

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT

Proposal : To close Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools, with all pupils transferring to a new Cwmaman Primary School on 1st September 2018.

1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 006/2013. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 1st March 2016 and 29th April 2016 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

2. Who did we consult with?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/Schoolconsultations.aspx>

- The Federated Governing Body of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Pupils of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Parents, carers, guardians, and staff members of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The local Communities First Partnership
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership

Copies were also sent to all local authorities that share a boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3. The Proposal

The proposal consulted upon is to close Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools and transfer all the pupils to a new Primary school to be created for the community of Cwmaman. A new school building will be constructed for this purpose, on land in Council ownership at Glanaman Road, Cwmaman. It is proposed that Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools would close on 31st August 2018 with the pupils transferring to the new Primary school on 1st September 2018.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all the stakeholders listed overleaf which is attached as Appendix 1.

4. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings were also convened:

- Meetings of both School Councils (Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior) – 15th March 2016
- Meeting of the Federated Governing Body of Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior – 15th March 2016
- Open Evening for all parents, governors, school staff, members of the community etc – 27th April 2016

Detailed notes of all of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes detail all questions raised, comments and statements made with responses provided where appropriate.

An open evening/exhibition was held at Glynhafod Junior School on 27th April 2016, the purpose of which was to provide further information on the proposal, answer any questions and give parents, in particular, the opportunity to view impressions of the proposed facilities that will be available for their children at the new Primary school. Officers from the Education and Lifelong Learning and Corporate Estates Divisions were in attendance. This event was attended by approximately 60 persons, which included school staff, governors, parents and members of the local community. In addition, 50 pupils of Glynhafod Junior attended and many of them made comments which are summarised at the end of this report. Many of the children's comments relate to internal school matters that will be the responsibility of their school staff and governors to deal with and respond to; they are outside of the remit of this consultation and are listed separately.

5. Summary of Responses to Consultation

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2. Also enclosed as part of this Appendix are summaries of the questionnaires received (20 in total), other correspondence received and comments posted on a board provided for this purpose at the open evening. The main issues raised during consultation, with our responses to them included the points summarised below.

It was stressed to all persons concerned that this consultation process is in respect of a proposal to merge two schools to create a new Primary school and follows statutory guidance contained within the School Organisation Code; it is not consultation on a construction project or proposed site. If the proposal progresses and a planning application for a new school is submitted in the future, then further consultation will be undertaken in the community under the relevant legislation (the Town and Country Planning Act). This is entirely separate from the current consultation process. Any comments received that directly related to any future planning process, such as the loss of a view or loss of a green space for example have not been responded to as they are outside of the remit of this consultation.

- **Concerns at the safety of the proposed new school site**

The Council is currently undertaking detailed feasibility works which include the statutory ground investigations and flood modelling works that are essential for projects of this size and nature. The results of these studies will inform our future plans for the new school building. No construction will be undertaken on a site that does not meet the stringent safety regulations laid down by statute. Copies of all statutory reports that have been commissioned will be available on the Council website should this proposal progress and a planning application be lodged; they will form part of the documentation that legally has to be submitted for this purpose.

- **Your consultation is incomplete; when do you intend to consult with every resident within the schools catchment area, in particular those living in Glanamman Road?**

Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. All persons who are required to be consulted with under this Code have indeed been consulted with. Our consultation documentation has, however been published on the Council website and any interested person can therefore view the details of the proposal

and comment on it if they so wish. It must be noted that the statutory consultation process being undertaken at this time relates to the Council's proposal to amalgamate the two schools to create a single Primary School; it is not consultation on the construction of a new building. If this proposal does proceed, further consultation will be undertaken with the local community, including that required under the Town and Country Planning Act.

- **Request made to view the Environmental Impact Assessment and other reports relating to ground investigations and flood modelling.**

As already advised, this consultation process relates to the proposal to create a new Primary school for the village of Cwmaman and the consultation relates to this issue only.

Initial ground investigation and flood modelling reports have been commissioned, these will be developed further should this proposal be agreed and a planning application submitted in the future. The hydrodynamic modelling of the proposal development based on surveys of all relevant rivers and watercourses has indicated that the proposed school building will be above the predicted flood levels and that adjacent land is protected from increased flooding in accordance with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) flood consequence assessment requirements. The proposal raises the level of the school building and lowers the levels of the areas used for the school sports pitches. Modelling indicates that this proposal will also reduce the level of existing flooding predicted along Glanamau Road.

A preliminary review of the ground investigations report confirms, subject to the extent and scope of the Phase 2 investigations, that there is no evidence of any major source of contamination present on the site.

A site materials, handling and management strategy is currently being developed with the aim of retaining, treating and reusing the existing colliery spoil on site to form the school plateau and landscape areas with the aim of mitigating off-site removal and disposal costs.

- **A new school is not needed, it is a waste of money, upgrade the existing schools instead.**

Our consultation document outlines in detail the reasons for the proposal and the rationale behind it. The figures quoted by some of the respondents for the cost of upgrading the existing schools (£800k) are actually the costs to maintain and repair the existing buildings, not to upgrade them and bring them up to a 21st Century Schools standard. The two schools are also on restricted sites which do not meet and will never meet current national building bulletin guidelines for new schools.

- **A school is not needed due to the falling birth rate**

There is no documentary or statistical evidence to support this statement.

- **Use the Cwmaman bottom club (the former Cwmaman Institute complex) for the new school**

Not only are the premises referred to not in the ownership of the Council, but they have not been considered as an option as they are totally unsuitable for use as a school. This is due to the fact that there is **no** outside space whatsoever at the site and no land around it or nearby that could be utilised for this purpose. The school would not have any playground or recreation space and no area for parking; it is highly unlikely that planning permission would be granted with such serious limitations. The cost of converting what was previously a licensed premises and theatre complex would be prohibitive even if it were feasible.

- **What are the future intentions for the current school sites?**

As this is a consultation process, no decisions on the potential future use of either school site have been made.

- **The woodland trail and memorial bench will be removed.**

This is not the case, both will remain and it is intended to enhance the area surrounding the memorial bench also.

- **Local businesses will suffer and homes will be devalued.**

There is no documented evidence to support these statements and it can be shown that neither of these events has occurred when schools have been amalgamated in other areas of RCT.

The View of Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales) of the Overall Merits of the Proposal.

Estyn has provided us with the following as their response to this consultation process:

‘ Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales have prepared this report. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body that is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortium, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council:

- Close Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools; and
- Opens a new primary school to replace them.
- The two schools would close on 31st August 2018 with the pupils transferring to the new primary school on 1 September 2018

Summary

The local authority's proposal is to amalgamate two schools into a newly built single school. The schools identified for closure are Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools. These schools are situated less than a mile apart.

Both schools currently perform well at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, and are categorised by the Central South Consortium as green schools.

This proposal is consistent with the local authority's strategy for school re-organisation, and will reduce the number of surplus places.

It is Estyn's opinion that this proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on pupils' standards.

Description and benefits

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal, which is consistent with the local authority's strategy for school re-organisation. This rationale includes the reduction of surplus places. Currently the take up of places in one school is significantly below capacity (25%) and the projected take up of places in this school is for a further decline in pupil numbers leading to total surplus places of 30% by 2020. The take up of places in the other school is slightly below capacity (10%) and the projected take up of places in this school is for an increase in pupil numbers leading to a full capacity by 2020. The proposed pupil roll for the new school is 240 pupil places, which on current predictions would leave a surplus capacity of 18% on opening in 2018.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on learner travel arrangements. There is a negligible increase in distance to travel for a minority of current pupils, and none of the existing routes to school will have to change.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on staff and their employment. The proposer has assessed that there could be some short term and possible longer term changes to staffing structures. However, the proposer has not identified any likely reductions in staffing numbers, and as this proposal brings together two schools each with a different age range of pupils, there is not likely to be any duplication of staff that needs to be addressed. The headteacher of one school is currently the acting head of the other school. The proposer does not comment on the impact (if any) on administration staff, or other support staff.

The proposer has undertaken an equality impact assessment, and a community impact assessment. However neither is included in the main consultation document, and these have to be sourced elsewhere. The provider has included the details for gaining sight of these.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer sets out the outcomes from the most recent Estyn inspection reports for the two schools affected by the proposal. Estyn judged that in both of the schools current performance and prospects for improvement were good, and that standards in learning and teaching was good. The proposal also sets out the most recent categorisation for these schools.

The proposal clearly states the educational advantages arising from the provision of a newly built school replacing the current dated accommodation. These include a more positive learning experience for pupils through being taught in a new, state of the art purpose built school, with sports facilities adjacent to it.

It is Estyn's opinion that a move to a new school is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on standards'.

6. Conclusion

The Council's Cabinet has met to consider all correspondence received and feedback received following the consultation process, and has determined that a statutory notice should be published to progress this proposal. This notice will be published on 2nd September 2016 and all prescribed consultees will be formally notified of this process.



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED AMALGAMATION
OF CWMAMAN INFANTS' AND GLYNHAFOD JUNIOR
SCHOOLS, BY CLOSING BOTH SCHOOLS AND
CREATING A NEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL,
FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER 2018.**

Table of Contents

Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Who will we consult with?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What will the consultation process entail?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What do you have to consider?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
How do you make your views known?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Background to the proposal	6
Information on the schools – Cwmaman Infants’ School.....	6
Information on the schools – Glynhafod Junior School.....	8
What is the basis for this proposal?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What is the educational case for closing Cwmaman Infants’ and Glynhafod Junior Schools to create a new primary ?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What does the proposal mean for the schools’ pupils?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What will be the likely impact of the proposal on the local area? ...	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What are the financial implications of the proposal?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What are the disadvantages of this proposal?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
What alternative options have been considered other than the amalgamation of the schools?.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
The new proposed school.....	16
What is the statutory process to close schools and open a new one?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Consultation Response Pro-forma	18

Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to amalgamate Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools. The amalgamation will be achieved by closing the two existing schools and opening a new primary school to replace them. A new school building to accommodate all children from the village who require a place at the primary school is proposed to be built on the site of the former Fforchaman Colliery, on land in the ownership of the Council located between the Cwrt Alun Lewis sheltered housing complex and the football field at Glanaman Road. It is proposed that the two schools would close on 31st August 2018 with the pupils transferring to the new primary school on 1 September 2018.

Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Federated Governing Body of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Pupils of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Parents, carers, guardians, and staff members of Cwmaman Infants' School and Glynhafod Junior School
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The local Communities First Partnership
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership

What will the consultation process entail?

The consultation will start on the 1st March 2016 and will be completed at 5pm on 29th April 2016. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in May, 2016. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on Page 5 of this document.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the statutory notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education & Lifelong Learning will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and his response to them within 7 days of the day of the determination of the proposal. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the addresses detailed on Page 5 of this document.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation dates are 31st August 2018 for the school closures and 1st September 2018 for the opening of the new school.

What do you have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed change to primary education provision in Cwmaman, Aberdare. We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposal to amalgamate Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools. A new school building to accommodate all children from the village who require a place at the primary school is proposed to be built on the site of the former Fforchaman Colliery, on land in the ownership of the Council located between the Cwrt Alun Lewis sheltered housing complex and the football field at Glanaman Road.

How do you make your views known?

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools	Federated Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Wednesday, 15 th March 2016, 4 – 6pm	Cwmaman Infants' School
Cwmaman Infants' School	School Council	Wednesday, 15 th March 2016 2.30 – 3.00 pm	Cwmaman Infants' School
Glynhafod Junior School	School Council	Wednesday, 15 th March 2016, 1.45 – 2.15 pm	Glynhafod Junior School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Wednesday 27 th April 2016, 4 – 6pm	Glynhafod Junior School

A consultation questionnaire is attached, it will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council's internet site at <http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/Schoolconsultations.aspx>

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet.

You are also welcome to put your views, comments and any questions you may have in writing to:

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

School Organisation and Planning Unit

Ty Trevithick,

Abercynon CF45 4UQ Telephone (01443) 744227 Fax (01443) 744201

E-mail schoolplanning@rctednet.net

All correspondence should be received **no later than 5pm Friday, 29th April 2016.**

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the statutory notice.

All schools affected by this proposal are English medium schools and therefore the consultation document is provided via the English language. If a Welsh language copy of the consultation document is required, please contact the above address.

Background to the proposal

Information on the schools – Cwmaman Infants' School

Cwmaman Infants' School (Cwmaman Infants') is an English Medium Community School located at Fforchaman Road, Cwmaman, Aberdare. The school site consists of a traditional stone Victorian building, constructed in 1880. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Cwmaman Infants is graded a B for condition and a C for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £289,000.

The pupil numbers in Cwmaman Infants' over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government's statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately.

Cwmaman Infants' School					
No on roll in January	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total statutory aged pupils	85	90	95	96	97
Pre-nursery and Nursery pupils	41	41	39	46	37

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Cwmaman Infants', which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

Cwmaman Infants' School								
Projected No on roll in January	Capacity of the School	2015 (Actual)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% surplus places in 2020
Statutory aged pupils	129	97	93	87	83	83	90	30.2%
Pre-nursery and Nursery pupils	(43 places)	37	32	38	40	40	40	

Cwmaman Infants' School was inspected by Estyn in June 2015 and the school's current performance was deemed good, with its prospects for improvement also good.

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the progress made to date, the school should:

- R1** Ensure consistency in teaching and developing pupils' numeracy skills and understanding in all classes; and increase opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in all areas of learning
- R2** Share good practice in Welsh language development to improve teacher confidence and ensure consistently good provision in all classes
- R3** Enable governors to challenge leaders more robustly in relation to the school's performance
- R4** Further develop the role of middle leaders in writing reports that focus more sharply on pupils' standards, and the ability of all leaders to write more evaluatively and consider the impact of initiatives more effectively

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region and considers that:

Cwmaman Infants School has recently been categorised as a 'Green' school, the highest level it can achieve. This rating means that the school has a track record of sustaining a high level of learner outcomes, it demonstrates resilience at all levels and is challenged to move forward towards, or sustaining excellence.

The tables below set out the performance of Cwmaman Infants' for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The three year average of the percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals (all pupils) is 52.94%.

Percentage of pupils at the end of Year 2 achieving at least outcome 5, and the Foundation Phase Indicator

	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile*	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile*	2014	2014 Benchmark Quartile*
Foundation Phase Indicator	93.8%	1st	92.9%	1st	88.2%	2nd
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	100%	1st	100%	1st	100%	1st
Language literacy and	93.8%	1st	92.9%	1st	91.1%	1st

communication skills English						
Mathematical development	96.9%	1st	92.9%	1st	88.2%	2nd

* - benchmark quartiles – 1 being the highest, 4 the lowest.

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year

	2012 %	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013 %	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014 %	2014 Benchmark Quartile	2015 %	2015 Benchmark Quartile
% attendance	93%	2nd	92.6%	2nd	92.7%	4th	94.9%	1st

Information on the schools – Glynhafod Junior School

Glynhafod Junior School (Glynhafod Junior) is an English medium Community School located at Glynhafod Street, Cwmaman and the school site consists of a traditional Victorian style stone and brick building, constructed in 1912 with a double mobile classroom unit on the front yard. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Glynhafod Junior is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £405,000; this includes the cost of a replacement roof and the removal of the mobile classrooms.

The pupil numbers in Glynhafod Junior over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory pupil level annual school census (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year.

Glynhafod Junior School					
No on roll in January	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total statutory aged pupils	82	82	80	90	102

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Glynhafod Junior, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

Glynhafod Junior School							
Capacity of the School	2015 (Actual)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% surplus places in 2020
109	102	110	113	113	112	109	0%

Glynhafod Junior School was last inspected by Estyn in December 2010. The school's current performance was deemed to be good, and its prospects for improvement also good.

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the progress made to date, the school should:

- R1** continue to address the gap between boys' and girls' attainment;
- R2** improve standards of Welsh language skills, especially in upper key stage 2;
- R3** strengthen the partnership with parents;
- R4** continue to improve attendance; and
- R5** further develop the role of the school council

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red in respect of their standards. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region and considers that:

Glynhafod Junior School like Cwmaman Infants School has recently been categorised as a 'Green' school, the highest level it can achieve. This rating means that the school has a track record of sustaining a high level of learner outcomes, it demonstrates resilience at all levels and is challenged to move forward towards, or sustaining excellence.

This is the same outcome as for Cwmaman Infants School. Since September 2012, the two schools have shared a federated governing body; they also share a Headteacher, as the Headteacher of Cwmaman Infants has, since the above date also undertaken the role as Acting Headteacher at Glynhafod Junior School.

The tables overleaf set out the performance of Glynhafod Junior for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The three year average of the percentage of pupils with free school meals is 44.12%

Percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 who have achieved the expected level

	2012 %	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013 %	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014 %	2014 Benchmark Quartile	2015 %	2015 Benchmark Quartile
Core	73.9	3rd	81.3	2nd	87.5	1st	90.9	1st

Subject Indicator								
English	73.9	3rd	87.5	1st	87.5	2nd	90.9	1st
Maths	78.3	3rd	87.5	2nd	93.8	1st	90.9	2nd
Science	82.6	3rd	93.8	1st	100	1st	95.4	1st

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year

	2012 %	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013 %	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014 %	2014 Benchmark Quartile	2015 %	2015 Benchmark Quartile
% attendance	94.4	1st	92.2	3rd	94.2	2nd	95.4	1st

What is the basis for this proposal?

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's education services were inspected by Estyn in March 2012, at which time the following recommendations were made:

- R1 - raise standards in schools particularly in key stage 4;
- R2 - improve attendance rates in all schools;
- R3 - improve the evaluation and analyses of data across service areas and partnerships to drive improvements in outcomes for learners;
- R4 - use the full powers available to the authority to improve leadership and management in schools;
- R5 - reduce surplus places; and
- R6 - improve the rigour and the level of scrutiny and challenge across all services and partnerships.

Over the past three years the Council had focused its attention on these six recommendations, and in particular Recommendations 1, 2 & 5, which will have the greatest impact on pupil achievement in our schools. As a result, schools that, when compared with similar schools across Wales based on

free school meals, are in the third and fourth quartiles are being subject to significant challenge, scrutiny and support.

Elected Members have accepted Estyn's recommendations and have undertaken a review of our school provision. The criteria we have used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer pupils of statutory school age;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, of meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- The schools are 'paired' with each other, i.e. the children usually progress from the one to the other;
- The schools are located on sites that are one mile apart from each other;
- Cwmaman Infants School has a current surplus capacity figure of 24.8%, just under the Wales Audit Office recommended 'benchmark' for review of 25%
- Both schools have mixed aged classes;

As advised, the two schools already share a federated governing body and a Headteacher.

The opportunity exists to bring the two schools together to create a larger, more educationally viable primary school.

What is the educational case for closing Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools and creating a primary school?

School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that creating a primary school for the community of Cwmaman, in a new, purpose built school will improve educational outcomes and provision for the following reasons;

- A single school vision and ethos, with a governing body and management team on a single site providing leadership across the full primary age range, using consistent policies and practices;
- Improved transition from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2 (Yr 2 to Yr 3) and overall progression;
- Greater consistency of teaching and learning for pupils across the key stages including:
 - Seamless curriculum planning and co-ordination;
 - Shared schemes of work, assessment and tracking of pupil progress;
 - Greater continuity in terms of expectations, behaviour, partnerships with parents and
 - Day to day organisation;
- Less change for parents and pupils;
- Greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
- Opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
- Potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to the single school; and
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21st Century learning environment.

There are opportunities for the teaching and support staff. An 'all-through' primary school for Cwmaman could offer:

- A larger school with a bigger role;
- A more flexible organisation;
- Improved career prospects;
- Improved curriculum co-ordination;
- The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;
- An increased range of expertise;
- Improved opportunities for staff interaction /co-ordination.

A new, purpose built primary school for Cwmaman will be able to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced and secure financial situation. Overall, the single, larger primary school will be more financially viable than the Infants' and Junior schools in their current form.

What will this proposal mean for the school pupils?

In making the proposed change, most things will not change for the children at all; indeed, there are several perceived benefits that can be realised:

- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, providing that pupil numbers remain stable at their current levels, the large majority of the staff currently employed in Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools will simply 'slot' in to similar posts in the new Primary School, if they wish to do so;
- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

- Build on the achievement gained at both schools by bringing together a larger team of staff to share expertise and experience.
- Being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school building, with sports facilities adjacent to it, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21st Century.

The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils.

The catchment area of the new primary school will not change, i.e. it will continue to be the same as the current catchment area of Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools. The Council's policy regarding home to school transport provision will continue to apply. No address within the new school's catchment area will be more than 2 miles from the school, therefore no child will qualify for free transport on the grounds of distance. All walking routes to the new school site are considered to be available and the route is also well served by public transport. The difference in time taken to travel to the new school site will be negligible as it is in close proximity to the existing schools, some children may have a slightly longer journey to school but many will have a shorter one. The proposed new school site is more centrally located within the catchment area than the current schools which we consider to be of benefit with regard to travel times and journeys undertaken. To illustrate this point, the proposed new school site is just 0.36 miles on foot from Cwmaman Infants' and 0.39 miles from Glynhafod Junior, it is located almost equidistantly between the two current schools. Overall, we consider the impact on learner travel arrangements to be neutral.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in the community of Cwmaman in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?

As with any major change, there could be some short term and possibly longer-term changes in the staffing structure. As this is a new school provision, a temporary governing body will be established if a decision to proceed with amalgamation is agreed. The main role of this temporary governing body will be to establish a staffing structure for the new

primary school, appoint its senior management team and make decisions with regard to the method of 'slotting in' of all other staff to the posts that are available in the new primary school. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

The Headteacher of Cwmaman Infants School also became the Acting Headteacher of Glynhafod Junior School in September 2012 and has continued to undertake both roles since this date. If the proposal is agreed, the temporary governing body will determine how the post of Headteacher of the new primary school is to be appointed.

A new permanent governing body will be appointed for the new primary school when it opens in September 2018; the temporary governing body will remain in place until all governor appointments are made. The existing federated governing body of the two schools will also remain in office until the new school opens.

There would also be benefits for teaching staff, which should improve teaching standards within the school. Currently, pupils are taught in mixed age groups. If the proposal proceeds, the new primary school will have approx 200 pupils of statutory school age which will equate to 7 teachers for 7 age groups. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be taught in their own age group, which makes it considerably easier for the class teacher to provide an appropriate curriculum and support for all pupils. This should result in higher standards of teaching and learning and better educational outcomes. The pupils and staff will also enjoy the benefits of enhanced and superior educational facilities that a new school build will bring.

Teaching (and also support) staff would be able to gain experience in working across the whole primary phase, rather than being restricted to just one key phase of education, as they are at present. This additional experience will bring benefits in respect of staff development and future promotion opportunities for all persons employed at the new primary school.

The creation of a larger primary school would also provide staff with the opportunity to specialise in specific areas of the curriculum. The primary school will require one co-ordinator for each subject area of the curriculum and for areas of school management such as child protection and additional learning needs; at present the separate Infants' and Junior Schools have one such co-ordinator per school. Being a small school with fewer staff means that staff have to take on multiple roles, leading to greater workloads and less opportunities to specialise. A larger primary school with more staff allows for such specialism with the ability to share workload more effectively and therefore gives staff more opportunities to progress their careers.

What will be the likely impact of the proposal on the community of Cwmaman?

The Aberaman South electoral ward is a Communities First Area and is also a Flying Start Area.

A community impact assessment and an equality impact assessment have been completed for this proposal. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The community impact assessment and equality impact assessment will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the community impact assessment and equalities impact assessment are available from the contact details at the start of this document and are also available on the Council website, using the web link provided on page 5. It is considered that the overall impact on the local community of this new school provision, with its improved facilities will be a positive, beneficial one.

As this is a consultation process at this point in time, no decisions have yet been taken as to the potential future use of any school sites that may become surplus to requirements should these proposals be implemented. Such matters will be determined at the appropriate time.

What are the financial implications of the proposal?

The purpose of creating all through primary schools, as the principal model of school organisation is not driven by financial considerations. Savings that do arise initially benefit the remaining school, as they enable school improvements to be made, and then schools as a whole through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

A move from a position with, 'two schools-two budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a head teacher not two, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the new primary school's governing body, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below.

	Glynhafod Junior (Current)	Cwmaman Infants' (Current)	Cwmaman Primary (Future)	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2015/16 budget	379	481	698	162

A new school will be constructed to accommodate the Primary School at an estimated cost of £7.9 million and will be funded from the 21st Century Schools Programme, 50% of which will be funded by the Welsh Government and 50% from the Council.

What are the disadvantages of this proposal?

Some parents may feel that two smaller schools are better for pupils rather than one larger school – in other words there could be a view that smaller schools may be more personal and less daunting, particularly for new entrants. The new primary school after the amalgamation will still only be the size of an average Rhondda Cynon Taf primary school, with approx 200 statutory age pupils in attendance and there are many much larger, very successful primary schools in the County Borough.

There will be staffing implications in that, for example, there will be need for only one Headteacher, but the two schools already have a shared post holder. Staff will be concerned about the security of their jobs which is why the temporary governing body will, as soon as possible, once the statutory processes are complete, address the staffing issues. In practice, governing bodies seek to keep as much continuity in the staffing as is possible in these situations.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.

What alternative options have been considered other than the amalgamation of Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools?

The current position is that we have two relatively small 'paired' schools, located just one mile away from each other with approximately 40 surplus places between the two schools. If the option were to 'do nothing', this would not change the current position of the two schools at all and there would not be any opportunities to utilise this spare capacity in a more effective and efficient way.

The only options available to the Council therefore to improve educational performance and ensure the provision represents value for money are to:

- Close both schools and create a new build primary school on a new site in Cwmaman, located on a plot of land in Council ownership that is located between the two schools at the current time, equidistant from both and which is within in the catchment area of the combined schools – the current proposal;
- Continue with the current federation, maintaining the two school buildings, with two separate school budgets but with one governing body and Headteacher. This, in effect is the 'do nothing' option that would make no change and thus no improvement to the current way in which the two schools are organised and managed.

In respect of the federation of the governing bodies, this has already created in essence a two -site school under one Headteacher and one governing body. They remain as two separate legal entities and employ two sets of staff. This option would not enable the educational benefits that accrue from deploying the teachers across both schools and improving the standards of teaching and learning that arise from creating a single school as

the school buildings are located a mile apart, making joint working relatively difficult. Both schools would still be subjected to separate inspections by Estyn also.

Therefore, the other option has been discounted and the preferred option is that proposed in this consultation document.

The new proposed school.

It is being proposed that a new school building will be constructed on the former Fforchaman Colliery site at Glanamman Road, Cwmaman. The new school will be an English Medium Community school and will cater for children aged between 3 and 11 years of age. It will have a proposed admissions number of 34 pupils per year group, and an overall pupil capacity of 240. In addition it will have at least 34 nursery places available, funded on a part time basis; there will however be flexibility to increase the number of nursery places, if there is evidenced demand, by utilising spare capacity that will exist within the building. The accommodation will consist of a nursery, 8 teaching areas and ancillary accommodation that will be appropriate for the numbers of pupils on roll, including a multi-purpose hall, kitchen, offices, resource areas and of course toilet provision. Admissions to the new school will be administered by the local authority and all pupils currently attending the two schools will automatically transfer to the new school when it opens, subject to parental preference.

Any risks that may be associated with these proposals, such as construction delays will be mitigated by the detailed and thorough project management arrangements that will be put in place.

What is the statutory process to close schools and open a new school?

The Code on School Organisation ("The Code") is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. Proposals to close schools and open a new school have to follow the following process:

1. The Council's Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Council **must** provide consultees with a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days. If the Council considers it appropriate meetings are held with stakeholders during the consultation period;
3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council's officers own responses is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period and presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration;
4. The Council's Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Council's Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;

5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
6. If objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority's determination as to whether to proceed with the proposals;
7. The Council's Cabinet must decide to issue its decision on the proposals within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;
8. If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.

Consultation Response Pro-forma

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
School Organisation and Planning Unit
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon
CF45 4UQ
or by fax to 01443 744201, or e-mail schoolplanning@rctednet.net*

The proposal

The proposal is to close Cwmaman Infants and Glynhafod Junior Schools and transfer all the pupils to a new primary school for Cwmaman. It is proposed that the current two schools would close on 31 August 2018 with the pupils transferring to the new primary school on 1 September 2018.

1. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

3. Please indicate who you are (eg parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

4. Name (optional)

5. Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 29th April 2016.

Appendix 2

Notes of a meeting held with the members of the staff and the Federated Governing Body of Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools on 15th March, to consider the proposal to amalgamate the schools.

Present

Mrs E Thomas, Temporary Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Mr T Britton, Head of Primary Performance

Miss A Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager

Mr R Evans, Head of HR

20 members of staff and governors of Cwmaman Infants and Glynhafod Junior Schools plus local Elected Members

The Headteacher, Mrs L Rees opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing the officers present.

Mrs Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposal in question, namely to amalgamate Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools to create a new Primary school, which will be accommodated in a brand new school building. She outlined the reasons and rationale behind the proposals, as advised in the detailed consultation document that had been widely circulated. The purpose of this meeting is to assist the consultation process, by affording staff and governors the opportunity to ask questions or raise comments, statements etc in respect of the proposals as outlined. Every effort will be made to answer questions if possible. The statutory process that must be followed was also outlined. It was noted that this part of the process is consultation; the receipt of objections is not appropriate at this time.

The meeting was then opened to questions and comments:

- The governing body are wholeheartedly behind the proposal and are excited by it, they consider it to be long overdue. They referred to a visit they had undertaken to a new school in Beddau to view the facilities there. The purpose of this visit was to give the staff and governors an idea of the facilities that are provided in new school builds. Governors queried the input that the staff and governors would have in to the design of the new school. Miss Richards (AR) gave information and advised that they would be kept fully informed and would be consulted as far as is possible.
- A question was asked on the establishment of the governing body of the new school and what its relationship would be with the existing federated GB. Mrs Hadley (JH) gave information, having checked this issue with the Welsh Government. A temporary governing body would need to be established and only members of the federated GB, plus local Elected Members would be invited to apply for positions. The temporary GB would work alongside the federated GB and their prime purpose

will be to establish the new school, agree the staffing structure and appoint the staff, commencing with the appointment of the Headteacher.

- Two years is a tight timescale for building the new school. Are you confident it will open on time? AR gave information on the work being undertaken at present, which was primarily ground investigations and flood risk assessment. This work will be concluded in April, so any risks will be identified early. This is preparatory and feasibility work at this stage to inform the design and build of the school.
- If the opening of the new building was delayed, what would be the budget position if the existing schools had to be used? JH gave information, a transitional budget would be provided, as had occurred previously at other amalgamating schools.
- Questions were asked regarding the potential staff structure of the new school and the appointment process. Richard Evans (RE) and JH gave information, based on previous experience at other schools. The overall staffing structure will be highly dependent on pupil numbers at the new school. Information on timescales for this process, including the establishment of the temporary governing body was provided.
- What will happen to any surplus budget balances of the existing schools? JH gave information.
- Questions were asked in respect of the proposed new site and the location of the school building on it. AR gave information. She also referred to the open evening planned for 27th April, advising that draft plans will be available and all persons were welcome to attend. It was stressed that these plans will not be the final versions as they are still subject to the outcome of the ground investigations.
- The size of the new school was queried. Information was given, including that reliable future forecasts of pupil numbers will be used to ensure that the building will be large enough going forward.
- Mr Britton (TB) provided feedback on the meetings of the two School Councils held earlier, and the comments that had been provided by the children.
- The Headteacher, Mrs L Rees stated that the children's views reflect those of the community. The amalgamation process will need careful handling and consideration. She advised that no guarantees could be given to staff, but that they should not be overly concerned as the governors will do everything they can to ensure that a fair process is followed. Communication will be important, there is a need for full information to be provided and the lines need to be kept open.

- A question was asked regarding the management of the project moving forward. AR provided information.
- A query was raised regarding the future use of the current buildings. AR advised that no decisions had yet been made on this issue and gave information on what the process would be.
- A governor queried the content of the Community Impact Assessment as she felt that it did not cover some important aspects. JH gave information on the compilation of this document, which followed the Welsh Government guidelines on this matter to the letter. She advised that this assessment focuses on the additional services being provided to the community by the school, such as breakfast and after school clubs, community usage etc, rather than the actual impact the new school building, and its new location will have on the community.
- The Community Impact Assessment does not outline any negative aspects such as traffic impact, the future use of empty buildings etc. The neighbouring Nursery school for example is now derelict and an eyesore. JH and AR provided information. The process to be considered with regard to the future use of the buildings was outlined. A traffic impact assessment will be undertaken and mitigation plans such as parking areas, pick up/drop off areas, safe routes to schools projects will all be considered.
- Possible difficulties regarding the delivery of plant, equipment, construction materials to the proposed site were outlined. AR provided information on the processes that will be followed.
- A query on HR processes was raised. RE provided information.
- What will the name of the new school be and how will this be chosen? JH gave information on this process.

Mrs Thomas thanked everyone for their attendance and valued input, the meeting was then closed.

Notes of a meeting held with the members of the School Council of Cwmaman Infants' School on 15th March 2016, to consider the proposal to amalgamate Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools.

Present

Mr T Britton, Head of Primary Performance

Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager

Ms R Bryant, Teacher

6 members of the School Council of Cwmaman Infants' School, from Reception to Year 2.

Mr Britton opened the meeting by introducing himself and Mrs Hadley and then asked the children to introduce themselves also. He gave each child a sticker with their name on so they could be easily identified.

Ms Bryant explained that the children had been told why this meeting had been called, which was to discuss Cwmaman Infants and Glynhafod Juniors coming together in to a new school. The children had been asked for their thoughts on this, whether they had any ideas or suggestions for the new school and how they felt about it. The children had prepared a 'mind map' of their thoughts, on which they had written what they thought was good and bad about the proposal. They then discussed what they had written, and made the following comments:

- I am worried as I don't know any children in the Juniors. Mr Britton assured the pupil that they would be transferring to the new school with all their classmates.
- I have brothers and cousins in the Juniors, so I already know other children there.
- Mr Britton asked the children what activities they may do in a larger school, for example, would they play with their friends? They all answered yes. He also asked whether any of the children had older brothers and sisters in the Juniors, several said that they did.
- We will be excited if we have new computers.
- Concern expressed that the food might change. Mr Britton said that it could be better than before, not worse.
- We would like a new playground with grass so we can play football. We would also like new equipment and an outside shelter so we can play outside.
- A new school will save electricity and water. Can it have a tank to collect rainwater for the toilets? Mrs Hadley said that this will probably be provided.
- We are keen to recycle and we always turn things off to save energy.

- Solar panels will be important. Mrs Hadley said that these will also probably be installed in the new school.
- We will make new friends and will be with our brothers and sisters.
- Will we have I Pads?

Mr Britton asked the children whether they thought that the new school was a good, or bad idea. They all replied stating that they thought it was a good one.

Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley then thanked the children for their comments and for attending, the meeting was then closed.

Notes of a meeting held with the members of the School Council of Glynhafod Junior School on 15th March 2016, to consider the proposal to amalgamate Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools.

Present

Mr T Britton, Head of Primary Performance
Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager
Ms E McCaffrey, Teacher
9 members of the School Council of Glynhafod Junior School

Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley opened the meeting by introducing themselves and then asked the children to introduce themselves also.

Mr Britton explained that he and Mrs Hadley were here today to discuss an idea to join together Glynhafod Junior with Cwmaman Infants to make a Primary School. The children were shown photos of a new school in Beddau that the school staff and governors had visited the previous evening, they were displayed on a screen throughout the meeting.

Mr Britton asked the children what they thought of the new school plans, what ideas or thoughts they had about it and whether they had any concerns, or worries.

The pupils explained that they had all asked their class colleagues what they thought about the new school plans, and that they had collected everyone's thoughts and questions ready to be put forward today. The following questions/comments/statements were made with Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley providing answers and additional information wherever possible:

- What will be the name of the school?
- Will we all finish school at the same time?
- Will we have a bigger yard?
- Will we lose the park?
- Will we have the same teachers?
- What facilities will the community have?
- Will breaktimes be different for Infants and Juniors?
- What will happen to the pool?
- Will the Glynhafod children be able to walk home?

- Will there be separate Nursery and Reception toilets (the photos of the toilets taken at the school visited yesterday were shown at this point)?
- Will you take parts of both existing schools for the new school (referred to the foundation stone at the side of the Junior school, the children would like to see this incorporated in the new school)?
- What will happen to the memorial bench on the field?
- Will we have tinted windows?
- How big will the classrooms be?
- Will we have lockers?
- Will the rooms have light sensors?
- Will the classes be mixed age?
- Will we have an allotment and wildlife area?
- Will we have an Astroturf?
- Is the river tunnel under the site safe?
- What will happen to this school building?
- What will the traffic be like?
- Will there be a car park?
- Will we have new teachers or keep the ones we have now?
- Will we have an IT suite?

The children then presented the officers with completed questionnaire sheets they had compiled with their classmates that outlined many of the questions asked today. They also provided some information prepared by certain pupils in respect of a 'balanced argument' for and against the new school. Mr Britton asked them all in turn whether they thought that

the new school was a good idea, the majority thought it was but some were either unsure or not in favour.

Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley then thanked the children for their comments and for attending, the meeting was then closed.

QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK FOR THE PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE CWMAMAN INFANTS AND GLYNHAFOD JUNIOR SCHOOLS

Agree with Proposal	Completed by	Comments	Additional Views
Not sure	Local resident	Lack of information to form an objective view. I want to see the feasibility study and the EIA. Lack of public engagement	The proposal of substantial development on a colliery site is unnerving, there is no evidence to say that it is safe
Yes	Parent, Cwmaman Infants	Modern learning and teaching facilities and seamless transition can only benefit pupils and staff	I would want to know more about the viability of the proposed old colliery site as it has been unstable in the past
Not sure	Parent	I do agree in many ways, but my child will be in the infants when the school closes and I am worried about the impact it will have on my child	I want to know if it is 100% safe to build on an old coal site
Yes	Parent	Easier for issues regarding children to be carried over to junior school. My son's dyslexia was picked up in the Infants and there was much better support there than the Juniors for him.	If pupils are in one school the support can continue at the same level.
Yes	Parent	Good idea	None
Yes	Parent	New and improved facilities for a better learning experience	Easier for parents who have children in two schools at present, safer access to the nature trail and the church for the infants, traffic congestion in the centre of Cwmaman and the side streets in Glynhafod will ease, the backdrop and the setting of the site is ideal for children to learn more about

			the nature around them
Yes	Parent	No split school for multiple children, ease congestion, upgraded facilities	
No	Grandparent and local resident	Devaluation of properties, disruption due to building work, heavy traffic, noise. Loss of community area and living in a building site for 1-2 years. Disruption to parking for residents	Total disruption to the village and community, houses opposite would be unsellable during this period. Large traffic would be a safety issue, no compensation for residents
Yes	Parent	Easier as I will have a child in Juniors and a child in Nursery when the school opens	It looks more like a Comp. or College than a nursery/juniors
Not sure	Community member	I would be in agreement if certain levels of safety could be guaranteed	Concerns regarding the culverts and the piping of the River Aman under the school site, the pipes are in a very poor state of repair and could fail at any time. I have been assured this would be addressed but not to the river above and below the school site. Trees are being removed from the quarry opposite the site which absorb a great deal of water at present. I have seen flooding from this forestry coming over the quarry to the point where the quarry is no longer visible. Will the drainage for the new school be able to take this extra water? Upstream from the school site, where RCT has already dumped waste there are a number of widening fissures in the tip which are causing land slippage in the area. Is this going to be surveyed to reassure residents that the school is safe from such movement? Residents are concerned over the level of disruption from the build. Flooding

			of the site rendering it unusable as a football pitch, how will this be improved, keeping residents safe?
No	Parent	Waste of money, would rather see the £800k spent on updating existing schools. Refuse to lose our green spaces	There is absolutely no need for a new school on the site proposed, no Estyn report to support requirement
Not sure	local resident	I live directly opposite the current school and would like to know what will be built in the space	
No	local resident	Amount of traffic involved in construction and use for school. Also spoiling of view and play areas for children	Glanaman Road has flooded previously and you are now proposing changing the course of the culvert, what effect will this have on the houses
No	Parent	I think the money should be spent elsewhere, eg build a homeless shelter. There is nothing wrong with the way the schools run	I am worried about all the mining tunnels underneath
No	local resident	A need for a new school is required	There is so much waste ground between the old people's home and the field. Why does the field have to be lost, it is the only useful part of the village
Yes	Parent	More modern facilities/equipment for the children as existing buildings etc are now very old and in state of repair	Encourage community involvement/buy in. Encourage feedback from staff/parents/pupils

Yes	Grandparent	<p>Safety issues with Cwmaman Infants - location and traffic congestion. For pupils and teachers I believe 1 school is better/more effective than 2.</p> <p>Current 2 schools are old and costly to maintain</p>	<p>The proposed site of the new school is known to hold water and is very wet and muddy, Is there a drainage problem? There was a major flood in the village many years ago and residents are concerned that building works will cause problems with the water flow.</p>
No	local resident	<p>Glanaman Road waited over 100 years to have a view other than the colliery and now that we have one you want to remove it. What we have in Cwmaman that no other village has is space which we would like to keep as it is. The disruption would be catastrophic.</p>	<p>Why not turn Cwmaman bottom club (the Institute) into a school, it has enough space to have as many classrooms as you wish, it has a kitchen, you could create a dining room, and it has a theatre where the kids can express in drama and music. Redevelop the ground opposite Glanaman Road for adventure and sports.</p>
Yes	Local resident	<p>An excellent proposal, dragging Cwmaman into the 21st Century. Common sense.</p>	<p>Sad to see the two schools close, but sentimentality should not be used as a brake to arrest progress. Ignore the Luddites!</p>
No	Local resident	<p>At the meeting on 27/4/16 you could not provide the info on the safety of the site, I asked one of the officials present if they would send their child there and they changed the subject. How much longer is it going to take for school planning to realise people want to know the site is safe to build on. It is great to sit in an office with wonderful ideas, these are not guaranteed to work in practice in the real world.</p>	<p>This consultation has raised even more questions which need to be answered, a new school will be cheaper to run just as long as you resolve all the problems with the river that runs under the site. I have lived all my life at the same address and have seen the power and damage these two rivers can do, every year the river gets closer to overflowing its banks at the side of the club so be very aware of what you are doing, lack of maintenance was the cause of the last flood at Glanaman Road. Until you can provide the results of the drilling and flood modelling and</p>

			confirm the safety of the site the proposal should be put on hold, bit late if the new school disappears down a sink hole.
--	--	--	--

Consultation Evening, 27th April 2016

Summary of Comments Made

Pupils of Glynhafod Junior School

- Will we still have clubs with Tristan?
- Will all the mining tunnels be safe?
- Will we still have singing club?
- I don't like the new school because I love the school I'm in, and we won't be able to play football because when it's wet the grass will be muddy
- Will they still have carnivals?
- Will it have a football pitch?
- Will it have a swing and slide to use at playtime?
- Can the boys toilets be light blue and the girls light pink or purple?
- Can we have swings for playtimes?
- Have a Healthy School board
- Have a wildlife garden for us to use
- Are we going to have Special Friday awards for the children?
- Will be still have tuck?
- Have a Healthy Board for children to see
- Have a slide to use at playtime
- Make a cloakroom for each classroom so we don't have to push each other
- Have a different toilet for each classroom
- Will it have a climbing frame?
- Will we still have swimming lessons?
- We need bigger cloakrooms, a bigger hall and more teachers
- Have a new school uniform
- Have an upstairs
- What time will school start and finish?
- Have a different school name
- Can we still have school concerts?
- Have a different teacher for each subject
- Are we having a new school uniform and a playground?
- Who will be the new Headteacher?
- Are we going to have more after school clubs?
- Will the grass football pitches be open to the public?
- Will the infants and juniors have separate yards to play on?
- Have a new uniform, and can the pupils design the badge with the best one chosen?
- Will they have carnivals?
- Can we play in the park?
- Is the library big?
- More PE lessons and equipment
- Are they going to have drama class?
- I think it will be a good school

- Have a heater and a sink in each classroom
- Will you get some of the old school features like the sign on the side of our school and the sign in the infants?
- Can we have a separate hall and canteen?
- Will there be an Astroturf to play football on?
- Will the staff from Cwmaman and Glynhafod still be there?
- Will there be a library room for both schools?
- I don't like the IT/Computer room because it is in the open space, I believe it should have its own room
- I think it looks awesome
- Will we have the same teachers?
- Will there be a basketball pitch?
- We need more staff
- Will the teachers keep their jobs?

Parents, school staff, governors and members of the community

- Parking permits needed for residents of Glanaman Road
- Green walls for green screen filming, Cineclub
- An allotment?
- Please not too much grass!
- Outside covered play areas for KS2
- Who will control outdoor area/playground after school hours?
- Outside under cover areas
- It is not needed to be done
- Outside learning areas for KS1 and KS2
- Falling birth rate means school is not required
- Waste of money
- The future of our children's education lies in the construction of this school
- The sooner the better
- Waste of money, community ground and council tax
- Will there be a new school name if amalgamated on to one site?
- Make enough room for parking
- It is a bit small. Make it bigger and add more character!
- Make a smaller car parking area for staff and visitors in comparison to the size of the school!

