



OBJECTION REPORT

Proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd as of the 31st August 2016 with pupils transferring to nearby schools subject to parental preference

This is the provisional draft response of the Council which is being provided to decision makers for discussion - a final view and objection report will be published before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of determination

MARCH 2016

Should you require a hard copy of this report in hard copy please email 21stcenturyschools@flintshire.gov.uk with your name and postal address. Please indicate whether you would like to receive the document in Welsh, English or both.

Flintshire County Council - Education & Youth

Objection Report

Proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd from 31st August 2016 with pupils transferring to nearby schools subject to parental preference

Purpose

The report is published in line with the requirements under section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This is a summary of the statutory objections – otherwise known as “the Objection Report”.

Publication of the Statutory Notice

Following the formal consultation period and the publication of a consultation report, Cabinet took the decision to proceed to publish the proposal by way of a statutory notice for 28 days from Friday 29th January 2016 to Friday 26th February 2016.

The statutory notice was published in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. The notice was published on the Flintshire County Council website and posted at the main entrance of Ysgol Llanfynydd. Each school affected by the proposal received electronic copies of the notice and provided with details of how to obtain hard copies of the notice.

During the objection period, 78 objections were received in relation to the proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd from 31st August 2016 with pupils transferring to nearby schools.

The correspondence received during the objection period was in a number of methods and included:

75 email,
3 letter and

Of the 78 objections received, there were issues with the following objections

14 signed but had no address

In what areas do the objectors reside?

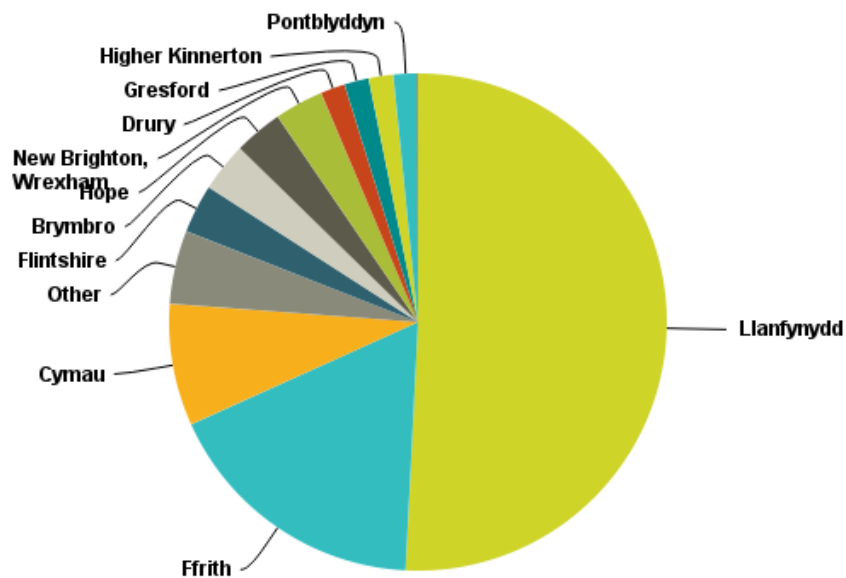
Llanfynydd	32
Ffrith	11
Cymau	5
Other	3
Flintshire	3
Brymbo	2

Hope	2
New Brighton, Wrexham	2
Drury	1
Gresford	1
Higher Kinnerton	1
Pontblyddyn	1
TOTAL	63

* The figure of 63 is reflected by respondents either based at the same address, their address was incomplete or unclear or they did not provide an address

Q8 In what areas do the objectors reside?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 15



In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013) this Objection Report is made available to stakeholders via an email link and also published electronically on Flintshire County Council's website at:

www.flintshire.gov.uk/schoolmodernisation

To request a hard (paper) copy of this document please email 21stcenturyschools@flintshire.gov.uk, or write to the School Modernisation Team, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6ND, or contact the team on 01352 704015 or 704134.

	Point Raised (in order of highest %)	Local Authority Response	No of written responses raising the point	% of Responses raising the point
1	<p>Consultation Document Flawed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure would offer very little benefit to the Council • Evidence used for closure is flawed • Capacity for the school is based on 2007 stating 80 pupil capacity and should be based on 2011 of 64 pupil capacity • The last Estyn report was in 2009. The school was not given an updated inspection to aid the decision process • The document is heavily biased towards closure of the school • FCC state that there are 1967 surplus places in Flintshire. This includes secondary schools, an unfair exaggeration in their favour • Estyn comments in the consultation document are unacceptable because they are basing their judgement on a 6 year old report • The proposals do not take account the future needs of the rural population and leads to inequality of choice for families • The document does not include births since 2013 	<p>The Council is satisfied that the publication and requirements of the Code have been met. The consultation process and documentation followed regulatory guidance as set out in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2013.</p> <p>The Council uses the latest verified data at the time of constructing the consultation documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School pupil numbers and more detailed information around pupils (for example Additional Learning Needs, English as an Additional Language and School action/school action plus/statemented) are obtained from the school's own statistical returns (September or January) • Estyn data is obtained from the school's last Estyn inspection. Timing of inspections will depend on Estyn's own inspection cycle and is not in the Council's control • National Welsh Government categorisation data is based on the school returns. The Council uses the most up to date data at the time of document construction from the Welsh Government website. Welsh Government update their national database annually. 	66	84.6%

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

- GwE (The Regional School Improvement Service) data is fed into the Welsh Government's national categorisation system.

- The Welsh Government's national Measuring Capacity of Schools in Wales forms are verified by Head teachers, this provides the School Capacity and Admission Number.

In 2006 the guidance for Measuring the Capacity in Schools in Wales was updated to provide more information to Councils, the actual method to calculate a school's capacity remained unchanged.

Capacity was reviewed in 2011 due to changes in school layout. However, alterations to the capacity at Ysgol Llanfynydd would mean that the school's capacity would reduce by more than 10% of the current admission number. Changes of this nature would require a statutory consultation and the Headteacher was advised accordingly. It was agreed that the capacity remained as previously agreed (signed off by the head teacher in 2007) Working with a hypothetical reduced capacity the school would still have had approximately 30% unfilled places, in any event this would still trigger a review as per the Council School Modernisation policy and also the School Organisation Code.

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

Welsh government annually require The Council as the Admitting Authority to complete a consultation period with all schools to review their capacity and admission number and admission arrangements.

- Unfilled places are recorded by Welsh Government; the Council provides its returns to Welsh Government annually; they are also based on official school returns.
- Birth Information by area is obtained from the Office of National Statistics.
- Pupil projections are aligned with the methodology of neighbouring Authorities within North Wales.
- Housing development information is based on actual current housing applications provided from the Planning Department.
- Potential pupil numbers which may be generated from new housing developments are calculated using a formula providing by a partnering Authority (Conwy CBC) who derive the formula based on the latest census returns.
- Pupil teacher ratios are provided by publicly available statistics on a school (<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk>), provided by Welsh Government and updated on an annual basis.

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

- Foundation Phase and Core Subject Outcomes are provided by publicly available statistics on a school (<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk>), provided by Welsh Government and updated on an annual basis.
- School building condition information is provided by an external company who compare the school building condition against the 'Building Bulletin for Primary and Secondary schools'.
- Backlog maintenance information is provided by independent consultants Property.

Condition Surveys are undertaken on a 5 year cycle. Priority Codes [definition] are as follows:-
Priority 1: Urgent work required to be undertaken within 1 year
Priority 2: Essential work required to be undertaken within 2 years
Priority 3: Desirable work [deemed as] required to be undertaken within 3 to 5 years
Priority 4: Long term work [deemed as] required to be undertaken outside the 5 year [cycle] period
The element Total 1 - 3 defines a five year financial investment and element 4 defines a six - ten year financial investment.

As highlighted in the Consultation report the roof at Ysgol Llanfynydd has slipping slates due to nail [fixings] fatigue associated with the main duo pitched roof. Additionally the roof has the original old lath and plaster beneath, which would also need to be replaced.

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

Work items are costed by the Consultant and include for preliminaries, labour, plant and materials etc. These costs are based on the current building cost information service provided by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors as the leading provider of cost and price information within the construction and maintenance areas. These costs [Unit Rates] are present within the condition survey software to a default figure and amended/updated as required by the Consultant.

The budget costings are exclusive of VAT, updated annually [using inflation indices] and reviewed post completion of work.

- School suitability information is provided from suitability surveys undertaken independently in line with DfE Asset Management guidance and reviewed by the Council and amended if work has been completed at schools post initial survey.
- School budgetary work is conducted using agreed formula as per the School budget forum. Cost per pupil data is obtained from the Authority's section 52 budget statements.
- Travel distances between school sites is provided by the Flintshire County Council mapping system Route Finder 3.41.
- Transport costs are provided by the Integrated Transport Unit who administer home to school transport contracts.

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

The Council has demonstrated in its consultation documents that there is sufficient capacity within the local school network to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Llanfynydd should it close, this view is upheld by Estyn. However, additional places if required can be established at Ysgol Parc y Llan, Treuddyn at either no cost or minimum cost.

The consultation document includes reference to the primary school portfolio has 1967 (or 17.15%) unfilled places (based on January 2015 PLASC). The unfilled places only includes the primary sector and not the secondary sector.

The secondary school portfolio has 2206 (or 20.37%) unfilled places (based on January 2015 PLASC).

The Council are unable to maintain all schools in the current financial climate especially where there are significant surplus places within the system. Should the proposal be implemented there will still be a balance of provision in area including rural, town, faith and language provision maintaining parental preference.

Consultation Document Flawed (continued)

The birth rate information was provided by Census information from the Schools Management Information Team. There was no birth information available post 2013 due to the timing of the availability of the census data. Since issuing the consultation document the 2014 birth information has become available, the birth rates for the area are included below. There is no significant increase in births in the area of Llanfynydd, and surrounding area. Birth rates remain static in the area.

Ward	2014
Caergwrle	15
Higher Kinnerton	11
Hope	35
Leeswood (Halved between Mold/Hope SPPA)	8
Llanfynydd	16
Penyffordd	32
Treuddyn	14
TOTAL	130

<p>2</p>	<p>Impact on the Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closure would have a hugely negative impact on the community • Llanfynydd is in the lowest quartile for access to services in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation • The area does have a community centre, riding centre and school are all sources of local pride and community spirit • The school is the heart of the community • The school is the only link for many people to their neighbours to support and socialisation within the community • The school helps to generate customers for Local businesses • The threat of closure has made us seriously consider relocating away from the area • Without the school the whole character of the 'Best Kept village' in Flintshire will be seriously degraded • The elderly living in the bungalows will miss the extra 'footfall' and children's play sounds • There will be no dedicated venue for community events • Closure of the school are the effects on the economy of the area • The village wouldn't be the same • The Community Impact Assessment was completed by the Headteacher who was not from the area and was applying for other employment at the time 	<p>The Council acknowledges that where a school closure is proposed it will have some impact on the local community, although the community use of the school is relatively low.</p> <p>The School Organisation Code suggests that the Council should complete a Community Impact Assessment to measure the impact and how the impact can be minimised or negated. The Council is satisfied that it has met the statutory consultative and publication requirements of the School Organisation Code.</p> <p>It is recognised that the school plays an important role in the wider community. Should the proposal be implemented there would be scope to extend links with alternative schools. Due to the proximity of the alternative schools to the village of Llanfynydd, the Council would seek to assist the Governing body of the alternative schools and PTA to foster links with the wider Llanfynydd community. The Council will work with the school and community to mitigate issues where possible.</p> <p>Llanfynydd is in the highest quartile for access to services in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, and is not in the lowest quartile.</p> <p>The Council has no plans for the site, and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the school's future is determined.</p>	<p>63</p>	<p>80.7%</p>
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	Impact on the Community (continued)	The Council notes the concerns about the impact on the community. However there are a number of villages within Flintshire, and wider, which do not have a village school but continue to have a thriving and engaged community. Should parents/carers wish for their child/children to access a village school provision there are schools within the area with surplus places.		
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<p>3</p>	<p>Strengths of the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a great deal of investment in the school • The school has been recognised by Estyn that ‘Cwriwlwn Cymraeg that learners bilingual Developments feature predominately in the life of the school’. Are other schools able to equal the requirement of the WESP • In 2004/2005 the Authority installed at some considerable expense a Wetroom – this is a unique feature and makes it the only school available to see to demands of disabled pupils needing a wet room with added facilities • Not many pupils have left the school during the process and teachers have remained very professional • It’s a fantastic school • It’s a good, achieving school: it is a very happy school • The children are nurtured and allowed to develop as individuals • Being able to grow up and learn in such a small and close-knit school environment only increased my confidence • Ysgol Llanfynydd is a much valued and excellent little rural school which should be supported and expanded • One size does not fit all in educational terms and a wide range of different sizes and types of school are necessary • The school is closely associated with the local church do the alternative schools have the same links • It has wonderful staff • Because its small you get a lot of attention • Bullying is less widespread and can be resolved more swiftly • What I have achieved is because of the fabulous education and sporting encouragement I received • Research has shown that small/medium class sizes 	<p>The positive responses from consultees regarding Ysgol Llanfynydd are noted.</p> <p>Reviewing the future of any school is controversial and emotive. Pupils, parents, carers and teachers, past and present, have strong ties to local schools as part of their own life-stories. The Council is challenged with balancing the sensitivities of community feeling on the one hand, with providing a high quality education offer which can be sustained and afforded. The Council cannot avoid making decisions for the future which are in the best interests of pupils and students.</p> <p>Ysgol Llanfynydd is a Community Primary English medium school and Welsh is taught as a second language. The proposal provides parents/carers with the option for English medium education for children with Welsh taught as a second language. This is similar to the current position and pupil access.</p> <p>The current proposal provides access and maintains parental preference for language medium.</p> <p>The national curriculum for the Foundation Phase includes Welsh Language Development (Welsh</p>	<p>54</p>	<p>70.5%</p>
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Strengths of the school (continued)

as a second language). Pupils in the Foundation Phase should learn to use and communicate their needs in Welsh to the best of their ability. Pupils should be encouraged to do so and should be increasingly exposed to Welsh. At Key Stage 2 pupils should build on these skills. This is followed by all schools in Wales.

It is noted that Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn has a successful record at the Eisteddfod as a school with Welsh second language over the past 3 years and hosts the Treuddyn Eisteddfod which Ysgol Llanfynydd attends on an annual basis.

At present there are no pupils in Ysgol Llanfynydd who require specialist changing facilities.

Ysgol Llanfynydd is an English community primary school, and is not a denominational school, the alternative schools are also English community primary schools and are also not denominational schools. The Council does recognise the close links the school has with the church. Due to the proximity of the alternative schools to the village of Llanfynydd, the Council would seek to assist the Governing body of the alternative schools and PTA to foster links with the wider Llanfynydd community. The Council will work with the school and community to mitigate issues where possible.

<p>4</p>	<p>Roof Repair Costings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roof does not need fixing • The costs to fix the roof of 80k seems crazy • 80,00 is not a definite cost, it is a possible cost at some point in the future • Flintshire building tips guide advise to get three building quotes from reputable companies before undertaking any building work 	<p>The condition surveys are carried out by independent surveyors, commissioned by the Council. They survey schools on a five year cycle in line with national guidance and provide the Council with maintenance priorities. The work to repair the roof was identified as a priority, therefore urgent repair work was programmed accordingly.</p> <p>As stated in the consultation report, the roof at Ysgol Llanfynydd has slipping slates due to nail [fixings] fatigue associated with the main duo pitched roof. Additionally the roof has the original old lath and plaster beneath, which would also need to be replaced.</p> <p>Work items are costed by the Consultant and include for preliminaries, labour, plant and materials etc. These costs are based on the current building cost information service [BCIS] provided by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, [RICS] as the leading provider of cost and price information within the construction and maintenance areas. These costs [Unit Rates] are present within the condition survey software to a default figure and amended/updated as required by the Consultant. The budget costings are exclusive of VAT, updated annually [using inflation indices] and reviewed post completion of work.</p>	<p>51</p>	<p>65.3%</p>
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Roof Repair Costings (continued)

The council manages the acquisition of all its goods, services and works, strictly in accordance with their Contract Procedure Rules [CPR's]. These CPRs have the following key objectives:

- To ensure that the council obtains value for money and achieves best value as defined in section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999;
- To ensure that the council complies with UK and European law that governs the procurement of goods, services and works;
- To establish procurement procedures which, when followed, should protect members and officers of the council from any allegation of acting unfairly or unlawfully.
- To ensure that fairness and transparency remain at the forefront of all procurement activity.

Contract procurement by the council is governed by detailed European and UK legislation. The law requires all council procurement and contracting to be conducted transparently, fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner.

<p>5</p>	<p>Alternative Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for school places in the area that particularly Abermorddu would not be able to fill • There are currently more applications than places in the area • The suggestion to increase the capacity of Ysgol Parc Y Llan to accommodate pupils will fill all the spare places in the local schools, allowing no room for any extra pupils in the area due to new housing developments • Parents who have been attempting to find their children places for their children • Council boundaries will be changing in the very near future and therefore it is not possible to predict what the future educational needs of the new Council will be and any decision should be left until these become clear • Abermorddu has recently been rated as Amber on MyLocalschool website, so would offer a less good education. • Standards at Ysgol Parc Y Llan will fall as the ratio of pupils to staff will increase and there will be less resources per pupil • Pupils will end up being educated in porta-cabins • Not one of the alternative schools can offer the same of higher level of educational standards • Parents are having problems placing siblings together 	<p>It is the Council's view that there is sufficient capacity within the local school network to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Llanfynydd should it close.</p> <p>All applications to transfer to another school will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's admissions policy and the School Admissions Code. Every effort will be made to keep siblings together and there is some discretion under the Admissions Code to admit pupils to a year group even though it is full and subject to certain conditions being met. Each application must be dealt with on its merits taking in to account the circumstances at the school, such as the number in each year group, the capacity of the school, class organisation, etc. The Council cannot keep places in reserve for any pupils who may move in to an area as this is not legal.</p> <p>School modernisation proposals will continue to be reviewed during any future Local Authority amalgamation.</p> <p>As part of their response to the consultation document Estyn concluded that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area based on the information and data provided within the consultation document and overall pupil outcomes in all four alternative schools are currently good, with all schools judged as having the necessary capacity to improve further.</p>	<p>41</p>	<p>52.5%</p>
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	Alternative Schools (continued)	<p>The Council included a range of data and statistical information within the consultation document relating to outcomes and standards at Ysgol Llanfynydd and the alternative schools. This included data at both Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.</p> <p>The consultation document also points out that where cohorts are small, such as Ysgol Llanfynydd outcomes should be treated with caution. Furthermore Estyn state that the proposer provides detailed information on each of the alternative schools capacity to provide a broad and balanced curriculum at both the Foundation phase and key stage 2.</p> <p>The Council provided a range of contextualised data regarding both Ysgol Llanfynydd and the proposed alternative schools. Further data was available regarding other possible alternative schools within the area for comparison. This included data relating to assessed cohorts at the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, Estyn reports and commentary regarding provision at all schools subject to the proposal.</p>		
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6	Results and achievement of the school <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The standard of teaching is beyond reproach• Academic results are consistently excellent• It's an achieving school	The positive responses from consultees regarding Ysgol Llanfynydd are noted. It is the view of the Council and the view of Estyn, that should the current proposal be implemented pupils would have access to at least an equivalent standard of educational provision.	34	43.5%
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7	<p>Federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCC are not looking at federation schools, it works perfectly well in Wrexham and has done with Mr Ashford • Federation has not been actively encouraged by Flintshire Local Authority • If a Federation if possible and desirable e.g. with Parc Y Llan, it could be imposed if this is the best solution for both schools. • Why are Flintshire County Council so anti-federation 	<p>The federation of schools is a legal process which enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils in that federation.</p> <p>The Welsh Government have brought in new regulations around Federation of maintained schools in Wales. The Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 which came into force on 22 May 2014 give effect to Councils powers to federate schools. (School governors already have powers to federate by choice under provisions introduced in 2010). These powers have now been consolidated into the 2014 Regulations.</p> <p>An alternative suggestion of federation had been suggested by a number of consultees, notably the governing body. The Governing body of Ysgol Llanfynydd has not been able to identify a willing partnering school or schools with which to pursue a federation. There is no prospect of developing a successful federation without a willing partner or partners. Ysgol Parc Y Llan Governors have confirmed that they have not and will not be bringing forward a federation proposal with Ysgol Llanfynydd.</p> <p>The Council's position was clear in the consultation documentation. The option to federate Ysgol Llanfynydd with another school would not address surplus places at the school. In the context of the Flintshire surplus places there is a significant number of surplus places as</p>	34	43.5%
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	<p>Federation (continued)</p>	<p>Should Ysgol Llanfynydd federate with another school the cost per pupil would remain unaffected, as federated schools maintain their individual budgets.</p> <p>Cabinet members in their decision making regarding the proposal considered all information from the consultation and whether or not to publish a statutory notice in respect of the proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the benefits that the acting headteacher arrangements with the Headteacher at Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn have had to Ysgol Llanfynydd. Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn Governors have provided written confirmation that although sympathetic to the schools situation they have decided not to enter into a federation discussions with Ysgol Llanfynydd.</p>		
8	<p>Comment made by Carwyn Jones that closing Schools should never be about saving money contradicts the Council's comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the consultation meeting Ian Budd drew attention to the £52 reduction in funding for public services over the next three years and the funding challenges. These were your rationale for proposing closure of the school. • Carwyn Jones, First Minister recently met two governors and told them that school closures should never be based on cost savings • The Minister was genuinely shocked that Flintshire's education officers were openly stating that this was all about cost savings 	<p>The proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd was put forward on the basis of criteria laid down in the Council's Modernisation Strategy, namely:-</p> <p>Unfilled places across the primary school portfolio:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ysgol Llanfynydd as at January 2015 (PLASC) had 42 full time pupils with unfilled places at 47.5%. As at September 2015 the school population has 34 full time pupils with unfilled places at 57.5% 2. Diminishing resource criteria (i.e. schools supported by pupils not from their local community and/or small numbers within the community raise concern regarding sustainability 	34	43.5%

	<p>Comment made by Carwyn Jones that closing Schools should never be about saving money contradicts the Council's comments (continued)</p>	<p>within the school's portfolio); for 44% of pupils attending Ysgol Llanfynydd, it is not their nearest school, and</p> <p>3. Small School criteria – The School and capacity of Ysgol Llanfynydd is lower than national designation of a small school, additionally school numbers do not meet the minimum requirements of primary school models as noted in the Council's School Modernisation Strategy. This leads to higher costs per pupil; unnecessary building, leadership and administration costs. The proposal will enable the Council to focus on the spending in the classroom in a time of annual diminishing budgets for schools for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to review educational provision within their area to ensure that resource is directed in an effective and efficient way, with a focus of resources being directed towards the benefit of pupils teaching and learning. Effective planning of educational provision allows for resource to be redirected to support the provision of new facilities.</p>		
<p>9</p>	<p>Traffic and Transport Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New people from the area were being provided with free transport to Abermorddu school and not Ysgol Llanfynydd – this has had a knock on impact 	<p>The Road Safety Team have completed a Traffic Regulation Order assessment for the provision of double yellow lines around Abermorddu Primary School and the school is on the assessment priority list for completion of these works subject to available funding. Additionally a request has been made to the Technical Performance section of Streetscene for the traffic light sequence to stay on green for longer to allow school traffic to</p>	<p>32</p>	<p>41%</p>

Traffic and Transport Impact (continued)

- Up until about six years ago transport was provided from Cymau to Ysgol Llanfynydd. The withdrawal of this transport to Abermorddu has obviously resulted in children moving from Ysgol Llanfynydd to Abermorddu School
- In Abermorddu traffic is already very dangerous in the area before and after school
- If pupils are transported to Abermorddu this will only increase the number of vehicles
- The journey times would create great difficulties for many children
- The distance that pupils will have to travel to other schools will disadvantage them and could well affect their performance in future years

exit around the school during school opening and closing times to assist with the flows of traffic, this request is currently under review with Streetscene.

The Consultation documentation recognises that most pupils at Ysgol Llanfynydd would see an increased distance from their home address to the alternative school, and would not be able to utilise walking routes within the village, due to its rural location.

However the increase in travel time would not be in excess of the learner travel guidance.

Transport eligibility is determined by the Council in which the pupil resides. 17 pupils who live in Flintshire would be entitled to free home to school transport based on the assumption and modelling that pupils transfer to Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn (nearest available school) on the basis of the following grounds:

- That the nearest appropriate available school is more than 2 miles away;
- That the route to the alternative schools would be considered to be hazardous by the Council due to its rural location which has limited footpaths in and out of the village.

Abermorddu Primary School is the nearest primary school to the Cymau area, additionally the route from Cymau to Abermorddu Primary School is considered to be hazardous, and therefore pupils are eligible for transport from home to school. Should pupils from Cymau

	<p>Traffic and Transport Impact (continued)</p>	<p>decide to go to Ysgol Llanfynydd, as they are bypassing their nearest school they would not be eligible for transport from home to school.</p> <p>The estimated maximum annual costs of transport as a result of the proposal are £16,150. However, this was an indicative model. Actual transport costs can only be fully assessed once all families have chosen their preferred school.</p> <p>The Council has a requirement to ensure it 1) provides transport in line with statute and its own policy and 2) that transport arrangements are commissioned in accordance with the Welsh Government Transport measure.</p>		
<p>10</p>	<p>Admission Arrangements and Transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no firm plans in place to confirm which school or schools these pupils will transferred to • Parents should not be responsible for finding places for their children, FCC and admission should be assisting more with this • The statutory code states that in a proposal to discontinue a school, the local Council must include admission arrangements at the proposed alternative school – this has not been done • The admission arrangements in the report are not explained in way which parents would find helpful and appears as a simple restatement of Flintshire CC general admission policy • You are not really giving us a lot of time to find an appropriate school for our children 	<p>The Council is satisfied that the publication and requirements of the Code have been met.</p> <p>Admission arrangements to the alternative school were provided in the consultation document in section 18 page 68.</p> <p>The Admissions information is also available on the council's website on the following link: http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Admissions.aspx</p> <p>Advice and information about admissions was readily provided to parents on request. Any advice given was in accordance with the School Admissions Code and the Council's admissions policy. The Council's Admissions Team has responded to many requests from parents for</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>39.7%</p>

	<p>Admission Arrangements and Transition (continued)</p>	<p>advice in order to provide parents with as much information as possible. In individual cases all options have been explored and appropriate advice given. Where applications have been received, alternative places have been allocated in accordance with the admissions policy.</p> <p>A mini admissions process will be administered to assist families in transition to other school should cabinet determine closure.</p> <p>The Council would work with parents of Ysgol Llanfynydd to ensure minimal disruption to pupils who would be transferring to alternative provision.</p> <p>The Statutory timeline complies with the School Organisation Code. The timeline allows sufficient time for parent/carers and pupils to select an alternative school and allow effective transition should Ysgol Llanfynydd close.</p>		
<p>11</p>	<p>Consultation Process was flawed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council have received 174 responses against the closure of Ysgol Llanfynydd have these responses been listened to • Any public authority which is required to consult should do it with an open mind and should be willing to listen and to seriously consider the responses it receives • The author of the original report either was instructed to justify closure or had already formed that opinion and was unwilling to include the positive features of the school • The consultation report does not respond to issues raised during consultation 	<p>The Council is satisfied that the publication and requirements of the Code have been met.</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Cabinet Members must maintain objectivity in decision making. It is the Council's view that discussions relating to this proposal were open and honest. All the submissions made results in a thorough and robust debate on the proposal and Cabinet Members were fully informed of the issues before making their decision. The decisions of the Cabinet were reached through the democratic process.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>34.6%</p>

	<p>Consultation Process was flawed (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cabinet meeting following consultation did not cover the concerns of all those who responded, only questions from the cabinet were responded to • The Council has failed to comply with the School Organisation Code as it has failed to follow the code by deviating from the requirements of the Code in compiling the consultation report 'respond to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons' • As a member of staff I have not received any formal direct correspondence during the entire consultation process • Has Flintshire County Council really considered the alternatives to closure • The consultation document misquotes the Code and does not state 'responding to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns with supporting reasons'. 	<p>The Council has engaged with the Headteacher, School, Teachers and Support staff throughout the process, including support offered through the HR team. A meeting was also arranged specifically for staff on the 23rd November 2015 to discuss the proposal and process. The HR Business Partner Team have also offered individual meetings should staff want to discuss any concerns.</p> <p>The consultation report does include in the main text of the report a summary of each of the issues raised by consultees, and a response to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal (not applicable) or rejection of the concerns with supporting reasons – refer to Appendix E of the consultation report.</p>		
12	<p>Housing developments not been taken into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households numbers will grow in the area • Many new homes are proposed to be built in Coed Talon • There is land designated under the local development plan in Llanfynydd, if these homes are built there would be competition for school places at Parc Y Llan • The pupil yield in the consultation document is extremely understated • In the likely event that Flintshire County Council sell Ysgol Llanfynydd for housing the area will be in the unfortunate circumstance of requiring quality school facilities 	<p>The Council has fully considered school capacity in the area together with potential housing development yield within its consultation documents.</p> <p>Data regarding potential pupils which could be generated from new housing developments is calculated using a housing yield formula. The housing yield formula has been derived from research work based on national census data from a partnering authority. This was applied to all current housing development planning applications approved by the planning authority. The Council does not include sites which are on</p>	21	26.9%

<p>Housing developments not been taken into consideration (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The document fails to take into account the current Local Development Plan including developments in Treuddyn (6 NR Sites), Llanfynydd (1 NR site), Cymau (1 NR Site), Abermorddu (1 NR Site), Caergwrle (8 NR Site), Hope (6 Nr Sites)	<p>the Local Development Plan because they do not have approved housing applications.</p> <p>The housing yield figures produced are a maximum figure and do not take into account parental choice and/or pupil movement i.e. pupils moving into the new homes but who are already in the local education system. Additionally there is no guarantee that all of these pupils would access the provision at Ysgol Llanfynydd due to parental preference for school provision in the area, including faith and language medium.</p> <p>The pace of housing developments will be constrained by the plans of the site owners/developers, the housing market, current economic climate and other factors which are unpredictable.</p> <p>It is the Council's view that there is sufficient capacity within the local school network to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Llanfynydd should it close. Estyn have commented that: <i>'Based on approved planning applications for new housing developments within the catchments are of the four schools, the proposers predict that an additional 15 primary places will be needed. These figures when added to the pupils at Ysgol Llanfynydd, still demonstrate capacity within the existing four schools to manage this increased demand for school places.'</i></p> <p>The Council have no plans for the site, and will</p>		
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	Housing developments not been taken into consideration (continued)	not consider the future of the site until such time as the school's future is determined.		
13	Statutory Notice process was flawed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statutory code states that a notice should insert details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the numbers of school places available as a consequence of the closure of this school this has not been done • The statutory notice was not given to Governors until Monday 1st February • The statutory notice was not handed in person or by email directly to the Board of Governors 	<p>The Council is satisfied that the publication requirements of the Statutory Notice in accordance with Code have been met.</p> <p>The statutory notice was provided directly via email to the school Headteacher and the school's generic email account, managed by the school secretary. This is an administrative approach that the Council have taken, individual contact details for Governors are not held with the School Modernisation Team. The Headteacher and generic school email account was provided with the link and instructed to make their parents/carers/guardians/pupils/governors/School Council/Staff Members and prospective parents aware of the link and also advised that hard copies were available on request. A hard copy of the statutory notice was placed on the front door of the school on the day the statutory notice was issued - Friday 29th January 2016.</p> <p>The Governors were provided with a copy of the statutory notice via the School and have also been provided with the opportunity to provide their objections in writing in line with the Code. The Chair of the school Governors has provided an objection on behalf of all of the school Governors. Additionally a number of Governors have provided their own individual objections to the</p>	21	26.9%

Statutory Notice process was flawed (continued)

proposal.

The Council proposes that existing pupils may attend either Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn English medium community based primary school, Abermorddu CP School, English medium community based primary school, Ysgol Estyn, Hope English medium community based primary school or Bwlchgwyn CP School, English medium community based primary school. This is however subject to parental preference and subject to available places. Parents may express a preference for the said schools or indeed another school and the Council will comply with any such expressed preference subject to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 86 (3).

The proposal does not require that any measures are taken to increase the numbers of school places available as a consequence of the closure of Ysgol Llanfynydd. The Council has demonstrated in its consultation documents that there is sufficient capacity within the local school network to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Llanfynydd should it close, this view is also upheld by Estyn.

Additional places if required can be established at Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn should the pupils wish to move as a group.

	<p>Statutory Notice process was flawed (continued)</p>	<p>Should, if any alterations of the teaching spaces be required this would be dependent on the numbers and organisation of year groups subject to the transfer of pupils should the proposal be implemented.</p> <p>The Council would work with parents of Ysgol Llanfynydd to ensure minimal disruption to pupils who would be transferring to alternative provision.</p>		
<p>14</p>	<p>Impact on Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distance that pupils will have to travel to other schools will disadvantage them and could well affect their performance in future years • Friendship groups will be split up • Impact on the learners will be sacrificed for relatively insignificant financial savings • The proposal to close the school is obviously not in the best interests of pupils • Forget the human impact of these changes and insecurities of the little children • There is not much evidence of care for the children's immediate future • Will have a detrimental effect to my child's learning and development • My children would be heartbroken 	<p>When proposing changes to school organisation it is acknowledged that there will be some changes for pupils. Should the proposal be implemented and Ysgol Llanfynydd be closed it would result in changes for the existing pupils such as :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter journey time to school for pupils who reside in Wrexham • A marginally longer route to school for pupils who live in the Llanfynydd area • A new school uniform • New teachers and support staff • New learning environment • Friendship groups may be affected, however new friendships may be formed. <p>The Council will take all practicable steps to ease the transition for all pupils, most especially for vulnerable groups of learners such as Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Should the proposal be implemented the Council would work alongside pupils, their parents, and the relevant schools to make appropriate transition arrangements for pupils to familiarise themselves with their new</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>14.1%</p>

Impact on Children (continued)

environment (subject to parental preference).

Where pupils have specific ALN needs, the resource and support they require would be replicated in their new learning environments.

At the time of preparing the consultation document, under current transport policy 17 pupils would be entitled to free home to school transport. This would be on the basis that the route to the alternative school from Llanfynydd would be considered to be hazardous due to its rural location which has limited footpaths in and out of the village.

The Council has a requirement to ensure it 1) provides transport in line with statute and its own policy and 2) that transport arrangements are commissioned in accordance with the Welsh Government Transport measure.

Reviewing the future of any school is controversial and emotive. Pupils, parents, carers and teachers, past and present, have strong ties to local schools as part of their own life-stories.

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The Council is challenged with balancing the sensitivities of community feeling on the one

	<p>Impact on Children (continued)</p>	<p>hand, with providing a high quality education offer which can be sustained and afforded. The Council cannot avoid making decisions for the future which are in the best interests of pupils and students.</p> <p>The Council has made adequate arrangements to ensure that the best interests of the learners are ensured during this process. This has included producing a children and young people's consultation document to which numerous pupils have supplied responses. The Council in conjunction Ysgol Llanfynydd facilitated a consultation session for the School Council of Ysgol Llanfynydd which allowed them to put forward their views regarding the proposal. The Council also produced a report for Cabinet and consultees summarising the views of the children and young people that were collected during the consultation period. Additionally the Council produced a summary of their views in a report specifically for children and young people.</p> <p>The Council would work with parents of Ysgol Llanfynydd to ensure minimal disruption to pupils who would be transferring to alternative provision.</p>		
<p>15</p>	<p>Family connections with the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myself and all my 5 siblings attended this school in the 1960's and some of my nephews and nieces since then • The school has been used for so many years by generations of children in this village 	<p>Reviewing the future of any school is controversial and emotive. Pupils, parents, carers and teachers, past and present, have strong ties to local schools as part of their own life-stories.</p> <p>The Council is challenged with balancing the sensitivities of community feeling on the one</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>14.1%</p>

	<p>Family connections with the school (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My family have attended this school for years • I would be devastated if this school was not available for me to send my children to 	<p>hand, with providing a high quality education offer which can be sustained and afforded. The Council cannot avoid making decisions for the future which are in the best interests of pupils and students across Flintshire.</p>		
<p>16</p>	<p>Savings/Budget/Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous VfM calculations would be negated if you closed the school after the investment it has had. • The budget savings made from closing the school are made up of a hypothetical costs for fixing a roof • Closing the school may achieve minimal financial savings to the education budget in the short term but could lead to far greater costs overall in the long term • The costs of making redundancies do not seem to have been included • I wonder how much money has been used to finance other projects in the past • The governing body of Llanfynydd were a source of jest by senior education personnel when we suggested that we could find a way of saving money by reducing our budget • Perhaps Flintshire County Council should consider a reduction to the amount of people it employs for administration staff • The proposal has not detailed whether the proceed of sales of redundant sites will meet the costs of proposal 	<p>Inefficient school organisation can result in uneven and unfair funding patterns where some schools receive a disproportionate share of funding at the expense of pupils attending other schools in the area, this is mostly the case of schools that are classified as small schools. Any school proposals should contribute towards establishing a more equitable pattern of school funding.</p> <p>In line with regulatory requirements Flintshire County Council has a schools funding formula which is the methodology by which the budget share for each school in the County is determined. Each year the formula is reviewed and in consultation with relevant stakeholders, amendments are made to reflect changes in funding and policy. (The detailed methodology and the budget shares are sent to all schools and a summary is published in what is referred to as the section 52 budget statement).</p> <p>Schools receive a budget for a financial year from April to March and this is based on the pupils in each school in the September preceding the financial year. The 2015/16 section 52 budget</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>12.8%</p>

Savings/Budget/Funding (continued)

- The First Minister has made it clear (TV interview 17 Feb) that Authorities have been given extra funds to support rural schools. Where has this money gone in Flintshire?
- The costings are not clearly set out within the consultation report in the context of the Estyn report published in May 2012 in respect of overall cost to the County of either closing or not closing Llanfynydd school

statement has been used as the basis of analysis.

The primary school funding formula was fundamentally reviewed in 2013/14 with full involvement and consultation with schools and other stakeholders including the Schools Budget Forum and Education and Youth Scrutiny. The formula must be applied consistently across all schools with any changes to the formula being consulted on and agreed. There is a primary schools funding formula group comprising Authority officers and nominated Headteachers which meets regularly to consider formula issues. A key ongoing concern from small primary schools has been to secure adequate resources to enable school leaders to fulfil their responsibilities.

In 2015-2016 Ysgol Llanfynydd received a formulae funding allocation of £217,715 which represents £4,838 per pupil, ranking the school as the highest funded per pupils in Flintshire, £1,569 higher than the average funding per pupil in Flintshire. The higher level of per pupil funding reflects the need to subsidise small schools by the inclusion of a lump sum amounts within the funding formula and also reflects the higher premium costs per pupils in smaller schools.

The inclusion of potential redundancy costs would be pre-determination of the proposal.

Additional funding from the Welsh Government

	<p>Savings/Budget/Funding (continued)</p>	<p>has been made available to three rural authorities – Monmouthshire, Powys and Ceredigion. The Minister for Finance and Government Business Jane Hutt referred to this in her announcement on the Draft Budget on 9 February and whilst not education specific, the additional funding for those rural authorities could be spent on schools.</p> <p>The Council is satisfied that the publication requirements of the statutory notice, in accordance with the Code requirements have been met.</p> <p>The Council have no reconceived plans for the use of the school site, and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the school's future is determined.</p> <p>The Council has met the requirements of the School Organisation Code in its reporting of financial matters. The Code also states that the Council should take into account whether the proposals will ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of funding.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council is satisfied that it had met the statutory consultative and publication requirements of the School Organisation Code.</p>		
<p>17</p>	<p>Parental preference is being taken away</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep siblings and friendship groups together pupils would have to go to Ysgol Parc Y Llan which isn't giving any parental choice 	<p>The Council acknowledges that there is a number of factors that determine where parents send their child/children. However, the Council are unable to maintain all schools in the current financial climate especially where there are significant</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7.6%</p>

	<p>Parental preference is being taken away (continued)</p>	<p>surplus places within the system. Should the proposal be implemented there will still be a balance of provision in area including rural, town, faith and language provision maintaining parental preference.</p> <p>The Local Authority will comply with statutory requirements and the Welsh Government School Admissions Code and will take account of the expression of parental preference in the context of its duty to ensure the provision of effective education and the efficient use of education resources. When considering applications, the Local Authority will observe the provisions of the School Admissions Code which states that admission authorities should admit to the school's admission number and will rarely be able to prove prejudice as a ground for refusing an additional pupil while the numbers remain below the admission number.</p>		
<p>18</p>	<p>Childcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ysgol Parc Y Llan has no after school club • Although pupils from Parc Y Llan are able to attend Ysgol Terrig, it offers a different language medium and may cause anxieties for some pupils 	<p>Ysgol Parc Y Llan does have an after school club. It is a shared after school club with Ysgol Terrig, Treuddyn (Welsh medium community school) based on the same site as Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn. The Headteacher of Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn has confirmed that the majority of pupils who attend the club are English speaking. The club is bilingual and pupils interact with other pupils from Ysgol Terrig, Treuddyn on a regular basis, this provides a unique opportunity for all pupils to develop their Welsh language skills.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2.5%</p>

19	<p>Impact of the proposals on the school numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By virtue of proposing the close the school, has created an environment in which parents are discouraged from using the local school 	<p>The Council has to follow the process as defined by the School Organisation Code.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges that statutory consultation around school organisation change will cause a level of uncertainty within the local school community, which can be a contributory factor in pupil number reduction.</p>	2	2.5%
20	<p>Increasing Pupil Numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some marketing of the school may help increase the admission numbers The Council has failed to support and promote this wonderful school 	<p>The three main roles of a governing body are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) set the aims and objectives for the school; (ii) agree policies, targets and priorities for achieving these objectives; (iii) monitor and evaluate the aims and objectives and whether the policies, targets and priorities are being met, always with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Active promotion of the school is a responsibility of the school and its governing body. <p>The Council supports all of its schools through support services.</p>	2	2.5%
21	<p>Comment supporting the Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like to go on record as expressing my full and unequivocal support for the proposal 		1	1%

Conclusion

As outlined during the consultation process, the proposal to close Ysgol Llanfynydd from 31st August 2016 with pupils transferring to nearby schools requires the approval of the Local Authority Cabinet Members. This Objection Report alongside a copy of all the Objections, a copy of the consultation; document; a copy of the consultation report, and a copy of the published notice will be forwarded to Cabinet Members for determination.

DRAFT