

Appendix 3



Modernising Education Programme

Review of Primary School Provision in the Ruthin Area

Proposal Two: Ysgol Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd

June 2013

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Denbighshire County Council has completed an Informal Consultation with eleven primary schools in the Ruthin Area.
- 1.2 As a consequence of the informal consultation exercise Denbighshire County Council wish formally to consult with all interested parties on a proposal which they consider would strengthen future provision.
- 1.3 The proposal that:

Denbighshire County Council would close Ysgol Llanbedr on the 31st August 2014;

2. Summary of proposal

- 2.1 This formal consultation relates to a proposal to close Ysgol Llanbedr. Throughout this document, this proposal is called the **Current Proposal**.
- 2.2 If the Current Proposal is agreed and implemented Ysgol Llanbedr would close on 31st August 2014.

3. Consultation Process

- 3.1 This formal consultation process relates to the Current Proposal. This formal consultation is being carried out to ensure that all relevant parties have an opportunity to contribute to this important subject.
- 3.2 This formal consultation document has been sent to a wide range of potential consultees including¹:
- a. Parents, teachers and ancillary staff of Ysgol Llanbedr;
 - b. Chair of Governors, Governors and School Council of the following schools:
 - i) Ysgol Llanbedr;
 - ii) Ysgol Borthyn;
 - iii) Rhos Street School;
 - iv) Ysgol Llanfair DC;
 - v) Ysgol Gellifor
 - c. Church in Wales Diocese of St Asaph and Roman Catholic Diocese of Wrexham;
 - d. Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of all Denbighshire Schools;
 - e. Independent nursery providers in the Ruthin area;
 - f. Denbighshire Children and Young People's Partnership and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships;
 - g. All Denbighshire County Councillors;
 - h. Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing areas affected by the proposal;
 - i. Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd Community Council;

- j. Ruthin Town Council;
- k. The Welsh Government;
- l. Estyn; and
- m. Relevant teaching and staff trades unions.
- n. Taith
- o. Gwasanaeth Effeithiolrwydd Ysgolion
- p. North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

3.3 This formal consultation document has also been published on the Denbighshire County Council website www.denbighshire.gov.ukⁱⁱ

3.4 The formal consultation period in respect of the Current Proposal will take place between 9th September and 18th of October 2013.

3.5 A series of formal consultation events will take place during this period. These include open workshops for parents to be informed further of the Current Proposal which will provide the opportunity for an open question and answer session around the various elements of the Current Proposal.

3.6 Events will also be held with children and young people at Ysgol Llanbedr and Ysgol Borthyn.

3.7 A supplementary versionⁱⁱⁱ of this formal consultation document has been produced for and made available to children and young people who are likely to be affected by the Current Proposal. The supplementary version has been written specifically to enable children and young people better to understand and engage with the formal consultation.

3.8 You are welcome to ask questions and let us have your views on the Current Proposal at the events mentioned above or to put your views in writing. Responses should be sent to Modernising Education Programme Team, Denbighshire County Council, County Hall, Wynnstay Road, Ruthin, LL15 1YN or by e-mail to modernisingeducation@denbighshire.gov.uk by no later than **18th October 2013**.

3.9 At the end of the formal consultation period all views received will be collated and considered before any recommendation is made to proceed to the next stage and issue a statutory notice.

3.10 It is anticipated that Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet will consider a report on the outcome of this formal consultation (including a recommendation from Council officers) on the 17th December 2013.

4. Power to make a decision

4.1 Denbighshire County Council is permitted to publish proposals to establish a new area school according to the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

Accordingly, the formal publication of the closure of Ysgol Llanbedr may be carried out by the Council following the correct statutory procedure.

5. Background to the proposal

- 5.1 Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet approved the Modernising Education Policy Framework^{iv} in January 2009 to provide a platform upon which to review existing school provision.
- 5.2 The council is committed to providing a first class education for all children and young people in the county. As part of this commitment, the Council has agreed that 'modernising education provision' is a priority because we recognise the importance of having school buildings, learning environments and resources that meet the needs of 21st century Wales.
- 5.3 We know that we have to change and modernise education provision in the county, as improvements in education cannot be sustained without changes to the way education is provided. Schools need to be able to provide the best possible learning experience so that children and young people in Denbighshire have the widest opportunities available to them and are able to reach their full potential.
- 5.4 In November 2012 Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of an informal consultation on the future of primary education in the Ruthin Review. The informal consultation document highlighted a number of issues that needed to be addressed to achieve long term sustainability. These included:
 - a. Sustainability of Schools and High Quality Provision
 - b. Surplus Places
 - c. Condition and Suitability of School Buildings (incl. use of Mobile Accommodation)
 - d. Recruitment of Head Teachers
 - e. Demand for Welsh Medium Education
- 5.5 The informal consultation ended on 22nd of March 2013 and Denbighshire County Council has carefully considered the issues raised during this period. In total over 63 letters and emails^v were received from stakeholders together with 195 questionnaires completed by parents. The findings of the informal consultation exercise have been compiled by the council and have been published on its website as part of the decision making process.

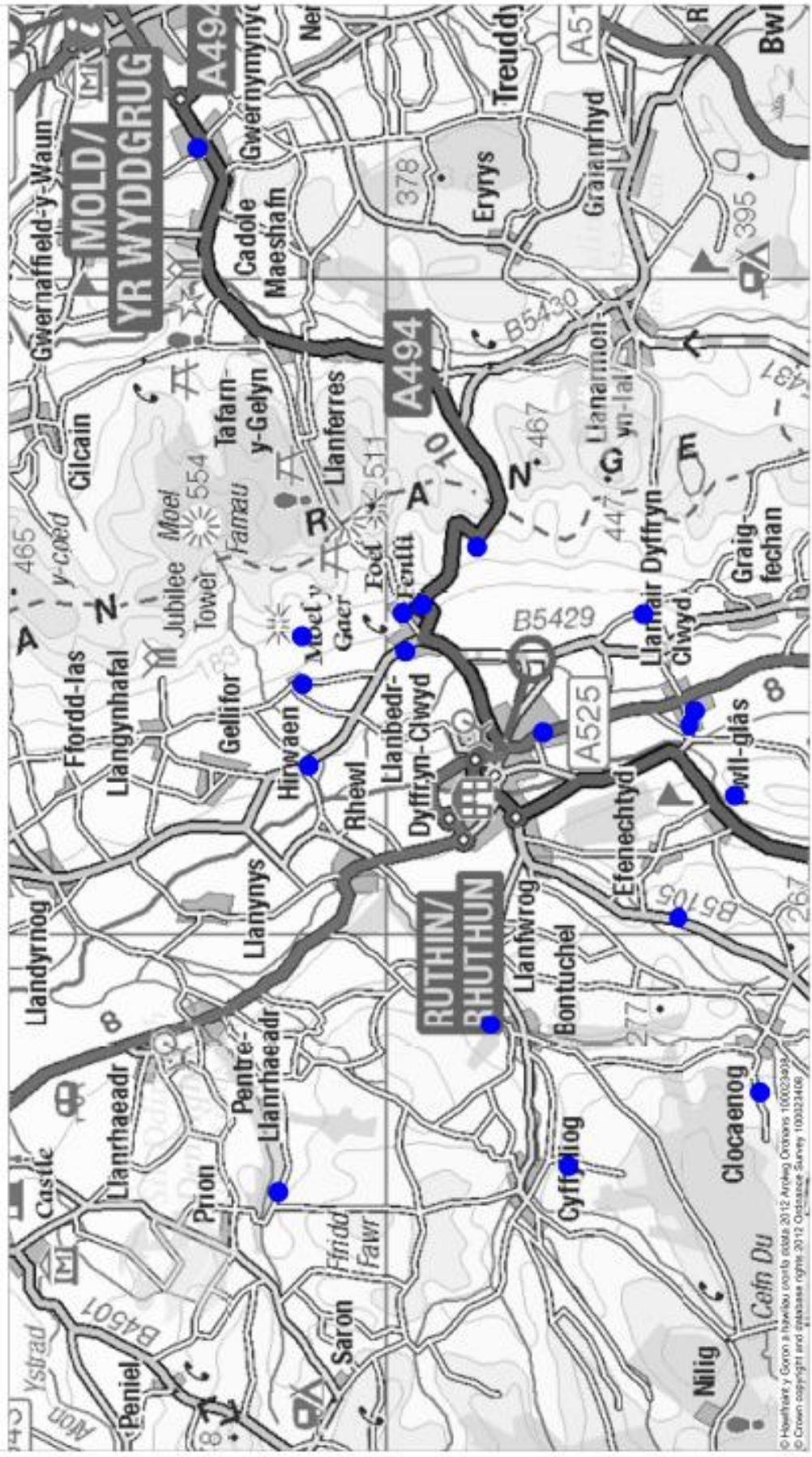
6. Current Provision

- 6.1 This section details the current provision at Ysgol Llanbedr.
- 6.2 Ysgol Llanbedr is located on the outskirts of the village of Llanbedr and serves an age range of 4 – 11 years old. It is a Voluntary Controlled Primary School and attracts pupils from a wide geographical area. This is illustrated in the diagram on page 5 which shows the postcode location of the home address for each pupil.



Graddfa/Scale: 1: 80000
Dyddiad/Date: 05/11/2012

Dalgylch Ysgol Llanbedr
Catchment of Ysgol Llanbedr



6.3 As of January 2013 Ysgol Llanbedr had 21 full time pupils. Pupil numbers have declined in the last 18 months and are illustrated below:

Full Time pupil numbers – January PLASC				
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
67	63	59	37	21

6.4 As of January 2013 the number of pupils in each year group was as follows:

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
5	4	7	0	3	1	1

6.5 The council's forecast of future pupil rolls suggests that an increase in future pupil numbers will occur at the school as illustrated below:

Projected Full Time pupil numbers – January PLASC				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
24	27	28	32	29

6.6 The capacity of the school building has been calculated at 77 pupils. As of January 2013 the school had 56 surplus (empty) places; equivalent to 72.7% of the total capacity. The school is operating at capacity.

6.7 An analysis of the nearest suitable school for the current full time and nursery pupils identified the nearest suitable school as follows:

Name of Nearest Suitable School	Total
Gwernymynydd	1
Rhos Street	2
Ysgol Borthyn	3
Ysgol Cyffylliog	1
Ysgol Gellifor	1
Ysgol Llanbedr	5
Ysgol Llanfair DC	5
Ysgol Rhewl	3
Total	21

6.8 Currently the school has four nursery pupils, two of which attend the nearest suitable school.

6.8 The school's last Estyn Inspection was in June 2009 and the inspection report in summary commented as follows:

Current performance

Key Question	Llanbedr Inspection grade - 2009
1. How well do learners achieve?	2
2. How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3. How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	3
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
5. How effective are leadership and strategic management?	3
6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	4
7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Key:

Grade 1

Good with outstanding features

Grade 2

Good features and no important shortcomings

Grade 3

Good features outweigh shortcomings

Grade 4

Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Grade 5

Many important shortcomings

6.9 The school was inspected by Estyn in June 2009 and the recommendations of the inspection report were as follows:

In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the staff and governing body need to:

R1 raise standards by addressing the shortcomings in Welsh second language and art and design at Key stage 2;

R2 improve pupils' bilingual competence;

R3 improve curriculum planning to ensure pupils' better progress in all subjects;

R4 improve communications with parents/carers;

R5 develop the self-evaluation system to consistently and rigorously monitor standards of work and the quality of learning.

7. Educational attainment

7.1 Educational standards at the school are good and have constantly stayed above the Denbighshire average over the past four years:

Year	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ysgol Llanbedr	71.40%	83.30%	84.60%	100.00%	85.70%
Denbighshire Average	76.50%	76.80%	78.10%	82.30%	83.50%
Wales – Average	75.50%	77.00%	78.20%	80.00%	82.60%

8. Alternative provision

8.1 Should the Current Proposal proceed, Denbighshire County Council would wish to see all pupils transfer to Ysgol Borthyn to ensure that they continue to receive their education in a Faith Based provision in the area and to a consistently high standard.

8.2 However, due to the nature of the current catchment parents/guardians, particularly from outlying villages, could wish to choose alternative provision. Accordingly, this section provides details of potential alternative, local authority maintained, provision on the periphery of the catchment areas of the existing schools. The alternative provision available is as follows:

Ysgol Borthyn

Type of School	Current Capacity	Surplus Places
English Medium / VC	142	31

Current Full Time Pupil Numbers							
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
9	17	13	17	22	19	14	111

Projected Pupil Numbers				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
115	111	103	102	104

Year	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ysgol Borthyn	87.5%	82.4%	58.8%	78.6%	92.3%

Rhos Street School

Type of School	Current Capacity	Surplus Places
English Medium / Community	189	24

Current Full Time Pupil Numbers							
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
23	23	25	23	18	26	25	163

Projected Pupil Numbers				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
152	146	147	142	136

	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Rhos Street School	82.10%	86.70%	93.55%	93.33%	96.55%

Ysgol Gellifor

Type of School	Current Capacity	Surplus Places
English Medium/ Community	91	4

Current Full Time Pupil Numbers							
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
13	16	8	14	19	5	12	87

Projected Pupil Numbers				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
86	94	87	85	89

	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ysgol Gellifor	90%	91.7%	92.9%	92.31%	100%

Ysgol Bro Fammau

Type of School	Current Capacity	Surplus Places
English Medium / Community	135	43

Current Full Time Pupil Numbers							
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
8	15	11	10	11	13	24	92

Projected Pupil Numbers				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
80	79	79	81	82

Year	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ysgol Bro Fammau	86.7%	87.5%	91.67%	100%	85.71%

Ysgol Llanfair DC

Type of School	Current Capacity	Surplus Places
Bilingual / VC	113	23

Current Full Time Pupil Numbers							
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
10	13	10	10	15	15	17	90

Projected Pupil Numbers				
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
87	84	81	84	86

Year	% achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ysgol Llanfair DC	50%	100%	88.89%	91.67%	100%

9. Secondary Provision

It is not expected that the current proposal will have a significant impact on Secondary Provision in the area. Ysgol Llanbedr currently feeds Ysgol Brynhyfryd and all of the alternative schools feed Ysgol Brynhyfryd.

10. Special educational needs provision

10.1 If the Current Proposal is approved the most significant change for a pupil would be a change in school and teacher. Accordingly, any pupils with special educational needs (**SEN**) who currently attend the schools will continue to receive the same education and support but within a new environment. The council will help pupils with SEN who experience difficulties because of the change.

11. The proposal in detail - description and rationale

11.1 Denbighshire County Council has a responsibility to provide the best possible educational provision for children and young people. This proposal has been developed in line with:

- a. the Council's commitment to 'Modernising Education';
- b. the School Effectiveness Framework's aim of enabling all children and young people to develop their full potential; and
- c. the Welsh Assembly's 21st Century Schools Programme to improve school buildings and facilities.

11.2 There are a number of issues facing the school that could impact on their ability to sustain educational standards and experiences into the future.

Educational case for change

11.3 Ysgol Llanbedr currently has an acting head teacher. **All** schools are finding it increasingly difficult to appoint permanent head teachers; in small schools this is becoming even more challenging. Not being able to recruit a permanent head teacher could have a major impact on standards at the school.

11.4 Pupil numbers at Ysgol Llanbedr are very low with only 21 Full Time pupils on roll in January 2013. Pupil projections indicate a slight increase in pupil numbers over the next few years; however it is unlikely based on current projections that the school will increase substantially in size.

11.5 There are a number of challenges facing small schools. In addition to the difficulties recruiting head teachers, there is the challenge of providing a full, progressive and balanced curriculum. The opportunities for pupils are limited - e.g. opportunities for group work; limited scope for peer interaction and for developing relationships with peer groups; the ability to offer extra-curricular activities. Planning for the wide age range becomes even more time consuming and demanding. All of this in addition to increasing budget pressures.

- 11.6 Whilst there is no recommended school size, there comes a time when the pattern of decreasing pupil numbers in that school, below what is a 'normal' class size (30 pupils), then the opportunities and curriculum provided becomes impossible to deliver.
- 11.7 There should be opportunities afforded to pupils to interact with other pupils in their peer/ age group - these opportunities and experiences are essential aspects of development and part of school life. When there are no other pupils within the year group, then this opportunity is not available. Pupils learn from having to work and interact with groups of pupils of a similar age; 'competition' between pupils in both academic and extra-curricular events is healthy. Year groups of 1 pupil do not give pupils access to these opportunities.
- 11.8 Other schools in the area are larger than Llanbedr - they have a larger compliment of teaching staff, providing a range of expertise in various curriculum areas. Pupils will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from a larger group of teachers. A broader range of staff also provides increased opportunities for staff to specialise, nurture different experiences and develop their careers for the benefit of children at the school.
- 11.9 Pupils will be part of larger peer groups and have more opportunities to learn alongside their peers in groups and participate in group activities.

Adequacy of existing school buildings and sites

- 11.10 The condition of the school is adequate. The school would require investment to bring them up to a satisfactory standard. The energy consumption per square meter of the school is £11 / m².
- 11.11 The catering facilities at the schools require investment. Space is limited in the school and any significant increase in pupils would reduce available dining space.
- 11.12 Access to indoor Physical Education provision has significant barriers at the school. The Astro turf is an excellent resource conveniently located on the site but the school doesn't have a hall space that can be used for Physical Education.
- 11.13 The site is in need of investment to enable it to provide a learning environment fit for purpose to meet the requirements of the 21st Century Schools Programme. Without expansion in the size of the school such a proposal would not address concerns over sustainability.

12. What is the proposed option?

12.1 This formal consultation relates to the Current Proposal, namely: to close Ysgol Llanbedr.

What would this mean?

12.2 If the Current Proposal was approved Ysgol Llanbedr would close on 31st August 2014;

12.3 All children attending Ysgol Llanbedr would transfer to Ysgol Borthyn; subject to parental preference.

12.4 There would be no change in provision at Ysgol Borthyn and the school would retain its identity.

12.5 As the school is a Church in Wales School the existing building would revert to the Diocesan Authority.

13. Admission arrangements for Ysgol Borthyn

13.1 All children attending Ysgol Llanbedr would transfer to Ysgol Borthyn, subject to parental preference. The admissions arrangements for Ysgol Borthyn are administered by the Denbighshire County Council's School Admissions service.

14. What are the transport implications of this proposal?

14.1 Transport would be provided in the first instance in accordance with Denbighshire County Council's Transport Policy which states that free transport is provided for pupils who live more than 2 miles from their nearest suitable school.

14.2 The Council has recognised that the some pupils currently attending Ysgol Llanbedr (who don't live within the town of Ruthin) would not be eligible for free home to school transport should they choose to attend Ysgol Borthyn as they live within the catchment of Ysgol Llanfair DC.

15. What are the staffing implications of this proposal?

15.1 Should the Current Proposal be implemented all current staff members would be supported by Denbighshire County Council Human Resources Department.

15.2 As part of this formal consultation process there will be full consultation with all members of staff and the appropriate teaching unions.

16. What are the financial implications of this proposal?

- 16.1 The cost of provision based upon the 2012/13 budget share is £8,498 per pupil, compared with the Denbighshire average of £3,951.
- 16.2 It is estimated that the initial annual revenue savings from the closure of the school would be £53,458 each year.
- 16.3 The savings would be retained within the education budget as part of the investment in the council's 21st Century Schools Programme.

17. What are the disadvantages of the proposal?

- 17.1 If the Current Proposal is approved, education provision would cease to take place at Ysgol Llanbedr.
- 17.2 Upon the closure of the School it is anticipated that some children will be required to travel further to school; subject to parental preference. Transport would be provided in accordance with Denbighshire's transport policy to meet the needs of pupils and to ensure travelling times are not excessive.
- 17.3 There would also be implications for staff at the current Ysgol Llanbedr. Should the need arise DCC would work with the current members of staff at the school to seek redeployment opportunities.

18. Alternative Options

- 18.1 Denbighshire County Council have given careful consideration to a range of alternative options as part of the development of the Current Proposal. In considering these options reference has been made to the main investment objectives of the council's 21st Century Schools Programme which are as follows:

- a. Learning environments for children and young people aged from 3 to 19 that will enable successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes;*
- b. Greater economy through better use of resources to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate and public provision; and*
- c. A sustainable education system with all schools meeting a 21st Century Schools Standard, and reducing recurrent costs and carbon footprint.*

- 18.2 The main options to have been considered are as follows:

- Option 1.1 Maintain the status quo;
- Option 1.2 Federate the school
- Option 1.3 Establish an Area School on the existing site;
- Option 1.4 Close the school;

18.3 The main advantages and disadvantages of each option are as follows.

Option 1.1 Maintain Status Quo (Do nothing)

Advantages	Disadvantages
No additional investment expenditure is required in the building.	A permanent Head Teacher would need to be appointed and the Head Teacher would have a significant teaching commitment.
The existing Temporary Accommodation would be removed from the school generating savings.	The childcare provision on site would be removed unless the provision generated sufficient income to rent the Temporary Accommodation themselves.
	Would not address issues regarding a projected surplus of places at Ysgol Llanbedr.
	The limited catering facilities / lack of indoor hall space at Ysgol Llanbedr would not be rectified.
	Funding per pupil would remain the 2 nd highest in Denbighshire at £8,498 per pupil.
	The school would remain vulnerable to changes in Parental Preference due to low pupil numbers within immediate geographical proximity.

Option 1.2 Federate both Schools

Advantages	Disadvantages
This option requires no additional capital investment.	Would not address issues regarding a projected surplus of places at Ysgol Llanbedr.
Appointing a permanent Head Teacher would be more viable in the future as the post would have no teaching commitment.	The limited catering facilities / lack of indoor hall space at Ysgol Llanbedr would not be rectified.
More opportunities to share resources and ensure long term sustainability of each school.	There would be no flexibility within the schools to respond to fluctuating pupil numbers within the existing catchment of each school.
Both schools would retain their individual	The potential partner – Ysgol Borthyn,

identities.	would gain little from the Federation.
	The school would remain vulnerable to changes in Parental Preference due to low pupil numbers within immediate geographical proximity.

Option 1.3 Establish an Area school at Ysgol Llanbedr;

Advantages	Disadvantages
Designing and constructing additional fit for purpose facilities would significantly improve the learning environment for all pupils.	Would require significant changes in regard to school organisation proposals across the area with potential reduction in capacity / closure of numerous schools.
Would not require amendments to current pupil travel arrangements.	The Head Teacher would retain a teaching commitment.
	The school would have a low number of pupils who could walk to school due to its location on the outskirts of the village.
	The school would be vulnerable to changes in parental preference.

Option 1.4 Close the School

Advantages	Disadvantages
No additional investment expenditure is required.	Staff would be redeployed or made redundant.
Pupils would gain from being taught in single year group classes.	Denbighshire County Council would not benefit from the sale of the building.
Provision would retain a Faith element.	
Pupils would be educated in fit for purpose facilities.	
Pupils would be educated at a school which has a permanent Head Teacher and is in a strong position for retaining a Head Teacher.	

18.4 The analysis of these options suggest that to meet the investment objectives and critical success factors that the option of closing the school should be considered as the preferred option.

Analysis of Options against Investment Objectives and Critical Success Factors

	Option 1.1 Do nothing	Option 1.2 Federate	Option 1.3 Expand	Option 1.4 Closure
1 Improved Learning Environment	x	x	✓	✓
2 Greater Economy – Revenue Implications	x	x	?	x
2 Greater Economy – Capital	?	?	?	?
3 Sustainable Education system	x	✓	x	✓
Critical success factors				
CSF1 Improved attainment and performance	?	?	?	?
CSF2 Improved school condition and suitability	x	x	✓	x
CSF3 Reduction in surplus places	x	x	x	✓
CSF4 Improved ability to appoint and retain permanent Head Teachers.	x	✓	x	✓
CSF 5 Support the increase in demand for Welsh Medium Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Summary	Discounted	Possible	Discounted	Preferred

19. Explanation of the statutory process

19.1 In order for the Current Proposal to be implemented, Denbighshire County Council is required to follow a procedure laid out by a combination of an Act of the Welsh Government and a statutory code.

19.2 The requirements are as follows:

- a. Consultation held with people likely to be affected by the Proposal;
- b. Consultation report setting out details of the Consultation to be published on the council's website;
- c. Publication of the Current Proposal (also known as the 'statutory notice') with details such as the planned implementation date, how to obtain a copy of the consultation report and how to object:
 - i) on the council's website;
 - ii) posted on or near the main entrance of the two schools; and
 - ii) by providing affected schools with copies to distribute to parents.
- d. An objection period of 28 days from the date of publication allowing anyone who wishes to object to the Current Proposal to do so;
- e. Determination by the council (when, subject to the above process, the decision to implement the Current Proposal may be approved);
- f. Publication by the council of any objections and its response to them (within 7 days of the date of determination of the Current Proposal).

19.3 Please note that any response provided to the formal consultation will not be regarded as an objection to the Current Proposal. This is because the Current Proposal may change in response to the formal consultation. If you would like to object to the Current Proposal, please wait until it has been published (as described in **paragraph 19.2(c)** above) then follow the procedure set out on the statutory notice.

20. Community, Welsh Language and Equality impact

20.1 Each school has completed a Community and Welsh Language assessment. As the Current Proposal, if implemented, will result in the closure of the school a further Equality and Community impact assessments will be carried out during the Formal Consultation.

21. Response Form

21.1 A response form for comments, including an opportunity for consultees to register their wish to be notified of publication of the formal consultation report, appears at the end of this consultation document.

ⁱ Section 41-45 School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It should be noted that this will be replaced by Section 48 School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 later in 2013; Royal Assent has been received for the 2013 Act but at the time of publication, this section has not yet come into force.

ⁱⁱ The consultation document can be found in the School Organisation & Modernising section or you can follow this link [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/modernisingeducation]

ⁱⁱⁱ Formal Consultation Document for Children & Young People. This is available upon request from DCC [and/or from the DCC website in the School Organisation & Modernising section by following this link [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/modernisingeducation]

^{iv} Modernising Education Framework - available to read on request at DCC's offices in Ruthin or by visiting the website [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/modernisingeducation] in the School Organisation & Modernising section

^v Copies of these letters and emails from people who gave relevant consents are available to view on the DCC website by following this link [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/modernisingeducation] in the School Organisation & Modernising section. All personal details have been removed from the letters and emails.

DRAFT