

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Gwynedd Council Cabinet</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>4 June 2019</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams</b>
<b>OFFICER</b>	<b>Gwern ap Rhisiart</b>
<b>TITLE OF ITEM</b>	<b>Ysgol Llanaelhaearn</b>

### **1. THE DECISION SOUGHT**

Further to initial discussions between the governing body of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn and officers from the Education Department about concerns regarding pupil numbers at the school, permission is sought to hold formal meetings with the governing body and other relevant stakeholders to discuss a range of potential options for the school's future.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Ysgol Llanaelhaearn is located in the centre of the village of Llanaelhaearn which is between Pwllheli and Caernarfon. The school's capacity from Nursery to Year 6 is 53, with 11 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age attending the school (September 2018). All of the pupils live in the catchment area of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn.
- 2.2 Ysgol Llanaelhaearn was last inspected in 2015 where it was concluded that the school's performance was adequate. However, improvements have been introduced in light of recent management arrangements. In 2017/18, the school was placed in the 'amber/yellow' category in terms of support and the school's ability to improve.
- 2.3 As a result of the current low numbers, the school is in a fragile position and under increasing budgetary pressures. Officers from the Education Department have already held initial meetings with the school's governing body to explain the reasons for the need to discuss the future of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn, and the arrangements for holding local discussions.

### **3. REASONS FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION**

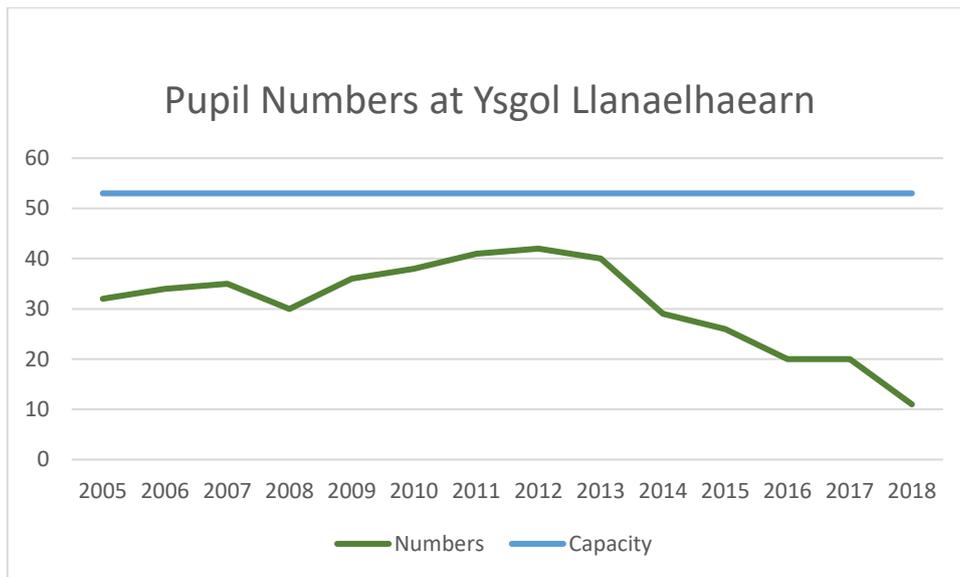
Permission is sought to commence formal discussions on potential options for the future of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn with the governing body and other relevant stakeholders as the school is facing a number of challenges, specifically:

- 3.1 There has been a substantial drop in the number of pupils on the register, with 11 pupils attending the school in 2018/19. The pupils are being taught in two classrooms.
- 3.2 Projections show that there will be a further reduction in numbers with 8 pupils on the register in 2021.

**4. THE REASONING AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE 'DECISION SOUGHT'**

**4.1 Low Numbers**

4.1.1 Pupil numbers at Ysgol Llanaelhaearn have reduced over the past few years. There has been a substantial drop in numbers since 2013 as seen in the graph below. Although the school has a capacity of 53 (Nursery to Year 6), the highest number the school has managed to obtain since 1980 is 42 pupils in 2012. Since then, numbers have reduced with 11 pupils on the school register in September 2018.



4.1.2 With 11 pupils on the school register in September 2018, this leaves 42 surplus places in the school, which represents 79% of the capacity.

4.1.3 39 children live in the Llanaelhaearn catchment area with 28 of them attending nearby schools.

**4.2 3 year projections**

4.2.1 Based on calculations in September 2018, the latest projections indicate that numbers at Ysgol Llanaelhaearn will decrease to 8 pupils by September 2021, with only 2 pupils in the Foundation Phase, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2 - Projection number of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn**

	N	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
September 2018	0	3	1	2	0	2	1	2	<b>11</b>
September 2019 Projection	2	0	3	1	2	0	2	1	<b>11</b>
September 2020 Projection	0	2	0	3	1	2	0	2	<b>10</b>
September 2021 Projection	0	0	2	0	3	1	2	0	<b>8</b>

## 5. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

### 5.1 The School Organisation Code 011/2018

- 5.1.1 Any process will be held in accordance with Welsh Government Guidelines (*Schools Organisation Code 011/2018*).

## 6. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 6.1 Subject to the Cabinet's decision, formal discussions will commence with the governors of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn and other relevant stakeholders to identify and discuss potential options, with a recommendation to the Cabinet on the way forward and the procedure to be followed.
- 6.2 Following these discussions, a Cabinet report will be prepared, to request permission to proceed to undertake any necessary statutory processes, in accordance with the Schools Organisation Code (011/2018).
- 6.3 Work programme

Date	Work
June/July 2019	Subject to the Cabinet's decision, formal discussions will commence with the Governors of Ysgol Llanaelhaearn and other relevant stakeholders to discuss options.
October 2019	Report back to the Cabinet following receipt of local feedback and seek the Cabinet's permission, as required, to follow a statutory consultation process on the preferred option in accordance with guidelines of the Schools Organisation Code (011/2018).

## 7. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

### Monitoring Officer:

It is explained in the report that the intent is to identify possible steps to address the challenges facing the school. It is also acknowledged that there are a range of matters which need to be considered in trying to identify possible answers and actions. It is also noted that the provisions of the Schools Organisation Code 11/2018 will have a central role in the considerations and that options on the way ahead will be the subject of further consideration by the Cabinet when the work is concluded. From a propriety perspective, what is proposed is appropriate.

### Head of Finance Department:

I support the decision sought.

### Local Member:

Ysgol Llanaelhaearn is a small, **happy** school, which has worked hard to raise the standard of education and attainment of the children over the last few years. The School's reports clearly demonstrates their success, and it is certain that the present parents are very happy with the children's development.

I am disappointed and sad that the school's situation, due to pupil numbers, is so fragile, and I am aware that the Governors are working to try to increase the number of children at present.

I accept that the School will have a significant funding problem if the number of children does not increase significantly by September this year.

I ask you to consider the quality of education and the happiness of the children and parents when discussing the possible options.

I look forward to discussing possible options for seeking a future for the School.