.” During the Consultation discussions with the Governing Body the VoG representatives outlined that the primary concern are education standards, falling admissions and surplus places and housing development projections. In our opinion all arguments are spurious: Education standards - Firstly we would like to state that Llancafarn Primary School standards of education and achievement are above the Welsh average and already provide innovative, creative learning environments which challenge and support children as evidenced by their results and Estyn report. There is no guarantee that the quality of education standards will improve with the proposed relocation. The current Estyn report judges the school’s performance and prospects for improvement as Good which means that it has many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. In addition, the Staff and GB have worked tirelessly to secure a move from amber to yellow in Wales’ school colour coded tables. Quality staffing has the greatest impact on education standards, and the school demonstrates a continuous effort and focus in this area with numerous projects such as “good to excellent” and commitment to CPD with a dynamic training programme. Moving to a larger school would not guarantee an improvement in standards. The opposite can be argued, there are more pupils to deal with, and potentially a less personal touch which can be detrimental to learning. The VOG representatives also quoted the research conducted by Salford University into Clever Classrooms, attempting to use this to show that Llancafarn primary school is a below standard learning environment. The report clearly shows that clever classrooms can exist in a school of any age or design and that Llancafarn Primary school already meets many of the criteria and the others can easily be met. We note that the preference of Vale of Glamorgan Council appears to be for schools to be that all schools should conform to the 210 place model in order to qualify under the 21st Century Schools initiative. However, making all schools conform to this model is to the detriment of parental choice for those parents who wish to send their children to a smaller, village-type school. That 70% of Llancafarn Primary school pupils come from outside catchment is evidence of its’ popularity with parents, they are happy to travel at their sometimes significant cost to bring their children to the school of their choice which provides the standard of education and small nurturing village school environment they want for their children. Migrating to a larger soulless building will remove parental choice. Admissions - We note that the basis for your projections for future pupil numbers is not explained. We are therefore not in a position to dispute

the specific projections, but it appears to us that they do not take into account housing development within reasonable travelling distance from Llanccarfan, but outside Rhose, nor the employment expansion of Aston Martin in St Athan, nor the possible relocation of a military unit from Brecon to St Athan - any or all of which could potentially increase pupil numbers at Llanccarfan. The council seem to have taken only short term projections that there are currently (end March) 7 intake and 19 moving on into secondary education. We are all aware that this intake number increases towards the end of the academic year, last year it was 17 and it is likely that this number will increase considerably in the next few months and ongoing years with marketing effort. We are deeply concerned about the news that the admissions have dropped from 7 to 4 since notification of the proposal to relocate the school and would like to scrutinise these applications. We have received feedback from parents and are deeply concerned with comments that the Admissions Officer made about the school being a second choice for parents through the consultation process and have little confidence in the admissions process and integrity of the data as a result and would like to see all applications to Llanccarfan school. There are surplus places at Llanccarfan school currently, running at 16% which is below the Welsh Government's position on what is considered significant (25%). We believe that the school will be able to gain from the various developments in the coming years. Housing development projections - It will take a number of years to build the second phase in Rhose and uptake of house purchases is directly linked to a number of macro economic factors which, with the best will in the world are unable to be projected accurately. This means that the new school may well be in surplus. What happens then? We have also received feedback from parents that several Llanccarfan pupils will not migrate with the staff, is it reasonable to ask young children to travel 5 miles to school in a minibus?

We would like to suggest that as an alternative the council revisits the potential extension of the existing school at Rhose, as governors are aware that there is the ability to extend Rhose further and that plans have been drawn up.

As you will be aware there is a groundswell of community feeling against the proposals. The community impact document has not considered the impact on the community and is, we understand the subject of deep scrutiny by the community council. It has not considered the many community links that make the school unique. These links include the Church with which the school has a special relationship contributing to the children's education; links with the Fox and Hounds pub, the Village hall, Tennis club, community council, community cinema and Llanccarfan society. The proposal splits the existing community of Llanbetherry, Llanccadle, Llanccarfan and Moulton into different primary/then secondary schools and we do not feel that the impact of important pre-school friendships and support networks for parents have been considered. Another point to note is that the way that the consultation was announced and has been implemented has unfortunately resulted in the creation of unrest between Staff, Governors and the Community. The Council's statement implied that the situation was predetermined, and the manner in which it was announced undermined the ability of the school and Governing Body to manage the situation, with an immediate detrimental effect for staff, pupils and parents. Clearly the staff are scared to lose their jobs and life security and have remained quiet on the matter and with the depth of feeling and strength of character in the community this is a big problem, especially against the backdrop of the threat of closure in 2012 when the staff came out fighting. This has implications for the future now, whatever the outcome. Please note that staff

members of the governing body abstained in the decision of the GB to oppose the council's proposals at this point.

## **Second Consultation Response**

Jill Davies Chair of Governing Body of Llancafarn Primary School

### **Not in favour**

We are pleased that the Council has considered the impact of splitting the existing community of Llanbethery, Llancadle, Llancafarn and Moulton into different primary/then secondary schools and has changed the proposal to reflect this. We do not feel that there has been any other substantial change to the proposal and our original response is still valid and we would like that to be considered in conjunction to this response.

Please note that staff members of the governing body along with Gordon Kemp abstained in the decision of the GB to oppose the council's proposals at this point.

## **Governing Body of Rhws Primary School**

### **First Consultation Response**

Matthew Lloyd – Chair of Governing Body

### **Not in favour**

The Governing Body of Rhws Primary does not support the proposal in its entirety as we do not feel the proposal fully addresses Primary provision across the whole local area, particularly a lack of any form of investment in the built fabric of Rhws Primary school. The proposal for the new school is financially supported by funding from three areas, including the Welsh Government, The Vale of Glamorgan Council and Section 106 monies resulting from the new housing development in Rhoose. To the best of our knowledge Rhws Primary has never benefitted from any section 106 money, including from the original Rhoose Point development, neither will it benefit from any section 106 money from the new development. It is our contention that section 106 money should be made available to both Rhws Primary to improve its many building issues which include but not limited to, • Leaking roof • Draughty windows • Inefficient and difficult to control heating • Poorly designed sprinkler systems • Poorly designed lift • Rotting wooden window frames • Rusting and broken guttering • Unsuitable classroom sizes • Not fit for purpose canteen area And also any new school that is required to be built to satisfy educational capacity within the village. It is not fully known, but the GB understands the above remedial work to put right the above named issue could cost approximately upwards of £500,000 – a figure which could be met through allocation of the section 106 money generated from the new housing developments. The Rhws Primary governing body also contends that the report to cabinet does not explore in enough detail the following areas: 1. The potentially negative social impact that moving to a two school village from an historic position of just one, will have on the villages residents, both adult and children alike. Should a new school be built, the GB would ask that the authority produces a proposal for consideration which incorporates options for either amalgamation or federation. We believe that this approach is

viable given the local context. This approach would remove potential future contention around catchment for primary provision within Rhoose and would provide a formal means of alignment between the schools at a strategic level. 2. Extending Rhws Primary school itself so that the additional capacity can be met within the one site. When the new build extension to Rhws Primary school was developed, architects plans were drawn up with a view to being able to extend further in the future. We do not believe this has been explored in enough detail and would like to see additional work carried out including the drawing up of new fully costed plans to this end. The Rhws Primary school site is large and has potential to be able to meet some of the additional capacity requirements. The Governing body of Rhws Primary School supports the Llancarfan community, and asks that the council makes further efforts to address its concerns about the impact that losing a small rural school will have upon the social and community context with its own village. On this point we assert that the community impact assessment that has been undertaken as part of the initial proposal process is lacking in depth and scope and should be widened – and importantly to seek much more actively engagement at a community level within both the villages of Rhoose and Llancarfan.

The council should consider strongly: - IF a new school is built in Rhoose, it is inconceivable that the new school should be named Llancarfan Primary School. An alternative, produced in consultation with local residents should be sought - Allocating some of the section 106 money generated within Rhoose, to Rhws Primary in order to address the poor state of condition the building is currently in - Extending and widening the scope of the community impact assessment to include much more local community engagement. This should concentrate particularly on the impact that losing its own local school will have on the village of Llancarfan, but also the impact that a new two school state will have on the village of Rhoose - Consider amalgamation and federation of a two school system, should a new school be built in Rhoose - Alternative options to fulfil the additional capacity requirements such as extending Rhws Primary should be investigated in greater detail

This submission was made in the knowledge of and with the full consent of the Governing Body of Rhws Primary School. Matthew Lloyd Chairman, Rhws Primary Governing Body.

## **Estyn response to the first consultation exercise**

### **Estyn response to the proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale (Vale of Glamorgan)**

#### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors for 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 from Estyn's own databases and from Welsh Government.

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal is to:

- reconfigure primary provision in the Vale of Glamorgan by creating a new primary school building on a new site for up to 210 pupils and a nursery class for up to 48 pupils on a part-time basis
- migrate all pupils and staff from Llancafán Primary School to the new school site, and
- Extend the age range of the school from 4 to 11 years to 3 to 11 years.

This is likely to at least maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

#### **Description and benefits**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has presented a sound rationale for the proposals to create a new school building for Llancafán Primary School with the addition of 48 nursery places for pupils on a part-time basis, on a new site in Rhoose. It sets out the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal clearly. The local authority has considered provision for existing pupils in the current Llancafán Primary School, its future pupils, as well as those in Rhws, Llanfair and St Nicholas Primary Schools. This is because the proposed realignment of existing catchment areas in Rhoose in order to accommodate the new school site, would affect pupils in these schools. The local authority has taken appropriate account of educational standards, school surplus places, pupil travel arrangements, accessibility of provision, the quality and sustainability of school accommodation, financial investment and running costs.

The proposal establishes that Llancafarn Primary School is a relatively small school with an admission number of 18. Its current catchment area population of 55 children is less than half the school capacity of 126 places. There are 106 pupils on roll currently, of which only around a third live in the school catchment area. The remaining 75 pupils live outside the school catchment area and 36 of these pupils live in the Rhws Primary School catchment area. Currently, Rhws Primary School is nearly at maximum capacity.

The proposal sets out clearly that there is a need to address the level of surplus places at Llancafarn Primary School in light of current and projected pupil numbers, in order to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the school. In addition, the local authority has considered the north-west and north-east housing development in Rhose and has projected an anticipated shortfall of 90 primary school places by 2023 as a result of the planned housing developments in the Rhws Primary School catchment area.

The local authority has considered carefully the condition of the school buildings, facilities and access to Llancafarn Primary School, which include a Victorian school building where pupils are taught in two classrooms and three separate demountable blocks on a small site. A condition survey in 2014, established that a low level of investment is required to ensure that the standard of the building provision is maintained. However, the school does not meet the standards set out in the statutory framework for school buildings and design in Wales and routes through the village and lanes to access the school are congested. Furthermore, the potential for further development opportunities at Rhws Primary School to accommodate the anticipated increase in pupil numbers in its catchment area, are limited. The school is a grade 2 listed building and the school site is restricted in size.

The Council provides a clear rationale for how it will address these issues through migrating all pupils and staff from the current Llancafarn Primary School site to a new primary school building in Rhose, and redefining the catchment areas within the Western Vale region. The local authority has considered suitable alternatives and given good reasons as to why it has discounted these.

The proposal has considered the impact of the new provision on other schools in the local area and has shown how it would redistribute the current catchment area of Llancafarn Primary School amongst Rhws, Llanfair, St Athan and St Nicholas Primary Schools and define the new catchment area of the new Llancafarn Primary School site. It anticipates that these revisions will increase pupil numbers for the other schools. However, the projected pupil numbers provided for two of the schools (St Nicholas and St Athan) decrease over time.

The proposal presents clearly the local authority's plan for transferring pupils, staff and governors to the new school site in September 2021, including how the local authority will 'honour' the feeder arrangements and catchment area links to

Cowbridge Comprehensive School for existing Llancafán Primary School pupils on roll.

The plan has considered appropriately the impact on learner travel arrangements, in terms of pupils' eligibility to access free school transport for pupils of statutory school age under existing local authority policy. It recognises that some pupils who live closer to the current school site will have further to travel. The proposed admission transition arrangements take suitable account of supporting pupils with siblings who would be affected by the change in catchment areas. The council states that it is considering traffic implications as part of the Transport Assessment required in order to achieve planning consent for the building works. It has considered that there is no impact as a result of this proposal on the available safe walking routes for pupils to access the school, as part of its Community Impact Assessment. It is likely that the proposal will at least maintain the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities

The proposal is likely to have no adverse impact on pupils from different groups, including those pupils with additional learning needs or those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, however, the local authority has not included an Equality Impact Assessment. It plans to do this after the consultation.

The proposal will not negatively affect Welsh medium primary education, as the local authority will continue provide this through the catchment area school, Ysgol Dewi Sant. The proposal does not seek to change the status of Llancafán Primary School as an English medium school.

The local authority's proposal to extend the age range of Llancafán Primary School to include nursery provision is based upon a strong principle of establishing and supporting continuity and progression in children's learning from age 3 and to support stability of numbers in the school. However, the proposal does not set out whether there is a need for additional nursery places in the area, or that the local authority has considered the effect of the proposal on numbers of nursery pupils in other schools, or on non-maintained settings that provide education for children before compulsory school age.

The legal aspects of the proposal have been considered and operate within the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The plan confirms that proposed procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposal has considered appropriately outcomes, provision and leadership at Llancafán Primary School. In general, it has drawn on a suitable range of evidence to do this. However, the proposal does not contain an analysis of the school's performance data.

The proposal identifies that Estyn judged the school's current performance and prospects for improvement as 'good' when it inspected the school in 2014. Leadership, including the role of governors, was judged as good. The proposal does not make clear whether the current leaders were in post at the time of the last inspection, but indicates that there have been staffing changes:

'Significant changes in staff have been well managed and the school has a permanent Deputy and 3 Class Teachers.' (p.19)

The school has been placed in a yellow category of support in the latest Welsh Government categorisation of schools, with standards grade 2 and improvement capacity B.

There are a very few inconsistencies in the proposer's broad description of the school's recent outcomes against its targets:

'The school has set challenging whole school targets and **nearly all** 2016-17 outcomes in the Foundation Phase and Key stage met or exceeded the targets set' (p.18)

'Targets reflect high expectations for the achievement of all pupils and **these are met consistently.**'

The school's current target for improvement in teaching appears to suggest that the quality of teaching, judged to be adequate at the time of the last inspection, has improved.

The proposal suggests that the new provision is not likely to impact negatively on the ability of the school to deliver the full curriculum across the foundation phase and key stage 2, and maintain current standards. It is likely that extending the provision to include nursery would support continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences from pre-school age to statutory school age. The addition of outdoor facilities is likely to enhance pupils' wellbeing through providing better opportunities to develop their physical skills and health. In addition, access to high-quality outdoor provision is a key principle of foundation phase pedagogy.

## **Risk Assessment**

The local authority identifies that 50% funding under Band B of the Welsh Government 21st Century Schools Programme is subject to approval of the business case. The remaining funding is dependent upon completion of the housing development and capital funding from the local authority. The local authority does not include any measures to manage these risks in the proposal.



## **Estyn response to the second consultation exercise**

### **Estyn response to the proposal to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale (Vale of Glamorgan)**

#### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors for 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 from Estyn's own databases and from Welsh Government.

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

Following comments made by members of the local community to the initial document, the local authority has produced a revised consultation document including responses to many questions. The revised document contains more detail and includes a new consultation timeline.

The proposal is to:

- reconfigure primary provision in the Vale of Glamorgan by creating a new primary school building on a new site for up to 210 pupils and a nursery class for up to 48 pupils on a part-time basis
- migrate all pupils and staff from Llancafán Primary School to the new school site, and
- extend the age range of the school from 4 to 11 years to 3 to 11 years.

This is likely to at least maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

#### **Description and benefits**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has presented a sound rationale for the proposals to create a new school building for Llancafán Primary School with the addition of 48 nursery places for pupils on a part-time basis, on a new site in Rhoose. It sets out the expected benefits and disadvantages of the proposal clearly. The local authority has considered provision for existing pupils in the current Llancafán Primary School, its future pupils, as well as those in Rhws, Llanfair and St Nicholas Primary Schools. This is because the proposed realignment of existing catchment areas in Rhoose in order to accommodate the new school site, would affect pupils in these schools. The local authority has taken appropriate account of educational standards, school surplus places, pupil travel arrangements, accessibility of provision, the quality and sustainability of school accommodation, financial investment and running costs.

The proposal establishes that Llancarfan Primary School is a relatively small school with an admission number of 18. Its current catchment area population of 55 children is less than half the school capacity of 126 places. There are 106 pupils on roll currently, of which only around a third live in the school catchment area. The remaining 75 pupils live outside the school catchment area and 36 of these pupils live in the Rhws Primary School catchment area. Currently, Rhws Primary School is nearly at maximum capacity.

The proposal sets out clearly that there is a need to address the level of surplus places at Llancarfan Primary School in light of current and projected pupil numbers, in order to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the school. In addition, the local authority has considered the north-west and north-east housing development in Rhoose and has projected an anticipated shortfall of 90 primary school places by 2023 as a result of the planned housing developments in the Rhws Primary School catchment area.

The local authority has considered carefully the condition of the school buildings, facilities and access to Llancarfan Primary School, which include a Victorian school building where pupils are taught in two classrooms and three separate demountable blocks on a small site. A condition survey in 2014, established that a low level of investment is required to ensure that the standard of the building provision is maintained. However, the school does not meet the standards set out in the statutory framework for school buildings and design in Wales and routes through the village and lanes to access the school are congested. Furthermore, the potential for further development opportunities at Rhws Primary School to accommodate the anticipated increase in pupil numbers in its catchment area, are limited. The school is a grade 2 listed building and the school site is restricted in size.

The council provides a clear rationale for how it will address these issues through migrating all pupils and staff from the current Llancarfan Primary School site to a new primary school building in Rhoose, and redefining the catchment areas within the Western Vale region. The local authority has considered suitable alternatives and given good reasons as to why it has discounted these.

The proposal has considered the impact of the new provision on other schools in the local area and has shown how it would redistribute the current catchment area of Llancarfan Primary School amongst Rhws, Llanfair, St Athan and St Nicholas Primary Schools and define the new catchment area of the new Llancarfan Primary School site. It anticipates that these revisions will increase pupil numbers for the other schools and includes increased projected pupil numbers for Rhws Primary over the next 5 years.

The proposal presents clearly the local authority's plan for pupils, staff and governors of Llancarfan Primary School following a move to the new school site in September 2021, including how the local authority will 'honour' the feeder arrangements and catchment area links to Cowbridge Comprehensive School for existing Llancarfan Primary School pupils on roll.

The plan has considered appropriately the impact on learner travel arrangements, in terms of pupils' eligibility to access free school transport for pupils of statutory

school age under existing local authority policy. It recognises that some pupils who live closer to the current school site will have further to travel. The proposed admission transition arrangements take suitable account of supporting pupils with siblings who would be affected by the change in catchment areas. The council states that it is considering traffic implications as part of the Transport Assessment required in order to achieve planning consent for the building works. It has considered that there is no impact as a result of this proposal on the available safe walking routes for pupils to access the school, as part of its Community Impact Assessment. It is likely that the proposal will at least maintain the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities

The proposal is likely to have no adverse impact on pupils from different groups, including those pupils with additional learning needs or those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the local authority has not included an Equality Impact Assessment. It plans to do this after the consultation.

The proposal will not negatively affect Welsh medium primary education, as the local authority will continue provide this through the catchment area school, Ysgol Dewi Sant. The proposal does not seek to change the status of Llancarfan Primary School as an English medium school.

The local authority's proposal to extend the age range of Llancarfan Primary School to include nursery provision is based upon a strong principle of establishing and supporting continuity and progression in children's learning from age 3 and to support stability of numbers in the school. The plan states that there is a need for increased nursery provision in the area as is currently no provision in the immediate area and that the closest non-maintained registered providers are located at St Athan West Camp and in the Welsh St Donats area. The local authority predicts that the overall number of nursery places required will increase in the area by approximately 70 places to take account of the new housing developments planned. The Council expect the additional demand to be accommodated at both Rhws Primary School and Llancarfan Primary School.

The legal aspects of the proposal have been considered and operate within the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The plan confirms that proposed procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposal has considered appropriately outcomes, provision and leadership at Llancarfan Primary School. It has drawn on a suitable range of evidence to do this including a brief analysis of the school's performance data over the past 3 years.

The proposal identifies that Estyn judged the school's current performance and prospects for improvement as 'good' when it inspected the school in 2014. Leadership, including the role of governors, was judged as good. The proposal does not make clear whether the current leaders were in post at the time of the last inspection, but indicates that there have been staffing changes. However, the regional consortium judge that the school is very well led by the headteacher and deputy head teacher

The school has been placed in a yellow category of support in the latest Welsh Government categorisation of schools, with standards grade 2 and improvement capacity B.

There are a very few inconsistencies in the proposer's broad description of the school's recent outcomes against its targets:

The school has set challenging whole school targets and **nearly all** 2016-17 outcomes in the Foundation Phase and Key stage met or exceeded the targets set'. 'Targets reflect high expectations for the achievement of all pupils and **these are met consistently**.'

The regional consortium report that teaching at the school is consistently good with elements of excellence indicating that the quality of teaching, judged to be adequate at the time of the last inspection, has improved significantly.

The proposal suggests that the new provision is not likely to impact negatively on the ability of the school to deliver the full curriculum across the foundation phase and key stage 2, and maintain current standards. It is likely that extending the provision to include nursery would support continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences from pre-school age to statutory school age. The addition of outdoor facilities is likely to enhance pupils' wellbeing through providing better opportunities to develop their physical skills and health. In addition, access to high-quality outdoor provision is a key principle of foundation phase pedagogy.

### **Risk Assessment**

The local authority identifies that 50% funding under Band B of the Welsh Government 21st Century Schools Programme is subject to approval of the business case. The remaining funding is dependent upon completion of the housing development and capital funding from the local authority. The local authority judges this as a limited risk as some instalments for homes have already been received and the development of the land is well underway.

## Llancarfan Parent Survey Summary

Residents in Llancarfan conducted their own survey, which was returned to the Council as part of the consultation process.

With regards to the survey, the respondent stated:

Every effort was made to ensure the survey was robust and unbiased. It was completed anonymously, and only parents who were sent a link via email could respond. The survey was sent to 75 families, which we are confident represents most, if not all, of the current pupils on roll at the school. As a further step to ensure we were in contact with all parents, posts on social media encouraged anyone who did not receive the link to supply their email address in order to take part.

A total of 43 completed surveys were submitted, a highly credible response rate of 57%. The pattern of responses by school catchment area broadly reflects the make-up of the school and was by no means skewed heavily in favour of one area or another. 42% of responses came from families in the Llancarfan catchment, 21% from Rhws catchment and the remainder from other areas (37%).

Just as importantly, 29 responses (two thirds of the sample) were from parents who will be directly affected by the proposal, either because they have a child in Reception, or Years 1 to 3 at the school, or a younger child due to start school in or after September 2021.

## Llancarfan Primary School Parents Survey

### Llancarfan Primary School's small size and village location are key to its appeal and ethos

The **small school size** (mentioned by 93% of parents) and **rural setting** (79%) were by far the most common reasons given by parents for choosing Llancarfan Primary. These factors **ranked higher** than the quality of education provided by the school (65%) and the feeder link to Cowbridge Comprehensive (65%).

### The school has positive appeal to parents (and not just those located conveniently nearby)

Almost every parent who responded to the survey had made a **positive choice** for their child to attend Llancarfan. Only one family selected Llancarfan because their first choice school was unavailable, and **seven out of ten parents** (70%) chose Llancarfan for reasons other than its convenience.

### Very few parents would choose to send their child to the new school proposed by the council

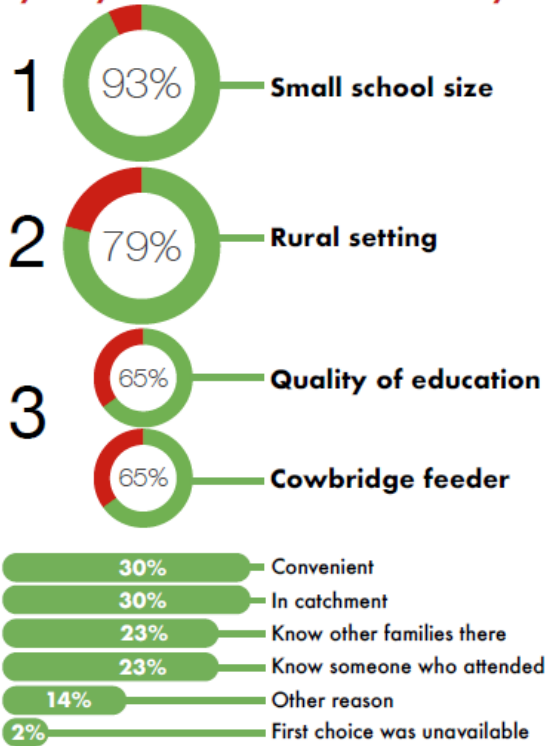
The 210 place school in Rhoose proposed by the council has very little appeal for parents of children currently at Llancarfan Primary. Only five parents (12% of the sample) said they would choose the new school, while **88% said they would consider another option**.

Online survey hosted on SurveyMonkey between 1 June and 18 June 2018.  
Analysis based on 43 responses out of 75 families contacted, a response rate of 57%.

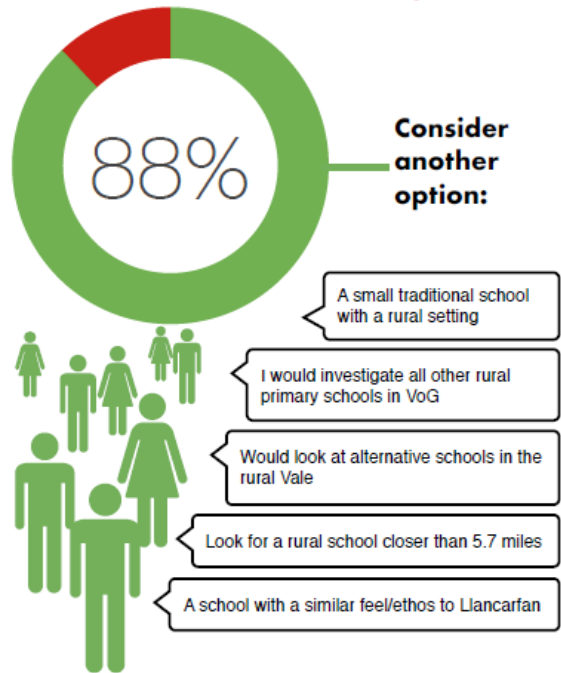


**The survey calls into real question the number of pupils likely to transfer to the new school, and how many new school entrants from within the revised catchment area will apply to attend once the transfer period is over**

### Why did you choose Llancarfan Primary?



### Would you choose the new school in Rhoose or consider another option?\*



\*Imagine you had a child about to start primary school for the first time, with no siblings in any other school. Would you choose the new 210 place school in Rhoose proposed by the council or would you consider another option?

Minutes from Llancafán Primary School in relation to the consultation

# GOVERNORS



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## Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018, 5.30pm

**Present** J Davies (JD - Chair), H Hughes (HH- Vice chair), C Smith (CS - Headteacher), J Potter (JP), O Spencer (OS), K Kemp (KK), J Scott-Quelch (JS-Q), C Hughes (CH), F Williams (FW), K Jenkins (KJ), A Riley (AR), J James (JJ)  
A Llewellyn-Blakemore (ALB),

J Western (JW - Clerk)

**Apologies** G Kemp (GK)

**Visitors** Paula Ham  
Lisa Lewis  
Jane O'Leary - 21<sup>st</sup> Century School, Vale of Glamorgan Council

*G Q – Governor Questions*

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### 1. **Welcome and Apologies**

JD welcomed everyone to the meeting and the visitors introduced themselves. Apologies were received and accepted from GK.

### 2. **Consultation with Vale of Glamorgan on School Migration**

Proposal has already been received by GB. Governors were encouraged to ask questions and voice their concerns regarding the proposals:

#### **Numbers at the school**

The primary admission round for September has taken place and numbers are quite low. Projections is that numbers will be lower than normal. Pupil number protection for three years could be an option to prevent the loss of staff due to lower pupil numbers. There is

funding protection to enable the school to keep staff, but it is up to the school how they spend the money.

Pupils number for September include 19 leaving and 7 coming in. Historically, applications are received up until June. The applications were closed before the proposal was published.

#### How did the proposal first come about?

We looked at all the options. We did consider building a larger school to replace original in Rhose and pick up the larger number of children. Rhose Primary is a listed building and on a restricted site. The costs to make that larger is significantly larger than building a whole new school.

The site is only big enough for a 210 place school, demand from the new housing development in Rhose was not enough to fill a 210 place school.

Rhose school have 372 pupils currently and can take 375 pupils. Therefore, slightly under full capacity at the moment. The capacity is across all the of the year groups.

The Section 106 Payment is dependent on current site. The North East site seeking to renew planning application as it has lapsed. There is still interest in developing the North East site.

Education 106 can only be claimed if there are new pupils who will come from that development.

Increments are 30 per year group.

*Governors suggested that if Llancarfan stayed in Llancarfan, and The North East site provided another Section 106 funding, Rhose PS could close and there could be two 210 entry schools.*

#### Provision?

Band B program to Welsh Government – Primary Provision in the Western Vale. 50% funding from Welsh Government, some from Section 106 and some from the council.

#### Catchment?

Pupils who transfer on migration and their siblings are included in the proposal to be guaranteed to be in the feeder to Cowbridge.

Catchment areas are currently under consultation. The community impact should also be considered. An over subscription criterion is published. The area is changing and therefore the catchment for Cowbridge Comprehensive will be changing in the future anyway.

*Governors enforced that it would be a big deal to the village if the pupils were dropped out of the catchment for Cowbridge.*



Feeder schools and catchments are currently used, however, if the Vale stop using feeder, Llancarfan children, who live in Llancarfan, would still qualify as in catchment.

*Governors pointed out that pupils from Barry and Rhoose have chosen Llancarfan because it is a rural school and a feeder for Cowbridge comprehensive.*

The Band B program will the impact the Feeder schools so will be reviewed over the next 12 months. People living in Llancarfan could still be in the catchment. Rhoose have dual feeder arrangements.

Two new comprehensive schools in Barry are opening in September 2018. The migrated school would still have a choice as a dual feeder.

*What is the primary reason for migrating school?*

To address the capacity in Rhoose and at Llancarfan PS. Llancarfan has surplus places and Rhoose will require more due to the housing.

The current Rhoose School cannot increase the capacity and would not meet criteria to get funding. The number of pupils traveling from Rhoose to other comprehensives would be a significant increase in traffic.

Projections are that it will not need more than the extra 210 places. The new school would provide sufficient places for the area but not too many places. The Welsh Government set a limit on how many surplus places you can have. Not more than 10%.

*How did you calculate the projected number of school places required?*

The projections were made based on housing developments that the Vale are aware of and have already received planning permission. They have included the Persimmon North East housing. If the Persimmon development does not go ahead, the places will be offered to out of catchment.

*The Governors have been made aware of the unrest on social media, including the feeling that having two schools in Rhoose is going to increase divide in the community. The migration will also have an impact on Llancarfan Village, potentially turning it into a retirement village.*

LL informed Governors that community impact is looked at, but there needs to be educational reasons for the concern.

The following are not taken into consideration:

- House prices
- Highways
- Planning

Education should not change as the staff will move with the school. The new school would have far better facilities and will be fully equipped. If the proposal goes ahead, the Vale will work with staff and governors to design the fixtures and fittings for the new building. A budget for fixture and fittings has been set, although some existing IT will be transferred to the new school. Whilst you are losing some of the small village aspect, the site overlooks the sea with a lot of external resources.

With regards to the community aspect, the LA encourages retired people and people without children to air their views, as well as the parents, staff and Governors. The consultation is based on information that is known. Evidence that will become known during the Consultation will be included in the Consultation Report.

A Community Impact Assessment will take place.

Llancarfan incurs a high revenue cost per child. This is a fact, not a key driver for the consultation. These have been included as a requirement from Welsh Government for the Consultation Document.

The impact of migrating the school will be included in the report.

*Do you have any plans for the existing site?*

None at the moment. We will wait for the outcome of Consultation. If it goes ahead, then consideration of the current site will take place. There is an Asset panel in the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Things to remember are:

- Llancarfan is not small enough or rural enough to be listed as a rural school.
- Proposal is to relocate rather than close the school.
- Governors can choose the name and then it goes through Cabinet from approval.

Whilst there are strong views against the migration of the school, staff are very supportive. Job security is a consideration, and what it could offer for pupils is first and foremost for staff.

The Vale ask that if you would like to support it, please answer as well.

It is not a vote, so the amount of responses is not counted in that way. The comments themselves will be factors. Education is the only thing that is considered and the points that are made. The comments will be grouped into issues and then a response for each one will be provided. In the past, the Vale has recommended to cabinet not to proceed. There will be no individual responses or acknowledge. There will be a summary of responses in the document.

*Is there an age limit to responses?*

Pupils can respond.

The School council were consulted today, by an independent specialist. The consultation was activity based and talked about the word consultation, and definitions of. The school council considered the pro's and con's of the Consultation. The information gathered to goes back in a form of a Report from the Independent Specialist. This report will go to Cabinet.

There has been research into the impact of a well-designed classrooms on pupils by Salford University, called Clever Classrooms.

Will ESTYN be made aware of the proposals and consultation?

Yes, ESTYN will also respond as a Key Stake Holder. ESTYN will look at the proposal and the impact on pupils and come to a conclusion based on their knowledge of the school and pupils. If ESTYN believed there was anything missing regarding the Educational aspect, it would be commented on.

*Should the Governing Body respond as a whole?*

A Governing Body response is optional.

Paula Ham, Lisa Lewis and Jane O'Leary left the meeting after Governors thanked them for their time.

**3. Discussion**

The Governors felt that there is some ignorance and misunderstanding within the community about the role of Governing Body with regards to this Consultation.

**RESOLVED** – the Governing Body is unable to give a majority response and therefore, each Governor is to make their own response to the Consultation.

**RESOLVED** – the role of the Governing body needs to be clarified. Our remit in this Consultation is to represent

Unfortunately, there has been a lot of factually incorrect information shared and feedback received.

The council has already allocated the funding for the new school. Split year groups are already a concern for the school and there is a fear that the school will not match up in attractiveness against a new school in Rhoose.

There will be a review of the Church in Wales schools and catchment areas.

Feeder could be removed, and it will go back to catchment only.

Cowbridge does not currently have intake just from feeder and catchment. Church in Wales school has different criteria with regard to catchment.

The consultation is causing a divide in the school community. The way in which the consultation was announced has caused conflict.

How do you promote the ethos and the school in general? CH has prices for an advert in the newspaper. This has to be carefully worded.

Number of pupils at Llanccarfan was 106 prior to the migration announcement, now 102 since the migration was announced.

If the number of pupils drop, the funding drops and then staff numbers will be affected.

Whichever way it goes, staff will continue to provide the best education possible for the children who are in the school.

It is important to consider that if the opposition is successful and the school does not close, there is a concern that there will not have enough pupils to keep the school viable and open. It will not become attractive with mixed year groups in a class, and numbers will drop.

**RESOLVED** – A letter will be drafted by the GB to parents.

Governors meeting 27 June 2018 at 17.30pm with council officials re Llanccarfan school consultation

Present: Bob Penrose (Cabinet member)

Council officials: Paula Ham, Lisa Lewis, Trevor Baker

Governing body: present Adam Riley, Andrew Llewellyn-Blakemore, Councillor Gordon Kemp,

Hayley Hughes, Jeffrey James, Joann Scott-Quelch, Julie Potter, Kate Jenkins, Katherine Kemp, Oli Spencer, Christine Hughes, Colin Smith

Apologies: Jill Davies, Jo Western

## **1. Consultation with the Vale of Glamorgan regarding proposal to migrate the school**

2nd consultation document issued - council wanted to get feedback so they had come along to listen.

A meeting between the council officials and school staff had been held just before the Governors meeting.

Many of the issues from the original consultation were still outstanding. We were told our collective response still stands unless we decide to submit a new response as a governing body.

560 responses had been received so far, this total includes the first and second consultations.

The crux of the consultation is the same. The second document was to address further points and updated community impact assessment and admission details, including some changes to catchment boundaries.

It was said the community feels there was no point in re-running the consultation but were pleased individual responses from the first consultation would be taken into account.

Bob Penrose said the purpose of tonight is part of the consultation process. They want us to have opportunity to air our thoughts on the educational aspects of the proposal. The impact assessment was not quite as detailed before as it is now. Other main difference in the second consultation is that concerns about the loss of the existing Llanccarfan School site had been addressed. Funding will come from section 106 funds plus reserves. There will be a time lag between the availability of the site and the completion of the project. Council is looking to generate a receipt from the site and it will be used to fund a future project. Effectively the funding will come from reserves and the capital proceeds of the existing school site, when received, will top up the reserves.

We were told that Estyn had commented, apparently favourably, on the proposal. Paula Ham said there had been a decline in pupil numbers in the area so they have looked at the wider area. They think the proposal will sustain the school for the future.

Budget formula shows minimum efficient size for a school is 210 pupils. Welsh Government are asking for programmes to be provided on the basis of 210 pupils, although WG have said that there is no minimum size to achieve match funding. There is a distinction in the schools code between the terms "closure" and "transfer".

Paula Ham alluded to the parents survey and the value of feeder school status. Council will be reviewing feeder schools in the next academic review and issuing a consultation which will cover catchment, feeder and admission policy across the whole of the Vale.

Jeff James asked if the process proceeds what costs would the council cover in terms of the reorganisation. Paula Ham said they usually fund reorganisation costs

from a reserve, plus additional revenue. She said the new school site would be fully funded and furnished.

Gordon Kemp mentioned the initial funding of the new site out of reserves and noted that the site could not be marketed aggressively until the new site is operational.

Katherine Kemp said the first consultation was negligent and shoddy. This was refuted by the officials.

There was further discussion about the sale of the Llancarfan site. Bob Penrose said he is sure that the consultation says that the proceeds will be used for the new site.

Why could Rhws school not be extended? Trevor Baker said the 21st Century Schools programme has different criteria and there is insufficient space on the Rhws school site to extend it.

There is no appetite from the council or the community for extending the consultation to a third run.

The introduction to the consultation makes clear that a first response is still valid if they don't submit a second response.

Concerns over having two different schools in Rhoose. The council don't see this as an issue. There will be those who want different things, established schools, new facilities, rural schools. It is an opportunity for schools to work together rather than dividing the local community. They feel the catchment areas won't be divisive in Rhoose.

It was pointed out that Llancarfan catchment children will have to drive past Rhws School to get to the new school.

The survey of parents done by Jim will be presented as it was submitted.

The school pupils have been consulted.

The Chair thanked the visitors and they left.

## **2. Response to the consultation**

We will make an additional response as a governing body

## **3. Present and apologies**

Covered at the start of this document

## **4. Minutes from meeting 18 April 2018 and matters arising**

Minutes accepted. Proposed by Jeff James, seconded by Katherine Kemp.

## **5. Head teacher's report to governors**

Head teacher's report circulated with the agenda and delivered by Colin Smith. Carry forward balance £13725. Boiler repairs will be required. Mrs Hughes had negotiated away the water bill arising from the recent leak.

## **6. Policies for review**

Eco policy - some duplication in the policy but otherwise policy agreed.

## **7. Staffing update and class organisation for September**

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## **8. Finance update**

Covered within item 5.

## **9. Access to Hwb**

Mr Bilney looking into getting permissions for governors' Hwb access, Dean Jones will be stepping in in the interim.

**10. Governor training**

Fran Williams and Jill Davies have completed data training. The training pack was inaccurate.

Christine Hughes and Fran Williams have completed finance training.

**11. School self-evaluation**

The process is changing. Colin Smith has attended training.

**12. Communications and documents received since last meeting**

None

**13. AOB**

None

**14. Determination of matters to be regarded as confidential**

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**Minutes of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

828 PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF PRIMARY PROVISION IN THE WESTERN VALE (REF) -

Cabinet had on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2018 referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration having approved that the Director of Learning and Skills in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Learning and Culture be authorised to undertake a consultation from 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 for a period of seven weeks on the profile to establish a 210 place primary school with a 48 part-time place nursery class at Rhoose Point and the migration of Llancarfan Primary School into the new site. As part of the consultation process, the Scrutiny Committee was being asked to consider the report.

The Operational Manager for Strategy and Resources also provided a PowerPoint presentation a copy of which was tabled at the meeting for Member's information. The Operational Manager commenced by advising that the consultation was currently live and the proposal was to reconfigure primary provision in the Western Vale through:

- The creation of a new 210 place primary school, with a 48 part time place nursery class at the land north of the railway line, Rhoose
- The migration of staff and pupils from Llancarfan Primary school into the new site and
- Extending the age range of the school

Llancarfan Primary School comprised the original Victorian school building containing two classrooms. The school was on a small site (slightly offset by the use of the adjacent tennis club courts) with difficult and congested access through the village and lanes leading to Llancarfan. The four separate buildings and small sloping site did not meet 21st Century School design guidance standards for primary schools which had been used for all new builds completed through the 21st Century Schools programme. These schools comprised a fully accessible one or two storey building providing all the required educational functions within a single building set in grounds meeting current outdoor curriculum needs.

Llancarfan Primary School had a pupil capacity of 126. The school was currently operating with a surplus capacity of 19 places (15%). This capacity was set to increase to 28 places (22%) as demonstrated by pupil projections in the report. The Vale of Glamorgan had made a commitment



to Welsh Government to reduce the number of surplus places in schools. Within the primary sector, this equated to an agreed target of 10%. Llancarfan Primary School incurred a high revenue cost per child at £4,490 per child compared to the Vale average of £3,697 per child. Llancarfan was the 5<sup>th</sup> highest primary school in terms of revenue cost per child. The majority of pupils attending Llancarfan Primary School resided outside the catchment area.

The Council's adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) (2011-2026) attached at Appendix A to the report, Policy MG1, allocated a total of 787 new dwellings in Rhoose over the LDP period. The allocations comprised 87 dwellings at land south of the Railway Line, and 700 new dwellings at land north of the Railway Line. The allocation to the south of the Railway Line had been completed and was now fully occupied with children in the school system (planning reference: 2012/00937/FUL).

The majority of children attending Rhws Primary School resided within the Rhoose area. The Council had a statutory duty to review the number of types of schools in the area and to make the best use of resources to raise standards in schools.

Based on current projections by 2023 there would be an anticipated shortfall of 90 primary school places in the Rhoose area. There was also a need to accommodate the demand however a new 210 place school would result in 10% surplus capacity when considering the projected increase in pupil numbers from both new developments in Rhoose in addition to the projected pupil numbers that would migrate over from Llancarfan Primary School. Reviewing the wider needs of the western Vale offered an opportunity to establish a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century School while addressing community needs and surplus capacity challenges.

Llancarfan Primary School was situated 3.7 miles from Rhws Primary School. The projected number on roll at Llancarfan Primary School for 2023 was 98 pupils with 28 (22%) surplus places.

Rhws Primary School was a grade 2 listed building. The school site was restricted in size and potential for further development opportunities were limited, and would not be able to accommodate the total projected increase in demand for pupil places. Llancarfan was a small rural school with an admission number of 18. Mixed age teaching was therefore necessary in managing classes with associated difficulties in terms of the planning and delivery of the national curriculum. An admission number of 18 with mixed

age classes also made it difficult to manage statutory class size limits of 30. Migrating the school to larger accommodation with a new catchment with sustainable numbers would enable the school to continue its success while catering for a greater pupil population.

In order to meet future demand, ensure best use of resources and to reduce overall surplus capacity in line with Welsh Government targets, the report proposed to migrate Llancarfan Primary School to a new, larger 210 place school in the Rhoose Point development. Catchment areas would be redefined to distribute the current catchment area of Llancarfan school amongst Rhws, Llanfair, St. Athan and St. Nicholas Primary schools, and to also realign existing catchment areas in Rhoose.

Committee was informed that migrating the school would address a number of challenges:

- The staff and pupils at the existing Llancarfan site would benefit from a new school build at 21st century school standards.
- Increasing amounts of surplus capacity at Llancarfan School would be addressed.
- Increasing demand for pupil places within the Rhoose area would be met.
- Revisions to catchment areas within the Western Vale were expected to increase pupil numbers at other schools, improving future sustainability and contributing to the Council's commitment to reduce surplus capacity in its schools.
- Small site issues associated with the school on a confined site such as the provision of outdoor sporting facilities.
- Congested access to the school through the village and lanes would be addressed.
- A nursery would be established supporting continuity and progression in children's learning from age 3 and would support stability of numbers for the school.

During the discussion a Member referred to the work of the Task and Finish Group on Surplus Places of the Scrutiny Committee stating that the proposal being considered appeared to be the final proposal as a result of the work of that Group and advised that he wholeheartedly supported the proposal recognising the changes in demography in the Llancarfan area.

The local Ward Member a Member of the Committee stated that he had two issues to raise with regard to the report advising that in his view the report reflected a purely educational perspective and there was an absence of the

impact on the local community. The village of Llancarfan was currently served by a hub of a school, a pub and a community hall and the removal of the school would adversely have an impact on the nature of the village and for Rhoose it would provide a dividing line down the middle of the village with the new school and the current school in competition. Rhws Primary was also a Listed Building which could benefit from investment from Section 106 monies advising that in his view he would prefer to see the current school upgraded rather than a new one established. It was also in his view inappropriate to name the new school Llancarfan as it would be sited in Rhoose and requested that the Council revisit the naming of the school.

However, in response the Operational Manager advised that the naming of the school would be a matter for the new Governing Body with final determination by Cabinet.

The Operational Manager further advised that the new school would be single form entry and that 210 had proven to be an optimum number in relation to finance and the delivery of education. The Cabinet Member, with permission to speak, also advised that they would be considering the views of the residents as it was not the intention to divide the Rhoose area but it would be important to consult and consider the responses when received. He was fully aware that there were repair bills for the Rhws School and officers were currently looking at a schedule of repairs to address the issue.

Following a query as to whether there would be transport for pupils from Llancarfan, the Operational Manager advised that where appropriate these would be met by the Council.

A local Member for Llantwit Major advised that she wished to reassure the Member for Rhoose that in her area where a similar scheme had taken place similar apprehension had been considered however both schools were working well together. A Member also requested the criteria for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools be circulated to all Members of the Committee for information together with the details of the other options that had been discounted.

The Chairman, in conclusion, advised that in noting the local Ward Member's concerns the majority of Members of the Committee appeared to be in support of the proposal following which it was subsequently

**RECOMMENDED**

(1) T H A T the Scrutiny Committee supports the resolutions of Cabinet in that consultation be authorised from 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 for the period of 7 weeks on the proposal to establish a 210 place primary school with a 48 part time place nursery class at Rhoose Point and the migration of Llancarfan Primary School into the new site.

(2) T H A T the comments made at the meeting be referred to Cabinet for its consideration following the consultation process.