

Appendix 2 - Considerations

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Quality of Education	<p>One of the main drivers behind the reorganisation of education is to improve the quality of education and pupils' experiences</p> <p>Some weaknesses exist in the catchment area at present. Ysgol Bro Tegid and Ysgol Beuno Sant Schools depend on the support of the head teacher at the two rural schools, and this is not sustainable. In addition, Ysgol Bro Tegid, Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol y Berwyn have been categorised yellow under the Welsh Government school categorising system (2016) with the remainder of the catchment area schools.</p>																																						
	<p>The preferred option continues with post-16 provision in the catchment area. Post-16 provision contributes towards the sustainability of the school, giving added value and benefit to the school, the rural community and the Welsh language.</p>																																						
Class size and age range	<p>Putting forward the Learning Campus Model would make the size of classes for primary age pupils in the town of Y Bala more consistent and would enable more pupils to receive their education in evenly sized groups.</p>																																						
	<p>The extremes of age range within classes would also be reduced and this would alleviate the challenges and problems associated with effective teaching and learning in a class where there is a wide age range</p>																																						
Number of pupils and surplus places	<p>The table below shows the number of surplus places in the Y Berwyn catchment area.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">School</th> <th rowspan="2">Capacity</th> <th colspan="2">Surplus Places (September 2017)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Numbers</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bro Tegid</td> <td>95</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bro Tryweryn</td> <td>60</td> <td>9</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ffridd y Llyn</td> <td>71</td> <td>7</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Beuno Sant</td> <td>89</td> <td>51</td> <td>57%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>O.M. Edwards</td> <td>98</td> <td>0</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary Total</td> <td>413</td> <td>67</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y Berwyn</td> <td>730</td> <td>407</td> <td>56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Catchment Area</td> <td>1,143</td> <td>474</td> <td>41%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	School	Capacity	Surplus Places (September 2017)		Numbers	%	Bro Tegid	95	0	0	Bro Tryweryn	60	9	15%	Ffridd y Llyn	71	7	10%	Beuno Sant	89	51	57%	O.M. Edwards	98	0	0%	Primary Total	413	67	16%	Y Berwyn	730	407	56%	Total Catchment Area	1,143	474	41%
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	<p>Pupil numbers in the primary schools in the town of Bala have decreased significantly since 1980, with a reduction of 50% and 42% at Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol Y Berwyn schools between 1980 and 2016. In contrast, and despite the fact that the three schools rural are comparatively small in size, there has been a steady and substantial growth of 41% at Ysgol Bro Tryweryn, 37% at Ysgol Ffridd y Llyn and 46% at Ysgol OM Edwards between 1980 and 2016.</p>																																						
	<p>There are a number of surplus places in the Y Berwyn catchment area, especially in the town of Bala, at Ysgol Y Berwyn and in Ysgol Beuno Sant – 407 in the secondary and 51 primary surplus places in September 2017, totalling 458 surplus places in the town of Bala</p>																																						
	<p>If the proposal was implemented the Learning Campus would be established with the appropriate capacity for the existing number of pupils and allowances made for changes in the future – at present, a Learning Campus with a capacity of approximately 560 pupils – 180 primary and 380 secondary - is predicted.</p>																																						
	<p>Based on present predictions, implementing the Learning Campus in September 2019 would mean reducing the number of surplus places in the catchment area from 41% to 17%. This is a considerable reduction.</p>																																						

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<p>Learning Environment – Quality and suitability of buildings</p>	<p>The Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme states that the teaching environment is an important factor in providing education. Estyn also believed that the quality of buildings and a good learning environment can improve pupils' achievement levels. In addition, new or refurbished buildings mean less expenditure on building and energy maintenance.</p> <p>When the original proposal was developed in 2014-15, i.e. before commencing the work of buildings which is now underway on the Ysgol Y Berwyn site, a summary of the case for change in relation to the Learning environment was presented. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It stated that not all school buildings in the Berwyn catchment were in the best condition and suitable to learn and educate pupils in the twenty-first century. This was especially true of Ysgol Y Berwyn. • Ysgol Y Berwyn was in a very poor condition. The building had deteriorated over a period time, and the school itself is a collection of buildings. Most of the building dates from the 1960's, and although modern in that time, it has now become dated. In addition, the school was in poor condition with parts of the flat roof dropping, and evidence of subsidence. The building was expensive to heat and unfit for purpose as it was designed for 700 children. • Many of the rooms were unsuitable for learning, as they were of the incorrect size, and some had pillars that obstructed communication and effective interaction between a teacher and pupils. Many of the rooms were inflexible and there were no suitable corridors to go from one room to another without disturbing other lessons. In addition, the entrance to the site was poor and the public Library is located in the centre of the present school. • Ysgol Bro Tegid and Ysgol Beuno Sant are Victorian schools, and although in fair condition, the Victorian design isn't suitable for modern teaching methods. There are a number of rooms that are not of the appropriate size, and their design prevents pupils from circulating and socialising within the building. The corridors are dark and narrow, and the buildings are difficult to heat. • In addition, Ysgol Beuno Sant does not have a playing field, and the playground is limited in size. Although there is a grass playground at Bro Tegid, it is limited in size with a high percentage of which is used for car parking for staff, as there are no school parking facilities. • Two sites are ineffective to run, and of inappropriate size, with Ysgol Bro Tegid too small and Ysgol Beuno Sant too large for the number of pupils.
<p>Status</p>	<p>Ysgol Beuno Sant is a Voluntary Aided (VA) school with a religious designation (Church in Wales) while the rest of the schools in the catchment area are community schools. This factor is received full consideration in part 3 of the Cabinet report.</p>
<p>Leadership and Staffing</p>	<p>There needs to be a consideration of the present staffing situation in the town of Bala to ensure a long-term solution. The head teacher of Ffridd y Llyn is currently responsible for Ysgol Bro Tegid, Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol Bro Tryweryn. Although this arrangement is sustainable in the short term, and can lead to the sharing of expertise and leadership skills of head teachers for the benefit of the town's pupils, this arrangement is not sustainable in the long term, since it diverts time and resources away from the rural schools.</p> <p>The Learning Campus could provide a number of new opportunities arising from a more innovative management and leadership structure. Combining all the resources of the area under one "roof" and one staffing structure will lead to many new possibilities.</p> <p>The exact staffing structure of the school will be discussed further and this would be a matter to be referred for the attention of the Shadow Governing Body of any Learning Campus. The school will be a new entity, and it will therefore be necessary to establish a new Shadow Governing Body together with an instrument of government, following current guidelines and regulations. The new Shadow Governing Body will need to appoint the Head teacher and then the rest of the school's staff.</p> <p>The establishment of a Learning Campus will provide career opportunities for teaching and other staff. At present, many of the head teacher are required to teach in a classroom for a high proportion of their time, which reduces the time available for them to lead and manage the schools. In a larger school, there will be more opportunities to release school leaders (senior management) to focus more on leadership and management responsibilities; this in turn will ensure continuous improvement of the school.</p> <p>In addition, there will be opportunities for teaching staff to share their expertise with a greater number of pupils and see benefits of teaching a smaller range of pupils' age range in classes. There will also be exciting opportunities for staff to gain career development in a new organisation.</p>

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<p>Impact on the Community, the Welsh Language and Equality</p>	<p>This factor is considered fully in part 4 of the Cabinet report.</p>
<p>Financial Resources</p>	<p>In 2017/18 allocated £1,410,953 to the primary schools in the catchment area. This sum is £3,825 per pupil on average, close to the average cost per pupil in Gwynedd £3,777. In 2017/18, Berwyn School had a cost per pupil of £5,278 of which are above the average for the county £4,991</p> <p>It is predict by establishing the Learning Campus that there will be revenue savings of approximately £65,000 with a possible further efficiency saving of around £23,000 by releasing maintenance funds and managerial costs to be re-utilised within the budget. This is in addition to savings of £66,000 have already been made as a result of previous re-organisation in the catchment area.</p> <p>There will also be notional savings of around £220,932 per year, taking into account the fact that the Welsh Government calculates the cost of surplus places in primary schools at £262 and in secondary schools at £510.</p> <p>We must acknowledge that national accounting arrangements NNDR (building tax) liability generally increases following a capital investment, but with the NNDR fund being redistributed to local authorities it is reasonable not to consider this issue when calculating revenue savings</p> <p>The Welsh Government has approved a contribution of 50% towards the sum of £10.27 million intended as an investment to establish a Learning Campus, which was subject to the submission of a successful business case.</p>
<p>Geographical Factors</p>	<p>In accordance with the strategy, if a Learning Campus was established in the town of Bala, there would be no need for any pupil to travel an unreasonable distance to reach an educational site. Transport would be provided in accordance with the County Transport Policy and because there is no change in the primary school situation, and because the schools due for closure are in the town of Y Bala, no changes to the existing travel arrangements are predicted.</p>