

APPENDIX 2

Option appraisal against investment objectives and critical success factors

1. Long list of options

Option 1: Do nothing
Option 2 A new SEN Centre consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision and relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion
Option 3 A new SEN Centre consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and continuing with the current provision at the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion.
Option 4 A new SEN Centre consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and the unit at Tŷ Aran and continuing with the current provision at Tŷ Meirion.
Option 5 A new SEN Centre consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and Tŷ Meirion and continuing with the current provision at Tŷ Aran.
Option 6 A virtual school with 3 SEN centres and a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision located at one of the centres. Closing Ysgol Hafod Lon and the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion.
Option 7 A new SEN Centre with a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, with 13 regional units located in each secondary school catchment area. Closing Ysgol Hafod Lon and the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion.
Option 8 Adapting the present site of Ysgol Hafod Lon to accommodate up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision and closing the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion

2. Option appraisal

OPTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Investment objective 1: Increase bilingual SEN school places to 100 and locate the school within reasonable travelling distance for the majority of children living in both Meirionnydd and Dwyfor areas of Gwynedd from September 2016	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Investment	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓

<p>objective 2:</p> <p>Ensure parity of education and social opportunities for SEN children and the wider community in Gwynedd from September 2016, providing all parents with equitable choices for their children's education and that access to appropriate facilities are also available to other SEN agencies and the wider community.</p>								
<p>Investment objective 3:</p> <p>Achieve efficiencies through a more centralised provision and less dependency on expensive out-of-county provision from September 2016.</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<p>Investment objective 4:</p> <p>Provide more positive outcomes for SEN children by improving partnership working including outreach into mainstream schools from September 2016</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Investment objective 5:</p> <p>Develop facilities to 21st Century Schools standard that will provide excellent teaching, learning and social environments for SEN children to fulfil their potential and offer</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

wider community benefits through the use of the facilities by SEN agencies, parents and the community.								
Investment objective 6: Develop the best possible outreach services for children with special education needs. Ensure flexible, expert and practical solutions and provisions regardless of location within the county, in partnership with other agencies.	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Critical success factors								
Strategic fit	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Business need	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Benefits optimisation	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Supply-side capacity and capability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Potential affordability								
a) Revenue	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
b) Capital	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Potential achievability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
	Carried forward	possible	possible	preferred	discounted	discounted	discounted	discounted

3. Short list options

3.1 Option 1: do nothing

This option would mean that Gwynedd would continue with its present provision of continuing with:

- the current outdated and over capacity provision in Ysgol Hafod Lon, with 49 pupils
- Uned Tŷ Aran, on the site of the primary school in Dolgellau, which currently provides a service for 3 children
- Uned Tŷ Meirion, on the site of the secondary school in Dolgellau, which currently provides a service for 10 children
- mainstream school provision with the assistance of varying amounts of 1:1 care for children whose parents choose this option
- having to send children with profound and complex needs to expensive out-of-county provision
- having to rely on foster placements for short breaks

Capital costs

If continuing with the present provision, as it is, an estimated £1.5m has been identified in order to continue with the present provision in Ysgol Hafod Lon at its present location and Ty Aran and Ty Meirion. This would not improve the provision nor increase the capacity for more children to attend the school.

Revenue costs

	Pupil numbers	Present (2013/2014)
Ysgol Hafod Lon - Allocation	46	£764,122
Tŷ Aran – Budget	3	£103,040
Tŷ Meirion - Budget	10	£240,000
Uned ABC	8	£73,178
Short term - Barnados		£62,000
Short term – other services		£52,000
Out-of-county residential and daily (education and residential)	2+5 pupils	£562,050
Mainstream pupils	59	£1,003,000

Transport costs		£447,719
Total revenue costs	133	£3,307,109
Other income		
Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board		£144,000
Total income		£144,000
Total NET cost		£3,163,109

Advantages

- No need to build a new provision
- No need for pupils to adapt to changes
- Enough staff with the necessary skills and qualifications
- Continue with the SEN units in the south of the county

Disadvantages

- Not enough required SEN school places for children with special educational needs in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor
- Current facilities not fit for purpose
- Current location of the SEN school not appropriate for all children in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor
- The present SEN school in the area is well over capacity
- A number of children with complex and profound special education needs, including autism have to go out-of-county for their education
- Most children who go out-of-county do not receive their education in Welsh
- The present SEN school and units do not meet 21st Century School standards
- There is no residential or short break facilities in Gwynedd
- Likely to be significant future upkeep costs for the current provision
- No modern SEN facilities such as a hydrotherapy pool or sensory rooms in the current school
- Parents are restricted in their choice of education provision for their child because of the lack of available places in SEN schools

Conclusion

It was felt that this option would result in very little real advantages for the future of SEN in the area and numerous disadvantages such as not enough SEN school places, facilities remaining not fit for purpose, location of SEN school not being central to Meirionnydd and Dwyfor, some children continue to go out of county for their education.

It was not felt that it would improve the education needs for children with SEN in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor adequately to answer the required strategic and business needs for the future. It would also not address the strategic and business needs for a

residential provision in Gwynedd that would allow children to attend the new school rather than the expensive out-of-county provision or allow short break provision for families.

3.2 Option 2: Developing a new SEN Centre located in Penrhyndeudraeth, consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision and relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion. This option would mean:

- Developing a new centre of excellence for special education needs primarily for providing education for children with SEN that live in the Meirionnydd and Dwyfor area of Gwynedd. The centre would provide up to 100 school places for children and young people between the ages of 3 and 19.
- Developing a residential/short breaks unit that would offer residential and short break provision. The residential unit would enable some children, depending on the severity of their needs, that under the current circumstances would have to access out-of-county provision, to attend the new school. These beds would also provide an opportunity for other local authorities to send children with SEN to the new provision in order to access Welsh medium education.
- The short breaks beds would provide a much needed provision in the county which, at present, totally dependent on foster placements.
- The residential/short break unit will be designed to provide flexibility in the way that the service is provided as there will be 2 wings, one with 2 and the other with 4 bedrooms. This means that 2,4 or 6 residential or short breaks can be offered at any one time.
- It would mean relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and the units that are attached to Ysgol Gynradd Dolgellau (Uned Tŷ Aran) and Ysgol y Gader (Uned Tŷ Meirion).
- The centre would also provide a hub for other partner organisations and agencies to provide centre-based and outreach SEN services.

Capital costs

The capital cost of developing the new school and residential / short term unit will be £12.4m with the Welsh Assembly contributing £6.2m towards the cost.

Revenue costs

	Pupil numbers	Present (2013/2014)
New school - allocation	100	£1,639,860
Residential / short term unit	6 beds	£550,000

Mainstream pupils	33	£561,000
Transport costs		£357,872
Total revenue costs	133	£3,108,732
Other possible income		
Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board		£0
Other Local Authorities*		£183,333
Total income		£183,333
Total NET cost		£2,925,399

* There is no guarantee of this income. Although a couple of other Local Authorities have shown an interest in the possibility of sending children to the new school in the future, as daily and residential pupils, there is no guarantee at present.

Advantages

- The new centre would be appropriate for the needs of SEN children, including ones with complex and profound special education needs, including autism, in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor
- Less children would need to access out-of-county SEN provision
- Cost savings due to less children having to use expensive out-of-county residential provision
- More children able to live at home
- Better working environment for staff
- Better learning environment for children and young people
- The new facility would meet modern standards that one would expect for SEN children
- More children could receive their education in Welsh
- Specialist provision and specialist resources on one site
- Less building upkeep costs in the short term
- More children would travel less of a distance to the new provision (based on the current contracts)
- Opportunity to work with a local secondary and primary school
- Short break provision available for use of families throughout Gwynedd
- Residential care available
- Possibility of raising income through offering school places and residential care for children from other counties requiring a Welsh language provision
- A hub for multi-agency co-working
- All SEN provision for Meirionnydd and Dwyfor delivered from one site
- Option for other people to use the specialist facilities outside of school hours
- Revenue costs would be lower than other options

Disadvantages

- No SEN provision in the south of the County

- No option for parents to choose to integrate their children in a mainstream secondary school with an SEN unit which conflicts with policy and strategic aspirations to ensure children and young people have the best choices within their communities
- May result in the need for increased spending on adaptations in mainstream schools if parents do not want their children to attend the SEN school

Conclusion

The advantages associated with this option include enough SEN school places, modern facilities with specialist resources, centrally located to Meirionnydd and Dwyfor, fewer children having to go out of county resulting in financial savings, residential provision and short break provision for Gwynedd families, a hub for multi-agency co-working, and lower costs.

The main disadvantage would be the removal of the SEN provision in the south of the county that allows children to partake in secondary mainstream education within a reasonable distance of their homes.

This option would address all strategic and business needs but would mean discontinuing with the provision at Uned Tŷ Meirion.

3.3 Option 3: Developing a new SEN Centre located in Penrhyndeudraeth, consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and continuing with the current provision at the units at Tŷ Aran and Tŷ Meirion. This option would mean:

- developing a new centre of excellence for special education needs primarily for providing education for children with SEN that live in the Meirionnydd and Dwyfor area of Gwynedd. The centre would provide up to 100 school places for children and young people between the ages of 3 and 19.
- Developing a residential/short breaks unit that would offer residential and short break provision. The residential unit would enable some children that under the current circumstances would have to access out-of-county provision depending on the severity of their needs, to attend the new school. These beds would also provide an opportunity for other local authorities to send children with SEN to the new provision in order to access Welsh medium education.
- The short breaks beds would provide a much needed provision in the county which, at present, totally dependent on foster placements.
- Continuing with the units that are attached to Ysgol Gynradd Dolgellau (Uned Tŷ Aran) and Ysgol y Gader (Uned Tŷ Meirion).
- It would mean relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon
- The centre would also provide a hub for other partner organisations and agencies to provide centre-based and outreach SEN services.

Capital costs

The capital cost of developing the new school and residential / short term unit will be £12.4m with the Welsh Assembly contributing £6.2m towards the cost.

Revenue costs

	Pupil numbers	Present (2013/2014)
New school - allocation	100	£1,639,860
Uned Ty Aran - Budget	3	£103,040
Uned Ty Meirion - Budget	10	£240,000
Residential / short term unit	6 beds	£550,000
Mainstream pupils	20	£340,000
Transport costs		£439,149
Total revenue costs	133	£3,312,049
Other possible income		
Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board		£0
Other Local Authorities*		£183,333
Total income		£183,333
Total NET cost		£3,128,716

* There is no guarantee of this income. Although a couple of other Local Authorities have shown an interest in the possibility of sending children to the new school in the future, as daily and residential pupils, there is no guarantee at present.

Advantages

- The new centre would be appropriate for the needs of SEN children, including ones with complex and profound special education needs, including autism, in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor
- Less children would need to access out-of-county SEN provision
- Cost savings due to less children having to use expensive out-of-county residential provision
- More children able to live at home
- Better working environment for staff
- Better learning environment for children and young people

- The new facility would meet modern standards that one would expect for SEN children
- More children could receive their education in Welsh
- Specialist provision and specialist resources on one site
- Less building upkeep costs in the short term
- More children would travel less of a distance to the new provision (based on the current contracts)
- Opportunity to work with a local secondary and primary school
- Short break provision available for use of families throughout Gwynedd
- Residential care available
- Possibility of raising income through offering school places and residential care for children from other counties requiring a Welsh language provision
- A hub for multi-agency co-working
- All SEN provision for Meirionnydd and Dwyfor delivered from one site
- Option for other people to use the specialist facilities outside of school hour
- Continuing with the provision in Ty Meirion would mean children with SEN could integrate daily in mainstream secondary classes in accordance with education department's strategy
- Pupils that are unable to travel long distances because of their complex medical needs and/or because they are very handicapped are able to attend SEN provision within a reasonable distance to their homes

Disadvantages

- Children continuing to attending the Units would not be able to benefit from the modern specialist equipment and provision in the new centre without having to travel
- Upkeep costs of the Units would continue
- Management across the 3 sites could be problematic
- Revenue costs would be higher than other options

Conclusion

The advantages associated with this option include enough SEN school places, modern facilities with specialist resources, centrally located to Meirionnydd and Dwyfor, fewer children having to go out of county resulting in savings, residential provision and short break provision for Gwynedd families, a hub for multi-agency co-working, continuing with the provision in Ty Meirion which enables children from the south of the county to partake in secondary mainstream education within a reasonable distance of their homes.

The main disadvantage would be higher revenue costs due to continuing with the SEN Units in Dolgellau and that children continuing to attend these units would have limited use of modern specialist SEN resources.

This option would address all strategic and business needs but would mean continuing with the expensive and under used provision at Uned Tŷ Aran.

- 3.4 Option 4:** Developing a new SEN Centre located in Penrhyndeudraeth, consisting of a school for up to 100 children, a 6 bed residential/short breaks provision, relocating Ysgol Hafod Lon and Uned Ty Aran and continuing with the current provision at Uned Tŷ Meirion.

- developing a new school in a central location for children with SEN that live in the Meirionnydd and Dwyfor area of Gwynedd. The aim is to open a new school in the Penrhyndeudraeth area of Gwynedd which would mean that children with SEN from both Meirionnydd and Dwyfor would travel a similar distance to receive their education.
- Increase SEN school places in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor for up to 100 children to include those with more profound and complex needs, including autism.
- Develop a school that will be to 21st Century Schools standard, the highest curriculum standard, with therapeutic and alternative resources which will satisfy SEN children's needs including those with severe and complex needs, including autism.
- Develop a school with the required resources including a hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms, rebound therapy rooms, therapeutic outdoor areas, gardening and small business facilities to realise the favoured model.
- Provide a 6 bed residential/short break facility for children and young people in Gwynedd and possibly other Local Authorities.
- Develop facilities that will be a hub to provide space for key workers to work fully with parents, teaching staff and support staff on a regular basis.

Capital costs

The capital cost of developing the new school and residential / short term unit will be £12.4m with the Welsh Assembly contributing £6.2m towards the cost.

Revenue costs

	Pupil numbers	Present (2013/2014)
New school - allocation	100	£1,639,860
Uned Ty Meirion - Budget	10	£240,000
Residential / short term unit	6 beds	£550,000
Mainstream pupils	23	£391,000
Transport costs		£424,008
Total revenue costs	133	£3,244,868
Other possible income		
Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board		£0

Other Local Authorities*		£183,333
Total income		£183,333
Total NET cost		£3,061,535

* There is no guarantee of this income. Although a couple of other Local Authorities have shown an interest in the possibility of sending children to the new school in the future, as daily and residential pupils, there is no guarantee at present.

Advantages

- The new centre would be appropriate for the needs of SEN children, including ones with complex and profound special education needs, including autism, in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor
- Less children would need to access out-of-county SEN provision
- Cost savings due to less children having to use expensive out-of-county residential provision
- More children able to live at home
- Better working environment for staff
- Better learning environment for children and young people
- The new facility would meet modern standards that one would expect for SEN children
- More children could receive their education in Welsh
- Specialist provision and specialist resources on one site
- Less building upkeep costs in the short term
- More children would travel less of a distance to the new provision (based on the current contracts)
- Opportunity to work with a local secondary and primary school
- Short break provision available for use of families throughout Gwynedd
- Residential care available
- Possibility of raising income through offering school places and residential care for children from other counties requiring a Welsh language provision
- A hub for multi-agency co-working
- All SEN provision for Meirionnydd and Dwyfor delivered from one site
- Option for other people to use the specialist facilities outside of school hour
- Continuing with the provision in Ty Meirion would mean children with SEN could integrate daily in mainstream secondary classes in accordance with education department's strategy
- Pupils that are unable to travel long distances because of their complex medical needs and/or because they are very handicapped are able to attend SEN provision within a reasonable distance to their homes
- Some reduction in upkeep costs with the closure of one unit

Disadvantages

- Children continuing to attending the Unit would not be able to benefit from the modern specialist equipment and provision in the new centre without having to travel
- Some upkeep costs of one Unit would continue
- Management across 2 sites could be problematic
- Revenue costs would be higher than one other option

Conclusion

The advantages associated with this option include enough SEN school places, modern facilities with specialist resources, centrally located to Meirionnydd and Dwyfor, fewer children having to go out of county resulting in savings, residential provision and short break provision for Gwynedd families, a hub for multi-agency co-working, continuing with the provision in Ty Meirion which enables children from the south of the county to partake in secondary mainstream education within a reasonable distance of their homes.

The main disadvantage would be higher revenue costs due to continuing with Uned Ty Meirion in Dolgellau and that children attending this unit would have limited use of modern specialist SEN resources.

This option would address all strategic and business needs and would mean discontinuing the under used provision at Uned Tŷ Aran. It would also mean continuing with Uned Ty Meirion enabling children from the south of the county to partake in secondary mainstream education within a reasonable distance of their homes.

The reason for continuing with Uned Ty Meirion

- a) The case for continuing with Uned Ty Meirion in Dolgellau is a highly relevant one for pupils who have to travel long distances for specialist education. We have pupils who live close to Powys, Conwy, Ceredigion and Denbighshire, who presently attend Ty Meirion in Dolgellau. The present pupil population includes pupils who are unable to travel long distances because of complex medical needs, and/or who are severely disabled, and/or have high sensory intolerance levels for proprioceptive activities (they cannot cope with being in a vehicle, or find it a highly distressing experience). Their morning routines and preparations before leaving home for school are on average 90 minutes long, those who need physiotherapy take longer. They presently travel approximately 30 minutes to school, which means that their mornings can begin as early as 6.30 a.m. in order to be in school by 9am. An additional 30 minutes to the proposed new school site at Penrhyndeudraeth (which is half way between both ends of Meirionnydd and Dwyfor) would be unreasonable for some of these pupils. In Dwyfor there will still be the possibility for the present Uned y Traeth to be used for pupils who have similar problems, and who live in Aberdaron/Abersoch/Botwnnog. Unlike the Meirionnydd area, we presently have no PMLD or PMED pupils with complex medical/proprioceptive needs in the far outreaches of Dwyfor.
- b) In addition to reducing travel times for complex PMED pupils in south Meirionnydd, Uned Ty Meirion continues to be an integral part of the education department's Strategic Equality Plan (Disabled Access Adaptations to Mainstream Schools), as it provides the opportunity for pupils to be integrated into mainstream secondary classes on a daily basis. The secondary school pupils at Ysgol Y Gader and Ty Meirion pupils presently share curriculum experiences including music, art, design and technology, assembly, enterprise and PSE, social and Urdd activities and competition and other extra-curricular experiences. Those pupils from Ty Meirion who can sit GCSE, Welsh Bac and entry level qualifications can do so side by side with their more able-bodied peers.
- c) The new SEN school for Meirion Dwyfor will cater for mostly learning disabled pupils, and those pupils who are not learning disabled, but are physically disabled, will continue to be educated in mainstream settings as far as possible, such as the facility provided by Uned Ty Meirion.
- d) This integration has been rated as a strength in Ysgol y Gader's Estyn inspection in 2010, and all recent consultation data demonstrates that parents, governors and local community wish this facility

to continue. The last Estyn inspection carried out for Ysgol Y Gader, Dolgellau was in December 2010. In the report there are the following references to Tŷ Meirion:

'The pupils at the Tŷ Meirion unit are integrated into the life and work of the school in an excellent manner. The school monitors these pupils' educational and social development very effectively through innovative methods.'