

**AGENDA ITEM 2****RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL****CABINET****19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2015****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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**REORGANISING PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE RHONDDA VALLEYS AND TONYREFAIL****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation process in respect of proposals to reorganise Primary schools, Secondary schools and Sixth Form provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:-

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached consultation report, which includes details of items of correspondence received during the consultation exercise and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report and to note its publication and distribution to the relevant stakeholders as required by Welsh Government.
- 2.3 Agree to progress the proposals to reorganise Primary schools, Secondary schools and Sixth Form provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail areas to the next stage of the review process by issuing appropriate statutory notices.

### 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of Cabinet held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, approval was given to begin a process of formal consultation on proposals to reorganise Primary schools, Secondary schools and Sixth Form provision in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail areas of the County borough, from September, 2018.
- 3.2 This consultation process has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any statutory notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015 in this instance.
- 3.3 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix A for your attention. It contains information in respect of all meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the detailed notes taken at these meetings. It also contains details of correspondence received together with the responses given to the points raised in this correspondence.
- 3.4 The initial response to our consultation was limited and as a result, the consultation period was extended by 4 weeks, to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015 to allow more time for respondents to submit their comments. The overwhelming majority of responses received came in after the original closing date of 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015. An additional consultation event was also organised for this purpose and was held at the Ystrad Sports Centre on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015, between 9 am and 6 pm.
- 3.5 Details of items of correspondence received can be summarised as follows:
- Letters and e-mails, 27 in total from the following:
    - 6 parents of pupils
    - 9 local residents/members of the public
    - 5 school governors
    - NASUWT trade union
    - Tonyrefail Community Council
    - Headteacher of one of the affected schools
    - Staff and governors of a school in the Rhondda (not directly affected by the proposals)
    - A playgroup based in one of the affected schools
    - RCT Welsh Liberal Democrats
    - Save the Rhondda Schools campaign group

- 177 completed paper questionnaires (provided with our consultation document)
- 1,000 'petition style' letters, with 17 different versions of these
- 40 on-line questionnaires
- 671 on line questionnaires completed by school pupils.

3.6 All correspondence, including the 'petition style' letters was acknowledged, where legible names and addresses were provided. It must be noted at this point in time that there is evidence that multiple copies of questionnaires and the 'petition style' letters appear to have been completed by the same individuals. We have also received numerous telephone calls from people who have received our acknowledgement letters and who have indicated that they have not in fact completed any questionnaires or signed any letters; this appears to have been done without their knowledge. This is similar to what occurred during our consultation on the Aberdare school proposals over four years ago, which was investigated at that time by our internal audit officers.

3.7 Members' attention should be drawn to the summary of the responses from Estyn on page 14 of the Consultation Report, which are reproduced in full as Appendix 7 of this particular Report.

3.8 Our consultation document, which was widely circulated in October 2014 indicated (on page 23) that various Impact Assessments, namely Equality, Community and Welsh Language had been produced in line with legislative requirements. Although these documents had been prepared and were freely available at the start of the consultation process, due to an administrative oversight they were not put on the Council website until 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015. They were therefore only available on line for the final 6 weeks of the consultation process. However, as clearly indicated they were actually available to any person who requested them from the commencement of consultation on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014. It should be noted that no requests whatsoever were received from any individual to receive copies of any of these assessments during the entire consultation period.

Copies of all of these Assessments, which have been compiled in accordance with the statutory guidance outlined in the Welsh Government School Organisation Code are attached as Appendix B.

3.9 As required by Welsh Government, the Consultation Report at Appendix A was published electronically, on the Council's website. In addition, hard copies are available on request. This must take place before the proposal is published. As required by Welsh Government, the following have also been advised of the availability of the consultation report:

- Pupils, parents (and where possible prospective parents), carers and guardians, and staff members of schools which are subject to the proposals and
- Consultees who had requested notification.

3.10 Furthermore, the following were informed by email that the Council had published the Consultation Report on its website on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015:

- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority for the area in which any school likely to be affected is located;
- Any other appropriate religious body for any school likely to be affected by the proposals;
- The governing body of any school which is the subject of the proposals and of other schools likely to be affected by the proposals, including those that might receive any displaced pupils;
- The Welsh Ministers;
- Assembly Members (AM's) and Members of Parliament (MP's) representing the area served by/ intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;
- Estyn;
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at any school which is the subject of the proposals;
- Central South Regional Education Consortium;
- South East Wales Transport Authority;
- The Police and Crime Commissioner;
- The local Communities First Partnership;
- In the case of proposals affecting nursery provision, and independent providers who may be affected;
- The Children and Young People's Partnership and/or the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships.

#### **4. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

4.1 Four statutory notices will need to be published in respect of these proposals, as follows:

- The alteration of the age range of pupils that may be admitted to Ferndale Community School, from 11 – 19 years to 11 – 16 years, resulting in the removal of the sixth form provision.
- The closure of Porth Infants, Porth Juniors, Llwynceilyn Infants and Porth County Community Schools and the creation of a new 3 – 16 Middle School for Porth, with a dedicated Unit for pupils with ALN at this school, encompassing four key stages of provision. There will be no sixth form provision at this school.
- The closure of Penygraig Infants, Penygraig Juniors, Tonypandy Primary, Ysgol yr Eos and Tonypandy Community College and the creation of a new 3 – 16 Middle school for Tonypandy. There will be no sixth form provision at this school.

- The closure of Tonyrefail Primary and Tonyrefail Comprehensive Schools and the creation of a new 3 – 19 school for Tonyrefail.
- 4.2 The Statutory Notices will, if agreed be published, at the earliest, on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending, at the earliest, on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015. If any objections are received, in accordance with the new Code an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, in July 2015 for Members to receive and note the Objections Report that will be prepared.
- 4.3 All of the proposals consulted upon, in this report, are dependent on decisions taken on the future restructuring of sixth form provision. The School Organisation Code states that any proposals which affect sixth form education must be approved by the Welsh Ministers; and the Council **must** also send to the Welsh Ministers any proposals which it considers are related to the proposals requiring determination.
- 4.4 The Welsh Ministers will decide whether these proposals require their determination or whether they refer the decision back to the Council's Cabinet to determine the proposals. Any statutory objections received must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, in addition to the Objection Report referred to above, within 35 days of the end of the objection period for them to consider and determine the outcome of these proposals.
- 4.5 The closure of the schools and the opening of new schools in accordance with the statutory notices will still be subject to the approval by Welsh Government of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Final Business Case.
- 4.6 The statutory notices will also make reference, if approved by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting on the morning of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015, of the proposal to consult on changes to the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

## 5. **SUMMARY**

Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication and to give officers approval to publish appropriate Statutory Notices to progress these proposals.

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# **APPENDIX A**

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## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CONSULTATION REPORT ON THE REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE RHONDDA VALLEYS AND TONYREFAIL**

#### **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 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015 between all stakeholders and interested parties in respect of the proposals to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypandy, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Increase the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

#### **1 The Proposals**

To achieve this, the proposals are to:

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypandy Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth County Community School, Llwynceilyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynceilyn Infants' School;
- Close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College. Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral provision at the Tai Centre, Penygraig to the site of the existing Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School;
- Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School. Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the current Tonyrefail Primary School;
- Change the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail;

- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, is planning to invest £75m in new or refurbished/remodelled school buildings and facilities.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was widely circulated to all the stakeholders listed below which is still available to download and view on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations). Paper copies, in English and Welsh are also available on request.

## 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 [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of the following schools: Abercerdin Primary; Aberllechau Primary; Alaw Primary; Bodringallt Primary; Cwmclydach Primary; Cwmlai Primary; Cymmer Infants'; Cymmer Junior; Darren Park Primary; Ferndale Infants'; Gelli Primary; Hafod Primary; Hendreforgan Primary; Llwyncelyn Infants'; Llwynypia Primary; Maerdy Primary; Parc Primary; Penpych Community Primary; Penrhys Primary; Pentre Primary; Penygraig Infants'; Penygraig Junior; Pen-yr-englyn Community Primary; Pontrhondda Primary; Pontygwaith Primary; Porth Infants'; Porth Junior; Rhiwgarn Infants'; SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary; Ton Pentre Infants'; Ton Pentre Junior; Tonypandy Primary; Tonyrefail Primary;
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd, Ogmore and Cynon Valley
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Teaching and support staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South Wales Police and Crime

- Trealaw Primary; Tref-Y-Rhyg Primary; Treorchy Primary; Tylorstown Primary; Williamstown Primary; Ynyshir Primary; Ysgol Yr Eos; YGG Bodringallt; YGG Bronllwyn; YGG Llwyncelyn; YGG Llyn y Forwyn; YGG Tonyrefail; YGG Ynyswen.
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School, Tonypandy Community College, Tonyrefail Comprehensive School, Treorchy Comprehensive School and Ysgol Gyfun Y Cymer
  - The Management Board of the Tai Centre
- Commissioner
  - The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
  - South East Wales Transport Association
  - The local Communities First Partnerships
  - Tonyrefail Community Council and Gilfach Goch Community Council
  - Neighbouring local authorities
  - Mudiad Meithrin
  - The Welsh Language Commissioner

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

### 3. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings and open evenings/sessions were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2014, 4 – 6pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive
<b>Llwyncelyn Infants'</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Llwyncelyn Infants'
<b>Porth Infants'</b>			

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Porth Junior</b>			
<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Penygraig Junior
<b>Penygraig Junior</b>			
<b>Tonypandy Primary</b>			
<b>Ysgol yr Eos</b>			
<b>Tonyrefail Primary</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonyrefail Primary
<b>YGG Tonyrefail</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	YGG Tonyrefail
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	School Council	4th November 2014, 2 – 3pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	School Council	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	School Council	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	School Council	11th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	School Council	13th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive
<b>Llwyncelyn Infants'</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Llwyncelyn Infants'
<b>Porth Infants'</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Infants'
<b>Porth Junior</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Junior
<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Infants'
<b>Penygraig Junior</b>	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Junior
<b>Tonypandy Primary</b>	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonypandy Primary
<b>Ysgol yr Eos</b>	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Ysgol yr Eos
<b>Tonyrefail Primary</b>	School Council	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonyrefail Primary
<b>YGG Tonyrefail</b>	School Council	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	YGG Tonyrefail

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Sixth Form Changes All Schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Treorchy Comprehensive School
		13 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Porth County and Porth Primary Schools – all Porth schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive and Tonyrefail Primary Schools – all Tonyrefail schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Tonypandy Community College and Tonypandy Primary Schools – all Tonypandy schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonypandy Community College

A further open day for all members of the local community was held at the Ystrad Sports Centre on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015, between 9am and 6pm.

#### **4. Summary of Responses to Consultation**

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the 22 meetings held which are attached as **Appendix 1**.

A total of 177 questionnaires were returned, a summary of these responses is attached as **Appendix 2**.

We also gave all persons who attended the open evenings/sessions the opportunity to write comments and post them on a notice board that was prominently displayed, these comments are summarised in **Appendix 3**.

We also received 17 different versions of 'petition style' letters, with a total number of 1,000 such letters received. Copies of each letter, with the numbers received for each are attached as **Appendix 4**.

It has to be noted at this point there is evidence that multiple copies of 'petition letters' and questionnaires appear to be been completed by single individuals.

Our questionnaire was also available for completion on-line, a summary of these responses (40 in total) is attached at **Appendix 5**.

School pupils were also given the opportunity to complete surveys at school using tablet computers; a summary of these is attached at **Appendix 6**.

For both on line surveys the comments provided are reproduced exactly as they were written by the respondents, they have not been edited or amended in any way. Any responses deemed inappropriate, i.e. that contained offensive language or content have been deleted, where this has occurred is however indicated. Where the comments simply consisted of the word 'no' or the term n/a, these have been removed. The personal details of respondents, i.e. names, addresses and any other kind of identification have been removed to comply with data protection legislation.

The main issues arising from the correspondence received in response to our consultation, together with our reply to them are summarised as follows:

#### **Main Issues Raised**

- **3– 16/19 schools will not work; you cannot have children of such varying ages accommodated in a single school.**

Our consultation document provides detailed evidence on how this model of provision, known as a 'Middle School' can operate successfully. Information on similar models, in Lampeter, Scotland and the English Academies was provided, together with details of an actual example of this provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf, namely Ysgol Llanhari. The Headteacher of Ysgol Llanhari was present at two of our 'open evening' events, she presented information on how her school operates and answered many questions put to her by attendees.

We also gave details on how a similar provision in RCT, at the Garth Olwg Community Campus (where a Primary and Secondary school share a site, buildings and facilities, together with a public library, day nursery and community learning facility) operates and works successfully. Whilst the two schools at Garth Olwg Campus are independent schools, the play areas of each school are adjacent to each other and the Year 6 class is based in the secondary school, with no concerns expressed by staff, parents or most importantly, the children attending these schools.

- **Safeguarding concerns at 3 – 16/19 schools; younger children being influenced or even put at risk by being in close contact with teenagers.**

We outlined in our consultation document and reiterated at the open evening that the safeguarding and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for the local authority. The Primary age children in a Middle School will be completely segregated from the Secondary age pupils and no unauthorised or unsupervised 'transfer' of pupils between the two sectors will take place; there will be secured doors etc, only accessible by keypads or 'fobs' to prevent free movement by children who are not accompanied by staff. This can be further assisted by recommended 'staggered' start and end times of the school day (e.g. Secondary pupils will arrive and leave at least 30 minutes before the Primary children; lunch and other breaks will also be held at different times). The two age ranges will have separate play areas and outside space and separate entrances and exits to and from the school buildings. Again, an actual example of how this operates successfully at Ysgol Llanhari has been provided.

- **Primary schools not included in the 'Middle School' model will be at a disadvantage.**

We believe that the key to ensuring that this does not occur is improved transition between all schools 'associated' with the Secondary department of the new school. We will ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that work is undertaken in this area. We consider that the other partner/associate primary schools will also benefit from the proposal. In Lampeter, where there is a similar arrangement, the independent pilot evaluation has highlighted that the remaining primary schools have sought to strengthen their relationship and transition arrangements with the primary and secondary phase of the 3-19 school, in order that their pupils benefit fully from the future all-through developments and to ensure that they will not be disadvantaged when they join the new school in Year 7.

If all the associated schools in the community work together on an effective transition plan, there is no reason why pupils attending other schools should not receive the same level of transition and support provided to the Primary children attending the Middle School, including use of the school's facilities.

- **Increased traffic at the Middle Schools will pose a health and safety risk; all three schools included in these proposals have poor access at present.**

In any school closure proposal, traffic management is a concern. Initial traffic assessments have been already undertaken and if these proposals progress, detailed traffic assessments will be undertaken at every site, to assist in preparing possible resolutions to the issues raised. All routes to the schools will be fully assessed using national criteria used by the 'Safe Routes to Schools' initiative and every effort will be made to ensure appropriate improvements, where possible, are implemented.

The initial plans displayed at our open events did give information on proposed highway improvements both on and in the vicinity of all of the school sites. Senior officers from the Council's Highways Division attended all of the open events and provided information and answers to questions wherever possible. The initial plans, presented ideas to improve the access into the three proposed middle schools. These included opportunities to significantly improve the existing pupil drop-off, car parking, access points and the management of vehicles to and from the school sites.

- **The distances to the Middle Schools are too far for young children to walk and involve negotiation of busy main roads and hilly terrain.**

We have undertaken checks of the potential distances Primary age children may have to walk (if this is their parents chosen method of travelling to school) to the new Middle School sites. The distances from the outer limits of the primary catchment areas for the schools are as follows:

Porth (residence at Nythbran Terrace, Llwynceilyn) – 1.7 miles by road, 1.49 miles on foot  
 Tonypany (residence at Appletree Road, Dinas) – 1.7 miles by road, 1.58 miles on foot  
 Tonyrefail (residence at Collenna Road, Tonyrefail) – 1 mile by road and on foot.

All walking distances have been calculated using routes deemed to be available following assessment using national criteria published by Road Safety GB. This Council currently provides free transportation to Primary pupils who reside more than 1.5 miles walking distance from school. The above information indicates that only a limited number of addresses in the Tonypany catchment may qualify under this distance criterion. The distance used by RCT for determination of free transport provision for primary children is more generous than that dictated by national legislation, which is 2 miles for primary children. Therefore, if the Council's home to school transport policy was in accordance with the legislative requirements, no child would qualify for free transport provision.

Many of the routes to schools in RCT involve the negotiation of steep hills and hilly terrain; this is an accepted part of life in valley communities. We do not provide transportation in such circumstances as this is not one of the road safety criteria used to assess whether a route is dangerous or not. All routes involved in these proposals will be properly assessed for safety using the aforementioned national criteria and in accordance with the Welsh Government's Learner Travel Measure, consideration of transport provision will be made in respect of any such routes that do not meet the standard to be considered as available or safe under these criteria.

- **The secondary school sites (at Porth and Tonypany) are too small to accommodate the number of children proposed to attend the new Middle schools**

We will ensure that the accommodation at these schools is suitable to meet the educational needs of all of the pupils that will attend the school in the future, and will offer sufficient space in accordance with Welsh Government requirements. Our proposals will involve considerable capital expenditure (under the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools initiative) to remodel and refurbish these school sites to ensure their suitability for pupils of an extended age range. This may involve providing additional teaching accommodation if this is deemed to be necessary.

It is important to consider that:

- Porth and Tonypany secondary schools currently have a high number of surplus places – Porth County had 30.1% (441 places) of surplus capacity as at January 2014, and Tonypany Community College had 20.4% (207 places) of surplus capacity;
  - These proposals involve the removal of the 6<sup>th</sup> forms at these schools, which will release accommodation, 222 places in Porth and 185 places in Tonypany. This information is contained within the consultation document that was widely circulated in October 2014.
- **The plans presented at the consultation events were not final versions and did not depict exactly how the new schools will look once complete.**

We made it very clear that the plans we presented at all of the events held were initial drafts of concepts and ideas only at this very early consultation stage. Many of the ‘artists impressions’ presented as examples of classrooms and other accommodation to be provided were in fact actual examples of similar accommodation already provided at new or refurbished schools in RCT, this was clearly explained.

We stressed to all persons attending these events that our plans at this stage were draft only as this is a consultation stage in respect of proposals that have not yet been agreed; to have presented firm, definite plans at such an early stage of the process would have given the impression that we are pre-empting the decisions of the Welsh Ministers, in addition to have presented finalised plans at this stage would have incurred considerable expenditure which may be wasted should the proposals be rejected.

This is the approach we have adopted with other recent school reorganisation proposals such as those in Aberdare and Ynysboeth, where the new school buildings are of a high quality but look very different from the initial artist designs the Council originally presented during the first consultation period.

- **All Secondary schools should have 6<sup>th</sup> forms. Removing them could result in major recruitment difficulties, as the best staff will not want to work in a school without a 6<sup>th</sup> form. Pupils will have further to travel, could decide to leave education as a result. Creates inequality.**

Our consultation document (pages 14 and 15) clearly outlined what we considered to be the educational benefits to learners in creating larger, more viable 6<sup>th</sup> form provisions. We clarified and clearly explained all of this at the meetings held at all five comprehensive schools included in these proposals, these meetings involves the staff, governors and members of the School Councils (pupils). We also outlined the educational, practical and financial concerns and difficulties experienced with the current pattern of provision. This included setting out the educational improvements we expect the larger sixth form provisions should achieve, which include a greater range of courses available to learners, larger, viable and stimulating classes and greater financial stability for the 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, with no ‘subsidisation’ from the budgets provided for education at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Pupils will receive transport to the 6<sup>th</sup> form provisions in accordance with our published Learner Travel Policy (this was also made clear at the consultation meetings).

- **Why not centralise 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in the Rhondda at Llwynypia College (a campus of Coleg y Cymoedd).**

The Council already works closely with Coleg y Cymoedd to provide vocational courses for our pupils and to ensure that by working collaboratively, duplication of provision between the College and Secondary schools is avoided wherever possible. We seek to ensure that the two sectors do not operate in competition with each other; they work together. Post 16 pupils can already access the courses on offer at Llwynypia or at the main college campus at Nantgarw if they so choose.

A few years ago, the Council submitted an outline business case to Welsh Government to create three tertiary colleges across Rhondda Cynon Taf, however the proposal was rejected by Welsh Government. The proposal included the tertiary provision being based at Llwynypia Campus but this option was very expensive due to the road access issues and the limited available land for construction.

- **The consultation process was flawed. (in respect of persons consulted and documentation produced).**

The consultation was undertaken strictly in accordance with legislation outlined in the School Organisation Code. The consultation document was produced to fully comply with this guidance and met all statutory requirements. All prescribed consultees outlined in the Code were properly consulted and provided with copies of the document, or given details of how it could be accessed. All supplementary documents, including the Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments followed the prescribed format recommended in the Code and were produced, and therefore available, from the start of the consultation process.

The consultation document was available to the wider community via the Council website, as was the questionnaire for any person to forward their views and opinions on the proposals. A series of consultation events were held, at the local secondary schools and at a local leisure centre, all of which were completely accessible and were open to any person who wished to attend. Attendance numbers at each open event were as follows:

- Treorchy Comprehensive School (6<sup>th</sup> form), 12/1/15 – 36
- Tonyrefail Comprehensive School (6<sup>th</sup> form), 13/1/15 – 52
- Porth Community School (3 – 16 proposal), 20/1/15 – 113
- Tonyrefail Comprehensive School (3 – 19 proposal), 21/1/15 – 35
- Tonypandy Community College (3 – 16 proposal), 22/1/15 – 240
- Ystrad Sports Centre (all proposals), 18/2/15 – 80

Taking into account the length of the consultation the number of meetings held with pupils, parents, staff, governors and the wider community, the Council has exceeded the expectations of the School Organisation Code. Indeed the Code is quite clear in stating that there is no requirement for the proposer to hold consultation meetings.

- **Why is a new building being proposed for Tonyrefail, but not for Tonypandy or Porth?**

All building works being proposed reflect and take in to account the information and data held by the Council on building condition, sufficiency, suitability and statistical information in respect of pupil numbers.

The school buildings at Porth and Tonypandy are in a significantly better standard and condition than those at Tonyrefail. Our plans for Porth and Tonypandy involve major remodelling, refurbishment and repair of existing buildings, to ensure that their facilities meet the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standards and more importantly, that they are suitable and sufficient to cater for an extended age range of pupils. We believe that this can be achieved at both sites with major capital investment that does not involve a complete re-build. This has been the case at Ysgol Llanhari where the former sixth form centre, built in the 1960's of CLASP design, has been converted into a 240 place primary school that meets the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standards.

With regard to the Tonyrefail site, we are restricted with the amount of remodelling and refurbishment of existing buildings we may undertake by two main factors; firstly, the Lower School building has listed building status which severely constrains the amount of physical alterations we can make to it. Secondly, the Upper School building is a three storey CLASP construction which is in a relatively poor condition overall, and difficult to remodel or refurbish due to the presence of asbestos in its internal structures. The site is the largest of all of the schools under consideration at the current time, making it more favourable and suitable for a major redevelopment such as a new school building.

**You are putting schools that have achieved Green and Yellow ratings in to a school with a Red rating. This will reduce standards.**

It is accepted that some of the schools being proposed for inclusion in the new Middle school models are achieving higher standards than others, in particular with regard to the proposal for Tonypandy. However, it has to be noted that these proposals involve the closure of the existing schools and the opening of new ones. These new schools will have new senior management teams and governing bodies, who will be responsible for formulating staffing structures for the new schools that will fully meet the needs of all learners and will be tailored to suit the new provision.

The governing bodies of the new schools will seek to employ the effective teachers currently in post in the schools to be closed, and it will be for the Headteacher to introduce the good practice from the current schools in the day to day operation of the school. Currently, there is good practice in all the schools, and collectively this will have a positive impact on the new school.

Tonypandy College is the only Red school under the Welsh Government model of categorisation. The school is improving very quickly, and the initial Key Stage 4 examination data for the summer 2015 is projected to show a significant improvement, with more pupils already having achieved good grades at GCSE English and mathematics than last year, prior to the summer examinations. With continued support from the Council, Central South Consortium and Welsh Government, we are confident that this improvement will be sustained and pupils and parents will see better educational outcomes from Tonypandy College.

- **Guarantees requested that all staff currently working at all schools involved will be given posts in the new schools**

Such guarantees could not be given to staff working in any schools, irrespective of the proposals under consideration. A school budget can fluctuate at any time due to reasons outside its control, such as pupil numbers falling, which may result in the reduction of staff numbers. Therefore, a guarantee of future employment can never be made.

We have clearly stated that we will work closely with all the schools and the temporary governing bodies of the new schools, which will be established, to ensure that the long standing HR policies of the Council on managing such changes are adhered to. We will provide support and advice to the governing bodies, which will include the recommendation to 'ringfence' all posts below Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher level. This will enable all existing staff to be given prior and priority consideration for all positions available at the new schools. Our HR staff will work with and liaise with all staff to provide them with advice and support on such matters as recruitment processes, redeployment opportunities and voluntary redundancy/retirement options where applicable.

- **We do not agree with the catchment area adjustment proposed for the Williamstown area; we want our children to attend Tonyrefail Comprehensive in the future and not be forced to attend Tonypandy. We also pay Community Council tax to Tonyrefail Community Council and should remain in that school's catchment as a result.**

Parents are able to state a preference for whichever school they choose, we do not 'force' any child to attend any school. If a school has not reached its published admissions limit in a particular year group all applications will be approved, irrespective of where the pupils reside. Our published admissions policy clearly states that school catchment areas are only applied where a school is over-subscribed ; this obviously does not apply if the school has places available.

We do not expect any of our new schools to be over-subscribed, they will have sufficient capacity to cater for local needs.

We do not draw up school catchment areas to coincide with Community Council areas and this is not a factor we have to take in to account when undertaking such work.

- **YGG Tonyrefail was promised a brand new building; Welsh Medium schools are having to settle for second hand and second best facilities.**

What has been indicated is that it would be provided with an alternative building that has a larger pupil capacity. It must be noted that the current Tonyrefail Primary School building is in a very good condition overall, having been extended and refurbished less than 6 years ago. This work also included the upgrading of external play areas (including a multi use games pitch) and ancillary facilities such as car parking. We have also stated that further improvement works will be undertaken to the school, which would include refurbishment of pupil toilets and redecoration. This school building has a larger pupil capacity that will allow for an expansion of Welsh Medium provision and will greatly improve the school environment for all pupils and staff; the existing YGG Tonyrefail is in a very poor condition and is not conducive to good standards of teaching and learning, in addition it has no external playing field facilities and very restricted tarmac play areas only.

- **There are safety concerns with major building works being undertaken at school sites when pupils are present**

The health, safety and welfare of all school pupils, staff and all other persons using school premises is of paramount importance. The Council has extensive experience of undertaking major building works at 'live' school sites and will work closely with the appointed contractor to ensure that appropriate health and safety plans are in place before any work is undertaken. Safety measures will include areas of construction being securely fenced off with no access other than by construction staff, works being 'staggered' on site to ensure that full access to all the curriculum is maintained and as much of the major works, e.g. demolition being undertaken during school holidays wherever possible.

- **Why don't you simply create new Primary schools in these areas and leave the Comprehensives as they are.**

Our consultation document clearly outlines our rationale behind these proposals, with evidence as to why we consider the 3 – 16/19 model of provision to be our preferred method of delivery in these areas. We have given clear information and evidence on the work will be undertaking to all sites to ensure that they have sufficient and suitable accommodation and capacity to cater for children of all age ranges attending that school. No account appears to have been taken of the considerable capital costs of making the alternative provision that has been suggested and neither does it take in to account the fact that there is no building land or surplus site of the size required (to comply with the relevant school building regulations) to construct a large Primary school facility in either Porth or Tonypanydy.

- **Increasing the capacity of YGG Llwynycelyn by 100 pupils will mean 100 additional cars transporting pupils, causing traffic congestion and problems for local residents.**

The overall capacity of the site, with Llwynycelyn Infants removed and YGG Llwynycelyn extended will be less than the two school's capacities combined at present. This is because

we will be removing some redundant and dilapidated accommodation from the site and undertaking internal remodelling of the buildings. In addition to this the majority of pupils attending this school are transported to school by bus. We also intend to create off road parking on the site for staff and visitors, which will help to alleviate the parking problems in the vicinity of the school. The pupil roll is also expected to increase gradually rather than 100 additional pupils joining at the same time

- **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 their responses to this consultation process, which are attached as **Appendix 7**. The summaries and conclusions of Estyn to the various elements of this proposal are outlined as follows:

- **Proposed changes to Sixth Form Provision**

*'The proposal is coherent with the local authority's aims to provide improved and more efficient post-16 provision, reduce surplus places, broaden curricular opportunities and provide greater equality of opportunity for students. It is Estyn's opinion that this proposal is likely to at least maintain educational standards in the locality.'*

- **Proposed changes to School Provision in Porth (creation of a 3 – 16 school)**

*'The proposal is coherent with the local authority's aims to provide more fair and efficient post-16 provision, reduce surplus places, broaden curricular opportunities and increase the number of Welsh Medium learners. It is Estyn's opinion that this proposal is likely to at least maintain educational standards.'*

- **Proposed changes to School Provision in Tonypandy (creation of a 3 – 16 school)**

*'The proposals set out arrangements that appear to give primary age pupils better access to specialist facilities. This has the potential to broaden the curriculum and improve outcomes for pupils'*

- **Proposed changes to School Provision in Tonyrefail (creation of a 3 – 19 school)**

*'In the overview, the proposer has set out a clear rationale for the proposal to create 3 – 16/19 schools and to create larger sixth forms. In the specific section regarding Tonyrefail, the proposer refers to the adverse impact of the small sixth form on the funding for the quality of education provision for KS 3 & 4 pupils. It also refers to the adverse of the poor state of the buildings at YGG Tonyrefail and the effect this has on the quality of educational provision and the curriculum provided.'*

*It is therefore Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to address the current adverse impacts identified and improve the educational environment. It is also likely that the proposal will at least maintain the current educational provision in the area.*

## **5. Conclusion**

The recommendation to be put before a forthcoming meeting of the Council's Cabinet is that statutory notices be published, to progress this proposal. If agreed, four statutory notices that make up this proposal will be published in May 2015 and it will allow for a 28 day period during which time any person may lodge an objection to the proposals.

At the end of the objection period, an Objection Report will be compiled, summarising any objections received, this Report will be published within 28 days of the end of the objection period detailed above. The outcome of this part of the process will be considered by Cabinet again at their meeting to be held in June/July 2015, following which, should objections be received, the proposal and all correspondence received will be forwarded to the Welsh Ministers for a final decision on the proposal to be made.

All of the proposals consulted upon, in this report, are dependent on decisions taken on the future restructuring of sixth form provision. The School Organisation Code states that any proposals which affect sixth form education must be approved by the Welsh Ministers; and the Council **must** also send to the Welsh Ministers any proposals which it considers are related to the proposals requiring determination.

The Welsh Ministers will decide whether these proposals require their determination or whether they should refer the decision back to the Council's Cabinet to determine the proposals. Any statutory objections received must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, in addition to the Objection Report referred to above, within 35 days of the end of the objection period for them to consider and determine the outcome of these proposals.

The closure of the schools and the opening of new schools in accordance with the statutory notices will still be subject to the approval by Welsh Government of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Final Business Case, which has to be submitted for consideration by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

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**Appendix 1****Contents****Notes of the consultation meetings held:**

<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	<b>1.1</b>
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<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	<b>1.3</b>
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<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>	School Council	<b>1.18</b>
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**1.1****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and governing body of Ferndale Community School on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data  
 Mr Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 30 members of staff and governors

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

CB wished to place on record his thanks to the school staff for the excellent progress they had made in recent years, evidenced by the fact that Ferndale is one of the top performing schools in RCT and is in fact a Band 1 school. He stressed that the proposals under consideration could also bring opportunities for staff.

The meeting was then opened to questions.

- Why is Ferndale the only school not proposed to be 3 – 16? Explained that this was due to its geographical location and the lack of opportunity to include the primary schools in the immediate area. Maerdy Junior and Infants merged in 2010 and a considerable sum was spent in creating the Primary School. There were no resources or opportunities available to put this new school on the Secondary school site at the time. There could however be opportunities to federate as a future option.
- Could the 6<sup>th</sup> form pupils go to Aberdare instead? Advised yes, especially as Aberdare is nearer and more accessible, CB asked whether those present thought that this may be a good idea, several concurred.
- As a teacher and a parent, I will be sad to lose the 6<sup>th</sup> form in this school, would wish to see judgements made at Key Stage 5. CB advised that this proposal is not just about finance but about viability and more learning opportunities for pupils.

- Will the high levels of deprivation in this area make things harder for pupils, more difficult for them to leave? It gives the message that there is nothing left in our own community, it moves the goalposts – you can't even finish your schooling here. Reference was made to comments in the previous meeting with the School Council, with an example given of one pupil who is in a class of just 2 for one of her chosen subjects.
- This proposal is just to save money and remove surplus places. This was denied, reference was made to the fact that Welsh Government funds 6<sup>th</sup> forms direct and the majority of schools have to subsidise this provision from their budgets allocated for Key Stages 3 & 4. This is in turn undermining these age ranges. Children need to learn to become more independent. All savings achieved are to be re-invested in improving buildings and to fund better learning experiences. We are not hiding anything.
- A query was raised regarding the budget deficit being faced by the Council and whether these proposals had any bearing on this. This was denied and it was emphasised that none of the savings achieved would go towards reducing the Council's budget deficit, they were to be re-invested in improving school buildings.
- A query was raised in respect of potential staff redundancies. Information was provided on how this process had worked in Aberdare, with the recent closure of 3 secondary schools and opening of 1 new school. It was noted that there had been very few compulsory redundancies, opportunities had been created for some staff to take early retirement if they wished. The Council's Management of Change Policy was discussed, it was noted that this policy gives flexibility to staff in respect of redeployment opportunities etc. RE gave further information and advice on the various process and policies that can be deployed and provided details of how this had worked in reality in Aberdare.
- Has a single 6<sup>th</sup> form centre for the Rhondda been considered? Advised that a tertiary model had been considered but had been ruled out on financial grounds and due to the lack of available building land, in addition issues with access to the current college at Llwynypia had caused problems.
- Can you envisage a large drop off rate at this school, with pupils choosing to go direct to Treorchy instead? Advised that Treorchy is close to its admissions limit and that published criteria will be applied if it receives more applications that it has places available. If this occurs pupils resident outside of catchment will have a lower priority for places, in addition out-catchment pupils will not receive any transport provision.
- Could Aberllechau pupils still go to Porth? This will have an adverse effect on us. Advised yes, this is down to parental choice, but they will not get transport.
- A 3 – 16 school may be an attractive choice. Advised that the LA manages admissions. Examples of other such schools in Wales were given. Noted that no extra capacity is going to be built in to either Porth or Tonypany for Secondary age pupils.
- 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in a school is an attraction for parents.
- There are historical reasons for choice of schools, plus siblings etc.
- A discussion on transport entitlement and catchment areas was held. Information was provided.

- To increase pupil numbers at the school, CB stated that transition will be key. You need to inform parents of the facilities available at this school and the excellent progress are being made by your pupils.
- Making children transfer post -16 may encourage them to leave school earlier. ET advised that this was not the response received from the pupils themselves earlier, they felt that this may prepare them better for higher education.
- Will the LA help the school to forge links with the College? Confirmed yes, this will be welcomed by the College also.
- CB gave information on the recent experience of merging 3 secondary schools in Aberdare.
- CB suggested that the school should forge stronger links with the Primary schools in the area and improve transition.

CB ended by offering to answer further questions at a later date if required and advised that further meetings with staff and HR representatives can be organised if needed. There is also a need to further engage with the pupils to get their views and feedback. He thanked everyone for their attendance.

**1.2****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and governing body of Porth County Community School on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data  
 Mr Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 36 members of staff and governors

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

He stressed that the proposals under consideration could also bring opportunities for staff.

The meeting was then opened to questions.

- Governor – my daughter in Year 11 is a high flyer who wants to go on to Porth's 6<sup>th</sup> form. Key staff could leave before these changes are implemented, causing issues with current provision and continuity. CB explained that this scenario could arise at any time, irrespective of these proposals. The benefits of a larger 6<sup>th</sup> form provision were outlined. The LA will work closely with the school and provide support. Information on the process followed in the Aberdare secondary school amalgamations was given, where a similar process had worked well.
- How many staff left Aberdare schools in the run up to their closure? Advised that very few indeed left, some of these were due to falling rolls causing budget pressures, which would have happened irrespective of the closures.
- Will the Secondary element of the new school be smaller than it is now? Advised yes, due to loss of 6<sup>th</sup> form and the need to remove surplus places.
- We could lose children initially due to parental choice. Advised that forecasts show numbers potentially rising, catchment area changes will take time to filter through.

- Other schools have been titled 'Centres of Excellence'. We could lose pupils to these schools as they will have 6<sup>th</sup> forms, we will not. CB gave information on the benefits of larger, more viable both educationally and financially, 6<sup>th</sup> forms and issues currently being experienced with consortium travel arrangements. He gave the example of Neath Port Talbot, a similar LA to RCT which had improved learning outcomes. NPT has all 11 – 16 Secondary schools, and 6<sup>th</sup> form tertiary centres. Under current arrangements here, 6<sup>th</sup> forms are being 'subsidised' by Key Stages 3 & 4. Outcomes could improve if this finance is concentrated back to KS 3 & 4.
- Can it be made clear that the term 'Centres of Excellence' refers only to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision? All schools can be centres of excellence, your document gives the wrong impression, we could lose pupils to Treorchy because of it. Little thought appears to have gone in to this when preparing your document. Parents will not understand this, they will choose these perceived 'Centres of Excellence'. CB stated that Porth has made good progress in the last 2 years. The document clearly states '6<sup>th</sup> form centres of excellence'. There are insufficient resources to create a full tertiary model and reducing the number of schools is not seen as viable either, 6<sup>th</sup> forms would still remain small. It is considered that this proposal will have the biggest impact on educational outcomes. The 3 – 16 model could attract parents, the seamless transfer to secondary school may make a difference to them.
- If children do not start school until they are 5 years old, this will reduce our numbers even further. CB advised that this is not being considered, the proposal is to introduce part time nursery provision term following 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, not to remove it altogether.
- CB advised that the LA manages admissions to schools and that places at Treorchy are restricted, admissions in excess of their capacity will not be allowed.
- Statement made that Treorchy 'encourages' some pupils with problems and issues to transfer out of their school. This creates a 2 tier system. (no response made to this as personal opinion was being expressed)
- Information on proposed catchment area changes was requested. Noted that only the catchments of Pontygwaith and Aberllechau Primaries were to transfer out of Porth.
- Will there be transport provided from Porth to Tonyrefail 6<sup>th</sup> form? Advised yes, transport policy was outlined.
- When will the 6<sup>th</sup> form in Porth close? Information on potential timescales was given. To be fully implemented in 2018, but will be phased in over a 2 year period prior to this (the Headteacher suggested that there may be a need to phase in even earlier).
- As Porth reduces the size of its 6<sup>th</sup> form, other schools will be increasing the size of theirs. Is there any possibility of staff transfers? Advised that all options will be considered, including early transfers and avoiding redundancies. There will be opportunities to do things differently and we will need to be flexible. Collaboration and consortium arrangements will stay in place in the meantime. We will look at 'harmonising' courses, subjects offered and exam boards post 2016.
- Would Year 12 pupils have to transfer elsewhere for Year 13? Advised no, due to phasing arrangements that will be put in place.

- Query raised on the admissions process. Advised that Treorchy is close to capacity and the LA manages admissions, not the school. Pupils living out of catchment will not get transport.
- Will the lack of transport provision add to the 'Centre of Excellence' impression, as parents who can afford transport will move their children. CB responded to this.
- CB advised that pupil numbers have fallen in recent years in line with similar falls at the associated Primary schools. Numbers are however starting to rise again. There is a need to promote the school, the staff are the assets.
- When will we receive information on what maintenance works are to be undertaken, we do not want to invest money in buildings that may be demolished. AR gave details, the school will be fully consulted in this regard.
- Do you have any idea as to where the Primary provision will be located? Information was given.
- There are safety concerns for the Primary children, has this issue been considered? Advised yes, this will be fully taken in to account at design stage. The Primary provision will be self contained and secure, any interaction with the Secondary department will be under supervision only. Timetabling will be looked at also. Information on how this works successfully at Ysgol Llanhari was provided.
- Can teachers have an input in to the design process? Advised yes, pupils will also be encouraged to take part in this.
- Will Secondary teachers teach Primary pupils? Advised that there may be opportunities to do so and vice versa also. Transition was discussed.
- What will happen to the swimming pool? Advised that this will be looked at, but presently it requires huge investment and is a financial drain on the school budget. A possibility is to replace it with a better facility, such as a 3G pitch for example.
- What about the children who will 'feed in' from schools other than those included in these proposals? Advised that there will be a need to improve transition arrangements with these schools in the future.
- Could Porth admit more children if the 3 – 16 model proves popular? Advised that there will be some limited room for growth, but admissions limits and criteria will be applied if needed.
- Query on cross phase teaching and leadership, eg would the Head of Science be responsible for that subject in the Primary department? Advised that this would be determined by the school governing body in consultation with school senior management.
- Is there a model for this kind of school provision? Advised in RCT, Ysgol Llanhari, similar models exist in England.
- Does the LA have a model and will they advise us? Advised and reiterated the Llanhari model, the LA will provide advice, assistance and guidance as required. School staff can be taken to view such models and examples if required.
- Information on the timescales for this process was requested. Information was provided, including details of matters such as establishment of the temporary GB, Headteacher recruitment etc. The position will become clearer by the end of this year when a decision on the proposal is received from Welsh Government.
- What happens if a member of staff does not secure a job in the new school? RE outlined and explained the Council's change management process. The temporary

GB will make decisions regarding issues such as ringfencing posts in the first instance, the LA will provide advice and guidance.

- Will these changes affect the Schools Challenge Cymru funding? Advised that there will be a second round of funding available.

CB ended by offering to answer further questions at a later date if required and advised that further meetings with staff and HR representatives can be organised if needed. There is also a need to further engage with the pupils to get their views and feedback. He thanked everyone for their attendance and also offered congratulations to the school on what had been a year of good results and achievements.

**1.3****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and governing body of Tonypany Community College on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data  
 Mr Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mr Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator  
 Mr David Powell, Head of Corporate Design  
 Mrs Bethan Davies, HR Officer  
 35 members of staff and governors

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

He stressed that the proposals under consideration could also bring opportunities for staff.

The meeting was then opened to questions.

- Road access to this site is poor. What consideration have you given to increased traffic? AR gave information, there has been input and consultation with Highways officers already and this matter will be subjected to a full feasibility study (the governor making the original comment stated that he felt this was a weak answer as this work should have been undertaken already)
- The distance that Primary age children will have to walk is challenging, especially in poor weather. AR advised that this issue will be looked at under the Safe Routes to Schools initiative, this situation is not unique and is replicated in other areas of RCT.
- Extra gritting will be needed in the winter.
- CB advised that all such matters will be looked in to if this proposal progresses to feasibility stage, at present this is a proposal under consultation only. He referred to the work undertaken at Ysgol Llanhari as an example of what can be achieved in respect of the creation of an 'all through' school, our track record of addressing such

issues is good. This is why this consultation is important, we need your input and engagement.

- Historically, this school has had problems with access and transport. The only resolution to this has been the creation of the rear access to the site for buses. Local residents will have grave concerns regarding your proposals as traffic through their estate will increase. You need to come up with a good solution. CB advised that the rear access had been funded by the housing developers as part of a planning gain agreement. The Council is well aware of all of these issues.
- Bringing Primary children to this site will only add to these traffic problems. It was suggested that parents need to be encouraged to walk their children to school, initiatives such as walking buses could be considered.
- What are the educational benefits for our young people? CB outlined the perceived benefits for 6<sup>th</sup> form students, ie wider range of courses, larger more viable classes and the other age ranges also. Funding for 6<sup>th</sup> forms is a major issue, at present schools are subsidising this provision from their budgets for KS3 & 4, meaning that these pupils are losing out. KS3 & 4 resources can be diverted to these pupils in the future to raise standards. The Primary schools in this area are small, with mixed age classes, documented evidence and Estyn advice shows that larger Primary schools are better educationally and have improved outcomes. Primary/Secondary transition can be improved also.
- Why are you not involving all schools in these proposals? Advised that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme only commenced in 2014, RCT has moved quickly to bring proposals forward and will progress further in future years, we are only at the start of our work programme.
- What about the other associated Primary schools that are not included in these proposals? CB advised that improved transition will be the key to success, it can make the cluster of schools stronger. In addition, the other cluster schools are relatively large and are also a further distance away.
- We have an unique community here, with challenges. What are you going to do about pupils who have to leave their local environment and have to travel to other schools? What about the pupil voice, you need to listen to the young people? ET advised of the earlier meeting that had taken place with the School Council and provided details of this.
- Have you considered moving 6<sup>th</sup> form provision to the College? CB advised that this had been considered, but had been ruled out as it was not financially viable, Welsh Medium provision was another issue. The cost of improving access to Llwynypia College alone is prohibitive. Students can however choose to attend the College if they wish.
- You should have provided more information for this consultation, in particular regarding the transport and access issues. Is the Welsh Government funding guaranteed? Has the business case gone in? CB provided information on the process that has to be undertaken and reminded everyone that this is an initial consultation on a proposal only. The Strategic Outline Case for the scheme has been approved and the Outline Business Case has been submitted, awaiting approval. WG support has been agreed, subject to the submission of all required business cases.

- What about rationalising the number of schools instead? CB advised that the Council wished to retain local schools in local communities, rather than close one secondary school in the area and transport children elsewhere.
- How will you ensure parental choice with less capacity in schools? CB advised that the Council will not increase capacity at any school to cater for children resident out of catchment. All schools will have sufficient capacity to meet demand for places now and in the future. Admissions are managed by the Council effectively, we will not do anything that will favour one school to the detriment of another.
- The Headteacher stated that she was aware of the advantages of a 3 – 16 school model. She indicated that it was reassuring to note that the Council wished to retain a school in this particular community.
- Queries were raised in respect of HR related matters and processes that would be followed. RE gave advice, including some information on how this process had recently been conducted in Aberdare, with the recent merger of three secondary schools in to one. The process of recruiting staff in Aberdare had commenced, with the appointment of the Headteacher, almost 2 years prior to the school opening. It will be for the temporary governing body to determine whether posts are 'ring fenced' to existing staff in the first instance, but the Council will encourage this.
- Information on the process to establish the temporary governing body was requested. JH provided details.
- Information on building works to be undertaken and the potential for disruption was requested. DP provided details of measures to be put in place to minimise any disruption, including phasing of work and the use of temporary accommodation if necessary. The Council has previous experience of undertaking major works on school sites and has a good track record in this regard.
- What are you going to do with the redundant school sites? DP gave information on the Council policy for such matters, but it was stressed that no decisions whatsoever have yet been made on such matters as this is a consultation process. Advised that the Council does not wish to have buildings lying empty and derelict, demolition will be considered first if this occurs.
- CB advised that the 6<sup>th</sup> form transfer would be phased to minimise its impact.
- A request was made for officers to make a commitment to consult with young people and their parents. Previous information provided on earlier consultation held with the pupils was reiterated. Proposals to undertake more consultation with the pupils were outlined, including plans to provide members of the school council with tablet computers, for them to encourage other pupils to complete online questionnaires and surveys. All parents have received a consultation document and covering letter advising them as to how they can engage in the consultation process.
- Will there be any redundancies during the 6<sup>th</sup> form phasing period? RE advised that this process will have to be properly managed post-2016. There may be gaps in provision in other schools, with an opportunity for staff to apply elsewhere.
- Could we offer post-16 provision to pupils where Tonyrefail does not offer a particular subject? CB advised that this will not be necessary as Tonyrefail will develop a new curriculum and offer subjects accordingly. Schools will need to collaborate more closely with each other regarding subject provision and also work with the College.

- A query was raised regarding capital funding and how it would be allocated. DP provided information.
- Will you consult with staff regarding the building work and how? AR advised that the Council consults with both staff and pupils with regard to all major school projects and gave further information on the process followed.
- A query was raised in respect of whether staff working here may wish to continue teaching 6<sup>th</sup> form. RE gave information on the agreed change management process and how this may apply in this case. Schools that retain 6<sup>th</sup> form provision would be asked to give priority consideration to applications received from staff at this school and others involved in this proposal.
- Statement made that recruitment to certain subject posts is difficult at present, this may get worse in the future due to the uncertainty this process will bring.
- Would permanent staff be redeployed to permanent posts? RE gave advice.
- Where will the new building be located on the site? DP advised that no final plans have been drawn up yet, a range of options are being considered. The primary school element will however be entirely self contained and secure. Information on how segregation will be achieved and how a 3 – 16 school can operate was provided.

CB ended by offering to answer further questions at a later date if required and advised that further meetings with staff and HR representatives can be organised if needed. There is also a need to further engage with the pupils to get their views and feedback. He thanked everyone for their attendance.

**1.4****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and governing body of Tonyrefail Comprehensive School on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mr Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mr David Powell, Head of Corporate Design  
 Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Ms Ellen Williams, HR Officer

30 members of staff and governors

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

He stressed that the proposals under consideration could also bring opportunities for staff.

The meeting was then opened to questions.

- I can see advantages and disadvantages in this proposal. One potential problem is that transport will be needed for the Tonyrefail Primary pupils. CB advised that this would be granted only in accordance with the Council's published travel policy.
- Is the distance greater than the 1.5 miles needed to qualify? CB advised that the route would need to be measured. (*post-meeting note – the distance between the two school sites is less than 1 mile*).
- No transport will cause major problems for parents, it is too far to walk, especially for 3 year olds, will also cause traffic congestion. CB advised that similar distances to school exist in other parts of RCT already and this does not cause any problems for pupils. The route will be measured and assessed for safety, but it is not anticipated that transport will be provided. Initiatives such as 'walking buses' can be looked at. Traffic congestion can be eased by careful management of the school day, eg different start and finish times for primary and secondary pupils. This proposal is

about improving education, this is our priority. Transport provision has not been a significant issue with other school closure proposals in RCT in similar areas to this.

- CB advised that the planning for the new school building will take all issues, including that of access in to account. The Council has to comply with all planning and building regulations that are in force at the current time – these regulations did not exist when the original school was built. He suggested that staff and governors may wish to visit the new Aberdare Community School, which is of a similar size to that being proposed here.
- A query was raised regarding the timetable for the 6<sup>th</sup> form transfer. CB provided information, including that of proposed phasing.
- Will there be sufficient accommodation in place to allow phasing? CB and DP provided information.
- CB advised that a new staffing structure would need to be put in place, this would be undertaken by the temporary governing body that will be established. Information on how this will happen was provided, with examples of how this was undertaken at Aberdare given. The procedures to be followed were outlined.
- RE gave information on the appointment process that had been undertaken at Aberdare, which would be recommended to the temporary governing body. There will potentially be redeployment opportunities for staff also. Information on the agreed redundancy and VER policies was given.
- CB advised that there will be a need for schools to work together in the interim period, and all would need to undertake transition planning.
- A query was raised regarding 6<sup>th</sup> form funding received from Welsh Government. CB provided information.
- What model are you basing the 3 – 19 proposal on? CB gave information on similar models operating successfully in English academies, in Scotland and in Lampeter. He also referred to Ysgol Llanhari in RCT. It has been shown that improving the transition links and working relationships with the primary schools not involved in the 3 – 19 school can benefit these schools also. Similar new schools are due to open in Ebbw Vale and Powys.
- ET advised that safeguarding is an absolute priority, but there will be opportunities for primary children to access the secondary school facilities, under supervision. The benefits of this outweigh the negatives.
- Cllr Hanagan (a governor at the school) gave information on the similar school already established at Llanhari. She suggested that staff and governors may wish to visit this school to see how it operates.
- CB advised that cross phase teaching opportunities can be put in place, these can benefit staff as well as pupils.
- Is the current 11 – 19 curriculum adequate? What about college study, especially non-vocational subjects, the school should not duplicate what the college is providing? Advised that this proposal aims to deliver 2 strong 6<sup>th</sup> forms with the college provision in between them, links with the college need to be strengthened.
- How will you manage admissions to the associated primaries, if parents choose to send their children here instead? CB advised that admissions are managed centrally by the LA, and published criteria will be applied if oversubscription occurs.

- Will there be sufficient Nursery provision to meet demand? Advised yes and referred to earlier response re managing admissions between schools.
- 6<sup>th</sup> form admission arrangements and transport provision were discussed.
- CB advised that HR officers can come out and speak to staff at the school at a later date if required.
- A query was raised as to why plans and designs are only provisional. DP advised that as this is only a consultation process they are still being developed, it is early days. There are also anticipated delays with any work due to the fact that the 'red brick' building is listed and Cadw have to be consulted.
- A query was raised regarding a potential public right of way crossing the site. Advised that this will be investigated at planning stage.
- Query regarding access between the buildings on the site. DP advised that the number of buildings will be reduced as far as is possible which will remove the need to walk outside to access them. Where this is not possible, covered walkways will be provided. This will all depend on the site complexities and the needs of the school. There is also a need to look at the swimming pool facility.
- The Chair of Governors stated that he felt that this is an exciting proposal and that he was looking forward to the provision of the new school facility.

CB ended by offering to answer further questions at a later date if required and reiterated that further meetings with staff and HR representatives can be organised if needed. There is also a need to further engage with the pupils to get their views and feedback. He thanked everyone for their attendance.

**1.5****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and governing body of Treorchy Comprehensive School on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mr Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 85 members of staff and governors

Mr R Jones, Headteacher opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

He stressed that the proposals under consideration could also bring opportunities for staff.

The meeting was then opened to questions.

- Are these proposals all or nothing? Would there be any amendments to them after the notices are published? CB advised that any amendments would have to be made before statutory notices are published, with further consultation undertaken if needed. The current intention is for all proposals to proceed as outlined in the consultation document.
- Has there been a review of the physical capacity of this school? CB advised yes, but that the intention is to increase the capacity of the 6<sup>th</sup> form provision only. Other building issues, including access will be addressed as part of the planned capital works, which are at feasibility stage at present. There is a 4 year plan to undertake improvements across the whole school site.
- A figure of £8.5 million has been mentioned for this school, can you break this down? CB advised that exact details are not available at the current time, but will be presented at a later date once finalised.
- Will you have to close this site and transfer pupils to other schools whilst work is on-going? CB advised that this will not be necessary.

- Has parental choice been factored in and can pupils from other areas come here earlier than the 6<sup>th</sup> form? CB advised that admissions limits for the 11 – 16 year groups will be enforced and maintained at their current levels and published admissions criteria will be applied in the event of oversubscription. 6<sup>th</sup> form admissions will be managed by the school but no transport will be provided to pupils who reside out of catchment.
- RE gave details on HR issues, in particular with regard to neighbouring schools that may have staff in a redundancy situation. The LA will work with the governing body and Headteacher to consider redeployment opportunities to this school if appropriate. Voluntary early retirement opportunities for staff could also be considered, which could create vacancies at this school, but this is likely to be limited at this school in comparison with others in the area.
- Will we have to apply for jobs that arise at this school in competition with redeployed staff? RE advised no, this school is not closing or changing in any way so the staff here will be unaffected. All that the LA will ask is that redeployed staff are given consideration for any vacancies or additional posts that arise here. There will be no change for Treorchy staff.
- Are there any plans for this school and Tonyrefail to specialise in certain subjects? CB advised no, it is proposed that both schools will offer a full post-16 curriculum as we do not want pupils to have to undertake unnecessary travelling between schools. MS advised that any duplication of provision between the schools and the local college will be challenged, as funding for post-16 provision is likely to be reduced by the Welsh Government in the future.
- CB advised that there will be a need for phased transition between years 11 and 12 in the future, there will be a need for discussions to be held involving all schools concerned.
- This is the fifth such meeting you have held with comprehensive schools, how have your proposals been received? CB advised that reaction to them has been fairly positive, staff appear to be optimistic.

CB ended by thanking everyone for their attendance.

**1.6****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and the governing bodies of Llwynceilyn Infants School, Porth Infants School and Porth Junior School on Tuesday 18 November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr. Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mrs. Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mrs. Susan Walker, Head of Primary Achievement  
 Ms. Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs. Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data  
 Mr. Richard Evans, HR Manager  
 Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator, School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 42 members of staff and governors

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

Prior to the meeting being opened to questions and comments one member of the staff and governors present made reference to CB's remarks at a Cabinet meeting when he referred to inspection outcomes. CB responded that the aim of the Porth proposal was to improve provision to be reflected in inspection outcomes.

The meeting was opened to questions and comments.

- If the amalgamation needs to be done why isn't the new school more central? It was explained that there was a lack of available land to build a new, more central school. This option had also been considered in the past, but no suitable land had been identified. The Council is trying to the best with what land it had to maximise opportunities for pupils.
- You (CB) quoted that an amount of £75 million will be used to fund this reorganisation. Where is the money coming from? It was explained that half of this amount is funded by the Welsh Government. The remaining money will be found by the Council through savings on the school buildings being used to repay a prudential borrowing scheme.

- Could this money be used in a different way by supporting the present schools? There is no building work needed at this (Llwyncelyn Infants School) school. You said it was closing down due to its condition. Why can't you use this school and the Welsh school as a new primary school and transfer the Welsh school elsewhere? The response was given that if the proposals are agreed the present Llwyncelyn Infants School site would become part of a larger Welsh school. Regarding the standard of the Llwyncelyn Infants School building CB stated that it was in good repair and that he had never said anything else. However, the school had over 30% surplus places. On the suggestion that a new primary school was established on the Llwyncelyn site this was one of a range of options that was considered to improve the learning environment for pupils of the Porth area. However, the present proposal was seen as the best option available.
- We are going to move to a Band 5 School – parents are not sending their children to Porth County because of this. Advised that Porth County's performance has improved significantly this year and standards are steadily improving. This can be evidenced.
- It is in trouble financially.
- Teachers are leaving in droves. CB answered, regarding teachers leaving in droves there is no evidence that shows this. The school has attracted high performing staff over the last academic year and the data evidences that this is having a sound effect on standards.
- When will we see this improvement evidenced? Advised that that this will become available in January when all schools are categorised.
- Why isn't the new school having a sixth form? What happens to travelling costs? Will capacity be available at Tonyrefail? The following answers were given. The numbers in the 6<sup>th</sup> form at the moment are low, and this diminishes the effectiveness of learning because of limited pupil interaction. Low numbers also reduce the amount of money available to the lower forms at the school because funds are diverted to subsidise loss making courses in form 6. Regarding transport, this will be provided by the Council, for those pupils living more than two miles from school. There will be capacity at Tonyrefail School which will be remodelled should the reorganisation proposals be agreed.
- If we need to have a primary school in Porth it should be located centrally.
- The new school will be located out of the existing schools' catchment area – what will happen to Alaw Primary School and Ynyshir Primary School – you are creating uncertainty in the greater Porth area and that will have an adverse effect on standards. A response was given that each school in RCT was limited in the number of pupils it could admit, and the Local Education Authority determined this.
- Parents will vote with their feet. They will go to Hafod and Ynyshir – my concern is that there won't be enough pupils to go to the new school.
- There are travel concerns about going between Llwyncelyn and the new school.

- The Council plans to change the mileage limit for free school transport. CB stated that no decision had been made on home to school transport but that this may have to be considered in the future.
- What are the facilities at the new school going to be? Advised that a feasibility study is presently being undertaken, with building rules and regulations having to be taken into account.
- Has the outdoor environment been considered? Yes. However the end design may be influenced by the views of governors and staff.
- How will you minimise disruption to Porth County students at the time of any construction? The response was given that the Council are very experienced in developing school sites when schools are in session and pupils are present. Measures are taken to lessen any impact. These will form part of the feasibility study.
- Officers offered to organise a trip for a limited number of staff and governors to visit Ysgol Llanhari. This school had recently become a 3 – 19 school and was operating successfully. Whilst catering for pupils aged 3 – 19, the primary pupils and secondary pupils are in separated facilities on the same school site.
- What facilities are there going to be at the new school? Will the swimming pool remain? Advised that this decision would form part of the feasibility study.
- What is it at Porth County that we haven't got now? Playing and sports facilities was given as an answer.
- I can't see anything at Porth County that we haven't got at our schools. Examples were given by Officers of benefits to be gained with the proposal including: ESTYN has evidenced that the larger the school the better the results; good transition opportunities; creation of better learning experiences.
- There are five other primary schools joining Porth which won't have these opportunities.
- We need a school to be centrally located, where people can walk to. A Welsh primary school can be anywhere – we need an English primary school in our area.
- Couldn't the money be used to develop other schools? Response – The LEA has to stand back and look strategically across all schools. There are issues with a number of schools and this proposed solution provides the best opportunity to address these issues.
- Is the response form at the back of the consultation book the only thing that can be used for people to express their views. Advised that views may be expressed through any means of correspondence, and that all consultation responses will be sent to the Welsh Government if the proposals proceed to statutory notice and there are objections.
- Have you thought about the travelling distance and the independence of pupils? Part of the route to Porth County doesn't have pavements.
- Pupils will be walking in the dark – breakfast clubs and after school clubs.
- It's a busy road.

- In response to the above concerns Officers stated that the Council sees pupil safety as being paramount. Consideration of safe walking routes to the Porth County site will form part of the reorganisation considerations and appropriate measures will be undertaken to allow children to walk to school safely.
- You need to be at Porth County half an hour before school closes to be able to pick up your child. Advised that parents need to be encouraged to walk to schools.
- Car parking is a problem at the school.
- My daughter will have to push a pram up the hill. An officer stated that it's a parent's responsibility to get their child to school safely.
- CB informed the meeting that similar concerns had been expressed by the parents of pupils at the time of the Abercynon Primary School development when three schools amalgamated to form one new school. As part of the development scheme, new pavements were installed on routes to the school, additional traffic lights were installed and a new pedestrian crossing was created. An officer stated that over £7 million was to be invested in improving the existing Porth County site. As part of this investment the site would be reconfigured with access being improved taking into account safety considerations.
- There are concerns over Porth County pupils being nuisances to neighbours and there are car parking issues in surrounding streets causing problems for residents. Parking on side streets will increase. An officer's response was that the site of Porth County would change. Car parking and access will be addressed – possibly there would be separate access to the primary and secondary sections of the proposed school. Also it was likely that the start and finish times of each set of pupils will be staggered. All appropriate measures will be considered to alleviate parking issues.
- I don't want my three year old being witness to bad behaviour.
- Have you tried walking three year old pupil up a hill (Cemetery Road hill) like that?
- You mention that children's safety is paramount. As a Chamber of Trade, for years we have been asking for pavements to be widened and more barriers installed en route to Porth County School but we have been turned down every time. Are you now going to overturn what Highways have refused? The response given was that as part of the new school proposals all areas of concern would be identified and attempts will be made to mitigate these areas. The Council's track record shows that it does put measures in place.
- Will more detailed plans be available before the end of the consultation period? The answer to this question is yes, concept designs will be drawn up and displayed at the drop in sessions which have been arranged. Also, if these proposals are accepted you will be involved in the full and detailed designs.
- Why can't we have a central school? What extra facilities will we get?
- From which education officers did you gather your team for drawing up these proposals? Advised that the proposals were drawn up by a wide range of

professionals including a former Head teacher, the Head of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools team, Senior Financial and Corporate Project Managers. This team is highly regarded by the Welsh Government and has a good track record with past proposals. The Welsh Government is building up confidence in the Authority with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council receiving the largest amount of 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant aid funding in Wales. The proposals we are discussing this evening have been through considerable scrutiny by the Welsh Government.

- Why didn't you get Head teachers involved in these proposals? We've missed an opportunity. The enquirer was advised that the Local Authority is responsible for the strategic direction of education in Rhondda Cynon Taf, but that Head teacher's views will be taken into account as part of the detailed plans for site development.
- Will you consider this site being a new primary school? Advised that the Council thinks the proposal being discussed is the best option.
- Is this proposal part of the Local Development Plan? Advised that the proposal will comply with the Local Development Plan if the Council builds on existing education land.
- At this stage of the meeting Mr. Richard Evans (RE) , Human Resources Manager, informed those present of the process of establishing a temporary governing body for a new school and its responsibilities with regards to staffing arrangements for the school.
- If present posts are duplicated at the new school who will decide who is appointed? RE responded that it will be the responsibility of the temporary governing body to decide this. He also referred to the possibility of some staff being able to take early retirement whilst others would be given the opportunity to seek redeployment to posts at other schools.
- What about staff transferring to posts paying a lower salary compared to that which they receive presently? RE - The Council's Compensation Scheme will apply.
- What about those staff who are employed as Special Needs Support Assistants who have over two years service? RE – These staff have the same employment rights as permanent members of staff.
- What about the timescale for staff to know where they are? RE – The temporary governing body will firstly appoint a Head teacher for the school. This Head will be responsible for drawing up a staffing structure for the school. It is only when this is completed that the process of staff appointment may be started.
- I'm yet to be convinced at the benefits of a 3-16 school. CB responded by offering to send to the person making this comment information around the success of this model and stated that in England this is a familiar model of education. There are also six or seven Local Authorities in Scotland looking to create the same model. A 3-16 school has recently opened in Blaenau Gwent and Ceredigion is moving towards this form of school organisation. Ceredigion is the highest performing Local Authority in Wales.
- Our schools are doing well.

- You mentioned at the start of this meeting that you need more land to build on. There is land adjacent to the Llwynceilyn schools that is for sale. CB responded that he was not aware of this, but that all suitable land had been looked at.
- Factory units are lying idle. Advised that the Council is bound by planning laws.
- I've seen the redeployment of staff from both sides, morale plummets and this has an effect on pupils.
- Going large doesn't always work.
- The thought of the distance between schools appals me. A response was made that the Council has previously changed its proposals as a result of consultation.
- The capacity of Llwynceilyn Infants is 100 and yet you are creating an additional 100 places for the Welsh school. How is this possible? This question was answered by detailing that building adaptations are to be made at both schools to allow for the additional capacity.
- Why isn't Garth Olwg a 3-19 school? It has separate Governing Bodies and separate Head teachers. A response was given that this may be looked at in the future when the time is right to do so.
- Do you think you are looking after the care of our children, arriving wet and cold after a very long walk to school?
- Will there be separate canteens? Response – This will be considered. It has happened in the past. The canteen at Porth County is designed to be shared at different times.
- What about arrangements to share other facilities, such as the sporting facilities available? The questioner was advised that the use of all appropriate facilities will be timetabled to allow sharing.
- Why weren't other schools included in the proposals? Response – We believe the present option is the best option.
- Why is it best for us and not for other pupils? CB answered that, in the future, proposals to improve the provision of education in Rhondda Cynon Taf, funded from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools initiative, will be considered. However, at the present time the Council had to consider ways of maximising the benefits to education in Rhondda Cynon Taf from this band of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding.
- Have you considered the mother and toddler groups? Response – This facility will be available at the new school, room will be made available.
- You are destroying the community. Advised that the new school will be in close proximity to Porth and that history does not indicate that communities are destroyed by such initiatives.

CB concluded the meeting by inviting those attending to send any other questions they may have to Education and Lifelong Learning. An offer was made to visit those schools affected to meet with staff and a reminder was given concerning the drop in sessions being held in January 2015

**1.7****Notes of a meeting held with the school staff and the governing bodies of Penygraig Junior School, Penygraig Infants School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol yr Eos on Wednesday 19 November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr. Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning.  
 Mrs. Esther Thomas (ET), Service Director, Schools and Community.  
 Mrs. Susan Walker (SW), Head of Primary Achievement.  
 Ms. Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools.  
 Mrs. Catrin Edwards, Head of Transformation and Data.  
 Mrs. Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation, Planning and Governance.  
 Ms. Ellen Williams, HR Advisor.  
 Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator, School Organisation Planning and Governance.  
 49 members of staff and governors.

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

Prior to the meeting being opened to questions and comments CB requested the HR Adviser present to detail the arrangements made with regards to the staff appointments process at the time a new school is established. The following areas were elaborated upon:

- A temporary governing body is established.
- A Head teacher is appointed
- A draft school structure is drawn up.
- Members of the school's senior management team are appointed.
- The Authority will recommend to the temporary governing body that any posts available at the new school are "ringfenced" so that members of staff affected by their schools' closure are given prior consideration before any other applicants are considered.
- Staff will be given the opportunity to consider voluntary redundancy and/or retirement.
- Redeployment opportunities will be made available.
- Any remaining posts are looked to be filled.
- No guarantee could be given however of continued employment.

- How will the temporary governing body be formed? Information was provided at the meeting.
- Is there an opt out clause in this proposal? The response was given that whilst the Council makes these proposals the final decision, if objections are made will be that responsibility of the Welsh Government. Also, in January 2015 the Council will take account of the consultation period feedback and may agree to stop or adjust the proposed reorganisation of schools in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail.
- We haven't seen any local elected members in consultation meetings. Response – It's their decision to attend.
- I thought any 6<sup>th</sup> form changes need to go through Westminster. CB responded by stating that education in Wales is delegated to the Welsh Government and it has the final decision on such matters.
- You have quoted Aberdare as a good example but it's secondary only. CB – Yes it is a good example. I was talking about bringing staff together and the process used to do this.
- Throughout the presentations on 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools there's one reason given for change – that good schools can become excellent schools – it's almost a mantra. I'm at a loss to see how this can happen when our primary schools are operating at this level. The Comprehensive is not. I'm at a loss to see how bringing the schools together will lead to an excellent school. The response to these comments was many examples of good teaching at Tonypanyd College and generally standards are good. However, performances in maths and English have been below the expected levels for the past few years. Significant support is being provided to the College and we will see improvements in the GCSE exam results this summer. The proposals also provide the opportunity to bring smaller schools together. A national Estyn study reports that larger schools perform to a higher standard. Also, the proposed new school, with a new staffing structure is going to be created and existing primary school teachers will be part of the new school. There will be a primary experienced teacher responsible for the primary phase at the new school and experience shows that this works effectively in raising standards.
- SW referred to the 3-19 school in Llanhari, and spoke of teaching and support staff expertise shared is shared across the school. The Head teacher has responsibility for the whole school and there is an Assistant Head teacher in charge of the primary section.
- What about the three year olds at the Llanhari school? SW responded that whilst there were presently no statistics available to evidence the success of this year group they are having very good learning experiences – no negative impact has been identified.
- ET commented that there will also be an opportunity at the proposed new school for interaction between key stages. The school's younger pupils could have access to specialised music and science areas.

- How will this proposal benefit the pupils of Llwynypia? This question was answered by CB stating that the creation of 3-16 schools in other parts of the country has benefitted all schools joining that provision at Key Stage 3 (KS3).
- What about the well being of children, especially at Foundation Phase (FP). How can small children in small groups be put into a big school? An answer was given that KS3 and Key Stage 4 (KS4) curricular arrangements are different to the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 (KS2) arrangements. This will continue in the proposed new school. Also, there is a statutory requirement that you cannot have more than 30 Foundation Phase pupils in a class, and there must be appropriate pupil to staff ratios. This can't change.
- We know the parents and the community – this will be lost. There is a genuine concern this ethos will be lost. CB responded that the development of this ethos tends to stop at KS3 and KS4, and there is a lot to learn from FP and KS2. With a 3-16 school relationships are able to be built up over time.
- Parents can walk their children to school at the minute. There are already health and safety issues at Tonypany Comprehensive before you add 60 staff and 300 pupils.
- How would you like to walk up there with a double buggy?
- You have to walk the walk before you talk the talk.
- Have you walked up there? I see people already soaking wet getting to the school when it's raining.
- One and a half miles up a hill seems a lot longer than the same distance on the flat. Punctuality and attendance will suffer. In response to this and the above comments and questions on walking to the new school CB stated that the Authority had been through this process previously and access and safe routes to school have been addressed. Consideration of safe walking routes to the new school will form part of the reorganisation considerations and appropriate measures will be undertaken to allow children to walk to school safely. In terms of school attendance rates these are improving across the LA, and these include merged schools.
- Will the Council consider an alternative site for the new school, for example using the existing site of Penygraig Junior School? A response was given that we have considered alternative options as set out in the consultation document and the preferred option based on the site, and other factors, is the one being considered today.
- Why are you spending the same amount of money on Treorchy Comprehensive School when it is just having a new 6<sup>th</sup> form? Answer – All of the proposals under this reorganisation are considered on a site by site basis. Some sites will have hidden costs to be considered e.g. drainage problems.
- What are the plans for the new site? This question was answered by CB who stated that concept designs for the proposed new school will be available at the drop in and exhibition session to be held at Tonypany Community College in January. There will be secure and separate play areas but there will be an opportunity to share certain facilities such as the Astroturf pitch and science labs. CB made an offer to governors and staff to visit Ysgol Llanhari to see the learning environment for themselves.

- We are talking about 3 year olds - what about the toilets? Response – There will be self contained and separate appropriate toilet facilities.
- Is Llanhari segregated? Response – Yes, but there are opportunities for older pupils to join younger pupils in lessons.
- What do you regard as being a small school? CB responded that a school with 90 or fewer pupils is regarded as a small school, but in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines when calculating the surplus places at a school nursery figures are excluded.
- In a perfect world it sounds wonderful but parents will be walking up the hill in pouring rain with a pushchair and 3 year olds.
- There's a nursery pick up at 12 noon in some cases – parents have to go back and fore a number of times.
- They can't keep the route open now at times of snow. Response – This is a rare occurrence.
- There will be babies in pushchairs and older pupils with grandparents.
- Why don't you try it? The answer was given that there are already a number of schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf at the top of a hill.
- But these are not primary and comprehensive combined.
- There are concerns about elderly relatives picking up children – there are problems already with the schools on the flat.
- We've already lost a family from our school because of what the proposals are. CB's response was that the Council has already created a large school in Abercynon through the closure of three primary schools in the area. People are pleased with this development even though it's in the town centre and parents and pupils have to get there from hilly areas. The only effect on pupil numbers is that they are rising, including out of catchment area admissions. Attendance levels are good.
- Have you seen Williamstown Primary School at dropping off time? This school was well planned but have you seen what's happening?
- Promises with regards to access were made at the time that Williamstown was built.
- Our priority is the children
- A 3-16 school shows a lack of ambition for the area with the loss of the 6<sup>th</sup> form. CB responded by stating that the School Council's of each of Porth County Comprehensive School, Tonypany Community College and Ferndale Comprehensive School have stated that they welcome moving schools at 16 as a first step to moving up in education. Also, there is substantial subsidising of 6<sup>th</sup> forms from the schools' budgets that should be spent on pupils in the lower forms. Larger 6<sup>th</sup> forms are more effective – we are looking to increase the level of aspiration not reduce it. We need to educate parents on the opportunities which become available with larger 6<sup>th</sup> forms.
- Will the Autistic Unit be located elsewhere on site or will it be integrated into the school? CB responded that there had already been a lot of dialogue over this consideration. It is hoped that the provision in the new school will be as good as, if not better, than at present. There will be lot of collaborative working on this project and we will work with you on the design of the new provision.

- The highway is a major problem. Response – This will be looked at with our Highway colleagues as part of the design process.
- What will the transport arrangements be? Response – Transport arrangements will be dependent upon a number of factors e.g. the number of courses available. Post 16 Transport will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy.
- Problems will occur on the train with additional pupils going up the valley.
- What are you going to do with empty buildings in our community, e.g. Williamstown Primary School. The response given was that Williamstown Primary School was sold within 18 Months of it being vacated. It is not now owned by the Council. Also, Blaenllechau Infants School is no longer in the ownership of the Council.
- You have a duty of care to the community with regards to vacant/derelict schools. An officer responded by stating that some sites are sold for housing development and others for business development. We don't want buildings to become derelict and become an eyesore.
- Can we have that in writing? Response – Yes.
- There are concerns over the interaction with local shops and the community – putting primary provision up the hill we will lose the closeness and partnership with the community. Response – In terms of distance the new site is not very far. There will still be opportunities for interaction.
- You won't be able to take them out of primary schools and into the community.
- The devil is in the detail – highways area real concern. Will we see proposals before the consultation period ends? Effects on foot traffic and vehicles. CB responded – We are working on outline plans to be displayed at the January consultation events – road safety is paramount. There will be a traffic impact survey which you will be able to see. However, detailed plans cannot be drawn up before funding from the Welsh Government is confirmed.
- Parents will take cars to school. Response – there is a responsibility placed upon parents to obey road traffic rules and regulations.
- There is also residential parking.
- Problems already exist at the Barratt's site entrance with just 500 pupils. The answer was given that the site will need to be carefully designed.
- Why hasn't this been done already? You should sort out the problem of access now. Answer – we will design something to address all issues.
- What about the schools which are not included in the proposal? Why can't they access 21 Century schools funding? CB answered that, in the future, proposals to improve the provision of education in Rhondda Cynon Taf, funded from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools initiative, will be considered. However, at the present time the Council had to consider ways of maximising the benefits to education in Rhondda Cynon Taf from this year's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding.
- What happens with the Tonypandy College pupils when any refurbishment is happening? The response was given that the Council are very experienced in developing school sites when schools are in session and pupils are present. Measures are taken to lessen any impact. These will form part of the feasibility study.

- Why were these schools chosen and not other schools? e.g. Clydach Vale.  
The response was that the present schools were chosen because of a variety of factors including proximity of sites and the sizes of the schools. Full details could be found in the consultation document.
- Is Clydach Vale in a better state than Tonypandy schools?
- Was any consideration given to Tonypandy Roman Catholic Primary being included in the move to the new site? Response – If the Diocesan Authority had requested such a move this would have been considered by the Council.
- Why only a drop in session in January? Why not a public meeting? These questions were answered by CB who stated that a public meeting would offer no opportunity for proper interaction, and that people are more comfortable with the drop in option. The Council was trying to accommodate what has worked best in the past. CB encouraged Head teachers to ensure that parents receive information on these sessions.
- Are you going to listen to what people are saying? Response – Yes.
- It's not the idea of the new school, it's where it's located.
- What about the alternatives? A response was given that options are very limited.
- What sizes will the classes be? Answer – There will need to be strict adherence to Welsh Government legislation and guidance.
- The bigger the school the bigger the classes. Response – Not necessarily, you could have two smaller classes.
- Would the Council consider using Industrial Estates to house a new school? The answer was given that these areas were known as brown field sites. As such there are different planning laws, planning laws for industrial development.

CB concluded the meeting by inviting those attending to send any other questions they may have to Education and Lifelong Learning. An offer was made to visit those schools affected to meet with staff and a reminder was given concerning the drop in sessions being held in January 2015.

**1.8****Notes of a meeting held at Tonyrefail Primary School 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.****Present:**

Chris Bradshaw	Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Esther Thomas	Service Director for Schools and Community
Andrea Richards	Head of 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools
Catrin Edwards	Head of Service Transformation and Data Systems
Richard Evans	Human Resources Manager
Julie Hadley	Head of School Organisation, Planning & Governance
Nicola Goodman	Asst. Head, School Organisation, Planning & Governance
Mrs Tynan	Headteacher

35 members of school staff and the governing body.

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB then read from a prepared script, for the purpose of consistency, which outlined and summarised the proposals being consulted upon at this time. The full details are outlined in the consultation document that has been widely circulated. He also outlined and explained the consultation timetable and the next stages, if it progresses. He encouraged all consultees to put their views in writing and explained how this should be done. He also advised staff that meetings with HR officers can be arranged for them if required. It was noted that, as changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision are an integral part of the proposals, the final decision on them will rest with the Welsh Government.

RE explained that as the proposal was for two schools to close and one new school to be created, a temporary governing body would be put in place comprising of governors from the two existing schools.

The first task of the temporary governing body would be the appointment of the senior leadership team of the new school.

Then, the staffing structure of the primary and secondary elements would be determined.

The primary element would be largely the same size as the existing primary school, therefore, staff transition should be painless.

If however, in three or four years time staff are looking to retire, that would be possible.

Some interviews may need to be held if more than one person applies for one role in the new school.

RE gave the example of Aberdare, whereby three secondary schools became one. At Aberdare, volunteers for retirement / redundancy were asked for first. Generally, anyone wanting to stay knew their position one year before the new school was scheduled to open. Should a decision be made to proceed with the proposals, the staffing process would start well before the new school opens.

The meeting was opened to questions.

Question

Is there a possibility that teachers / staff within the school will lose their jobs?

Response

RE advised that it would depend on how the temporary governing body determine the staffing structure. Based on pupil numbers, staff numbers should be the same, but there will be an opportunity for people to go if they wish.

CE added that primary and secondary budgets would be formulated in the same way.

JH pointed out that the only impact would be if pupil numbers dropped, but that would be the case in the current school also.

CB stated that the only areas of possible reduction would be catering and admin. However, as the proposal is for the sixth form to enlarge, the new school is likely to be bigger than the two current schools combined.

RE added that the Council would try to be as flexible as possible so that staff who want to go can and staff who want to stay can.

Question

Will there be new contracts?

Response

RE stated that there would be continuity of service.

Question

Does that apply to senior management?

Response

RE advised that it would, if the governors decide to retain that appointment.

CB added that the governing body will appoint the headteacher and thereafter the senior management team structure will be decided and staff can apply for posts.

RE commented that in the absence of a structure, it was difficult to confirm as the structure was the governing body's decision, not the Local Authority's. The Local Authority would advise the governing body.

ET pointed out that there had been only minimal job losses in Aberdare – here three secondary schools became one, so there was a lot more duplication of roles.

Question

How many job losses in Aberdare?

Response

RE advised that there were probably five people in that process for whom jobs could not be found. (JH added that this was out of approximately 240 staff).

RE continued by outlining that if anyone in this proposed new school has no job, the Local Authority can look to see if staff want to retire in other schools and then someone could be redeployed to another school.

ET added that in four years time, some people could have moved on.

CB also commented on changes due to other uncertainties such as pupil numbers.

Question

What are the timescales for the structure being in place?

Response

RE explained that prior to the new school starting, staff positions would be confirmed. However, exact timescales could not be confirmed at present. If a decision is made to

proceed with the proposal, moves to appoint a temporary governing body would be undertaken straight away.

ET added that timescales are outside of the control of officers – for example, elected member decisions are needed and Welsh Government decisions are needed.

Question

What about the catchment area for Tonyrefail – will this change?

Response

CB explained that there were no proposals to change the primary catchment area at present, however, if housing developments in Tonyrefail progress, places at Tref-Y Rhyg and Hendreforgan will be used and catchments may need to change.

Question

Will there be one or two temporary governing bodies?

Response

CB stated that should the proposal proceed, the primary school and secondary school would have separate governing bodies until such time as the schools close. The temporary governing body would be one entity comprising of governors from the two existing governing bodies.

JH added that the temporary governing body would have 20 members and members of both governing bodies at the time of the decision can apply to be governors of the temporary governing body. All appointments (excluding community governors) will be made by the appointments panel in Clydach Vale and will be split between primary and secondary, with an equal split being encouraged. Those appointed would then elect community governor colleagues.

Question

Will the headteachers be on the temporary governing body?

Response

JH and ET stated that they would not. The first role of the temporary governing body would be to appoint a headteacher.

Question

Will there be one headteacher or two?

Response

CB stated that there would be one headteacher of the 3-19 school. That headteacher would then determine the structure of the senior management of the school. CB gave Ysgol Llanhari as an example – in this 3-19 school, there was a headteacher of the 3-19 school with a deputy headteacher of the primary sector and a deputy headteacher of the secondary sector. Governing body meetings in Ysgol Llanhari are attended by the headteacher and the two deputy headteachers.

CB added that it was pleasing when meeting the secondary school staff that they are keen for primary school teachers to teach at Key Stage 3 and for secondary school teachers to teach at Key Stage 2 (especially languages). Opportunities are exciting for career development.

Question

If people do not want to ask questions in this meeting, how can they contact officers?

Response

CB advised that anyone can e-mail the address in the consultation document, or the headteacher has CB's contact details.

Question

In relation to access to the school – will primary age and secondary age pupils use the same entrance?

Response

AR explained that proposals were only at feasibility stage at present. Proposals involved looking to develop off the red brick building (which is a listed building) central core facilities, with a brand new separate primary school with its own entrance alongside the red brick building.

Question

What about traffic?

Response

AR stated that a traffic assessment would be undertaken as part of the planning process. CB added that in Ysgol Llanhari, there is one entrance, the vehicles then split - one direction for the primary sector and another direction for the secondary sector.

Question

What about staff parking?

Response

AR commented that staff parking would be within the site.

Question

The possibility of changing the catchment area – who would this affect?

Response

CB explained that if housing developments required further places, catchment areas would change to utilise surplus places in other schools before additional spaces could be built at this school.

JH added that once a child was registered at a particular school, they can stay there.

Question

If a catchment has to change, will the children currently in the school have to leave?

Response

JH confirmed that they would not – catchment changes only affect children not at the school prior to the catchment change.

Question

If we are happy but schools in other areas are not happy with the proposals, will this new school go ahead?

Response

CB stated that elected members would consider this as one proposal. If the proposal is rejected, elected members may decide to re-consult on another proposal. This is what happened in Aberdare after the views of the staff and the community had been taken on board.

Question

Would we be working in just the primary school or could we be working as 1:1 in the Foundation Phase, then as 1:1 in Key Stage 3?

Response

ET commented that would be determined by the headteacher and the management structure, but the skill sets of staff would also be looked at and training given if needed.

Question

Reference made to library being moved into the leisure centre and then being lost. Will the identity of the primary school be lost in the 3-19 school?

Response

ET commented that this could also be looked at as being part of a more innovative environment with opportunities.

AR added that these would be fantastic 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities for the school and for the community – for example, sports facilities.

Comment (from staff / governor representative)

It is important that this information is put to the public to emphasise how positive this is, as opposed to the message that the schools are shutting.

Response

CB advised that in Ysgol Llanhari, there is now surplus capacity in other schools in the area as lots of people want to go to the Llanhari 3-19 school. CB encouraged staff and governors to visit Ysgol Llanhari to see that the primary sector still has its own identity and is still a nurturing environment.

Comment (from staff / governor representative)

It may be good to have Llanhari staff at the public evenings so that staff and parents can speak with them.

Comment

Parents in Hendreforgan and Cwmlai are complaining that there will be inequality for their children.

Response

CB referred to the proximity of Tonyrefail Primary to Tonyrefail Comprehensive and added that transition links from Hendreforgan and Cwmlai will be key.

The Lampeter example of transition at primary level was outlined by CB.

The community and the wider schools will all benefit from the 3-19 school.

CB also referred to a visit to Machynlleth outlining how all primary schools in the community worked together.

CB emphasised that the key priority is to ensure that all Rhondda Cynon Taf children benefit.

AR referred to the possibility of the new hall being made available to all schools for Christmas concerts.

ET added that the secondary school in Lampeter gained a better understanding of what good transition is by having primary age pupils on the same site.

Comment

Referring back to the earlier discussion on catchments – there are already three housing estates (for example Mountain View) between Hendreforgan and the new school.

Response

JH stated that all housing estates already have a catchment area allocated to them.

Catchments only come into play if the year group in a particular school is oversubscribed.

The Council is aware of all housing developments.

Question

How many places will be available at the new primary school?

Response

AR advised 300.

JH added that forecasts are undertaken five years in advance and cannot include the unknown. If new developments subsequently come online the developer would need to

provide funding for additional classrooms. No planning application has been submitted for Trane Farm yet. The catchment for Trane Farm is likely to be split between two existing catchments, as one school currently has surplus places.

Question

What are the key concerns for the Director of Education in relation to this proposal?

Response

CB stated that his main concerns were timescales, particularly in relation to the timing of the decision from Welsh Government and the timing of the appointment of contractors.

Question

How advanced is the feasibility study / concept drawings?

Response

AR advised that these will be discussed with governors and staff as they are developed, as these are the key practitioners.

CB added that a fundamentally important part of the process is staff and governor input - architects plans do change after staff and governor input. Interlinks between departments, location of storerooms etc. are key to staff.

AR stated that new buildings would be built to Building Bulletin guidelines.

ET added that during the meeting with the School Council, a key concern of the pupils was the toilets and the pupil voice was also very important and they would also be involved.

Question

Are there any plans for the red brick building?

Response

AR stated that the building needs to be kept as it is a listed building. Cadw are being consulted. It will contain secondary school classrooms. The secondary school building will be off the red brick building. The primary school element will be a separate building with good areas for the Foundation Phase.

Question

Will there be one head of both facilities?

Response

RE advised that there could be an Executive headteacher of the whole school, with a headteacher of the secondary sector and a headteacher of the primary sector.

CB referred to the previous Ysgol Llanhari example given - in this 3-19 school, there was a headteacher of the 3-19 school with a deputy headteacher of the primary sector and a deputy headteacher of the secondary sector; however, different schools do have different structures.

ET added that one headteacher would have accountability for the whole school, with other individuals accountable for various phases.

Question

Will there be one headteacher on the temporary governing body?

CB responded – Yes. They will be appointed by the temporary governing body.

Comment

There are concerns that there will be no-one fighting the primary school's corner.

Response

JH advised that primary school governors will be on the governing body.

CB stated that if a person with primary school experience were appointed as the overall headteacher, they would appoint a secondary school experienced person to the senior management team (or vice versa).

ET added that it is not about the secondary school taking over the primary school, it is a case of having a balance of expertise and shared ownership. Two separate sectors are needed in terms of safeguarding, but in terms of education, it would be a 3-19 school and everyone would have an input. It is not 'top down'.

CB commented that the headteacher of Ysgol Llanhari refers to the primary sector as bringing a real buzz to the school.

ET added that secondary sector colleagues have a lot to learn from primary sector colleagues.

Question

When will the headteacher be appointed?

Response

RE stated that the appointment of the headteacher is the first appointment to be made as soon as the temporary governing body is in place.

Question

Will there be one budget split between primary and secondary?

Response

CE advised that in Ysgol Llanhari, the school have decided to keep the primary budget and the secondary budget separate, as the primary budget is a lot more prescriptive than the secondary budget.

Question

What if the secondary budget goes into deficit?

Response

CE stated that this will be addressed across the sector. Some costs will be across both budgets, for example rates and utilities.

ET explained that there will be some growth in Tonyrefail at Key Stage 5. Some secondary schools are in deficit at present as small Key Stage 5 classes are being subsidised by Key Stage 4. Larger sixth form classes will alleviate this. Investment would not be taken from the primary sector.

CB added – we want to make it work. Between us we all want the best for the children in Tonyrefail.

Question

Will there be maps etc. at the January drop in event?

Response

AR stated that there would be some concept drawings on display.

Question

Why is £75 million being spent when a deficit of £70 million needs to be found.

Response

CB explained that these are different pots of money. Welsh Government are willing to provide £75 million capital to invest in schools, but are not willing to give £70 million more revenue to spend on services.

Question

Can't the reserves be used?

Response

CB stated that reserves are one off money for a short period of time and are being used to continue services now.

Question

How safe are the young children going to be?

Response

ET explained the layout of Ysgol Llanhari and stated that segregation will be there. Safeguarding underpins all that we do. Any use of secondary school resources by primary age pupils would be under strict supervision. This point was raised at the earlier meeting with the School Council.

AR added that there would be lock down areas between the buildings.

ET stated that the new Aberdare School is attached to a leisure centre which is open to the public, therefore, there is security built into the building.

There were no further questions.

CB thanked all for their attendance.

**1.9****Notes of a meeting held at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 4pm****Meeting to discuss the Council's proposals in respect of the possible relocation of the school**

Present:

Chris Bradshaw	Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Esther Thomas	Service Director for Schools and Community
Andrea Richards	Head of 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools
Catrin Edwards	Head of Service Transformation and Data Systems
Richard Evans	Human Resources Manager
Julie Hadley	Head of School Organisation, Planning & Governance
Nicola Goodman	Asst. Head, School Organisation, Planning & Governance

27 members of school staff and the governing body (including the headteacher).

Mr Bradshaw (CB) opened the meeting by thanking all present for attending. The officers then introduced themselves.

CB explained that this is a period of consultation and that objections are not received at this time.

The next steps in the process are:-

Following the period of consultation, a report will be provided to elected members in February / March.

Should elected members decide to proceed with the proposals, the next step is the publication of a statutory notice probably in March / April (for a 28 day period)

If objections are received during the statutory notice period, an objection report is published.

As the overall proposals involve sixth form changes, Welsh Government will make the ultimate decision in relation to the proposals.

A decision would be expected during Autumn 2015.

CB explained that at previous meetings, he had read from a script so as to ensure that the proposals for the whole of the region (which involved a number of schools) were outlined in the same way at every meeting. However, this school was slightly different as the proposal did not involve closure of the school.

CB explained the history of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School proposals.

Part of the original 21<sup>st</sup> Century School proposals involved a new school for YGG Tonyrefail. The Council was to fund 30% of the cost, with Welsh Government funding 70%. Welsh Government then changed the funding and a 50% contribution from the Councils was needed. Proposals therefore had to be reviewed in light of this and in light of housing developments in the area. There are more economies of scale by utilising Tonyrefail

Primary School than by putting a new English and a new Welsh Medium Primary School on the Comprehensive School site. Other land had also been looked at, for example, the day centre.

The Tonyrefail Primary School site also provides the opportunity for growth of Welsh medium provision.

CB outlined that the purpose of the meeting is to gather views in relation to the proposals.

There is no change in the governance and management arrangements at this school as part of the proposals. The school and the staff would simply move to the new site. RE from Human Resources is present to answer any queries.

The meeting was opened to questions.

#### Question

There is an increase of 23% referred to in the WESP document – would this mean two year groups in each year?

#### Response

ET stated that future numbers would depend on parental choice.

CB added that there are opportunities for growth due to housing developments. Plans for growth in Welsh medium provision include this area, the Cynon Valley and the Llantrisant area. Also, the quality of secondary school education will affect parental choice (in both the English and Welsh sectors).

#### Question

Repairs of the current school are a major problem. Moving to a 30-year old school building, will they be inheriting problems? Can assurances be given that a lot of the school budget won't be spent on repairs?

#### Response

AR explained that the proposals involve remodelling and refurbishment being undertaken to the Tonyrefail Primary School building, in relation to the 1980s block in particular. The building is structurally sound. External areas are also to be improved. Pupils will also be involved, for example, in the design of the toilet areas.

#### Comment

Concerns that the English school should have been for Welsh medium. Concerns that Welsh-medium is being side-stepped. Parents and governors need reassurance.

#### Comment

The headteacher commented that she has seen plans for the new school previously which looked very nice, but she did not believe that a Welsh-medium primary school on an English secondary school site was suitable.

#### Response

AR advised that the current Building Bulletin does not allow schools to be built to the size of Tonyrefail Primary School, therefore, the Welsh school are getting a bigger school than they would get if they were having a brand new build, hence, there was room for growth. .

Comment

The headteacher commented that there are concerns at the current YGG Tonyrefail school building in relation to the condition of the buildings and especially in relation to disabled access.

Comment

Welsh medium schools have transport to the school – YGG Tonyrefail currently has one coach and four minibuses bringing pupils to the school. In relation to the location of the current Tonyrefail Primary School site, buses cannot get out of Martin's Crescent.

Response

AR will take this up with the Council's Transport Department.

JH proposed splitting the large coach into two smaller buses.

Comment

A lot of parents also drop off at this school.

Response

ET explained that there is a lay-by outside Tonyrefail Primary School.

Comment

This would be used for the minibuses.

Response

AR and CB commented that this could be looked at as there is land there. Reference made to works undertaken at Cwmbach.

Comment

We are concerned that not too much land is taken away as we want good sports facilities.

Response

AR stated that play facilities for children is the priority.

AR asked whether the start time of YGG Tonyrefail was the same as the start time of Tonyrefail Primary School.

The Headteacher confirmed that it was.

Comment

Could the one way system be changed back around / reversed?

Response

AR will take this up with the Council's Transport Department.

CB asked whether the buses could come into the day centre area.

The staff/governors responded that there was not enough space there for coaches, only minibuses.

JH again commented that the possibility of replacing the coach with two smaller buses could be looked at.

Question

Could a letter go out to parents as soon as possible detailing what the works will involve, as the Welsh document only refers to re-vamping?

Response

ET commented that it was difficult to do this at present as we cannot be seen to be pre-empting any decision. Consultation events in January will provide some more information.

AR added that the events would display some schools which meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards.

AR stated that arrangements could also be made for parents to visit the current Tonyrefail Primary School.

Question

What will happen to the field to the rear of the school?

Response

AR stated that this will have to be looked at as there is quite a change in levels.

Question

CB asked - have many of the staff been to Ysgol Llanhari to see the quality of the refurbishment there?

Response

The headteacher commented that her and one member of staff had been and were very impressed.

Comment

The project management and information from the team during the refurbishment process at Ysgol Llanhari was great.

Response

AR commented that the same project manager from the Council's Corporate Estates Department could manage the scheme.

AR and JH reiterated that staff and pupils would be consulted.

Comment

The amount of green space at Tonyrefail Primary is also seen as a benefit.

Comment

Could a note be added to the Starting School booklet (page which lists all schools) referring readers to see Ysgol Llanhari in relation to YGG Tonyrefail so as to afford parity to YGG Tonyrefail, as all other Tonyrefail Schools (excluding YGG Tonyrefail) are listed under Tonyrefail Secondary.

Response

JH pointed out that that part of the booklet shows secondary schools and their associated primary schools.

CB and AR advised that this could be looked at.

ET commented that most people use the website now. Also, the Starting School book is going to be re-vamped.

Comment

AR pointed out that in relation to the proposed 3-19 English-medium school, there will be opportunity for YGG Tonyrefail pupils and the wider community to use the facilities there, for example, the astroturf.

Comment

CB advised that comments or questions could be put in writing or e-mail – details are provided in the consultation document.

Comment

A thorough look has presumably been undertaken in relation to the existing building and a budget provided.

Response

AR stated that an amount per square metre has been allocated for refurbishment. There is also a furniture budget. Technology will be looked at nearer the time as what is currently 'state of the art' technology will have changed considerably by 2018.

Comment

ET stated that the School Council look with fondness at the current school, which is a credit to the school and the staff.

Question

What are the timescales?

Response

CB stated that if the proposal goes ahead, all elements will be implemented by September 2018. Refurbishment / repairs to the current Tonyrefail Primary School building are likely to be undertaken over the summer of 2018 (some works, for example, highways may need to be undertaken in advance). Transition into the new school can be undertaken shortly thereafter.

Question

What are the plans for the current site of YGG Tonyrefail?

Response

CB stated that the Council would be likely to sell or demolish it.

Question

What about the Genesis provision in the current school?

Response

CB advised that discussions were being held with Early Years colleagues.

AR pointed out that Tonyrefail Primary School building is too large for the current YGG Tonyrefail pupil numbers, therefore, it would be possible for the Meithrin to use also.

Question

What if you cut nursery provision and cut buses and then pupil numbers drop – would the school need to move to another building?

Response

ET stated that a better building usually attracts more pupils.

Comment

That is only initially.

Question

Does the school have enough capacity to grow to the 23% referred to earlier?

Response

AR pointed out that without even extending the school, just by remodelling, the current school can be made able to accommodate 410 pupils. Also, the new building has been constructed to be able to build on to.

CB added that educational standards would also encourage parents to select this school.

There were no further questions.

CB thanked all for their attendance.

**1.10****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Ferndale Community School on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mr P Thomas, member of staff, Ferndale Community School  
 16 members of the School Council, from years 7 to 13.

The officers and pupils present introduced themselves. Mrs Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposals. She referred to the consultation document booklet which had been distributed, which fully outlined and explained the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas. In the case of Ferndale Community School, this proposal will mean that the school will lose its 6<sup>th</sup> form, as such provision is to be transferred to two centres only, at Treorchy and Tonyrefail Comprehensive Schools. An amendment to the school's catchment area was also being recommended, which would see pupils resident in the catchments of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools transferring to the catchment of Ferndale, from that of Porth County.

ET also gave information on the other proposals being considered, which were to create 3 – 16 age schools at Porth and Tonypany and a 3 – 19 school at Tonyrefail. It was noted that this would affect both Primary and Secondary schools in these areas and that a full explanation was provided in the consultation document, copies of which were available at this meeting for anyone who required one.

ET then explained the consultation process. The Council is currently seeking the views of all stakeholders, which includes parents, school staff, governors and of course the pupils of the schools in question. She advised that the consultation would be held between October 2014 and the end of January 2015. She also outlined the full statutory process that would be followed in respect of these proposals and advised that, as they involved changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, the final decision on all of them would be made by ministers at the Welsh Government. It was also noted that a sum of £75 million was to be invested to improve and enhance the school buildings included within the proposal, which was to be joint funded between the Council and the Welsh Government.

ET also explained the reasons why these proposals were under consideration, all of which were explained in more detail in the consultation document. It was pointed out that there are too many small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes and that funding is being diverted from Key Stages 3 and 4 within schools to 'subsidise' small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes, leading to many schools experiencing budget difficulties. She also added that Ferndale is performing well, but that overall, schools in RCT could do better when compared with other local authorities in Wales, especially at post-16. The 'pros and cons' of the current provision

and consortium arrangements were also discussed.

ET then opened the meeting to the pupils, for them to ask questions. She also asked pupils whether they had any worries or concerns and whether they understood the proposals:

- After GCSE's, pupils will now have to travel to other schools for their A levels. Concern was expressed at the distance between Ferndale and Treorchy.
- How big will classes be? This will depend on options and exact numbers etc, but they will not be too large. There will be approx 500 in the new 6<sup>th</sup> form, so the Headteacher can be creative with the timetable.
- Mr Whittingham (BW) gave information on how the larger 6<sup>th</sup> form could work. It will allow for more hours of study per week. Class sizes will depend on the subject, practical subjects will have smaller classes, 18 per class would be an ideal size. These classes are bigger than you have at present, but smaller than the colleges can offer.
- What subjects will be on offer? It will replicate what is currently available at both schools and the college. It is more likely that there will be enough pupils per subject to make a class viable than under the current arrangements. There will be more choice.
- What if we can't afford to travel, will there be free bus passes? Advised yes.
- Will there be opportunities to travel to Aberdare instead, as it is closer? Advised yes.
- All pupils will be going together, unlike the current consortium arrangements.
- The travelling and distance may put students off going to Treorchy. We are not forcing pupils to go anywhere, college is also an option.
- The Tonyrefail proposal to put 3 and 19 year old in the same school doesn't seem right, I wouldn't like it for my younger sister. Information was provided on how this operates successfully in Llanhari at present. The two parts of the school are separate, it is like having 2 schools in 1. It gives flexibility for teachers, eg Science specialists could give lessons to Primary pupils.
- I still feel that Primary and Secondary schools should be separate. It could be difficult, especially for school buses. Responded that this needs to be properly managed, with staggered times for example. Safeguarding will be managed by segregation and separation on site.
- What is in this for Ferndale, will there be any money to improve our school? Responded that there is a backlog of maintenance at this school, we will work with the governors to improve the buildings. There will be no new buildings as we have to remove surplus capacity, there will also be a change to the catchment area. There could also be other usage of the school, eg Flying Start provision.
- What about the staff who teach A levels here? Advised that this will be looked at by our HR staff and that the staff and governors are in fact meeting later today. It is very rare for staff in these circumstances to lose their jobs. There will be opportunities elsewhere for them.
- We love this school and wouldn't want to move.
- I can see the advantages in going to another school for A Levels, it could be a

forward step. Travelling can give you good experience and confidence. It can be positive and prepare you for university and employment.

- ET then asked the Year 9 pupils what they felt about the proposals, as they would be the first year group affected. There were some opposing views expressed, some thought that travelling to another school would build confidence, others did not like the idea. They did agree that there would be advantaged to having all courses provided at one place, rather than having to travel to different schools as they do at present under the consortium arrangements. Travelling between schools for different lessons during the day is not ideal and can be difficult.
- Will courses on offer be the same as they are here? Advised yes, with a larger choice of subjects being available. There will be more teachers, so it will be easier to timetable exactly what students will need.
- Could you do some subjects in Treorchy and others in Aberdare? Advised that hopefully, all subjects will be available at both schools, ie they will be replicated, so there will be no need to travel to both schools.
- Having fewer schools may restrict sports teams? Responded that this could in fact lead to higher standards – regional rugby being an example.
- The pupils were asked what could the officers do to address their concerns or fears. The pupils responded that they need more information, they first heard about these plans in the local paper and on Facebook, speak to more pupils or speak in assemblies.
- ET advised that the views of pupils are important and were taken on board with the recent project to build a new school in Aberdare. She referred to the open days that were held, transition days with all schools involved, visits to other schools to meet their pupils. The pupils agreed that these were good ideas, they also suggested meetings with their youth officers and possibly the School Parliament.
- ET encouraged the pupils to write or e-mail their views on the proposals. She suggested that the School Council, or perhaps the 6<sup>th</sup> form students could co-ordinate this. The questionnaires and online surveys could be placed on the school website for completion if necessary.

ET ended the meeting by thanking all of the pupils for attending and for providing excellent feedback to the officers. It had been a thoroughly enjoyable session.

**1.11****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Porth County Community School on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mrs MacDonald, member of staff, Porth County Community School  
 11 members of the School Council, from years 8 to 10.

The officers and pupils present introduced themselves. Mr Whittingham (BW) then outlined the proposals. He referred to the consultation document booklet which had been distributed, which fully outlined and explained the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas. In the case of Porth County Community School, this proposal will mean that the school will lose its 6<sup>th</sup> form, as such provision is to be transferred to two centres only, at Treorchy and Tonyrefail Comprehensive Schools. In addition, the age range of the school would become 3 to 16 years, with the local Primary schools, namely Porth Infants, Llwynceilyn Infants and Porth Juniors closing and primary school provision transferring to this school. An amendment to the school's catchment area was also being recommended, which would see pupils resident in the catchments of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools transferring to the catchment of Ferndale, from that of Porth County.

BW also gave information on the other proposals being considered, which were to create a 3 – 16 age school at Tonypany and a 3 – 19 school at Tonyrefail. It was noted that this would affect both Primary and Secondary schools in these areas and that a full explanation was provided in the consultation document, copies of which were available at this meeting for anyone who required one.

BW then explained the consultation process. The Council is currently seeking the views of all stakeholders, which includes parents, school staff, governors and of course the pupils of the schools in question. He advised that the consultation would be held between October 2014 and the end of January 2015. He also outlined the full statutory process that would be followed in respect of these proposals and advised that, as they involved changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, the final decision on all of them would be made by ministers at the Welsh Government. It was also noted that a sum of £75 million was to be invested to improve and enhance the school buildings included within the proposal, which was to be joint funded between the Council and the Welsh Government.

BW also explained the reasons why these proposals were under consideration, all of which were explained in more detail in the consultation document. It was pointed out that there are too many small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes and that funding is being diverted from Key Stages 3 and 4 within schools to 'subsidise' small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes, leading to many schools

experiencing budget difficulties. The 'pros and cons' of the current provision and consortium arrangements were also discussed.

BW then opened the meeting to the pupils, for them to ask questions. He also asked pupils whether they had any worries or concerns and whether they understood the proposals:

- Where would we go whilst you are building the school? AR provided information, one block would be converted to a Primary school, secondary pupils would be temporarily housed in mobile classes while this was being done. The extent of the work planned was explained. Pupils would not need to move off site.
- A query on transport was raised. Information was provided.
- Are you all in favour of this? AR said yes and gave some information regarding the proposals, as outlined in the consultation document.
- MS explained the funding process for 6<sup>th</sup> form, in particular that across RCT approximately £800,000 funding from budgets provided for Key Stage 3 & 4 pupils is subsidising 6<sup>th</sup> form provision. Younger pupils are not getting good value.
- What about the Primary school teachers, will they lose their jobs? Advised all current teaching staff will be given first priority for posts in the new school.
- Will the younger children be kept separate? Advised yes, information on current arrangements at Ysgol Llanhari were given .
- Moving from Year 6 to Year 7 in Secondary is part of growing up. We have spoken with friends, there is some concern at having to move for the 6<sup>th</sup> form, this could cause anxiety. BW advised that pupils should also consider possible benefits, such as any transfer will be with all your friends in the year group, everybody will be in the same position. There will be more choice of courses for you to study, more opportunities for you. You will also meet new friends and the experience will help to prepare you for university or employment.
- Why are you trying to change things, especially for the Primary schools? Will the 6<sup>th</sup> forms be too big? BW referred to information contained in the consultation document. Advised that larger schools doesn't mean larger classes, rather more of them, eg if 30 pupils chose to study an A Level there would probably be 2 classes of 15 each. Also, there will be no changes to the decisions you make for post – 16, eg you can still choose, college or school for example. You will however have more choice of courses and you will also have advice and guidance to help you. The Primary and Secondary provisions will be kept separate on the one site.
- BW advised that the SEN provision will remain at the school, but will increase in size so that it caters for all Key Stages.
- Will the Primary children have to attend the Secondary department of this school? Advised not necessarily, parents could choose other schools and as long as there are places available, this can happen.
- What will happen to the empty school buildings? AR gave information, including that any money raised from any sales will remain in the education budget.
- If we stay in the same school from 3 to 16 years old, will leaving at 16 be even harder? BW advised that this could be of benefit – Year 11 pupils will be the senior year group and could assume some responsibility for mentoring younger pupils, this model of education works well elsewhere.

- We have 5 lessons a day now, will the school day be longer? This will be decided by school staff and governors, there is a minimum length a school day should be.
- Should you be consulting with all pupils? Advised that this is a very good idea. The School Council were asked to assist with this task, to enable all pupils to complete an on line survey using tablet computers, this was readily agreed.
- A query on transport and traffic was raised, considered to be busy now and will only get worse. Advised that work on this issue was to be undertaken.
- Will there be separate headteachers and deputy headteachers for each part of the school? Advised there will be one headteacher only, but the governing body will decide the staffing structure for the rest of the school. There could be more opportunities for teaching staff.
- Concern was expressed re potential safeguarding issues for younger children being with teenagers. Advised that they will be separated and segregated at all times, there will be 'staggered' times during the school day, for example start, finish and break times will be different.
- Will the Primary children have a separate yard area? Advised yes.
- Who will make the final decision? Information was provided on the process. Noted that all evidence of consultation, including the notes of this meeting will be made available for this.
- A discussion on the swimming pool facility was held.

BW ended the meeting by thanking all of the pupils for attending, he added that the pupils will have a say and some input in to the design of the new school. He encouraged all pupils to make comments and complete questionnaires and reiterated that tablet computers will be made available for them to do so.

**1.12****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Tonypany Community College on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mr Marc Eades-Jones, Youth Empowerment Officer, Tonypany  
 11 members of the School Council, from years 7 to 12.

The officers and pupils present introduced themselves. Mrs Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposals. She referred to the consultation document booklet which had been distributed, which fully outlined and explained the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas. In the case of Tonypany Community College, this proposal will mean that the school will lose its 6<sup>th</sup> form, as such provision is to be transferred to two centres only, at Treorchy and Tonyrefail Comprehensive Schools. In addition, the age range of the school would become 3 to 16 years, with the local Primary schools, namely Penygraig Junior and Infants, Tonypany Primary and Ysgol yr Eos closing and primary school provision transferring to this school. An amendment to the school's catchment area was also being recommended, which would see pupils resident in the catchments of Gelli and Bodringallt Primary Schools transferring to the catchment of Treorchy, from that of Tonypany.

ET also gave information on the other proposals being considered, which were to create a 3 – 16 age school at Porth and a 3 – 19 school at Tonyrefail. It was noted that this would affect both Primary and Secondary schools in these areas and that a full explanation was provided in the consultation document, copies of which were available at this meeting for anyone who required one.

ET then explained the consultation process. The Council is currently seeking the views of all stakeholders, which includes parents, school staff, governors and of course the pupils of the schools in question. She advised that the consultation would be held between October 2014 and the end of January 2015. She also outlined the full statutory process that would be followed in respect of these proposals and advised that, as they involved changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, the final decision on all of them would be made by ministers at the Welsh Government. It was also noted that a sum of £75 million was to be invested to improve and enhance the school buildings included within the proposal, which was to be joint funded between the Council and the Welsh Government.

ET also explained the reasons why these proposals were under consideration, all of which were explained in more detail in the consultation document. It was pointed out that there are too many small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes and that funding is being diverted from Key Stages 3 and 4 within schools to 'subsidise' small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes, leading to many schools experiencing budget difficulties.

ET then opened the meeting to the pupils, for them to ask questions. She also asked pupils whether they had any worries or concerns and whether they understood the proposals:

- What is the solution to the issues you have outlined? ET referred to the consultation document (copies of which were made available to the pupils) which contained detailed information.
- We think that there will be too many pupils and not enough space. ET advised that the school has considerable surplus places at present and the 6<sup>th</sup> form is also to be moved. Primary places will be created by remodelling the building and possibly adding a small extension if needed.
- Traffic congestion is bad now, it will get worse. ET advised that some work on this issue had already been done, namely the new access and bus parking area at the rear of the school. We will be working with our Highways department to improve things further. We also want to try to encourage people to walk to school if possible.
- Treorchy pupils get free rail travel, Tonypany pupils don't. ET promised to make enquiries regarding this with our Transport Unit.
- Will 3 year old and 16 year olds be in the same building? ET advised no, there will be segregation and separation measures in place, she explained how it works currently at Llanhari.
- Will Primary children stay in the same classes all day? ET advised yes, as they do at present, but they will be able to use the secondary school facilities, under the supervision of their school staff, subject to timetables.
- What is happening to Ferndale Comp? Advised that it is proposed to become an 11 – 16 school.
- What about the canteen facilities, they are crowded now? Advised that there will be fewer Secondary pupils and that the Primary pupils will have their own facility, or will have lunch at a different time.
- ET advised that there will be one Headteacher for the whole school, with separate departments for Primary and Secondary.
- Also advised that the backlog of maintenance work will be addresses, also the new facilities will be designed with input from the school staff and pupils.
- Would we have a new uniform? Advised that this would be a governing body decision, but there would be a transition period before this would be introduced.
- 3 year olds will not be able to walk to this school. Parents bringing cars will cause chaos. ET advised that parents will be encouraged to walk with their children,, there are health benefits to this also. Other measures such as 'staggering' start and finish times for Primary and Secondary will also help.
- Parents will not walk, many haven't got the time as they work. ET advised that traffic management will be put in place, but common sense must also be used. A 'walking bus' could be established.
- Younger pupils could be influenced by the bad behaviour or older pupils. ET said that this should be dealt with by good management within the school and with clear segregation and separation of the two age ranges.

- We want to meet up with all the pupils affected in the Tonypany area, including the Primary schools, will this be ok? ET advised yes, also indicated that officers will be meeting with all the respective School Councils as part of this consultation process.
- ET asked whether the pupils present could assist in getting the views of the other pupils in the school as well. This could be done by using tablet computers to complete questionnaires on the LA's behalf? The pupils present thought that this was a good idea and agreed to assist with this work.
- How are you going to ensure that children get to school if they have to travel greater distances? Advised that this will be for their parents to determine, but transport will be provided if pupils qualify for it. 6<sup>th</sup> form students have the option of going to the College also.
- What are you going to do with the empty Primary school buildings? AR gave information on the process that will be followed.
- Why have you chosen these Primary schools and have not included Llwynypia? Advised that Llwynypia is too far away and if it were included the primary department of the school would be too big.
- AR gave details of the money that will be invested in this school if the proposals go ahead.
- A member of the school council then presented officers with lists of what pupils had asked the council members to bring forward, as what they considered to be the positive and negative aspects of these proposals. Details as follows:

#### Positive Aspects

All children travelling to the same school  
 More jobs  
 Transition from Primary to Comp changes  
 Primaries would know the facilities more

#### Negative Aspects

Older children's language  
 Older children smoking and being intimidating  
 6<sup>th</sup> form moving to a different school  
 Taking away facilities for another school  
 Other family members in the school  
 Where are they going to go if fire alarm sounds  
 Why are they doing it  
 School closures  
 Loss of jobs  
 Parents travelling further  
 Children being intimidated by so many pupils  
 Teachers losing jobs  
 Facilities being shared

ET ended the meeting by thanking all of the pupils for attending, she added that the pupils will have a say and some input in to the design of the new school. She encouraged all pupils to make comments and complete questionnaires and reiterated that tablet computers will be made available for them to do so.

**1.13****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Tonyrefail Comprehensive School on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mrs Esther Thomas, Service Director, Schools and Community  
Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
Miss Edwards, member of teaching staff  
9 members of the School Council, from years 7, 9, 11 and 13.

The officers and pupils present introduced themselves. Mrs Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposals. She referred to the consultation document booklet which had been distributed, which fully outlined and explained the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas. In the case of Tonyrefail Comprehensive, this proposal will mean that the age range of the school would become 3 to 19 years, with primary school provision of Tonyrefail Primary transferring to this school, which would then be classified as a Middle School. The 6<sup>th</sup> form would also be increased in size, to accommodate pupils from Tonypany and Porth who require such provision. An amendment to the school's catchment area was also being recommended, which would see pupils resident in the catchment of Williamstown Primary School transferring entirely to the catchment area of the new Tonypany Middle School (at present this school's catchment is split between Tonypany and Tonyrefail, depending on home address).

ET also gave information on the other proposals being considered, which were to create 3 – 16 age schools at Porth and Tonypany, plus the removal of the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Ferndale. It was noted that this would affect both Primary and Secondary schools in these areas and that a full explanation was provided in the consultation document, copies of which were available at this meeting for anyone who required one.

ET then explained the consultation process. The Council is currently seeking the views of all stakeholders, which includes parents, school staff, governors and of course the pupils of the schools in question. She advised that the consultation would be held between October 2014 and the end of January 2015. She also outlined the full statutory process that would be followed in respect of these proposals and advised that, as they involved changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, the final decision on all of them would be made by ministers at the Welsh Government. It was also noted that a sum of £75 million was to be invested to improve and enhance the school buildings included within the proposal, which was to be joint funded between the Council and the Welsh Government.

ET also explained the reasons why these proposals were under consideration, all of which were explained in more detail in the consultation document. It was pointed out that there are too many small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes and that funding is being diverted from Key Stages 3 and 4 within schools to 'subsidise' small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes, leading to many schools experiencing budget difficulties.

ET then opened the meeting to the pupils, for them to ask questions. She also asked pupils whether they had any worries or concerns and whether they understood the proposals:

- Will the school close during construction? Advised that it will remain open to pupils, with the construction areas securely fenced off. Disruption will be kept to a minimum.
- How many pupils will there be in each year group? Advised that the exact numbers are not known at present, but it is expected that there will be approx 1500 pupils in total at the school.
- A query on transport provision was raised. Advised that improved access to the school for cars and buses will form part of the work to be undertaken.
- What about the uniform, will it stay the same? Advised that this will be for the governing body to decide, but that pupils will have a say.
- What Primary school will move to this site? Advised Tonyrefail Primary.
- More pupils will cause transport issues and problems which could make us late for registration. Advised that this would be looked at, with a potential solution being staggered start and finish times for Primary and Secondary.
- Will we have better food? Many children leave the site at lunchtime, could we also have 'theme days'? Advised that this would be looked at with a view to improvement. Pupils would be asked to submit ideas.
- We have concerns with the security of this site for young children. AR outlined the plans for the site and stressed that a key element of the design will be the safety of all persons who will use the school.
- The pupils asked the officers how they would feel attending a school for 3 to 19 year olds. ET responded by indicating that she thought it would have many benefits, for example it will assist transition between year 6 and year 7.
- How will the 6<sup>th</sup> form change? ET advised that the 6<sup>th</sup> form is small at present and it can't offer a full range of subjects, pupils also have to travel between schools. Larger 6<sup>th</sup> forms have more flexibility and can offer a larger choice of courses.
- Concern was expressed that 6<sup>th</sup> form classes will become larger. BW reassured pupils that this will not necessarily be the case, but even so class sizes will not be excessively large. He also gave details of other perceived benefits such as more opportunities re the curriculum, school sports and productions etc.
- AR advised that the 'old red brick' building will have to be retained as it is listed. The new buildings would be constructed with the old buildings still in place, these will be demolished when the new buildings become occupied. Pupils will have an input in to the design of the new facilities.
- Are you going to consult with local businesses and the public, as they may be affected? Advised that all persons may participate in and respond to this consultation.
- Will the Primary and Secondary pupils have separate buildings? Advised yes.
- Will there be one Headteacher in charge of the whole school? Advised yes.
- Pupils were advised that the large majority of the staff currently working at the school would remain in post.

- Do you have plans for the empty Welsh School building? AR gave information of Council policy on redundant buildings.
- Can Years 10 and 11 have a study area, like the 6<sup>th</sup> form? Advised that this could be considered.
- AR advised that all 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools will have state of the art modern technology and ICT systems.
- A query regarding playing field provision was made. Information was provided.
- Access for disabled people was queried. Advised that the building will be fully compliant in this regard and will be accessible to all.
- What about our sporting facilities, especially the swimming pool? Advised that this will be looked at in detail, but with regard to the pool, this could be removed as the leisure centre next door has its own pool the school can use.
- When will a decision be taken? Timescales for the process were outlined.
- Are you going to broaden the curriculum? Advised that this is up to the school staff and governors to determine, but it is something that the Council would encourage. There will be more opportunities and better facilities available for the primary children.
- The leisure centre is closing, as is Porth swimming pool. A reassurance was given that this information is not correct.
- A query on school admissions was made. Information was provided.
- ET provided information, as requested, on the costs of the proposal and the budget available.
- You need transition between Primary and Secondary to prepare you for university. This will not happen in a 3 – 19 school. ET advised that this could actually benefit younger children in particular, to better prepare them for the transfer. Pupils get used to being in a larger school which could in fact benefit them when going to university or college.
- ET asked whether the Council should consult with all pupils in the school. The School Council agreed that this was a good idea. They were advised that tablet computers would be provided for them to encourage the other pupils to submit their comments and to complete questionnaires on line.

ET ended the session by thanking all the pupils for attending and for their valuable input in to this consultation process. She commended the pupils for this.

**1.14****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council of Treorchy Comprehensive School on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014, to discuss the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas.**

Present: Mr Bernard Whittingham, Head of Secondary Achievement  
 Mr Martyn Silezin, 14 – 19 Strategy Officer  
 Ms Andrea Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs Julie Hadley, Head of School Organisation Planning and Governance  
 Mr J Davies, member of teaching staff  
 12 members of the School Council, from years 7, 9, 11 and 13.

The officers and pupils present introduced themselves. Mr Whittingham (BW) then outlined the proposals. He referred to the consultation document booklet which had been distributed, which fully outlined and explained the Council's proposals to reorganise school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas. In the case of Treorchy Comprehensive, the proposal will mean that the 6<sup>th</sup> form would be increased in size, to accommodate pupils from other secondary schools in the Rhondda, whose 6<sup>th</sup> forms are being removed and who require such provision. An amendment to the school's catchment area was also being recommended, which would see pupils resident in the catchments of Gelli and Bodringallt Primary Schools transferring entirely to the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School.

BW also gave information on the other proposals being considered, which were to create 3 – 16 age schools at Porth and Tonypany, a 3 – 19 school at Tonyrefail plus the removal of the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Ferndale. It was noted that this would affect both Primary and Secondary schools in these areas and that a full explanation was provided in the consultation document, copies of which were available at this meeting for anyone who required one.

BW then explained the consultation process. The Council is currently seeking the views of all stakeholders, which includes parents, school staff, governors and of course the pupils of the schools in question. He advised that the consultation would be held between October 2014 and the end of January 2015. He also outlined the full statutory process that would be followed in respect of these proposals and advised that, as they involved changes to 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, the final decision on all of them would be made by ministers at the Welsh Government. It was also noted that a sum of £75 million was to be invested to improve and enhance the school buildings included within the proposal, which was to be joint funded between the Council and the Welsh Government.

BW also explained the reasons why these proposals were under consideration, all of which were explained in more detail in the consultation document. It was pointed out that there are too many small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes and that funding is being diverted from Key Stages 3 and 4 within schools to 'subsidise' small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and classes, leading to many schools experiencing budget difficulties.

BW then opened the meeting to the pupils, for them to ask questions. He also asked pupils whether they had any worries or concerns and whether they understood the proposals:

- What works are to be undertaken to the school buildings? Advised that modifications and some other building works will be undertaken, full details of these are still to be determined. The school's capacity will be expanded at post-16 only. There will be investment in the school, but no major works are planned. Staff, pupils and governors will be fully consulted and will have an input.
- Will staff from the other 6<sup>th</sup> forms come here? Advised that there will be a need for more staff, but this will be determined by the governing body. There are very good staff working at the other schools, who will have the opportunity to come here.
- Will the building work disrupt our education? Advised that any disruption will be kept to an absolute minimum, The Council has considerable experience of managing projects like this.
- Will there be lorries delivering building materials to the school during the school day? Advised that a separate construction access will be created. Safety is an absolute priority and this will be carefully managed, eg deliveries could be scheduled outside of school hours only.
- This school site is very compact. Where will you put any new buildings? Advised that this is still being looked at by architects at present, but it will involve removal of mobile classrooms and possible demolition of other buildings.
- Do you think that many of the new pupils will leave the school at lunchtimes? Perhaps facilities and activities provided need to improve? Advised that this is up to the headteacher and governors to determine, but that this clearly needs to be looked at.
- AR asked the pupils why they go off site at lunchtime at present. They replied that Year 10 and up are allowed to do this, it is convenient for them, also the quality of food in school is poor. There is more variety and better quality food to be obtained outside. AR responded that this issue needs to be looked at, she also asked the pupils to come up with ideas and suggestions for improvements.
- This school runs differently to other schools, we have concerns that pupils coming here may not be able to adapt. AR advised that officers have spoken with pupils from the other schools, they see transferring for 6<sup>th</sup> form as an opportunity to prepare themselves for when they go to university. In general, they see this as positive, especially as they will transfer with their classmates and friends.
- We already know many of the pupils from the other schools from activities outside school, such as football, rugby etc.
- We need more sports facilities at this school.
- Will class sizes increase? BW advised that this will not necessarily happen. Other schools have small 6<sup>th</sup> forms and pupils have to travel to other schools for some subjects, or they are taught in very small classes. This is not seen as best practice, also small classes are very expensive to run. What this will mean is that there will be more choice of subjects and more classes, not necessarily larger ones.
- Will this cause problems lower down the school, as pupils could decide to transfer before they reach 6<sup>th</sup> form? JH advised that this will not happen automatically as the

school has an admissions limit that will be adhered to. The Council determines this. The admissions process was outlined.

- How can you ensure that subjects and courses offered in other schools are compatible with those taught in our 6<sup>th</sup> form? MS gave information on what will be put in place to ensure compatibility and gave details of how a similar process had been successful in Aberdare.
- Is this proposal to save money and why have you chosen this school? AR advised that it is not about saving money, any savings that are achieved will be re-invested towards the cost of the building works that will be undertaken. This programme is costing £75 million, split 50/50 between the Council and the Welsh Government. All savings will therefore be ringfenced towards the Council's share of the cost.
- MS advised that funding for 11 – 16 year olds (Key Stages 3 and 4) comes from RCT, post 16 from Welsh Government. The budget for KS 3& 4 is subsidising small 6<sup>th</sup> forms. This is not the case at Treorchy however as the 6<sup>th</sup> form is larger and more economically sound.
- Will new pupils cause a strain on senior management, eg the Headteacher? Advised that it will be up to the Headteacher and governing body to review the staff structure, there may be a need for more senior staff to cover the 6<sup>th</sup> form, but this is not an LA decision.
- If more pupils catch the train from Porth, it could be an issue. Advised that the LA will make arrangements for more 6<sup>th</sup> form transport if required.
- The distance to this school could deter pupils from coming to the 6<sup>th</sup> form. Advised that transition will be key to making the 6<sup>th</sup> form attractive, it is intended to be a Centre of Excellence.
- Will the free train transport be taken away from us? Advised that this is a service organised by the school, not the LA.
- Why not make other 6<sup>th</sup> forms larger? Advised that this school's 6<sup>th</sup> form is the largest in the Rhondda, with good results and a large choice of subjects, also the staff are already here.
- You are improving 6<sup>th</sup> form facilities, but what about those lower down the school? Advised that the LA is looking to work with the school to improve the whole site, including ICT infrastructure.
- Are there any plans for the Welsh Baccalaureate? MS gave information on this issue, advising that it is a decision that has to be taken at school level.
- Will the school get extra resources, eg for the library and ICT? Advised that extra funding will be allocated and that the LA will work with the governing body on this.
- Will we have new PE and Music equipment? Advised that some additional funding will be provided, but it would be up to the governors to determine priorities.
- Will the building work affect pupils doing A Levels? Advised that any disruption will be kept to a minimum, as far as is possible and that safety will be paramount.
- Will demolishing buildings remove resources? Advised yes, but temporary classrooms will be provided while new buildings are being constructed.
- How long will the work take? Advised 12 – 18 months.
- A question was asked as to how the 3 – 19 model will work at Tonyrefail. Information on how this model currently works at Llanhari was given.

- What happens if these changes are not successful? Advised that there are always risks, but we will attempt to identify and mitigate these when they arise, to resolve and reduce the risks. Ultimately, the success of the proposal will be down to staff and pupils.
- What will happen to the 6<sup>th</sup> form blocks in the other schools? Advised that surplus accommodation at these schools will be converted for use by Primary age children. Community usage will be improved and facilities for all pupils using the schools will be improved also.
- Will the younger pupils be afraid of such a large 6<sup>th</sup> form contingent? BW gave information and advised that this scenario was unlikely, also the older pupils would be good role models.

BW ended the session by thanking all the pupils for attending and for their valuable input in to this consultation process. He commended the pupils for this.

**1.15****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Llwynceilyn Infants School, 18 November 2014.**

Present: Mrs. Sue Walker, Head of Primary Achievement  
Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator  
Mrs. Elisabeth Decaro, Acting Headteacher, Llwynceilyn Infants School  
Seven pupils, members of the School Council

Mrs. Walker explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with the children about the possible closure of Llwynceilyn Infants School and to ask them how they felt about this and how they felt about moving to a big school in Porth.

Mrs. Walker told the children that what the Council would like to do is to start children in school at 3 years old and they would stay in the same school until they were sixteen. She asked the children what they think they would like about moving to a bigger school with older pupils and what they thought they would not like.

In response to these questions the children commented:

- I think it's a good idea – we might get to learn better things.
- We can bring a football to school and a bike.
- The older pupils will swear at the little ones.
- It's a good idea – we can learn more maths and do more of everything.
- I think it's a bad idea – this is a lovely school and we are taught lovely things.
- It's a good idea – I can see my brother and we can play football.
- I think half and half.
- I'll miss my teachers and we may forget them.
- Older ones will be able to help.
- I like going up the Juniors because my brother is up there.
- My friends wouldn't play with me in another school because they would play with other people.
- We'd like to have a grass football field.

Mrs. Walker then asked the pupils how many of them would be walking to the new school. They were unsure how to respond.

Mrs. Walker and Mr. Jenkins ended by thanking the children for talking to them and commented on how clever they had all been in thinking up their comments.

**1.16****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Porth Infants School, 18 November 2014.**

Present: Mrs. Sue Walker, Head of Primary Achievement  
Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator  
Mrs. Pam Morgan, Headteacher, Porth Infants School  
Ten pupils, members of the School Council

Mrs. Walker explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with the children about the possible closure of Porth Infants School and to ask them how they felt about this and how they felt about moving to a big school in Porth.

Mrs. Walker told the children that what the Council would like to do is to start children in school at 3 years old and they would stay in the same school until they were sixteen. She asked the children what they think they would like about moving to a bigger school with older pupils and what they thought they would not like.

In response to these questions the children commented:

- I wouldn't like it – we could go into separate classes.
- I want to stay nearer here.
- I like this school – we play a lot and work hard.
- Our yard is better than the other schools.
- We like our forest school.
- I like lying down on the grass.
- We like our singing and Christmas concert.
- Ten of us are going to Porth Junior School – looking forward to eating in the hall and learning new things.

A pupil asked why they were shutting down their school. Mrs. Walker replied that in this area they were lots of small schools and the Council thinks it would be better to have one big one.

Mrs. Walker then asked the pupils how many of them would be walking to the new school. Three responded yes.

Mrs. Walker explained that the new school would be where the Comprehensive School is now. A number of pupils responded that they don't want to walk that far and would get tired. One responded "I will be happy – I'll be with my brother's friends all day and another responded "I'll get to see my cousin up the Comp."

Mrs. Walker and Mr. Jenkins ended by thanking the children for talking to them and commented on how good they had all been.

**1.17****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Porth Junior School, 18 November 2014.****Present:**

Mrs. Sue Walker, Head of Primary Achievement

Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator

Mrs. Cheryl Bastable and Mrs. Amanda Dawe, Staff Members, Porth Junior School

Ten pupils, members of the School Council

Mrs. Walker explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with pupils about the Council's proposal to close Porth County Community School, Porth Junior School, Porth Infants School and Llwynceilyn Infants School with the creation of a 3 to 16 years of age school on the present site of Porth County School.

The meeting took the form of a question (Q) and answer (A) session, with pupils taking the opportunity to ask questions on the proposal with a number of immediate responses given by the Officers present. Pupils also made comments (C) on the proposals.

**Q – Why do you have to shut down all three schools?**

**A –** There are presently three small primary phase schools in the area. We are trying to make sure that all schools are of a similar size. Also, the buildings are in poor condition and a lot of money would have to be spent on them to bring them up to an acceptable standard.

**Q – Are there going to be after school clubs at the new school?**

**A –** Probably yes – but it would be for the school's Headteacher to decide what clubs and how many.

**Q – Are you providing transport – will there be lollipop ladies?**

**A –** The Council has rules about providing transport for those pupils living a certain distance from their school. These rules will apply with the new school. Also as part of a safe routes to school exercise the employment of lollipop ladies may be considered.

**Q – Where are our packed lunches going to go?**

**A –** Don't know at the moment.

**Q – Will they give the new school money? The resource room roof is leaking at the moment.**

**A –** The Authority will have to make sure the school is safe.

**Q – Why do you want to make a bigger school?**

**A –** Bigger schools cost less money, but there's more to bigger schools than that. For example, there's more opportunity for a larger number of after school clubs and for specialist staff to teach different age ranges.

**Q – Will the Infant and Junior parts of the school start at the same time?**

**A –** That will be up to the Headteacher, but the schools we have at the minute start at different times.

**Q – Will the teachers have the same jobs?**

**A –** This will have to be considered.

**Q – Are we going to have separate yards? – will there be fences? Will 16 year olds swear in front of 3 year olds?**

**A –** We already have a school with primary age and secondary age pupils sharing the same site. However, it has got separate yards, one for the primary aged pupils and one for the secondary aged pupils. They are apart from each other. However, there will be an opportunity for the two sets of pupils to meet through, say, the School Council which will have pupils from 3 to 16 years of age represented.

Mrs. Walker asked the members of the School Council what was worrying them the most about the proposal. Responses were concerns about possible behaviour problems – “big ones smashing fire alarm”, teasing and bullying.

She then asked whether the pupils liked coming together at Porth Junior School when they moved from Porth Infants School and Llwynhelyn Infants School. The general response was positive.

**Q – How will this building be used if it closes?**

**A –** No decision has been made on this as yet.

**Q – If Llwynhelyn Infants School closes will it become the Welsh school?**

**A –** This is the intention.

**Q – We are going to have floodlights in our school – will there be some in the new school?**

**Q – Will we have the same uniform?**

**A –** That will be considered if the proposal goes ahead.

**Q – Are we going to have the same Headteacher?**

**Q – Where would the Headteacher go if it's a very big school with a primary and secondary section?**

**Q – Will we have fire doors? How many?**

**Q – Will parents have to send their children to the new school? Some may send them to other schools like Ynyshir and Alaw.**

- Q – Why have you only thought about only our schools?**  
**A –** Because Lwyncelyn Infants and Porth Infants are your partner schools.
- Q – Who will teach the Infant pupils to eat? Many teachers are going to lose their jobs.**  
**A –** It is likely that pupils will have the same number of support staff and teachers as they have now.
- C – Teachers love it in our school.**
- C – We like coming back to see the school when we are in the Comp. We won't be able to do it anymore.**
- Q – Are we going to have a new school?**
- Q – What is going to happen to the other schools? Llwynceilyn Infants and Porth Infants.**
- Q – What about the traffic? There will be lots of traffic at the new school.**  
**A –** The traffic at the new school will be managed very carefully.
- Q – Are we going to have buses?**  
**A –** That depends on how far you live away from the school.
- Q – If we have rugby can we use the field and the car park?**  
**A –** The use of the rugby field will be timetabled for the use of the whole school.
- Q – Will we be able to use the gym equipment?**  
**A –** This will have to be looked at because you have to have the right equipment for all ages.
- Q – What are you going to do with all our equipment at Porth Junior School?**  
**A –** The teachers will be asked to pack up the equipment they want to take with them to the new school. All the other equipment will be offered to other schools.
- Q – Why can't a nearer school be built?**
- Q – What are you going to do with our trees?**  
**A –** This depends on what happens to the school.
- Q – Will there be separate dinner halls?**  
**A –** Yes.

Mrs. Walker and Mr. Jenkins ended by thanking the members of the School Council for their very valued contribution to the consultation process. They advised that if the School Council members think of any more questions they can send them in to the Education Office.



**1.18****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Councils of Penygraig Infants School and Penygraig Junior School, 19 November 2014.**

Present: Mrs. Sue Walker, Head of Primary Achievement  
 Mrs. J. Hadley, Head of School Organisation, Planning and Governance.  
 Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator  
 Mrs. Paula Vaughan, Headteacher, Penygraig Infant and Junior Schools.  
 15 pupils, 6 members of the Infants School Council and 9 members of the Junior School Council.

Mrs. Walker explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with the children about the possible closure of Penygraig Infants School and Penygraig Junior School and to ask them how they felt about this and how they felt about moving to a bigger school where the Comprehensive School is situated.

Following the conclusion of the slide show Mrs. Walker told the children that what the Council would like to do is to start children in school at 3 years old and they would stay in the same school until they were sixteen.

The pupils of the Infants School Council presented a slide show to inform Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Hadley and Mr. Jenkins what they think about their school, and a narrative of their presentation is detailed below:

- Our school motto is “nurtured to learn”
- From our school we can walk to lots of different places in our community, like the church, and we can walk to the parks.
- We learn about history, seasons and how things work. Sometimes we have to solve a mystery.
- We learn about number, reading and our community by visiting the shops and the Post Office in Penygraig
- Sometimes people from our community come to our school and we help each other to make our community better.
- Lots of interesting visitors come to see us at Penygraig Infants School. They tell us about all sorts of different things.
- We visit the Junior School and we are working on a Forest School Project there. We do fun things, get messy and get lots of exercise too!
- Our school is an old building but it is full of learning, fun and happy children.....and a whole family of owls.
- As you can see our school is a special and happy place. We are nurtured and we learn.
- Thanks for listening – any questions?

The pupils were then asked by Mrs. Walker what they think about moving to a new, bigger school. The pupils answered as follows:

- I would like a new carpet.
- It would be too busy and I'd be scared
- We wouldn't like to be in the same yard.

The pupils of the Junior School Council then took the opportunity to present their own slide show, the narrative of which is as follows:

- Thank you for inviting us to speak to you today. We have thought carefully about the proposal for the new school and have lots of ideas to share with you all.
- We have tried to think of the good points as well as the bad. Some of us found this tricky because we feel strongly that Penygraig Juniors is an awesome school and we don't want it to close!
- Some people think that having one big school might be easier for families to share the drop offs and pickups, However getting up that hill will be problem in the bad weather and many people are concerned about the extra traffic with so many pupils trying to get to one place! It's hard for little children and grandparents to walk up the big hill.
- On the other hand, a super school would have lots of new facilities and children would benefit greatly from these. We thought it would be the perfect time to build a swimming pool and drama space there for everyone to use. However, at Penygraig Juniors we have spent lots of time and money developing our Pod with leading technology and we really don't want this to go to waste!
- Lots of time and money has gone into Penygraig Junior School to make it a wonderful place to learn – we have a big, bright yard with lots of opportunities to play and our ICT suite, The Pod was only opened last year with the latest new technology installed. This would all be wasted and the building left to be vandalised and become derelict if the school closes.
- People who are waiting for a new home would support the proposal because the Council will build new houses where all the existing schools are. That's great news for those families, but bad news for younger children who will be intimidated by the bigger kids and won't want to go to school at all! They may feel stressed and this will affect their well being and learning. The Council think that building a new super school will save lots of money in the long run. This could used to care for sick people in hospital, or develop our local area.

- However, there are several schools in RCT that have already closed. These schools have not been knocked down and used for new homes. Williamstown is an example of this. I worry that these derelict buildings look unpleasant as well as being a target for vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Thanks for listening today, we really hope you take our views into consideration. We are really proud of our school and it would a massive shame to see it close. Diolch.

Mrs. Walker thanked the pupils for their presentation and asked them what they could see as the advantages and disadvantages of a 3-16 school. She emphasised that whilst the school would take great care in ensuring the well being of all pupils, particular attention would be paid to the school's younger pupils.

One pupil replied that they didn't want their baby cousin to go up the school with older pupils. Another replied that pupils have more confidence in going from Infant to Junior and then Year 6 to Comprehensive and that this won't be possible in an all through school.

Mrs Walker asked the pupils whether they had enjoyed working together in the Infant and Junior schools and the answer was yes. She than asked whether the pupils would like to go to a larger school and the response was that they didn't know.

A comment was then made by a pupil that the new school would not be a nice environment because because there would be old pupils and new pupils together e.g the younger pupils hearing bad language.

The Officers present responded by saying that the Council already has one school like the new one and the primary area and secondary area on the site have been segregated. The Council's architects will draw up plans to make sure this also happens at the new Tonypany School.

The following three questions were then asked by pupils:

- Would the level of education change for the worse?
- Would we keep our school uniforms or will we get a new one?
- Will the school be offering A levels?

Officers responded by stating that it would be the new school's responsibility to ensure that standards of education were high, to decide upon what uniform pupils will wear and that the school will not be offering A Levels.

Mrs Walker, Mrs Hadley and Mr Jenkins ended by thanking the members of both School Councils for each of their well thought out contributions to the consultation process.

**1.19****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Tonypandy Primary School, 20 November 2014.****Present:**

Mr. Tim Britton, Head of Performance

Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator

Mr. Stuart Scammell, Head teacher, Tonypandy Primary School

Eight pupils, members of the School Council

Mr. Britton explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with pupils about the Council's proposal to close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Junior School, Penygraig Infants School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol yr Eos. A new school, with pupils ranging from 3 years old to 16 years old would then be built on the existing site of Tonypandy Community College.

The meeting took the form of a question (Q) and answer (A) session, with pupils taking the opportunity to ask questions on the proposal with a number of immediate responses given by the Officers present. Pupils also made comments (C) on the proposals.

Mr. Britton asked the pupils what they would like about the new school and what would bother them.

**Q – Is the Council going to knock down the schools in Tonypandy?**

**A –** We don't know if that will happen. They would be put up for sale first.

**C – Some people go to this school because it's nearer in the snow. We won't be able to get to the new school.**

**A –** The Council will try to make sure that the route to the new school will be safe.

**C – It will be slippery when it's very cold.**

**Q – How are you going to get the little ones up there? They'd have to go by car and there would be car problems.**

**A –** There will have to be good traffic management at the school.

**Q – Will the older children be in a different area to the little ones? They may knock them over.**

**A –** There will be special zones at the school. There'll be a primary area and a secondary area.

**C – If the little ones go up the comprehensive the older ones can help them – with homework for example.**

**Q – Are you going to employ all the teachers from the primary school?**

**A –** You would hope that the teachers will get jobs in the new school.

**C –** **I will find it difficult to go that far up the hill.**

**A –** It's handy having a school opposite where you live but it doesn't always work like that.

**C –** **It will be closer for me from where I live.**

**Q –** **Does it mean that there will have to be an extension at the new school?**

**A –** Things will be different at the new school compared to what they are now. There will be drop in session and exhibition at the Comprehensive in January when some plans for the new school will be available.

**Q –** **Will the little ones go on the Astroturf as well?**

**A –** There will be separate yards.

**C –** **When I'm older at the new school I'd look after the younger pupils – as I'd like them to look after me if I went there now.**

Mr. Britton and Mr. Jenkins ended by thanking the members of the School Council for their very valued contribution to the consultation process. They advised that if the School Council members think of any more questions they can send them in to the Education Office.

1.20

## Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Ysgol yr Eos, 20 November 2014.

### Present:

Mr. Tim Britton, Head of Performance  
 Mr. Ian Jenkins, Liaison Services Co-ordinator  
 Mrs. J. Phillips, Teacher, Ysgol yr Eos  
 Ten pupils, members of the School Council

Mr. Britton explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with pupils about the Council's proposal to close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Junior School, Penygraig Infants School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol yr Eos. A new school, with pupils ranging from 3 years old to 16 years old would then be built on the existing site of Tonypandy Community College.

The meeting took the form of a question (Q) and answer (A) session, with pupils taking the opportunity to ask questions on the proposal with a number of immediate responses given by the Officers present. Pupils also made comments (C) on the proposals.

Mr. Britton asked the pupils what they would like about the new school and what would bother them.

A number of pupils responded that they would feel happy because of the walk to school, it would have a bigger yard and they would meet new friends. Others responded that the school would be too big and they would get lost.

**Q – What will happen with bigger children and little children using the same school?**

**A –** You will have your own special places – your own classrooms and your own playground.

**Q – What if you had to go into a corridor?**

**A –** It will be important that the teachers make sure that everyone knows where to go.

**Q – What will happen to our teachers? We might not have them**

**A –** Your teachers and support staff will be needed at the new school.

**Q – What will the age range be?**

**A –** 3-16

**Q – What if you are picked on by older pupils?**

**A –** You can do as you do now and talk to a teacher.

**Q – Will there be a School Council at the new school?**

**A –** Yes – all schools have a School Council

**Q – Will there be a football team?**

**A –** That's something you can bring up at a School Council meeting at the new school.

**Q – Will everyone go into the yard at the same time?**

**A –** There are going to be separate primary and secondary yards.

Mr. Britton asked the members of the School Council what they would like at the new school.

The pupils responded by saying that they would like brand new facilities with nice classrooms. They would like the texture of the yard to be grass with loads of sports facilities and equipment.

**C – I don't think that the classrooms will be as good as they are now.**

**C – I'm worried about the staff and their employment.**

**C – We may be separated from our friends – we may not be in the same class.**

**A –** It's hoped that you would be put into a class with friends.

**Q – How long will we be at the new school?**

**A –** It could be for 5 years at your age.

**Q – How many children will be at the new school?**

**A –** That is difficult to predict but there could be as many as 1,100

**C – Everyone at the minute gets to take a part in the Christmas show.**

**A –** There could be more opportunities to take part in different things at the new school.

**Q – How big will the hall be? Will it be as big as Penygraig Boys Club Hall?**

**Q – Will there still be a School Council?**

**A –** Yes – and pupils will need to be voted on to it.

**Q – What time will the school start?**

**A –** That will be decided upon by the new schools governing body.

**Q – How many lessons will there be?**

**A –** There would be the same number of lessons as you have now.

**Q – Will the school have a green flag?**

**A –** You can suggest at the new school that you think it would be a good idea to have one.

**Q – Will we have to do harder work?**

**A –** The work will be the same as it is now, and I'm sure you'll do your best.

**Q – What stage will we be at with our books?**

**A –** The teachers will know that.

**Q – Will we have homework?**

**A –** Yes – doing homework is very important.

Mr. Britton and Mr. Jenkins ended by thanking the members of the School Council for their very valued contribution to the consultation process. They advised that if the School Council members think of any more questions they can send them in to the Education Office.

**1.21****Notes of a meeting held with members of the School Council of Tonyrefail Primary School Council, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 2:30pm****Present:**

Esther Thomas	Service Director for Schools and Community, RCT
Tim Britton	Head of Performance, RCT
Julie Hadley	Head of School Organisation, Planning & Governance, RCT
Nicola Goodman	Asst. Head, School Organisation, Planning & Governance, RCT
Mrs. Tynan	Headteacher, Tonyrefail Primary School
10 pupils	Members of the School Council (from Years 3 to 6)

The officers present introduced themselves.

ET explained why this meeting had been arranged, which was to talk with the pupils about the plans that the Council has for their school and to ask them how they felt about this.

ET explained that later in the day there were meetings with school staff and governors and that in January there were meetings that parents and the community could attend.

ET explained what the Council are proposing for the Tonyrefail area and for the school. In summary –

The Council are proposing to spend £75 million across Tonyrefail and the Rhondda to change some of the Primary Schools and Secondary Schools in the area.

The proposal is to build new school facilities on the Tonyrefail Comprehensive School site for pupils from age 3 to age 19 and to close the current primary school as an English medium school.

If the proposal goes ahead it will happen in four years time (August 2018).

The pupils were asked whether they had any questions:-

**Q.** As there will be pupils from age 3 to age 18 what if the older children bully the younger children?

**A.** TB asked the pupils what would happen now if someone was being nasty.

One of the pupils said that they would tell a teacher and it gets sorted.

TB explained that exactly the same thing would happen in a bigger school.

**Q.** Will there be separate yards?

**A.** ET explained that there would be a separate area for the primary age pupils to play in. Also, within the building, there would be separate areas for primary and secondary age pupils. It would be possible for primary age pupils to have the opportunity to use science laboratories; drama studios etc. within the secondary school but they would be taken there by their teachers.

**Q.** Will there be three yards – one for infants; one for juniors and one for the comp?

**A.** ET explained that the Council doesn't have plans for the building yet, but at the meeting in January the Council hopes to have some plans for people to look at.

JH asked whether any of the pupils were at the school when the extension was built and explained that the pupils in the school at that time were asked for their opinions in relation to the colours of classrooms; the design of the toilets etc. and the same would happen with the new school.

**Q.** What if we tell a teacher about bullying but the person threatens something else if we tell?

**A.** ET said that there will be a headteacher of the whole school and a teacher in charge of the primary school and there will always be staff around.

**Q.** Will we have the same teachers?

**A.** ET explained that she cannot guarantee that as some teachers may choose leave the school anyway as four years is a long time, but many teachers will move across if they want to.

**Comment –** I think it is good, but my aunty is concerned about younger children being bullied.

**Comment –** Lots of problems with toilets in our school – children putting rulers and things down the toilets.

**A.** ET explained that the primary and secondary pupils will have separate toilets. Also the new school will have new toilets which are better respected and looked after. One pupil commented that they have toilet monitors now.

**Q.** Will there be a football court in the yard?

**A.** ET outlined that the facilities will be better in the new school. The pupils will also be consulted on what they want.

**Comment –** Toilet rolls are being unravelled.

**A.** TB told the pupils that the new school would have a school council who would discuss and resolve such issues, as they do now.

**Q.** Will it be the same size yard?

**A.** ET explained that when the plans are drawn up, the pupils can see what is proposed.

**Q.** Will there be boys and girls toilets?

**A.** ET explained that toilets are usually mixed for the younger primary pupils and separate for the older primary pupils.

**Comment –** Year 5 and 6 could use the football field and the Astroturf in the comp.

**A.** ET stated that this could be planned into the timetable.

Mrs. Tynan commented that the same thing happens now with the ICT room and library in the primary school.

**Q.** Do the juniors go into higher years?

**A.** ET advised that if someone is really good and doing year 7 maths the teacher can give them year 7/8 work to do. The teachers can work together and give extension work.

**Comment –** There are problems with the toilets.

**A.** The Council will ensure that the toilets are built in an excellent condition and the school council will be consulted on the design and colours etc.

**Q.** What if there are teenagers ruining the school?

(Mrs. Tynan clarified that there had been vandalism in the current primary school out of hours by teenagers).

**A.** ET commented that the headteacher and senior staff will deal with this in the new school.

TB added that CCTV cameras etc. could be put in the new school to try and stop such things happening.

Mrs. Tynan added that the policemen have also been brought in to speak with the people to stop it happening.

One pupil commented that there were CCTV cameras in the shops in the community.

**Q.** Will it be illegal to come onto the premises of the new school?

**A.** ET stated that the Council don't want to stop people coming onto the school premises after hours if they are there for sport etc., but they don't want them coming onto the site to do bad things.

**Comment –** Dogs are walked across the primary school site now.

**A.** JH commented that this would not be allowed.

ET asked the pupils whether they thought that this was an exciting time.

All of the pupils raised their hands.

**Q.** What if drunk people wreck the school?

**A.** JH commented that no-one will be there when the children are there.

Mrs. Tynan added that after hours the CCTV will pick up such behaviour.

TB added that the school will also have an alarm, just as their school does now.

ET asked the pupils what they thought are the good things about a 3 to 19 school.

The pupils responded:-

- New facilities – swings etc.
- Use of science labs etc.
- More friends and more education.
- All brothers and sisters on the same site, so can walk to school together.
- Playground facilities.
- Separate playgrounds with basketball court and sponge surfaces.

ET asked the pupils what they thought were the bad things about a 3-19 school.

Only one response:-

What if someone is threatened with something further if they tell a teacher about bullying?  
ET responded that you should always tell a teacher or a grown up.

**Q.** Will there be school buses?

**A.** ET explained that it depends on how far you live from the school. If it is less than one and a half miles away, then you wouldn't.

**Q.** Will we have a new headteacher because I like Mrs. Tynan.

**A.** There will be a headteacher of the new school and a person in charge of the primary sector.

**Q.** What if older pupils set bad examples to younger pupils?

**A.** ET explained that there would be separation of primary and secondary age pupils. Mrs. Tynan added that the same would happen as happens in the primary school at the moment if year 5 or year 6 pupils set a bad example to younger pupils – the headteacher and deputy headteacher sort it out.

**Q.** Need to think of land available – is there enough?

**A.** ET explained that plans will be drawn up and shared with pupils.

There were no further comments or questions.

ET thanked the pupils for their input.

TB added that the School Council represented the school pupils at this meeting but if there were any other comments from the School Council or other pupils, these can be given to Mrs. Tynan who will e-mail them to the Council.

JH explained that NG had been taking notes of the meeting so that the pupils' views could be shared with Councillors.

Query from one pupil as to whether the officers present were Councillors.

ET explained that the people present were not Councillors, but were officers who work for the Council. Councillors are elected by the community and voted for by parents and Councillors make decisions.

**1.22****Notes of a meeting held with the School Council, YGG Tonyrefail on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014.****Present:**

Esther Thomas, Service Director Schools and Community  
 Steffan Gealy, Head of Welsh Language Services Unit  
 Miss N Downes, Headteacher  
 13 members of the School Council

The meeting was conducted through the medium of Welsh, with the notes being taken and translated by Mr Gealy.

Esther Thomas (ET) welcomed everyone and thanked Miss Downes and the pupils for convening this special meeting of the school council. ET explained what her role was and also introduced Steffan Gealy (SG) who also explained to the pupils what his role was at the Council.

Esther Thomas went on to explain why the meeting was taking place i.e. relocating the school to the current Tonyrefail English medium primary. This was a part of the Council and the Welsh Government's plans to spend £75m on improving identified schools in RCT. Esther wanted to know what the pupils thought about the proposed move. She explained that if they were to move, they were going to be under one roof and not spread over several buildings as is now the case. ET showed them the book about the plans previously distributed to the school.

All of the pupils knew where the *new* school would be.

Miss Downes and the pupils explained that they were aware of the proposed move. They had already prepared and answered a questionnaire and collated their views. (see below). ET asked the pupils if they could explain to us what would be important to them at the new location

Pupils remarked it was important to be in one building / on one site. Here are the reasons:

- didn't have to move from one building to another in the rain,
- could all socialise with each other. The current set up means that the pupils are split across various playgrounds and buildings.
- would feel much safer being on one site. The current tarmac playgrounds are unsafe, are on inclines and there are many steps. Accidents are frequent occurrences. Also one fenced off and gated premises.
- would have grassy areas on the new site
- buses would have safer areas to pick up and drop off pupils (over 75 pupils currently arrive on a bus. A lot of congestion during pick up and drop off times)
- the pupils would have one large hall to hold concerts/assemblies and PE
- the current hall is too small for everyone to each lunch together. Being cramped is quite dangerous (Miss Downes)
- much better accommodation for disabled children, wheelchair users etc. ET explained that the current school would be difficult to alter to give idea access
- new iapds and whiteboards. All the pupils enjoyed learning through IT. IT can help those pupils with difficulties too e.g. difficult with sight, confidence. The pupils are also familiar

with IT at home. ET explained that the plan was to move in 2018, so even better technology may be available by then.

ET asked the pupils why were we asking their opinion when the older pupils of the school council would have long left to go to secondary school (Llanhari). They thought it may be because their brothers, sisters cousins would be affected. They can help them with the change.

One pupil asked what would happen to this school. ET responded by saying that if the plans are accepted by the Welsh Government – it's not just up to the Council – the site may be offered to the community, be sold, made into a car park maybe – it's too early to say.

Pupils went on to discuss some of the other issues they collated such as the need for a new cloakroom and new resource. ET explained that some resources would be taken from the existing site and some brand new resources would be purchased for the new site.

The pupils also expressed their wish for benches outside, new PE equipment and external classroom for open air lessons.

ET asked if there were any negative thoughts about moving to the new site. Some of the pupils would be happy and sad about moving, One remarked that she would be happy about moving to a safer site but sad about all the good memories of being on the current site. Other pupils also weren't sure and had happy memories of the current site.

ET explained that a lot of things would be familiar to them on the new site, such as the same teachers, classroom assistants, some resources. Miss Downes suggested that the new site could have a display of the old site to remind pupils of their happy days. SG said they could take their favourite things from the old site to the new site.

ET reminded the pupils again that if the plans were approved, it wouldn't happen until 2018 – a few Christmases away!

Other suggestions included a swimming pool and a Jacuzzi on the yard. A favourite suggestion, agreed by all, was the need for a manageable stage in the new hall for concerts.

One pupil wanted to make sure that the fence of the new site kept pupils safe and Miss Downes expressed the need for a small copse on the site too. The current site has a small area with trees. ET said there's plenty of room to plant new trees on the new site.

ET asked the pupils about single 3-18 sites for schools. Although some didn't grasp the concept, others thought it good to be on the same site when moving from primary to secondary as they would be familiar with the place.

ET / SG thanked the pupils and Miss Downes for their time and all their valuable comments.

# **APPENDIX 2**

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Name	Status	Agree with the various proposals?				Comments made
		Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4	
Provided	Parent & Governor	No	No	No	No	Too far to travel; proposals are just to save costs and do not consider other implications
						Placed child at current school (Tonypany Primary) as previous school (Williamstown) was too big. Merging the schools in to one larger school will be the worst decision ever made by this Council. Small community schools are precious and should be protected. A high tech school is not the answer. Parents will be happy to fund raise to keep their community schools open.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	
						Each area needs a 6th form, taking them away will make children think they are not worthy of further education. Learning Support classes have been moved once, they should not be moved again. 3-16 schools are a ridiculous idea which only benefit the money men interested as treating children as numbers and making savings. Penygraig Infants School thrives on fantastic working partnerships. Amalgamate the 3 - 11 schools only. Tonypany College is half way up a mountain on a site with poor drainage. Traffic will be a nightmare. How can mothers with prams be expected to walk to this site? 3-16 is far too wide an age range. What about the other feeder schools, not great for transition. Schools without 6th forms will find it hard to recruit the best staff. Problems with transport. Tonypany will not be a brand new school, proposal is misleading. Clear that someone with an accountancy background rather than educational is behind these proposals. It is a shame that money was wasted on glossy booklets when the Council is short on funds.
Not provided	Teacher	No	No	No	No	
						6th form proposals not fair to those in the Rhondda Fach and lower valleys. Too far to travel from Tonypany to Tonyrefail for 6th form. The Porth proposal is the fairest to all ages and communities, taking into account the Learning Support Classes needs. It will offer more accessibility to those wanting Welsh Medium education as current schools are far too over-stretched.
Provided	Parent	No	Yes	No	Not sure	
						My 3 children have attended YGG Llwynceilyn, this is an excellent school which will benefit from extra space. It would be an advantage for the children to have a safe play area as the current yard is on a slope and is dangerous.
Not provided	Parent YGG Llwynceilyn		Yes			
						I think this will be better for Welsh Medium education and there will be plenty of room for the children.
Provided	Parent YGG Llwynceilyn		Yes			
Not provided	Not provided		Yes			Better school and education for my children
Not provided	Not provided		Yes			Because it would better the education of my children
						6th form students will benefit from centralised resources and support. 3-16 schools have proven successful in other areas in RCT and will ensure more up to date facilities for the children. Proposal 2 will allow YGG Llwynceilyn to meet the high demand for places at the school, while providing enhanced opportunities for pupils attending English medium schools. RCT must ensure that demand for good education through the Welsh Language is provided to all that seek it. It would however be nice to see Welsh schools being provided with new schools rather than having buildings deemed not good enough for English medium pupils.
Not provided	Parent YGG Llwynceilyn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Not provided	Not provided		Yes			
						Asking pupils to move schools post-16 will cut down the number choosing to do so. No continuity of study, something which 3 - 16 prides itself on maintaining. Mixture of schools inconsistent with schools being the heart of the community. LSC is a unique group which should not be moved. More than 3 lines (to write comments) would be helpful! Tonypany College is on a site unsuitable for younger children re safety, access and weather conditions. No provision for Welsh school on separate site (Tonyrefail). Instead of spending £8m on Tonypany CC use money to build a purpose build primary for Penygraig and Tonypany. Ysgol yr Eos is a relatively new building.
Provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	

Not provided	Carer Tonypandy CC	No	No	No	No	The young children should have their own school.
Not provided	Not provided	No	No	No	No	Too many children in one school, young children will be around older ones, picking up and dropping off will take longer, school will be too far away and little children can't walk that far
Not provided	Parent YGG Llwynceilyn		Yes			I have children attending YGG Llwynceilyn and was a pupil there, so can relate to how small the school is. It is unfair to have 30+ children in one class they do not have enough 1-1 teaching. Having Llwynceilyn Infants would make a great deal of improvement.
Not provided	Parent	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Not provided	Parent YGG Tonyrefail	No	No	No	no	More congestion, damage to the environment and a big impact on traffic infrastructure.
Not provided	Parent Porth J & I	No	No	No	No	3 year olds are too young to be in school with 16 year olds. The walk is too long and dangerous. Sharing gym equipment isn't going to work out. There will be no 1-1 relationship between child and teacher. Have no concerns about a 3 - 11 primary school
Not provided	Parent Porth J & I	No	No	No	No	Walk will be too long and dangerous for the younger children. 3 and 16 year old shouldn't be taught in the same school. The language and conversations the younger children will hear is a scary thought. Happy for a 3 - 11 primary school
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I don't think children should be mixed at the ages of 3 and 16. Too far to walk for a young child. Roads from Porth to Mount Pleasant are already dangerous enough without the extra traffic this will bring. School will be too large, teachers will no longer know the children personally as they do now in the smaller schools. Happy for a primary school for 3 - 11.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Too far for children to walk each day. School attendance will suffer because in bad weather parents with babies will stay home as it is too far to walk. Happy for a primary and junior school.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Too expensive, will cause horrendous and dangerous levels of traffic, longer journeys to school, class sizes will rise which has been proved detrimental to education. 3 - 16 schools have not been proved to be better for education. There is nothing wrong with the current schools.
Provided	Parent Porth J & I	No	No	No	No	3 yr olds shouldn't be in school with 16 yr olds, too much bad activities happening outside the older schools - drug dealing, fighting, knife incidents - fact. With a big school you can't park, children won't get to school 100% safe - fact. Lot of kids walking to school, health and safety hasn't been thought of. No community spirit in a 'super school' families will have to walk longer distances - safety first. Leave things alone muppets. Spend your budget on improving existing schools, common sense should prevail. 3 yr old in schools with 19 yr olds - get a grip. Build a primary school in Porth and a 6th form college in the Rhondda and provide transport for all areas.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Could you not pick a better place for centres of excellence? What makes them centres of excellence anyway? 3 - 16 and 3 - 19 schools are not a good idea no evidence to support them. Everyone knows the problems with 11+ education, this will have a negative impact on younger children. Younger children would not be in walking distance, traffic around the schools would be a problem - what solutions have been offered? Too far to bring transport. Bigger is not better.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	It is hard enough for 3 yr olds to start school without it being bigger and further from home. Traffic will be a big problem and travel to school further. No proof that this works could have a negative impact on education and happiness of children. These are children, not guinea pigs to test crazy money saving ideas on.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Transport will be an issue. Hate the thought of 3 yr olds interacting with 16 yr olds. Will transport be provided? What about people who don't drive? What about weather conditions for people walking with younger children?

Provided	Parent Porth Infs & Comp	No	No	No	No	I transport links to Porth Comp are not the best it isn't central to the valleys. I don't feel that cramming as many people in to one school is going to provide the best education. Keep the community schools open. There is a massive safety issue in my opinion. (Porth Comp) is not very local to a lot of children and the walk is too far for the younger ones. Taking local schools away really is ripping the heart of the community out.
Not provided	Parent of a 2 yr old	No	No	No	No	3 yr olds shouldn't be able to go to school with 16 yr olds.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	No, no, no. I travel main concern for parents and children. Especially for part time, means going back and fore school, most parents work - unfair. There is nothing wrong with the schools we have got. Absolutely not - outrageous. This will ruin communities. Morale will be low, new children trying to mix at a very important stage in their development, will cause upset and confusion. Leave system as it is, if it's not broke, don't fix it.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I want my daughter to be educated in a school environment where she can concentrate on her studies. All these changes will be happening as she is taking A Levels and I don't want the disruption to affect her studies. I don't want her in a college where adult life begins as she is still a child. School is more disciplined. Porth Infs and Jnr are the heart of our community. You will hurt the wellbeing of the children by taking away the teaching and care they receive at the moment. Childrens safety will be put at risk with high volume of people walking along a busy road. Children will get soaked in bad weather. Hazards for young children around older ones, especially with recent knife events. Build a primary school for Porth, keep the heart of our community.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Children whose 6th form is removed will be likely to quit higher education as it will be difficult to travel to the proposed school. It is not appropriate for 3 and 16 yr olds to be together even though they will not be in the same building, they will still come in to contact. Junior school children will lose their independence as they will no longer be able to walk to school. Has anyone looked at the parking and traffic issues, they are horrendous at this site (Porth). It will be more acceptable for a primary school to be built. We don't want your proposal at all.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Wrong on so many levels, expecting vulnerable children to go to school with teenagers. How are parents expected to get their children to school? Closing the schools in Porth means losing part of our closeness and heritage. Our great grandparents fought for the schooling of our children and the Council are hell bent on ruining it. I absolutely disagree with putting 3 yr olds in same school as 16 yr olds. Everyone knows how vulnerable infant age children are, going to school with teenagers is asking for trouble. Closing two primary schools and expecting young children to walk to school safely? Funny how Welsh schools never come out like the English schools, discrimination at its best. Councillors should stop blaming England for budget cuts and start by not wasting money on pay increases at Council and cutting pointless jobs. It is a joke, like the last proposal.
Provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	There is no need for this draconian shutting of schools and merging. This is just a ploy to save money. Our local councillors were educated locally when they were young now you are asking parents with young babies in prams and with infant children to walk to a new school with no transport for many. With all the traffic someone could lose a life with all those children trying to get there in one block. Now would the councillors, if that did happen be prepared to have that on their conscience? Leave things as they are, you do not get things correct all the time. Why not move the Welsh school up to Cymmer, they would all be together then you could close both Infants and they could merge in to the Welsh school.

Provided	Parent	No	No	Not sure	No	This merging is going to cause issues. Pupils will have further to travel and now worst still are the plans to make pupils pay for school transport. I don't agree with any plans for further transfer to the Porth County site. Traffic in this area is a nightmare daily and you want to increase vehicles using Porth and Trealew. The Porth relief road can't cope with the traffic now. I am not from this area (Tonypany) so would not know pros and cons. I am against 3 - 19 yr olds in same school it is not natural. Merge schools of same age groups in same areas where possible.
Not provided	Not provided		Yes			Being a well established school, the pupils of Llwynceilyn would definitely benefit from the extra room and facilities.
Not provided	Not provided		Yes			I think that Llwynceilyn would benefit having the extra space as it is a brilliant school with a high standard and I think the pupils would deserve a bigger school.
Provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I do not want lots of children at the same place. Porth County is too far from my daughter's home, my grandchildren will have to walk 30 - 40 minutes each way every day as they don't have a car. We need a Primary school rather than a big super school.
Not provided	Not provided	No	No	No	No	I live in Porth and am partly affected by this, but my answer relates to primary school closures in RCT. It is not fair on young children due to the length of the walk, we want local schools close to where we live. Some families find it difficult to get to schools on their doorstep, I don't know how they will get there if they have to travel. I live near YGG Llwynceilyn and am concerned re parking, residents can't get near their homes, it is dangerous for children and residents alike.
Not provided	Parent, Porth Infants		No	No		Don't like the idea of primary children mixing with 11 - 16 (this will happen). Too far for children to walk, dangerous roads. Small community schools have a better relationship with children and parents and have better results in literacy and numeracy.
Provided	Local resident	No	No	No	No	Three page letter summarised - Tonypany Comm College not built for 1200 pupils and doesn't have capacity to expand. The Primary schools have achieved good results, Tonypany Comm, College is in the lower quarter of league tables, this is a gamble with our children's future. Exposing young children to bad language and behaviour, buildings not separate. Too far to travel, especially for children living by Craig (Ysgol) yr Eos. Too far for Ferndale pupils to travel to Treorchy for A Levels, could discourage. Existing access to Tonypany completely unsuitable, no parking, problems accessing via Gellifaelog estate, residents have paid millions for their houses and have added to the economic growth of RCT, they will move out of the area if this goes ahead. A new access road is needed.
Not provided	Parent Llwynceilyn & Porth Jnr	No	No	No	No	one page letter summarised - teachers have a great rapport with pupils, putting them into a massive class where they become nothing but a number means teachers are less able to spot problems. Porth County is already full to bursting, putting 3 other schools there is crazy. Traffic in Porth/ Trealew will be a nightmare, site access even worse. Parents with multiple children living in Llwynceilyn that have to walk in atrocious weather are really going to struggle. This will affect attendance. Route is so dangerous, busy roads and extremely busy traffic, an accident waiting to happen. Building on a school site when pupils are present will affect their education, affecting their employment in years to come.

Not provided	Parent Llwynceilyn & Porth Jnr	No	No	No	No	two page letter summarised - All schools should have a 6th form, teachers pride themselves on teaching 6th forms, children may not be able to do courses and travelling will be a problem. Our schools already have what we need. Putting huge numbers of children together is not productive, some need extra support. Good teachers will become unemployed. Closing schools will kill the community. the walk will be horrendous especially in winter, children will suffer more illness and have bad attendance which RCT has been ramming down our throats. The walk is dangerous. (Traffic) Chaos at Porth County is bad now yet you want to double that. Staff at the current schools know names of all children and can sense problems, condensing all schools like a cattle market is detrimental to their wellbeing. Llwynceilyn Infants parents feel we are being pushed out by the Welsh School, this is unfair, we have all contributed to making our school a lovely teaching environment. Dangerous to have children in what is essentially a building site, will affect their education and safety.
Not provided	Not provided		No			I am very disgusted with the planned closure of schools in the Rhondda, they should be left as junior and infants schools. We have enough problems with hospital closures let alone schools. Children from Llwynceilyn should be able to go to local schools at the age of 3, it is an excellent school and should be kept open for all 3 year olds.
Not provided	Not provided		No			Our primary schools have what we need for a good education. The walk to school will be difficult and there will be no free transport, will take 30 mins at least. Children will arrive wet, cold and unhappy. Traffic through Porth is dangerous. Parking at the Comp is difficult. 3 to 11 year olds should not be in same school as 16 year olds. Leave the primary schools alone, they are excellent schools.
Provided	Grandparent		No			Our schools have what we need for a good education. The walk will be difficult, no free transport and having to walk for half an hour in all weathers is dangerous. 3 to 11 year olds shouldn't be in the same school as 16 year olds. Leave the primary schools stay as they are they are all excellent schools.
Provided	Aunt		No			I believe A levels should be taught in a college environment. 3 - 16 schools are too big. Smaller schools more secure and nurturing. Where will all the children go whilst the school is being built? Who will take over the buildings? Transport - should not expect parents to drive kids to school. Education will suffer for the youngsters. Will this be cheaper than the current schools? Will people move out of the area or choose other schools? Tonyrefail Primary is fairly new, so just expand Tonyrefail Comp for 17 - 19 year olds.
Provided	Former pupil	No	No	No	Not sure	You can't expect a 3 year old to be schooled in the same premises as a 16 year old. The distance some parents will have to walk in all weathers is totally unacceptable. If plans go ahead a new short-cut and access to Tonypandy especially must be a priority. Tonypandy residents can't cope now with the traffic without adding another 300 pupils. I recommend making the large banking at the side of the A4119 into a footpath so parents from Tonypandy and Penygraig can have direct access to the school. Gellifaelog estate was only supposed to be a bus route. This new walkway is a priority if these plans go ahead.
Not provided	Parent/resident	No	Not sure	No	Not sure	Remove surplus 6th forms and allow all 6th form children the opportunity to access the new facility. (Tonyrefail proposal) can only enhance an already successful school. Not happy with the proposed catchment change for Tonyrefail, I believe that Williamstown Primary, who turn out children with such high standards should be able to access these new facilities as they have done for over 40 years. It is unfair that these children should have to attend a school currently in special measures and nowhere as successful as Tonyrefail.

Not provided	Not provided		Yes			I would like Llwynceilyn school to close as the traffic is so bad, also kids are here on Sundays and it is not their school. It is a wonder that children have not been hurt. Suggest buying land behind the school and make a car park for teachers and parents, we will all be happy then.
Not provided	Local resident	Not sure	No	Not sure	Not sure	There is a major parking problem at Llwynceilyn which will only get worse. I live near and have a disabled relative, we often lose our parking space outside our house. They are not allocating dedicated disabled parking spaces at present.
Provided	Parent, Penygraig J & I	No	Not sure	No	Not sure	I am concerned for my children's well being in a 3 - 16 school. My 5 year old son was very upset following the open evening at Tonypany Community College and does not want to go there. I am concerned that he and many others will just become a pupil number on the conveyor belt of a 3 - 16 school. He has flourished in a small school as the staff can dedicate time to him and get to know him. The headteacher knows his name and that sense of belonging will be compromised. I also feel upset that no 6th form provision will mean that my children may have to move to a different school and 'not so confident' children may choose not to study A Levels as the thought of having to settle in a new class full of strangers at 16 yrs may appear daunting!
Not provided	Parent, Penygraig Infants	No	No	No	No	Too far for children to walk, 3 - 16 year olds shouldn't be mixed together. Will all the children from the closed (Tonypany) schools fit in one school? Too many people leaving school at home time.
Not provided	Parent, Penygraig Infants	No	No	No	No	How will all the children from these schools (Tonypany) fit in to one school? What will happen to teachers jobs? 3 - 16 year olds should not be taught in the same school. Too busy after school times, not enough parking.
Provided	Parent, Tonypany Comm College and local resident	No	No	No	No	Two page letter summarised - Proposals are breaking down our communities. Having primary and secondary children on one site will be detrimental to the child's education. Nurturing a child when they start school is paramount to them enjoying school for the rest of their lives. First day at school is daunting enough but will be more frightening with older children. I understand the proposals but cannot see the benefits. Proposals on drawings appear cramped and not sufficient. Traffic in Parc Gellifaelog is horrendous at present, will be utter chaos with more children. Proposed speed restriction measures outlined by Highways are not sufficient. Your representative stated that restrictions will not be put in place until an accident happens, this does not give us any confidence as our children's safety should be paramount. Walking paths need to be considered as well. If this goes ahead a walkway from the bridge crossing the A4119 direct to the school should be considered.
Not provided	Staff member				No	I think that Tonyrefail Welsh School should be moved to the new site and Tonyrefail Primary should remain where it is, as it is relatively central to the village, also the Welsh School deserves to be sited in a new building after 'making do' for so many years. Traffic to the new school would cause problems especially for residents, there would be less traffic to the Welsh school than the English primary as Tonyrefail Primary is better placed for local children. I think the Primary school should be placed well apart from the Secondary school to avoid any bad influence from the older pupils.

Provided	Parent, Tonypandy Comm College and local resident	No	No	No	No	Ferndale school has better ratings than Tonyrefail which has one of the lowest ratings in the area, a failing school. You need to sort out the schools that are failing, ie Tonyrefail and Tonypandy. Treorchy will deteriorate as the other 6th formers will not have gone through this school. 3 - 11 year olds will be submitted to foul language, it is a joke, keep them as they are. Traffic congestion will be at one site, you people putting these proposals forward don't live here, how would you like hundreds of cars stopping you leaving for work! I don't think mixing younger and older children is a good idea, it beggars belief that when primary children are taken on trips, swimming etc they close off the facility to the public but when it suits you financially you put them together and plough ahead with a plan no one wants. You haven't thought this through properly and there has been no consultation with local residents. Why can't people see that no one in the community wants this, I question that this appears to be pushed through by a financial adviser - get someone who knows what is best for childrens education. Please rethink this crazy plan. Tonypandy is a failing school in special measures, maybe the proposal should be to close this school altogether and this is the discussion we should be having.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	My children have gone to Porth Infants and I feel comfy talking to the staff, I will not have this if you move us to a new super school. My children love the staff and the results are great too. Merge the Porth schools into a Primary school.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	Many students will choose not to stay on for A Levels if they have to travel or they will choose Treorchy/Tonyrefail from age 11. This will mean lower ability range in the 3 - 16 schools and no good role models for the younger children. Small schools provide a very high standard of education and are the hub of our community. We will lose excellent facilities and gain nothing. 3 year olds should not be on the same site as 11 - 16 year olds. The learning support classes are shown to be in the primary school, not really suitable. Too far to travel in all weathers and inadequate parking for parents. Too dangerous to walk, an accident waiting to happen. Moving them is not to their advantage but yours. No parent agrees with this plan and the council should listen to them. We do not want to lose a good nursery school and don't want our children to suffer.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	Absolutely despicable to integrate such different ages. There is a problem in parents and pupils commuting such a distance. How can the proposal (no 3) be possible without much consequence. Smaller schools and classes guarantee the pupils most attention from teachers.
Provided	Parent, Porth Infants	No	No	No	No	Porth Infants is a very good school in a great location. My wife doesn't drive, we need Porth Infants to stay where it is or my child will not be able to attend school. It is too far to ask a 3 year old to travel to the Porth County site as we have no transport. How can you make a child walk 30 minutes in rain, snow etc to get to school. Think about people who walk, adding 30 minutes is ridiculous. 5 minutes is fine. Leave Porth Infants and Juniors alone.
Provided	Governor, Porth County	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Porth County has a long tradition of providing a high standard of education in South Wales. As it has a central position in Porth perhaps this school could have been considered as a 3 - 19 school. My main concern is the transition to the new structure. At present, the school qualifies for Challenge Cymru funding, which is having a beneficial effect in raising standards. However, the school has run a deficit budget for a number of years which it is trying to resolve. Recent budget changes will make this more difficult and therefore redundancies will need to be implemented. This, together with the uncertainty over transfer to the new structure, plus children opting to go to Treorchy may affect our aim to raise standards in the interim term.

Provided	Parent, Trealaw Primary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	This will improve access to better education, will offer modern environments to aid learning, improve diversity and give children the opportunity to learn and improve their career prospects. I agree that the proposals are a good idea, however there must be a lot of consultation with teachers and parents regarding the running of the new schools. They need to be led well and the Council needs to take on board the views of parents and teachers around day to day running, a parent council put in place from the start so parents can see this happening. Parents and teachers are wary of the plans due to the huge changes to current lifestyle, the council needs to be truthful in their planning, including predicted completion dates as any delays will be viewed as letting us down. I would like to see clearer plans of where facilities will be located and strategies for separating primary from secondary. This is most important and although a long way off should have been thought about by now.
Not provided	(response provided - 'mind your own business')	No	No	No	No	Travelling time becomes disproportionate for 6th formers especially. Working mothers will have their working day severely disrupted by having to supervise excessively long school journeys. How in hells name are parents from Blaencwm/Blaenrhondda/ Treherbert/Treorchy going to cope with young school children? There will be excessive travel time/distance for all except Porth based kids. Reduced parental influence on children's safety. Retain all existing schools but increase working hours of teachers and reduce number of staff employed. Reduce holidays also.
Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	Traffic and travel conditions do not appear to have been taken in to account in this plan. It is too far to expect young children from Porth to travel along Cemetery Road. No consideration made for already congested Mount Pleasant/Cemetery Road area - putting hundreds of extra children, parents, pushchairs etc will be chaos and tempting accidents and fatalities. Merge the three Porth schools into Llwynycelyn and transfer YGG Llwynycelyn to YG y Cymer.
Provided	Governor and grandparent	No	No	No	Not sure	Inequality of schools, schools too large and diverse. I consider that education took a backward step with the closure of grammar schools and the introduction of comprehensives, now you want to go larger. This won't work to the advantage of all. Roads are too dangerous for so many young pupils, children have already lost their lives in Porth travelling to school. Position of school (Tonypany), topography, dangerous roads, punctuality and attendance will decline, no Cabinet member lives in this area, a map is flat. Not from this area (Tonyrefail), a Cabinet member is, she should know her area better than me. Keep senior schools open, open a 6th form college in Llwynypia and combine the Primaries only. Penygraig Junior site has room for extension (also attached a two page letter outlining road safety concerns and perceived hazards along the several walking routes to Tonypany Community College)
Provided	Local resident	Not sure				Already too many different buses back and forth the valleys. Council budget cutbacks. I believe in specialist provision for children who have and need help with learning problems. I see locally a lot of old buildings left and forgotten about, burned down etc, they could contribute to the typical coal mining villages. Local residents find this hurtful, these buildings should be properly monitored with a reasonable budget (reference made to the former Blaenrhondda school - note that this building was sold by the Council to a private individual approx 15 years ago). I find this proposal form confusing for obvious understandable reasons
Provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	Cemetery Road (Porth) is really busy and used as a speedway for youngsters driving. I walk up and down this road each day for work and I know how dangerous it is. Too far for children to walk and for parents without cars.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No			I think if you do as you propose my grandchildren will have too far to travel and it will mean they have to travel on a dangerous road.

Provided	Parent, Penygraig Infants	No	No	No	No	I don't think 3 yr olds should be placed in a school with 16/19 year olds. Pupils in Tonypany and Porth should not get the choice of where to go and what to do for A level taken away from them. Penygraig jnr & Infs are excellent schools so it seems very un-logical to put them in a school that is in special measures. Make a large primary school on Penygraig Junior site, not 3 - 16/19.
Not provided	Parent, Penygraig	No	No	No	No	Tonypany should be able to keep its 6th form, 3 - 16 year olds should not be on same site, it is not appropriate.
Not provided	Parent, Penygraig Junior	No	No	No	No	I don't agree that children should have to travel to Treorchy for 6th form. I don't agree that young children should be in the same school as older children, I have seen them not being very nice to them and their attitude. Why are Tonyrefail having a new school and not Tonypany or Porth? I would rather see the Infants and Juniors joined together.
Provided	Grandparent, Penygraig Junior	No	No	No	No	Pupils aged 3 to 16/19 should not be in the same school. It could be detrimental to their health, wellbeing and education. They benefit from being in nurturing and caring environments. Parents choose which schools they want their child to attend and this is now being taken away from them. Children should be placed in schools with children of a similar age to receive education in a safe environment. Put primary aged children in a separate building with their own access and environment, possibly use Penygraig Junior site?
Provided	Parent, Penygraig Infants	No	No	No	No	You are taking away pupils choice by removing 6th forms which is ludicrous. They have built up relationships with teachers for 5 years, then have to move to another school to finish their education. Absolutely awful idea! 3 yr olds should not share a site with 16/19 yr olds, I am concerned about my children's safety, Get the Tonypany campus out of special measures before you move our children there just to improve their standards.
Not provided	Parent, Penygraig Junior	No	No	No	No	3 yr olds should not be in same school as 16/19 yr olds. It could be detrimental to their well being and education. The environment is not suitable, the current juniors and infants are far more suitable as they are now. The site is not suitable or big enough to take another 500 pupils. Build a bigger Primary on the Penygraig Junior site.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I strongly disagree with the removal of the 6th form at Tonypany. Children should have a choice to continue their education in the school they have been attending. The loss of the sports academy is a shame. The Primary schools should not be closed as they are all in green and yellow bands where Tonypany Community is red. Keep the College as it is and support it to gain better results.
Provided	Parent, Penygraig Junior	No	No	No	No	The 6th form is a major issue as it will directly affect both of my children. The disruption of the refurbishing while they spend their vital educational years is concerning as well as having to move to complete A Levels. Penygraig Jun and Infs are excellent schools with fantastic provision and learning opportunities for children already. Leave the primary children alone and sort out Tonypany Community College first.
(illegible)	Not provided	No	No	No	No	Tonypany Community College is at the heart of a community and should be supported to stay open to give children the chance to continue their education in a 6th form within their school. Children aged 3 should not be put in a school at the top of a mountain with 16 yr olds. What a loss the 6th form would be!
Provided	Parent and governor	No	No	No	Not sure	Children aged 3 - 16 should not be mixed in a school not purpose built for segregation. Taking 6th forms away will make further education an issue resulting in more underskilled adults in future. Gives an unfair advantage to certain areas. The Tonypany site is up an unsafe mountain and away from the community. Teachers would be of a lower calibre as many top rated Comp teachers would not want to work in a school without the challenge of A Levels. Penygraig Junior and Infants are thriving, high ranking schools at the heart of their community, all this will be lost mixing with a school in an inappropriate site. Proposals as a whole are unworkable.

Not provided	Not provided	No	No	No	No	I do not agree with 3 yr olds being in same environment as 16 year olds, having to share toilets and other facilities is not healthy. We bring children at a young age to wash their hands after going to the toilet and then you will have older ones who couldn't care less, they will intimidate the younger ones, it's totally wrong.
Provided	Parent, Penygraig J & I	No	No	No	No	Not happy with pre school, infants and juniors being placed with teenage adolescent pupils who will have a negative influence on their behaviour and attitudes. In the case of Penygraig Junior and Infants, would it not be possible to merge these two schools?
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Mixing young children with adults and the location you are proposing is a ridiculous idea. I think it is a crazy idea.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I do not think that the safety of the children has been fully considered. I do not think the needs of all children will be met individually. Children will not have the opportunity of transition experience. Takes part of community away. Do not think that the children and staff are being fully considered in terms of how school closures will affect them.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I think this idea is ridiculous, mixing small children with young adults is crazy. We never save money for our valleys children, valleys always seem to suffer.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Older children should not be mixed with younger children, they need a place where they can go with their friends. There will be less room to play and they may copy the way older children behave. The sites are not suitable, too much traffic. Children could get hurt because the older ones are much bigger.
Not provided	Parent and staff member	No	No	No	No	I believe all comprehensives should have a 6th form to give all children the chance to continue their education in the school they started in. Young children should not be put in a school with young adults. Closing Penygraig Infants which is high achieving to be put with a failing school is unbelievable. the site is dangerous, too much traffic.
Provided	Staff member	No	No	No	No	I think this idea is crazy, mixing small children with young adults. I have seen how a minority of children are violent and disruptive and should not be mixing with young children. Even though this does not affect my family I still do not agree.
Not provided	Not provided			No		Young children should not be sharing the same entrance/exits as the older ones. Their innocence should be protected, they should not be able to see the actions of the older ones.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I object to the removal of 6th forms as they are an asset of the school. I do not feel it is a good idea to incorporate such a wide age range. We have excellent primary school provision throughout the Rhondda why mix these with a failing comprehensive school. I disagree with this, as a parent at Penygraig Infants we have a fantastic school and I do not want my child to be mixed with teenagers. The site location and access are unsuitable. Address failing schools to raise standards, provide a new Primary.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Can't afford to pay for my child to catch the train to Treorchy. Every school should have a 6th form. How can you justify closing schools that are doing really well to put them with a failing school.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I think this idea is crazy, mixing small children with young adults
Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	Creating 2nd class education at mid Rhondda is not a recipe for success. Foundation phase children need nurturing.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I think this idea is ridiculous, mixing small children with young adults is crazy. We never save money for our valleys children, valleys always seem to suffer.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I can't afford the costs for my grandchild. We need schools in the community.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I don't believe it is the right educated choice for our children and their safety. 3 - 19 children should not be put together. Why should Tonyrefail have a new school and Porth, Tonypany do not.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Travelling is impossible, train to Treorchy is already at capacity cost to parents also leave children at a disadvantage. Children need to be educated at own level, young children need to be away from older children, there is no evidence 3 - 16 schools are successful and plenty of evidence that our schools are.

Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Children in Tonypanyd will think they are not as good as children in the other schools. The site is not suitable for young children.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	The cost of sending pupils to Treorchy - not all parents can afford this. The location of the school (Tonypanyd) is totally impractical for parents with young children. Keep the schools open
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	No evidence to support that these would be successful. Cost of sending pupils to Treorchy and Tonyrefail. Cannot expect small children to walk up the hill. Small schools know all parents. Keep Infant and Primary schools open.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I don't agree, putting 3 - 16 together is too much and a struggle for younger children. The locations are an issue. I do not want my children in the same school as age range 3 - 19. Leave the schools as they are now.
Provided	Retired Headteacher	No	No	No	No	To expect 6th form pupils to travel to Treorchy or Tonyrefail is unacceptable. What self esteem will they have if their school loses its 6th form? Creating centres of excellence may be a good idea but house them in the centre of the valley and let all schools lose their 6th form, this is fairer. Young children should not be educated on the same site as older pupils. To expect young children to travel along a dangerous route is unacceptable. How can you justify closing very good Primary schools and place them in an unsuitable school on the side of a mountain. Children are already transferring to other Primary schools not included in your proposal. This is not going to solve the surplus places problem. Tonyrefail is to receive a new school while Rhondda schools 'make do' - why? Amalgamate the Primaries and deal with the issue of the comprehensives separately.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	The parking and traffic at Tonypanyd will be really bad, very dangerous.
Not provided	Parent, Tonypanyd Primary	No	No	No	No	Tonypanyd Community College - bad idea. Don't agree with shutting the infants and junior schools, green and yellow schools to combine with a failing school.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	It is so unfair for Infant and Junior age children to be mixing with teenagers. Journey to school would be unsuitable and dangerous with so much traffic.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	It is not a good idea for primary age children to be mixing with teenagers and their behaviour/language.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	The schools you want to merge have had excellent results with wonderful learning experiences and facilities, plus children of nursery and primary age mixing with teenagers is despicable.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	How can 3 - 19 year old be taught in the same school fairly? Foundation phase needs the support from small schools that know the families well.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Access to the school (Tonypanyd) is dangerous with so much traffic. How can comprehensive facilities be suitable for younger children?
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	How can young children be expected to walk to Tonypanyd college and what if they have no other transport? They won't be able to attend school.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	The existing schools have remarkable reports and achieve expectations, so why take that away potentially disturbing these results and messing with the children's routines.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Cost of sending pupils to Treorchy and Tonyrefail will not be possible for a lot of parents. Cannot expect young children to walk up the hill to Tonypanyd college it is very difficult.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	The location of the school is not practical whatsoever to anybody in the area. Safety of the children is paramount and this will not meet their needs.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	This new school will not be safe for younger children to access because of the busy route, buses and hills. It is highly dangerous!
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	If this is the last resort then please consider building a new school on a more suitable and safe site.
Provided	Grandparent and resident	No	No	No	No	Traffic issues are a major concern regarding Tonypanyd Community College. Access is not good now without an extra 500 children attending. The current schools are very good and excellent now whereas Tonypanyd Community College is in special measures.

Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	There are plenty of other sites to build a school more easily accessible to others. Pupils from 5 - 19 should not be placed in the same school, it could be detrimental to their health and wellbeing and consequently their education would suffer. All pupils should be placed in schools with others of a similar age to receive education in a safe environment. To expect a child of 3 to walk 2 miles each way to school is unacceptable and dangerous. There is already a major traffic problem in Porth and Llwynceilyn which will be exacerbated by those that drive their children to school. Use the Llwynceilyn site for the Porth Primary schools and move the Welsh school to the Cymer site.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Is it not enough that primary children have to endure teenagers behaviour at the age of 11 - before this is ludicrous and the approach to this site (Tonypany) is beyond the joke.
Not provided	Resident	No	No	No	No	3 - 16 children should not be housed on the same site. Leave the thriving primary schools alone. Surely a more suitable site should be looked at. The proposed site (Tonypany) is unsuitable for younger children. The walk to school is dangerous.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Why can't Tonypany have a brand new school like all the rest, it's just not fair.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	How can you justify closing Penygraig Infants and Junior Schools after they have had excellent reports?
Not provided	Governor Penygraig	No	No	No	No	This is a silly idea - putting excellent run schools with failing schools, leave the infant and primary schools alone.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	
Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	There is little or no evidence to suggest that these type of schools are more successful. The issue of travel is a concern. Why should children living in Tonypany have to travel to Treorchy or Tonyrefail when there is a perfectly good school in their local area. Unhappy with the thought of 3 - 16 taught on the same site. Difficult to improve standards from the bottom up. Location of the Comprehensive school (Tonypany) is unsatisfactory for young children. How is it justifiable to build a new school in Tonyrefail and not in Tonypany or Porth.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Children will lose out on the close knit environment they have with their excellent schools.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Build Tonypany a new school on a new site.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Not fair for children aged 3 - 10 yrs to be with older children - language will be terrible, smoking, drugs are very big issues in Tonypany. I live by the school.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Tonypany is a no-go area, not enough access to the school. Build it on a new site, give us a new school.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I would not be happy for 3 yr olds mixing with 16 yr olds. Not an ideal learning environment for such a mixture of ages, health and safety a huge risk. This will have a huge impact on the local community environment (Tonypany)
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Young children should stay in smaller schools where they are nurtured properly. Older pupils do not want their younger siblings on the same site. This will not necessarily improve standards. Bigger issues with increased traffic. Tonypany Comp should not have been built on this site in the first place. Why can't Tonypany have a brand new school.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Traffic will be a nightmare, it is already where I live it takes me ages and blocks my drive. I am not happy.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	Primary children deserve to be educated in their own school environment - not lost in larger anonymous schools. Why new for Tonyrefail and makeshift changes for Porth and Tonypany. Keep Primary separate, deal with secondary issues separate.

Provided	Grandparents	No	No	No	No	Net result of losing 6th form is an actual increase of 300 plus pupils of infant/junior age. Unacceptable increase in traffic to and from site. Teenagers are vulnerable and could lose sense of identity and drive leaving a school they know. Too many small children on too big a campus. They will just become a number. Ludicrous proposal involving too many small children attempting to get to a totally inappropriate site (Tonypandy). Our young children are so vulnerable and need to be nurtured not just taught and have to be mixed with pupils old enough to be their parents. Vulnerability, danger, subjected to unruly teenagers, language, traffic concerns. Summary of 1 page letter re concerns re traffic, lack of transport, effect on attendance, how can a 3 - 16 school be safe, plans do not show appropriate segregation, residents having to put up with abuse etc. Please allow common sense to prevail.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	3-16 school in Tonypandy would not work, due to access, safety of children would be at risk. Tonypandy children would have to move to go to 6th form, they would be outsiders in that school or not even carry on to 6th form. Tonypandy is a failing school, putting good schools with special measures schools. No evidence any of this improves education or grades. Plough money in to Tonypandy Comp making it a good school so they have the same benefits as Treorchy kids. We have excellent surrounding schools, make the Comp better for the kids coming out of the excellent primaries.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	issue with travelling, why should our children have to travel when Tonypandy would be right in the middle of Treorchy and Tonyrefail (6th form). Don't agree with 3 - 7 yr olds being in same school as older children. Young children will pick up bad language very easily which is what will happen when walking to school. Why can't the 6th form be left as they are. Don't think that kids should have to travel this far for school. Crazy idea.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I don't think there is anything wrong with the schooling system as it is now, there is an old saying, if it is not broke don't fix it. I don't think 3 to 16 yr olds should be in the same school. There will be great difficulty getting our grandson to the proposed site. Why the new 6th form at Tonyrefail and not Tonypandy or Porth.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I don't agree that our children should have to travel to Tonyrefail and Treorchy for their 6th form schooling. I don't think 3 - 16 year olds should be together in the same school. Walking young children to this location (Tonypandy) is going to be inappropriate in bad weather. Why should Tonyrefail have a school built and not Tonypandy.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I don't agree with 16 - 19 year olds having to travel to Treorchy when there is a perfectly good 6th form at Tonypandy. The traffic is horrendous now without every parent of the 3 - 7 yr olds running them to school everyday. It will be a nightmare. Why should Tonyrefail get a new school when Tonypandy is more central than any of the schools.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Why should our children have to travel to Tonyrefail or Treorchy when there is a 6th form on our doorstep. I do not think that 3 - 16 year olds should be in the same school and the location (Tonypandy) is not suitable for walking to and from home. Tonypandy and Porth don't get a new school but Tonyrefail does, I don't think this is very fair.
Not provided	Local resident	No	No	No	No	Why on earth should our children have to travel to Treorchy or Tonyrefail when there is a well established 6th form in Tonypandy. I do not think that 3 yr olds should be in such a large environment and difficult site for walking on a very busy hill. Tonypandy is the most central place why not spend the money there, not elsewhere, but on a more appropriate site.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I think there is a big issue with regards to travelling and don't see why our children should travel to Tonyrefail or Treorchy. I do not think that 3 - 16 should be on the same site, the location (Tonypandy) is totally the wrong place to put any such structure and there is a big problem with traffic going to this site. Why should Tonyrefail have a new building and not Tonypandy or Porth.

Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I really believe there will be a massive drop in 6th form uptake. I personally would not have gone on to 6th form if it was like this and would have gone to a local college instead. To expect young adults to start in a new school with that many young children is crazy. You say one of the reasons for this is to improve attendance, this is crazy. If parents aren't taking their children to primary schools on their doorstep do you really expect them to do it when the school is further away? The safety aspect is ridiculous, so many roads to cross. Many children of Junior age walk themselves to school, this won't happen if this goes ahead and the traffic increase will be phenomenal.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I don't think it is plausible to keep younger children away from older ones with a hip high fence, especially when it will be next to the entrance which has to be passed to get to the part of the school for older children. Why does this proposal (Tonyrefail) not include Cwmlai, anything to do with a councillor? You are planning to close schools that are doing well, even the Director agreed. You will be taking the heart out of the community. There is not enough space for Primary children on the Tonypandy site. The whole thing would have to be knocked down and started from scratch. Where do you think these extra 500 children will play, this is stupid.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	6th form education should be offered in all comprehensive schools. 3 - 16 yr olds should not be on the same site. Traffic will be worse, not an appropriate site (Tonypandy) for young children . A 3yr old should in no way see or be influenced by 16 - 19 year olds.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	The age gap is not right and the distance for a 3 year old to walk. I don't think it is right that a grade 1 school should be with a grade 4 school. Look at reasons why the grade 4 school is failing. Why can't Porth and Tonypandy have new schools as well as Tonyrefail? Join the Primary schools and create a 6th form school in the centre of Rhondda.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Tonypandy Community College is totally the wrong site to add on a nursery/primary unit, I am strongly opposed to this proposal. Build a new Primary and find a more suitable, accessible site. It is not practical to expect 6th form pupils to travel to Ireorchy and Tonyrefail. Although Porth is a better placed site the journey to school would be unsafe. How can you even think of taking young children out of an environment that is so familiar and put them in a school located on the side of a mountain (Tonypandy). Why is a new school planned for Tonyrefail and not Porth and Tonypandy. Rhondda children not being treated fairly.
Not provided	Parent and staff member	No	No	No	No	Children aged 3 - 16 should be in separate schools. Location of school (Tonypandy) unsuitable, children as young as 3 can't be expected to walk. Why should Tonyrefail have a new school? Problems in Secondary schools should be dealt with separately.
Not provided	Staff member	No	No	No	No	I don't think it is a good idea to put young children with older children, leave it as it is please. Our schools are excellent, don't close them. Save money elsewhere.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Health and safety issues of the site (Tonypandy)
Not provided	Staff member	No	No	No	No	I think it is bad to do this to them all. 3 - 16 should not be on the same site. Why is Tonyrefail having a new school.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Don't want young children with Comp children. Community reasons. Site not suitable (Tonypandy). Traffic.
Not provided	Parent and staff member	No	No	No	No	I don't feel my child will be in a safe environment if she is with up to 16 year olds. It will be impossible to completely separate them so how will the younger children be kept safe? Why close excellent schools? Our excellent teachers who don't get employed within this proposal will be lost and I feel my child's education will suffer. I don't see how 480 young children will fit in to Tonypandy Comp - there is no room and proposed alterations do not accommodate them. Discipline is a major problem in the Comp.

Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	This is a disgusting cost cutting exercise that is completely unworkable for the children, especially in Tonypanydy. Penygraig Infants is an excellent and outstanding school, no need to close it. My child's education will suffer at this shocking proposal. Why not create a 6th form college somewhere.
Not provided	Staff member	No	No	No	No	Mixing 3 yr olds with comprehensive children is not good for the children, they should stay in separate schools. Travelling to the new school (Tonypanydy) is unnecessary for the children.
Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	The site (Tonypanydy) is totally inappropriate. Build a new Primary in the Tonypanydy area.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I totally disagree with this proposals and am shocked that you feel it is a good idea. Our future generations will be given no opportunities at all. Our community will suffer. Shocking to put 3 and 4 year olds with 16 year olds, very dangerous with regards to hormones!
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Don't agree with young children being with older children also the school is not big enough to put all these children up there. Traffic is also a big problem in the area. Put all the Comp schools in to one on the Tonyrefail site which is big enough to do so.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	The age gap is not right and the distance too far for a 3 year old to walk. I don't think it is right that a grade 1 school should suffer because of a grade 4 failing school.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	It is important that every Comprehensive school keeps its 6th form. Young children need to stay in their own schools. They cannot be expected to walk to a school situated half way up a mountain. The children are already having a good education in their existing schools. It cannot be right that one area has a brand new school whilst others do not. Why should Tonyrefail be the chosen area? Leave our young children alone and sort out the issue of Secondary education as a separate matter. I don't agree with mixing nursery/infant children with Comp age children. The 6th form pupils would not be motivated to travel so far to a 6th form school. Having such a wide age range of children on a site is not ideal. There is a massive health and safety issue which will affect them. Mixing ages is not ideal. The site (Tonypanydy) is not ideal due to the access, lacking in facilities and space on the site and taking schools from the heart of the community. A larger site would be ideal instead of Tonypanydy Comprehensive.
Provided	Staff member	No	No	No	No	
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	You clearly cannot expect 3 year old children to walk to Tonypanydy Community College.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Children of 3 - 11 should not be mixing with older children, just not right.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	How can you justify putting green/yellow band children with red band. It will take a lot of time to change this.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Foundation phase is very important, learning through play. These children won't get that at the 'super school', very silly idea.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	The school (Tonypanydy) is not accessible enough for the amount of parents, pupils and staff that will be coming in and out of the school each day.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	The location of the school is not suitable (Tonypanydy). It is too far for young children to walk every morning. Parents are given the impression that there is a new building being built when in fact it is the refurbishment of an existing college.
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	The plans are impractical. The location, size and accessibility of the site (Tonypanydy) are not suitable for young children.
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	Why close schools such as Penygraig Infants, who have excellent reports and merge them with a school under special measures?
Not provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	I would not send my child to a college that did not offer 6th form education.
Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	How can you justify closing Penygraig Infant and Junior Schools when they have received excellent reports?
Not provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	I think creating 'schools of excellence' would be divisive - they would make Mid Rhondda pupils feel less confident and lose self worth.

Not provided	Governor	No	No	No	No	Our current schools are excellent - there is no evidence to suggest that these schools would be successful and would provide the same quality of education we have come to expect.
Not provided	Parent and staff member	No	No	No	No	I don't think it is an ideal situation placing 3 yr old children on the same site as 19 yr old students. There would be huge health and safety implications. Too many children on one site and also the position of Tonypanydy Community College, which is built on a mountain makes this an unsatisfactory proposal.
Provided	Governor and retired headteacher	No	No	No	No	6th form pupils enhance a school and are often good role models. Questions lack of information on vocational course provision, minimum GCSE pass requirements and outdoor learning environments at the 3 - 16 schools. Also queries whether pupils will receive as good an education as now, relevant factors being space and ring fenced spending on Primary pupils. Pupils will face longer and less safe journeys to school, violating point 6 of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child. Proposals are driven by costs of 6th forms and running secondary schools. Amalgamating the Porth primary schools in to a larger Primary would be more accepted by governors and the community. Summary of a 3 page attachment - concerns in particular re Porth proposal in respect of walking route and distance, traffic, safety of pupils, impact on breakfast club, secondary school will not be easily modified for primary, no evidence of raising standards, primary children being intimidated by poor behaviour of older pupils and trying to mimic it. Examples quoted of 3 - 16 provision elsewhere, including Llanhari are flawed and not good examples. Difficulty of transition for pupils in other schools not included in proposals. Issues of shared expertise not proven. Play areas in Porth Comprehensive inadequate. Location of Autistic Unit and access an issue, as is segregation of Primary and Secondary children. Suggests alternatives such as closing one secondary school, keeping all schools 11 - 19 but restricting subjects they offer, timetable amendments so children remain at one location, amend timing of school day for A level students, transfer YG Y Cymer to one of the other school sites and close this site, amalgamate the Porth Primary schools on the Llwynceilyn site, build a new school for YGG Llwynceilyn or relocate it to Cymer or change the catchment areas of Welsh Medium schools to reduce surplus places.
Provided	Parent	No	No	No	No	school (Porth) will make the journey to and from school very challenging and dangerous. Summary of 2 page attachment - A 3 - 16 school will put young children in a position of being under the influence of much older pupils, their behaviour will have an adverse effect, they will feel intimidated and insecure, detrimental to their wellbeing. Build an extension to Porth Infants or Junior to create a larger school. Journey would take minutes compared to the 45 mins to Porth Comp. Walking young children long distances on busy roads is stressful for the children. In bad weather they will have to change out of wet clothes. They will have to cross 4 busy main roads. Attendance will probably be low on wet days. Parking is a major problem at the Secondary school, more vehicles may make it unsafe for pupils staff and parents. I do not believe that 3 - 16 schools will greatly improve education. Llwynceilyn Infants already provides an exceptional standard above the national average. Falling numbers at the 3 schools are probably about to rise dramatically in the not too distant future. I intended to send my child to Welsh school but changed my mind after comparing inspection reports, it was clear that English speaking schools perform much better. I am sure that quite a number of parents will be making the same decision and pupil numbers attending Welsh schools will fall.

Provided	Grandparent	No	No	No	No	<p>I have serious concerns at young children sharing an environment with older pupils. Children aged 3-11 will have a safer, happier environment in Primary schools. The distance young children will have to travel along busy roads is a concern. Llwynceilyn Infants is already providing a high standard of education as evidenced in their last inspection. Summary of 3 page attachment - due to underoccupancy it makes sense to merge the three Porth primary schools. Feels that numbers will however start to rise as considers that pupils will move away from Welsh medium towards English with recent publication of information on standards. Makes suggestion to build a new Primary school on the site of Porth Infants or Juniors. Young children in 3 - 16 schools will be subjected to influences of older pupils, children feel safe and secure in a smaller school free from the risk of abuse and victimisation. Concerns at journey to school, having to cross 4 busy roads. The walk from Llwynceilyn will take at least 40 mins, in bad weather children will be not just tired but wet. Concern at the amount of extra traffic generated at Porth Comp site and the implications, suggested that traffic lights and other road safety measures will be needed. Primary schools not included in the 3 - 16 school will be at a disadvantage, also questions evidence regarding the 3 - 16 model. Indicates that this is similar to the idea to close small grammar schools and secondaries to create larger comprehensives, this didn't turn out well. Have we learned nothing, bigger is not always better.</p>
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# **APPENDIX 3**

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## **Summary of Comments provided at the Open Evening Sessions (message boards)**

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### **Session held at Treorchy Comprehensive on 12/1/15**

No comments made.

### **Session held at Tonyrefail Comprehensive on 13/1/15**

Congested entrance

A covered walkway

More canteens

Car parking!

Dance studio

Space for GCSE students to study.

Common room lockers.

Social spaces (covered).

The Anvil

Cliff Morgan's Field

Covered walkway between schools.

Entrance and exit to school via Gilfach Road

### **Session held at Porth Community on 20/1/15**

I don't think there is enough room for primary children.

Make the barn more modern to match the rest of the school.

Walked up with my 3 year old who cried, screamed and had to be carried almost all of the way. 6 children almost got run over on our walk. Not happy with our walk. Wet and crying.

Keep Porth open and Llwyncelyn too.

Concerns about yard space for 800+ secondary students at break and lunchtime.

Keep Porth infants and juniors open!!

Pavements too small for groups of children. Roads are unsafe. On the way today 3 children nearly got knocked down.

Small children have come here today and are cold wet and sad. The schools they are in already are closer to their homes.

Why were 6th form moved to Tonyrefail who's drop out rate was far worse than ours. In one class of twelve only one was left at Tonyrefail.

Will the teachers in the other schools work in Porth County?

Put the 6th form where the old science car park is.

Traffic calming near Upper Cemetery Road entrance to school.

Welfare of the children is paramount. Despite the Directors comments to the contrary. Disgusting!

What will happen to primary schools?

Is there enough space for secondary? After all, the primary pupils will go to secondary later?

Improve the halls.

Redevelop the swimming pool.

No disruption to 6th form while buildings are being demolished and rebuilt.

When you are 16 you will get a prom. Surely with the money for a prom could be used to save our school.

Looks like too much effort placed on primary space at the detriment of the secondary school.

Why can't they keep 6th form?

Children well being and safety not acceptable.

Why? Show something on paper and then when someone questions it you say it's only a concept?

Worries of child safety . Worries of protection. Worries of well being. Can't there be a primary? Not acceptable.

Keep Astroturf and swimming pool.

Absolute load of rubbish. Money??

Having to bring up my children here would be a loss of income for my family.

Swimming pool - considering this is a deprived area, wouldn't it be a good idea to keep the pool because many families cannot afford swimming lessons.

Keep sub central. Keep swimming pool.

DT block needs improving.

Reinvent the barn.

These proposals, including all plans shown here tonight, should be available to view on the RCT Website

Why are they demolishing the lower school?

Make dinner halls separate

Keep Porth open please. Please!!!!!! I love it.

As a resident it is not acceptable. Worried for 3-10 year olds, should not be mixed with secondary.

Concerns over distance to walk for non-drivers with such young children, especially in bad weather. Too far for 3 year olds to walk.

Cannot see how 810 secondary pupils can fit into the space we are allocated?

School will have similar number of pupils yet much less space? Primary only a little larger than 6th form.

What about the schools that already exist? What is going to happen to them?

What will happen to the teachers that are here now?

Safety concerns for drop off areas. Too small an area outside for 3-11 year olds - Foundation phase may suffer as a result.

Will there be libraries in either the primary or secondary schools?

Will it affect our lessons when it is being refurbished?

Where will C.D. Provision be? Will there be a break area for the C.D. People?

What is going to replace the swimming pool?

Where will the C.D. Unit be?

Is there enough rooms for the secondary pupils?

Will there be another sub? (sub central food point).

Will facilities still be available for literacy/numeracy rooms? Will literacy/numeracy staff work with both primary/Secondary? Will literacy/numeracy have computer facilities?

Enough classrooms for secondary when buildings removed?

Where will the outdoor areas for secondary school pupils be? Will this be safely away from all car parks?

Don't forget the C.D. Provision.

Why are they getting rid of the 6th form?

Distance to walk to school is a major issue as my father does not drive and is an OAP. He will struggle with distance and hills when dropping off my young son.

Make more room for the secondary children.

Major concern about secondary element. There seems no decisions or planning - lower school has English / Geography / History / Pub. Serv / Literacy lab / 2 IT rooms alone! Plus maths in upper school.

Drop off points for children - after seeing plans, I have concerns for safety of 3-11 year olds.

Are you going to replace the car parks with anything?

Don't close Porth Infants and Porth juniors down.

Have you considered the requirements of the curriculum - subject specialist rooms> ICT suites, labs etc - floor space for secondary section inadequate

## **Session held at Tonyrefail Comprehensive on 21/1/15**

Excellent idea which will only enhance provision to give all our children extended opportunities.

Would like a gate to block off going to Nant-Eirin.

Really good idea. Will be more support for my child with learning difficulties.

Caer Gwerlas. Will the council consider a one way system with Gilfach Road - manage parental traffic

The spread of the governors concerns me a little. I understand they would initially be spread from primary and secondary, but not once the permanent governors are in place. I would feel more comfortable with guaranteed primary and secondary governors.

Is there a possibility of including a 'drop off' zone for parents bringing pupils by car. Also one way traffic through site.

Great idea - will provide more opportunity for younger children.

Entrance to school must be from the bypass. Governors very keen on this!!

The proposals seem fantastic. I have no issues or worries with what I've seen and heard. I look forward to seeing these plans progress.

## **Session held at Tonypandy Community College on 22/1/15**

Safety first

It is a bad idea because where will the teachers in Penygraig juniors and infants go to work?

Absolutely disgraceful idea. Will refuse to send my children here.

Safety first. Access not suitable for amount of vehicles that will travel through the road. Traffic fails the hills when it becomes icy and Snows.

I think it is a bad idea because 16 year olds may be a bad example to younger kids = age 10

If you got 75 Million, spend it on the schools that we have already got.

Education should be FAR MORE important than saving money.

Government worry about results now, so it would be ridiculous to cut nursery - THINK!

Keep Nursery Full Time.

Sense of Community completely abolished! Staggered start times and disjointed lessons will lead to poor attendance and unhappy children / parents!!!

Will there be provision made for link up 2-3 year olds?

It would be an excellent opportunity to re vamp this secondary school - which seems to be failing in results and discipline. Main concern is access and dragging young pupils up here - very hard for young children. \*Positive - will help transition.

Save our school please!

Save the innocence of the young children!

Nursery education is specialised. Children are known by name.

I think we should have lockers.

Can't wait! Sarcasm??

Roads - dangerous crossing at white rock. Quickest route for some.

It is a bad idea because you will lose the sense of community.

It is a bad idea because really good teachers will lose their jobs. Age 10

Happy that younger children and older children will be separated.

Save our school now!!!

My main concerns have been addressed by talking to RCT staff.  
 Different start times of schools will help access.  
 Complete segregation from older children essential!  
 You can't put a price on our childrens education.  
 Traffic congestion and children safety should be VITAL!  
 Grassy area for primary?  
 Bad idea because it will be 3 and 16 year olds together! Younger children may be scared of older children!  
 I think closing down the schools is a bad idea because some people will struggle to get up there with over 1000 people there. Age 10  
 To much pressure on teachers and younger children. What will happen when exams are taking place?  
 Look to have gym hall relocated to primary - overlooking the valley.  
 What will happen to staff at Penygraig juniors? I don't want to lose my teachers.  
 Access to site very busy. Not good for infant / primary children.  
 Teachers will not know children personally!!! Age 9  
 Save my infant school.  
 Keep my school where it is. Age 8  
 Save my junior school.  
 Save our school!! Age 6  
 Look what happened to James Bulger. Not mixing 3-11 with older children. Appalling.  
 Save our school!!!  
 No bigger!!!! Proposal disgusting and won't work! Kids will suffer. Unsafe for my 4 year old.  
 Save our school!!!  
 Save our school!!!  
 Save our school!!!  
 Save our school because it is special. Age 5  
 Primary's should be individual so children won't be bullied or left out.  
 Just money to do up comps using our kids schools.  
 Inadequate parking. Access roads are a major concern too.  
 Save our schools!!!  
 As a resident I am really concerned about the level and speed of traffic approaching the school.  
 I think it is a bad idea because 3 year olds and 16 year olds may be in the same part of the school.  
 Disgusting!!!  
 Save our schools or teachers may lose their jobs. Age 10  
 Duller colours and higher fences.

Younger children walking with older children.  
 It's appalling that 3 year olds are going to mix with 18 year olds.  
 Keep the community group - brings up many opportunities.  
 Looks fab. Love the colour.  
 Car parking insufficient. Designated drop off points?  
 Bigger car park.  
 Stupid idea!!!  
 Higher fences for primary block.  
 Bigger car park. Blue and red for colours not green.  
 Keep our schools small and personal!  
 What about jobs in post 16?  
 Unsafe for the younger child when you have groups of older children on drugs.  
 Geographically long way from Ysgol yr Eos!  
 Why couldn't this happen earlier. I wanted to be here. Year 11  
 Employment?  
 Bad idea because people will struggle to get up here as over 1000 people. Age 10  
 No thought for people living in Llewellyn Street. i.e. Speeding of cars and parking.  
 Parking and drop off points.  
 Traffic congestion at Gelli Faelog Estate - Safety concerns.  
 Transition for primary aged children. Large classes. Traffic. Location.  
 What about 2-3 year olds. Education? Transition? Flying start?  
 Significant lack of outdoor space for primary school.

### **Comments submitted by Tonypandy pupils, Primary and Secondary Schools on 22/1/15**

#### **I don't think it's a good idea because .....**

All the time the pupils are out of school it affects their learning.  
 I think it's bad because they maybe won't learn as much.  
 Bad because I have been in the primary for 4 years.  
 If this happens there won't be as much room.  
 It will take a long time for them to get to school.  
 To much traffic in front of my house.  
 I think it's a bad idea. I'd rather stay where I am.

Because you will miss out on Education.

I think it will be a bad idea because it will be to cramped.

Bad because I have been in the primary for 4 years and I don't want to see it close.

If it's not local it could be hard and loads of buses for one school.

Because older and younger kids will be together.

I think it will deter many people from education. Maybe ruining the education of many young people in the Rhondda.

Because it will take a long time to get here.

The older ones could bully the younger ones.

Too many young people here.

I don't think it's bad idea because they are good schools.

Because there will be too much traffic.

There's too many up here and the young ones will get bullied.

The little ones will see the older ones smoke.

Hard to get them all in the same car park.

Not good - should keep them apart.

#### **Instead of closing my school they could .....**

Keep it the same

Leave it as it is. Combine Penygraig infants and juniors together on Penygraig junior site and leave Tonypandy Comp as it is, including 'A' level year. Ysgol yr Eos and Tonypandy primary could also be on the Penygraig Junior site.

#### **It will be good because .....**

You will be with higher achievers.

Some people will be with their family.

### **Session held at Ystrad Sports Centre on 18/2/15**

#### **Porth**

I'm not convinced of the educational advantage of 3-16 yr old schools.

The safety aspect of the walking access to the school needs to be considered in much greater detail.

The dedicated play area for the pupils is flatter on the drawing provided. In reality the area is much smaller - largely in an area shaded in winter for the 3-5 yr olds - far too many steps for the 5-7 yr olds.

Whether walking or transported, the Primary pupils will be subjected to very difficult journeys. Traffic through Porth will increase greatly.

The area of the building will be shared on the ground floor by the 3-7 yr old children and the Autistic Unit. Also on the 1st floor shared between 7-11 yr olds and a library and I.T. Unit for 11-16 yr olds. Apparently pupil access by the Secondary pupils will be limited to access with teachers.

The play area for the 3-5 yr olds is very close to the barn, where currently GCSE exams are taken. Noise problems for the examinees!

Breakfast club for Primary children - arrival at 8am. Currently Secondary school day starts at 8.30 am and ends at 2.40pm. Currently Primary school day begins at 9am and ends at 3.30 pm. The reality is that it is going to be very difficult to keep Primary and Secondary pupils apart.

I agree with every single word (person above) has said, so I won't repeat here. In addition, I am concerned with the lack of space to accommodate the pupils on such a small site. Where are the 'state of the art' sports, science, I.T. etc facilities going to be? How will all the Secondary students fit in such a small building?

I think the site is too small. Will there be Headteacher and deputy Headteacher for each part of the school i.e. Infants, Primary and Secondary? You can't expect to have 1 Headteacher for all years. Young children should not have to listen to teenage language which they will hear because areas are so close.

Why???? When the schools the children now attend are excellent.

You cannot expect parents of young children to walk to Tonypany Community College often with younger siblings in buggies. The Primary aged children in this area already receive an excellent education as inspection reports show. Why not deal with the Secondary sector and Primary sector separately to overcome the issue of surplus places.

Walking access not safe even with the proposed changes. Also too far for 3 yr old legs for many who live in Porth. Small surrounding roads couldn't cope with increased congestion plus insufficient parking to drop off Infant children. Not happy for 3-16 yr olds mixing and sharing spaces, site is not big enough for a proper separation. Outdoor play spaces are far too small, even smaller than what current schools have. I could go on and on!!

We need 20 mph limit now by Porth Infants, Llwynhelyn and Porth Juniors.

### **Treorchy**

I think it is a bad idea.

Concerns regarding traffic and congestion. Must widen access through bowling green and provide more parking spaces. Move more pupils to North

Barking mad in the extreme. The lot of it.

Why new parking areas and safety measures here for 16+ when far less at Pandy and Porth for Infants>

### **Tonyrefail**

This will give fantastic and life changing opportunities to children in Tonyrefail.

Why a new school for Tonyrefail but only enhanced buildings for Porth and Tonypany??

How are you spending this amount on a school here and not in Tonypany?

**Tonypandy**

I think it is a bad idea because people will have trouble getting to school as there will be so many other people, children and parents trying to get there at the same time

Please don't close our schools. I love my school.

Save our schools.

Save schools.

Can you save them. I think it is a bad idea because if the younger children see the older people fight or smoke, they will think it's a good idea to do the same.

Children deserve the best. Do not do it! Save our School.

Why do you chose Penygraig Juniors as a choice to close down and take pupils up to here?

Save our school please.

No!!!!

Why are we not getting a new school when Ton is? We would like one too.

Save our school.

Essential traffic calming is paramount.

Leave our school alone.

Please don't make my school bigger because there is too much traffic already. It's not fair.

Is it really possible to keep Primary and Secondary pupils separate on the same site? There is just not the room to extend the building to ensure this!!!!

Happy school.

Successful schools joining a school in special measures! How does that equal improvement!!

In theory everything looks great. In reality?? Too much on too small a space and I hate to think of the traffic problems at drop off and pick up times.

People that live far away like Dinas, it will be harder for the young children to get up there and easier where it is.

Will all our 'extra' spaces/rooms at the TCC be considered. Will we lose our 'cwtch' and 'hub' provision for example?

Wellbeing for the children will go! Please don't do it!

It is not right to do this!!!!!!

Can you not close the school.

It is not the right thing to do because we care about our school.

Can you not close the schools.

The transport issues are a nightmare in this area already. 500 more children added, what will happen?

Why are you doing this. We love our school.

What's the safety aspect of all the traffic? Why move 2 perfectly good schools!!!

I like my school.

Why close down loads of good schools to be knocked down and Tonypandy is one of the worst in RCT.

Great teacher will lose their jobs in the school.

Concerns over traffic and increased access.

Please Please Please!!!!

Bad idea because great schools like Penygraig Juniors and Infants will close down.

SOS Save our school!!!!

It is bad to put young children with older children. It isn't safe.

Save the Nursery.

Please do not close it.

Come on please.

Please do not do it.

Our schools are precious to us so why move us and knock it all down. I will not be moving away because I've had a fab time in the Infants and Juniors and I will not be moving away. So what ever you say it's no.

Our school has spent loads of money on 30 I-Pads, IS touch screen laptops, guitars, drums, applemac games on the Mac. I-Pads are really dear and also they spent £500 on percussion and then your going to knock down our school to build the super school.

Why choose our school and not other schools? We love our school and the Infants do so don's close our school.

Save our school.

I like my school. I like writing all the time.

Why is Tonyrefail having a new school and Tonypandy is not.

Think about our children's future. They are doing excellent as it is.

Why is Tonyrefail having a new school where as Tonypandy and Porth are not???

Can you save the school.

It is not the right thing to do.

Save our schools please!!!

I think it is a very bad idea, because if the younger children see the older children fighting, smoking, drinking and using bad language the younger children might think it is a good thing to do and do it themselves.

# **APPENDIX 4**

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Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
School Organisation and Planning Unit  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

**Re: School reorganization plans – Tonypany & Penygraig**

As a resident living near the site of Tonypany Community College I am writing to lodge my objection to the proposed changes to close several primary schools and relocate the pupils on the site of the College.

Quite apart from the notion of putting primary and secondary pupils on the same site and the lack of evidence that supports this move from an educational point of view there are other concerns to be taken on board.

The Council has made no effort to notify us, as residents, of the plans even though they will have an effect upon our quality of life. It is not enough to tell us that we will be consulted if the proposals are passed and planning permission is then needed. We have a right to have our say now.

You say you have carried out a Community Impact Assessment but that makes no mention of the impact on the wider community i.e. residents. That is surely a flaw in your consultation process.

The plans, if they go ahead, will result in a substantial amount of extra traffic around the site. This is inevitable as young children need to be taken to school and parents with cars will undoubtedly use them, as is human nature. Given the extra distance in some cases, and the dangerous nature of the walk to school for some then it is likely that more primary age children will also be taken to school rather than being allowed to walk. This will add to the traffic and the parking problems which we already face.

As well as being a nuisance to us the extra traffic will also be a danger to pupils and an accident waiting to happen. The extra volume of cars will affect the by pass at peak time for people trying to get to work.

This site is not suitable for the alterations you are proposing and I urge you to reconsider.

Name

90

Address

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

I was a pupil in Penygraig Infant school and then Penygraig Junior school and received an excellent education in warm, friendly, stimulating environments. The staff of the schools, particularly the Infants, where parents saw the teachers everyday, knew all the families well and understood the needs of all the children in their care. I'm sure this was the case in the two other primary schools involved in your proposal for the Tonypandy area.

How could you possibly consider taking such wonderful experiences away from our children in their early years. Putting these children on such a big campus would make them just another number. The Head teacher certainly wouldn't know the children individually.

The location of Tonypandy Community College is totally inappropriate for younger pupils. You tell us they will have "twenty first century" facilities to use but you omit to tell us what these facilities are. You obviously don't consider them to be important for every child as you are not making these facilities available for the children in the Treorchy or Ferndale areas or even the rest of the Tonypandy and Porth areas. Where is the consistency in your proposal, where are the plans for people to see? You obviously don't live in our area or you would see the difficulties involved. The danger to the children walking to school, the increased volume of traffic!

Headteachers and their staff should have been consulted before this proposal of yours was drafted. Perhaps you knew what their answer would be. There again they are the educationalists and not yourself.

The Councillors ought to be ashamed of themselves for even agreeing to such a ridiculous proposal which I strongly oppose.

PLEASE THINK AGAIN

Yours Sincerely

64

Cannot acknowledge,  
incomplete address.

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

EDUCATION

28 JAN 2015

TREVITHICK

Dear Mr Bradshaw

I object to the Cabinet proposals to close primary schools in Porth Tonypany and Penygraig, remove the sixth forms from Porth, Tonypany and Ferndale and create 3 to 16 age schools.

I understand the problems with surplus places across Rhondda Cynon Taff, but do not agree that this is the way to address the problem. If there are surplus places in secondary schools then that should be addressed by closing one of the secondary schools. Likewise there must be option around amalgamating some primary schools as has been done elsewhere.

There is no educational argument presented that provides a solid reason for these proposals. There is no research that backs up the case for all through schools. Indeed if they are so beneficial then why is this not being done across Wales?

The consultation says that the primary school pupils involved in this will benefit from being able to share facilities and from better transition. Where does that leave the pupils in the schools not included in the plans? Also when they join the rest of year seven will there still be a situation where standards are inequitable and some have to play catch up.

There will be further disruption when pupils reach the A level stage and have to move schools. Some may decide that they do not want to be educated completely elsewhere in a school where they will be the newcomers and others will have been settled there since age 11 at least.

There is no consistency in what is on offer – it is unequal and unfair. Why should there be two so called centres of excellence set up, one of which will not be a combined primary and secondary school.

I believe these plans are badly thought out and do not have the best interests of pupils at heart. I urge you and the Cabinet to reconsider and look at an alternative way forward.

Yours sincerely

Name:

38

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 School Organisation and Planning Unit  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon  
 CF45 4UQ

✓  
312.

Dear Mr Bradshaw

**Re: School reorganization plans – Porth**

I am a resident living near the site of Porth County Community School and I am writing to object to the proposed scheme to close several primary schools in our area and create a new 3 to 16 through school on the site of Porth County.

Aside from the suggestion of combining primary and secondary pupils on the same site and the apparent lack of educational evidence supporting this move there are other concerns which need to be taken on board.

Residents are appalled that the Council has made no effort to notify residents of the proposal even though it will have an effect upon our quality of life. It is not sufficient to tell us that we will be consulted if the proposals are passed and planning permission is then needed. We have a right to have our say before things reach that stage.

The Community Impact Assessment that you have on your website makes no mention of the impact on the wider community i.e. residents, which surely must be a flaw in the consultation process.

If these plans go ahead they will result in a significant volume of extra traffic in the area. This is unavoidable as infant age pupils need to be taken to school and parents with cars will undoubtedly use them, as is human nature. Given the extra distance involved it is also highly likely that more primary age pupils will also be driven to school. This will add to the traffic and the parking problems which we already face.

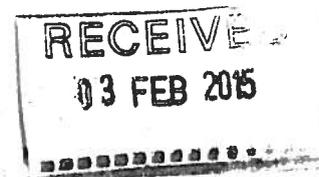
Quite apart from being a nuisance to us the extra traffic will also be a danger to pupils and an accident waiting to happen.

I urge you to put a stop to these ill thought out plans.

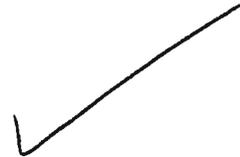
Name \_\_\_\_\_

53

Address \_\_\_\_\_



Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 School Organisation and Planning Unit  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon  
 CF45 4UQ



Dear Mr Bradshaw

School reorganisation plans - Porth

I am writing to object to the proposed scheme to close Llwynceilyn Infants School, Porth Infants School and Porth Primary School and create a new 3 to 16 school on the site of Porth County Community School (PCCS).

Aside from the apparent lack of educational evidence supporting the proposal to combine primary and secondary education on the same site there are other concerns that need to be considered.

As a resident living in the vicinity of these schools and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn (YGG) I am more than aware of the disruption caused by the "school run". There is indiscriminate, often dangerous, parking including blocking of junctions and driveways. Repeated requests to combat this have been refused or ignored.

The proposals include YGG expanding into what is currently Llwynceilyn Infants School providing an extra 100 pupil places.

There are, in term time, at least 150 vehicles going through, and parking, in Primrose Terrace, Leslie Terrace, Heatherway and The Parade. The expansion of YGG would result in, potentially, another 100 cars transporting children to YGG. There would also be an increase in staff that may drive and need to park.

The Community Impact Assessment on your website makes no mention of the impact on the community of this significant increase in traffic volume. It does, however, mention that travelling by bus or car from Llwynceilyn to PCCS takes less than 10 minutes. This suggests that parents with cars are likely to use them resulting in an even greater increase in volume of traffic. Apart from the disruption there is also the issue of safety.

Residents are appalled that the Council has made no effort to notify them of the proposals and the effect it will have on our quality of life. It is not sufficient to tell us that we will be consulted if the proposals are passed and planning permission is then needed. We have a right to have our say before things reach that stage.

I urge you to stop and rethink these flawed plans

Name *o*

Address

20

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Ty Trevethick  
 Abercynon  
 CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

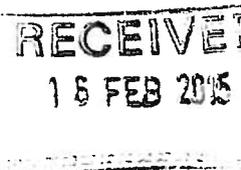
I am writing regarding the proposals to close, move, amalgamate and expand schools in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail.

I have read the document headed "21st Century Schools" and believe the proposals are flawed mainly because

- a) the document stresses the advantages of shared facilities but what about those nursery and primary schools that remain separate? Is this not inequitable?
- b) facilities for nursery and primary school children are, necessarily, different to those provided for secondary age children e.g. a laboratory set up for secondary age children would be totally unsuitable, possibly dangerous, for younger children.
- c) teaching nursery and primary school children requires different skills to teaching secondary age pupils so how would teachers be expected to do both?
- d) parents are, understandably, concerned about younger, smaller children being on the same site as older, possibly boisterous pupils. The report does not make clear how this will be managed. How can the nursery and primary pupils be separate and protected whilst sharing facilities?
- e) the document states that pupils who live over one and a half miles away from school will have free transport. As I was told, quite vociferously, at a PACT meeting by a councillor and then governor of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwyncelyn (YGG), parents could not be expected to put young children on a bus as they would feel it was not safe. Why, then, would any parent not feel this way?
- f) the 6th form "Centres of Excellence" may deter some pupils continuing in education. Those moving to a new school may feel at a disadvantage when their fellow pupils have remained in the same school for all their secondary education.

I understand that you may not be responsible for how pupils travel to school but, as the free transport is noted in the report, this should be considered.

The average walking speed of a 5 year old is believed to be approximately 0.84m/s. This means that it would take a child of 5 years over 47 minutes to walk to school and this does not take into account any hills involved. It is likely, therefore, that most



pupils would travel to school by bus, incurring costs for parents, or by car causing substantial traffic congestion.

It also means that fewer children are able to walk to school which, at a time when childhood obesity is on the rise and concerns about children having suitable exercise are regularly raised, seems incomprehensible.

The residents of Primrose Terrace, Leslie Terrace and Heatherway in Llwyncelyn, Porth are all aware of the disruption caused by the "school run" and the indiscriminate, sometimes dangerous, parking. Driveways and junctions are blocked and repeated requests to prevent this have been ignored. In addition, there is the issue of safety which is already poor and can only deteriorate with more traffic.

There are currently about 150 vehicles going through and parking in the streets during term time. An extra 100 pupils in YGG means, potentially, another 100 vehicles not including those used by any extra staff.

The proposals will cause similar chaos in other areas and, whereas your primary responsibility is the schools, the council, as a whole, must consider the impact on all those in the community.

There has been a significant lack of public information readily available. The schools may have been aware of the proposals but the wider community has not. The "open day" at Ystrad for 18th February is during working hours, 9am to 6pm, and many will be unable to attend.

I urge you to reconsider these proposals as local residents, not just schools, should be consulted as all will be detrimentally affected.

Yours sincerely

3

RECEIVED  
16 FEB 2015

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

I urge you and the Cabinet to reconsider your views with regard to the proposals to reorganise Rhondda and Tonyrefail schools and not press forward with these flawed proposals.

I understand that there are too many spare places in schools in the area, but do not agree that this is the way forward. A far better solution would surely be to look at amalgamating some of the primary schools and closing one of the secondary schools – Tonyrefail being the obvious choice as it is such bad condition.

There is no evidence that says through schools are more effective and in my view this is not the case. It is too wide an age range to put together,

The proposals will result in a two tier system that is unfair and inequitable. It could result in a two tier system in the affected schools. Whilst there are many very good Secondary school teachers who are content to teach only up to GCSE level there are also those who want to teach A level as well. There is a danger schools without sixth forms would lose some highly skilled staff and find it difficult to recruit. This could be especially damaging in the core subject areas.

Some students stay on because they are attracted by other non-academic things that schools have to offer, such as sports academies. They would not travel to another school to study and these "centres of excellence" would not accept them unless they were capable of achieving at least two A levels.

Having a sixth form enriches the life of a school and enables younger pupils to learn a great deal from the older ones. It also gives the opportunity for those sixth form students to be mentors and guides for younger children and adds to their own experience.

You claim that pupils in the Primary schools who are amalgamating with Secondary schools will benefit, yet what about the other feeder schools, surely they will be losing out. Again this is an unfair system.

These proposals will lead to a system in the Rhondda area that is patchy and inconsistent and will not drive up standards. Putting primary and secondary schools together is not the answer

Yours sincerely

Name:

86

Address:

**Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ**

*Doc*

**Dear Mr Bradshaw**

**I cannot support your proposal to reorganise the education of pupils in the Tonypandy area. It does not make sense to put children aged 3 - 6 years on one campus, especially one located in such an inappropriate place. You obviously have no idea of the congestion caused at the start and end of the school day. To expect parents of young children to have to endure this is ridiculous. Getting children to school, especially in wintry weather, will be very difficult and will be detrimental to attendance figures.**

**Children of these schools in Tonypandy already receive a very good education and placing them on one site will not improve this.**

**If you have too many places in schools then surely it makes sense to amalgamate the Primaries and deal with the Secondary schools separately.**

**To think Rhondda was once at the forefront of education! Your predecessors would be appalled.**

**Please reconsider your proposal and let the primary school children continue their education in their familiar schools where they feel valued.**

**Yours Sincerely**

20

**Name**

**Address**

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon  
 CF45 4UQ

Dore

For the attention of Director of Education and RCT CBC Cabinet

**Re: reorganisation of Rhondda and Tonyrefail Schools**

I urge you not to press ahead with the proposals put forward wish to reorganise schools in the Rhondda, creating through 3 to 16 schools and centralising sixth forms.

It is my opinion that the scheme has not been thought through and that it will create a raft of problems that will not benefit pupils or our communities.

- It is too wide an age range to put together on one site under one Headteacher. The outline plans do not show sufficient segregation.
- There is a huge difference between the needs of three year olds and sixteen year olds with regard to their education and pastoral needs.
- If the idea of a through school is such a good one then why aren't all the schools in the catchment areas involved and why isn't Welsh Government promoting the dea across Wales?
- No account has been taken of the extra traffic and the parking problems that will be created and worsened if the scheme goes ahead. Concerns have been dismissed by and large as being not part of the education debate.
- Our primary schools are an important part of the community. The proposals take away that community aspect.
- Many children will have to travel further to school. This will cause traffic problems as parents have to park to drop infant age children at school. For those without cars it will mean a substantial walk possibly several times a day.
- All the good work that has been put into increasing attendance could be damaged as putting primary schools on the secondary school sites is not going to encourage those who are frequently absent or late to improve.

Yours

Name: (

110

Address:

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 School Organisation and Planning Unit  
 Ty Trevithick  
 Abercynon  
 CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

Please do not go ahead with the proposals to reorganise schools in the Rhondda. Schools catering for the needs of 3 year olds through to 16 year olds have not been in existence for a long enough period to be proven successful.

- Tonypandy Community College is in a very poor location and to expect young children to walk to this site is impractical.
- The campus itself does not lend itself to accommodating the Primary School children as it is a single building with no separate buildings for the younger children.
- The facilities offered at the College may be used by years 5 and 6 but younger children will receive no benefit from these facilities.
- Foundation Phase and K.S.1 children constantly use their local communities as part of their education. You surely cannot expect this practice to continue if their new school is located near the top of a mountain.
- Do you realise that if this proposal was to succeed then the Primary Schools due for closure would lose children, and already have done, to other Primary Schools not included in your proposal thus creating even more surplus places.
- Why is Tonyrefail having a new building when Porth and Tonypandy are not? Tonyrefail ward already has a new Primary School at Williamstown.
- How do you expect families to afford to send their children to Treorchy Comprehensive or Tonyrefail for 6<sup>th</sup> form education if free transport is withdrawn?

You talk about equality but nothing in this proposal is equal. There is no consistency throughout Rhondda and Tonyrefail.

I strongly object to these proposals and urge you to keep our successful primaries and address the issue of Secondary Schools separately.

Yours Sincerely

Name

41

Address

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

My children have attended Penygraig Infants and Junior Schools and received an excellent education. The schools have excellent facilities and excellent staff. The schools are welcoming, familiar places where children are happy.

Now you expect these children to travel to Tonypandy Community College. I don't understand your thinking. Have you been to the site, halfway up a mountain. It's quite a trek in good weather but in bad weather, particularly snow it's impossible as you know from the school being closed and traffic not able to access it.

Please leave our young children in their schools or if needs be amalgamate the Primaries. Whilst not ideal this would be preferable to your proposals to which I strongly object.

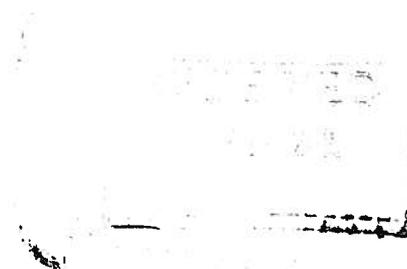
Yours Sincerely

Name

Address

5

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ



FAO: Mr Bradshaw and the Cabinet

I strongly object to the proposals being consulted on to create 3 to 16 age schools at Tonypany and Porth, closing some of our primary schools in the process.

This is not the way to address the problems with surplus places in the area. If there are surplus places in our primary schools then surely the solution should be to close one or more primary school, as unfortunate as this may be.

If through schools are so beneficial then why is this not being done across Wales? I have not been convinced by the arguments presented so far by the Council of the educational benefits. I also do not think that enough thought has gone into the positioning of the schools and the question of access.

Traffic and parking will be a nightmare if these proposals go ahead and there seems to have been no thought given to this at all. It will be an accident waiting to happen.

I fail to understand why there needs to be a concentration of 6<sup>th</sup> form education at the extreme ends of the area. If free sixth form transport is removed as the Council has already indicated it may be then our children will be disadvantaged as some may not be able to afford to travel to Tonyrefail or Treorchy.

Staff in Porth, Tonypany and Ferndale may well decide to move elsewhere and it may become harder to recruit good staff as they will be limited to teaching up to GCSE. The idea that there will be two "centres of excellence" also implies that the other schools will not be "excellent."

These plans are badly thought out and will create a huge amount of inequality. They are ill conceived and do not have the best interests of pupils at heart. I urge the Cabinet to reject them

Yours sincerely

Name:

Address:

107

**Director of Education and Lifelong Learning**

**Ty Trevithick**

**Abercynon**

**CF45 4UQ**

**Dear Mr Bradshaw**

**I object to the Cabinet proposals to close primary schools in Porth Tonypany and Penygraig, remove the sixth forms from Porth, Tonypany and Ferndale and create 3 to 16 age schools.**

**I understand the problems with surplus places across Rhondda Cynon Taff, but to not agree that this is the way to address the problem. If there are surplus places in secondary schools then that should be addressed by closing one of the secondary schools. Likewise there must be option around amalgamating some primary schools as has been done elsewhere.**

**There is no educational argument presented that provides a solid reason for these proposals. There is no research that backs up the case for all through schools. Indeed if they are so beneficial then why is this not being done across Wales?**

**The consultation says that the primary school pupils involved in this will benefit from being able to share facilities and from better transition. Where does that leave the pupils in the schools not included in the plans? Also when they join the rest of year seven will there still be a situation where standards are inequitable and some have to play catch up.**

**There will be further disruption when pupils reach the A level stage and have to move schools. Some may decide that they do not want to be educated completely elsewhere in a school where they will be the newcomers and others will have been settled there since age 11 at least.**

**There is no consistency in what is on offer – it is unequal and unfair. Why should there be two so called centres of excellence set up, one of which will not be a combined primary and secondary school.**

**I believe these plans are badly thought out and do not have the best interests of pupils at heart. I urge you and the Cabinet to reconsider and look at an alternative way forward.**

**Yours sincerely**

**Name:**

109

**Address:**

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

As a parent I strongly object to proposed reorganisation of Education in selected parts of RCT. The fact that these few schools are being treated differently from the majority of RCT schools is in effect displaying inequality. All our children should be treated equally.

To put children with such a wide age gap on one site does not make sense. If the children are being housed, as you say, in different buildings on one site then why not leave them in their Primary schools where they are being nurtured and educated by excellent staff and already have access to twenty first century education as our schools' Estyn Reports show.

I doubt whether you even know what facilities our schools have. How many times have you even visited these schools?

The location of Tonypandy Community College does not bode well for inclement weather. When there is snow this is the first school in the Tonypandy area to close due to inaccessibility. Is that going to improve your attendance figures?

I urge you to think again and think of the childrens' well being not the money involved.

Yours Sincerely

Name

Address:

20

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

I wish to register my objection to the proposed reorganisation of Rhondda and Tonyrefail schools which I think is ill thought out and will do nothing to improve education in the Mid Rhondda area.

I believe that putting primary and secondary schools together represents too wide an age range in one site under one Headteacher. Educationally, although some people seem not to appreciate it, early years education is a specialist subject. It is where the foundations are laid for all future learning. There is a vast difference between nursery education and key stages 4 and 5 and the school management needs to understand that.

We have been told that there will be segregation between primary and secondary pupils, but also that the younger children will benefit from shared facilities. How can they share facilities if there is to be complete segregation?

No plans were included with the initial consultation showing how the new 3 to 16 schools will be set up and as a result the consultation is surely flawed.

One of the arguments put forward is that the pupils in the Primary schools who are amalgamating with Secondary schools will benefit from the increased facilities there. Yet what about the other feeder schools, surely they will be losing out.

Our primary schools are an important part of the community. The proposals take away that community aspect.

Children will have to travel much further to reach school. This will cause traffic chaos as parents have to park to drop infant age children at school. For those without cars it will mean a long journey possibly several times a day.

There has been a major drive to increase attendance but moving primary schools to the secondary school site will certainly not encourage those parents whose children are frequently absent or late to make sure their children attend.

Yours sincerely

Name:

Address:

83

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Ty Trevithick

Abercynon

CF45 4UQ

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Yours sincerely

Name: (

Address:

95

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon  
CF45 4UQ

Dear Mr Bradshaw

I find it ludicrous that you have proposed this reorganisation of some schools in RCT and I object strongly. Your arguments are not consistent. If these children are to receive 21<sup>st</sup> century education ( I thought they already were ) with 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities ( have you visited the schools? ) why aren't all children in RCT to receive the same. To choose part of a cluster group is divisive in itself.

It seems that the problem lies with the secondary sector and therefore should be dealt with separately – do not penalise the pupils and parents of the primary aged children.

I appreciate you have to make savings but this is not the way to go about it. If you have surplus places then close one secondary school – one on the outskirts would make most sense.

Why should Tonyrefail have millions of pounds spent on a new 3 – 19 school and other areas have “enhanced” buildings? Don't all children deserve the best?

Please think again and look at the locations of the secondary schools you expect young children to travel to. I suggest, regretfully, it's an accident waiting to happen.

Yours Sincerely

Name /

Address

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# **APPENDIX 5**

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# Proposals to Re-Organise School Provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail Area of

This report was generated on 04/03/15, giving the results for 40 respondents.  
A filter of 'All Respondents' has been applied to the data.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

**Proposal 1: Remove the sixth form from Ferndale and Ferndale becomes an 11-16 school; Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail; create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypandy, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail.**

## Do you agree with proposal 1?



## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

One new 6th form college should be placed in central Rhondda with easy access for all, avoiding elitist groups in certain subjects congregating north or south of the Rhondda, so that the full array of subject choices will be available for all students in one geographical campus.

I currently live in Penygraig, there are two very good primary schools in the area with good reports, to merge these schools to the Tonypandy site means I can not walk my child to school, it will increase more car use and inconveniences for working families. Currently I am lucky to have a two good schools on my doorstep, why change something that is already working?

this does not affect my childs schooling so I feel unable to comment

Too far for students to travel especially in adverse weather.

Children from the Ferndale area may become demotivated to carry on into KS5 if they have to move schools.

I agree with the principle of rationalizing provision for financial and educational reasons, but this would need to be done very carefully to ensure the economic advantages are not the sole driver for change. I understand and accept change is necessary but feel strongly that the quality of learning, teaching and pastoral care for pupils must never suffer

Year 12 and 13 are stressful enough times without the upheaval of moving to another school and mixing with new students. Parents will want to send their children to an established setting with an excellent track record with A levels. Treorchy Comp is such a school and Tonyrefail will be, to a degree, an unknown entity. Many will be unhappy at not being able to make a choice as to where their child ends up. It will be far too competitive between there two provision centres.

I agree with the amalgamation of 6th forms but believe that the other secondary schools at Tonypandy and Porth should be 11 \_ 16 as at Ferndale.

You will be creating a divide in the Rhondda valley with a school of excellence at the top of the valley and second class schools at the middle and lower end of the valley. Good teachers will want to have the chance of teaching A level and the best will choose to work in a school with a 6th form. Parents who wish to send their children to the same school from the age of 11 to 18 will take them to Treorchy or Tonyrefail.

Will pupils needing to travel further get help with transport?

Some children will still have access to small schools in their community, whilst children of Porth will have to mix with older children which could be quite daunting for them.

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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To far for children to travel on public transport

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I do not agree with closing the sixth form in Ferndale. I don't think it would be fair on students to be made to travel so far to attend sixth form in Treorchy or Tonyrefail. I also do not agree with these 3-16 schools being built. Primary schools are part of the community and are close knit family type structures. Teachers and school staff know all the kids by name and their families. That wouldn't happen in such large schools. I think young children would get lost in a sea of faces just like secondary school children do. I don't think this is good for their wellbeing or education. Im also concerned about the impact on traffic. Putting that many children on one site will cause traffic mayhem. Even if buses are available many parents would prefer to use their own vehicles.

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all schools keep they're sixth form, due to travelling. with the location of sixth form in treorchy and tonyrefail the catchment areas of the two planned schools would be to large. Meaning a lot of sixth formers would have to travel some distance, taking more than one transportation to arrive at the school.

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My children would have to attend a comprehensive school until 16 yes old and then be expected to move to a different comprehensive school to do a levels. I believe this will discourage them from staying in school to do a levels and therefore impact on their entire lives. Amy second reason is that the comprehensive they will now be expected to attend is a school with a bad reputation which I don't want them going to.

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I disagree with creating one school for 3 to 16 year olds. I feel that local schools build friendships with local children that can be long standing. The problems of traffic taking children to school would be detrimental. Local schools can be walked to and would help the environment.

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I believe that to remove Sixth Form provision from schools may discourage some students from choosing further education. The staff all the schools know their pupils and know how to get the best from them. Having a Sixth Form in a school gives younger pupils something concrete to aspire to, and the sixth formers can gain valuable lifelong learning experiences. I myself went to Ferndale (Comprehensive School as it was then) and continued to study A Level in the school. We were encouraged to support the staff with the smooth running of the school by becoming hall monitors, library assistants and helping the staff with admin duties etc. We also helped support the learning of the younger students by listening to them read. By performing theses tasks I learned some very important skills, which I have taken with me into my adult life. Removing Sixth Form Provision will not only be detrimental to the individual students, but to school life in general. Also, staff who wish to teach A Level would have no option but to leave the school, resulting in the loss of some excellent teachers and would make recruiting replacements difficult. I understand that there will also be a reduction with regards to home-to-school transport. This again will discourage students from studying further education. I was told at the Governors Meeting in November, that there will be provision for poorer pupils, but as I pointed out at the time, only families in receipt of certain benefits would be eligible, and just because students may come from working families, this by no means indicates that the parents could afford the additional travelling costs to send their children to school further afield, especially if they have more than one child wanting to study past GCSE level. My comment was not responded to. I appreciate that the current situation is not sustainable, but instead of transporting pupils, how about requesting that staff travel between sites, or request that they be at specific sites on certain days. Any support required for students not at the same site as their teacher that day could be provided by e mail, phone etc. Not a perfect idea, but maybe an alternative to consider? Also, the travelling costs to the council would be greatly reduced by providing staff with a petrol allowance, rather than paying for mini buses/coaches. Has teaching by video conference been considered? Many companies in the private sector provide training via video conferencing to reduce costs and travelling time. Why is this not an option? The council says currently class sizes are small. Why? Instead of this ridiculous proposal which will discourage learning, start thinking of ways to encourage students to further their education. Once again, I think it is clear that this is simply a money saving exercise. If the Rhondda Valleys are to have any sort of future, we need to invest in our young people, and this is not the way to do it.

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It's stupid

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

It would be overwhelming for primary school pupils to be combined with secondary schools, the sites at Porth and Tonypany do not seem large enough. The plans we have been shown are just a "concept" so we can't even have a firm idea how the children would be segregated and if there would be sufficient room and resources for the secondary school pupils. I would worry for the loss of good teachers/head teachers especially at the schools where the teachers have no scope to teach "A" levels, they would want to move from these schools.

You are limiting the number of people who can attend sixth form by increasing travel distances and of course travel costs. 3-16 schools are a ridiculous idea, especially on the proposed sites which are clearly no where near big enough.

this proposal introduces a further lack of equitable provision across RCT. It introduces totally different pathways for pupils with the LA Within one cluster we will have children going to nursery school, primary school and 3-16 secondary school, some going to 3-16 school, other going to primary school and then to a 3-16 school at 11 and then going to a different school for post 16. In one adjoining cluster pupils will either go to 3-19 school or primary and then transfer at 11, in another adjoining cluster pupils will go to primary school and the 11-19 school. The next cluster along will have pupils

.Am happy with the idea of 6th form centres but not with the proposal to close the Infant/Junior schools .The sites of the 3-16 schools are not easily accessible, especially for young children

The experiences children get will be too different according to where they live. Some primary children will still have a small school where they know most of the children. In the 3-16 school in Porth, they will be in a very big school with lots of bigger children and that may frighten them. Also, when the comprehensive school is being renovated, I am concerned about my child's safety and also the dramatic affect it will have on his education.

As an ex sixth form student myself, the idea of removing post 16 education from comprehensive schools seems incredibly problematic. Studying for A-Levels can be an extremely stressful and challenging time and often it is the staff of whom you've built up a relationship from years 7-11 that make the process as smooth as possible. I also think that those pupils who are less inclined to stay on to study post 16 will be even less likely to travel to these "centres of excellence", meaning more people will be leaving school with few qualifications. Schools often run prefect and mentoring programs so that the older, more mature sixth form students help younger pupils with any issues that they may have. By removing the sixth form, there will be no older, and often better behaved, role models to the 12-16 year olds.

The proposal to transfer even more children using more schools transport will create even more traffic congestion in areas already suffering from this at peak times. Additionally the proposal to create a "New 3-16 School" in Porth will further add to the current high levels of children roaming the streets during the normal school day. This is already a major headache for residents local to the Porth County Site and the proposal only offers to increase this burden on the local community whilst offering no benefit to residents.

Unsure regarding creating Sixth Form centres. Do not agree with creating 3-16 schools - reasons as for proposal 2.

- Good role models of the school will be taken away. - Good teachers will also be taken away from the school. - There will be less informal guidance and less time to help people individually in a sixth form centre of excellence as opposed to a smaller sixth form. - students with less academic capability will not have the same opportunities. - smaller sixth form groups make it easier to approach staff with any issues. - Staff in a smaller sixth form know the students better enabling them to provide more relevant and important help. - less students are likely to attend sixth form especially if free transport is withdrawn as proposed.

I feel that this proposal will take away good role models from the school, Also there will be bigger groups of children in the school and wont be provided with the same quality of learning and one to one mentoring by staff. I feel that children would also find it more difficult to approach staff with a problem or for help due to the lack of one to one mentoring that helps to gain trust. Less academic children will miss out on learning opportunities that otherwise would be available to them.

At present there is a large family feeling within the school, everyone is familiar with everyone and everyone is addressed by name, children find peers and teachers approachable on all levels and thrive with their support. There is no secret that minors and teens clash on every level, and little ones shouldn't be exposed to this at such a critical level of learning and shaping of their future.

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

You will remove older students who are usually good role models therefore behaviour and discipline which are already poor at Porth will further decline. Will these 'Centres of excellence' cater for the less academic by providing vocational routes as well as 'A' levels? Higher ability pupils are more likely to choose a school with sixth form facilities from year 7 rather than Porth until year 11 then have to change to another facility. This will mean a lower level of academia at Porth and Ferndale which will impact on GCSE results and discipline and behaviour. This will also not be helped by the fact that many good teachers will be lost in these schools as they will not be able to teach to 'A' level standard. Pupils will be less likely to travel for sixth form education particularly as it looks very likely that free transport will not be available to them. There is a high percentage of disadvantaged families in this area who will suffer as a result of this. Pupils with unsupportive backgrounds will be far less likely to continue their education after year 11.

I think it will discourage less confident and disadvantaged sixteen year olds from taking A levels. Consider the Maerdy area especially- the journey to Treorchy is particularly difficult even with a car- driving over Maerdy Mountain is not pleasant. In these proposals the geography of the area is not being considered just distance. If sixth form has to be centralised the Porth area would be easier to get to from all parts of the Rhondda valleys. I do not like the 'Centre of Excellence' tag- it implies the other schools are not excellent, I have heard them referred to as 'sink schools' already. Porth County has a proud heritage and this inference is unfair. Sixth forms add a lot to a secondary school- they attract the best teachers who want the challenge of teaching A level, the pupils offer aspirational role models for the younger pupils. I think every secondary school should keep sixth form provision for a core of academic subjects to ensure the bright disadvantaged are encouraged to continue their studies. My children went to Porth County and are now in Cardiff University. I have noted how a number of their friends- academically bright, found the travelling to other sites too much of a challenge and dropped subjects. Many of these children are not supported by their parents, they are not expected to go to university. We need to make accessing A levels easy for them so they get their qualifications and gain confidence.

"centres of excellence" suggests that the other schools in the area are substandard, this will create a divide and also cause a high demand for certain schools and avoidance of other schools, this no equality across the region. 3-16 and 3-19 schools are completely inappropriate unless infants are completely separated from the older children at all times. Having seen the proposal plans the sites are clearly not big enough to do this whilst providing sufficient learning and recreational spaces. The whole thing is clearly a poorly thought out cost cutting exercise with little regard for the educational needs of the children.

This will remove centres of sixth form provision from within disadvantaged communities. Transportation will be an issue, especially in winter months with students expected to travel over mountains to Aberdare or Treorchy.

**Proposal 2: Close Porth County Community School, Llwynelyn Infants School, Porth Infants School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School; transfer the sixth form provision to a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail; transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages.**

### Do you agree with proposal 2?



## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Again, create one 6th form centrally although closure and reopening of schools maybe necessary.

Increase of numbers in classes lack of individual educational care needs being met. Larger classes more stress on teachers, this emphasis on the pupils who need additional support. Children with additional education needs, need the time to learn moving them to a large environment with multiple age variety how with this help build confidence etc?

this would allow Llwynceilyn Infants School to be utilised for YGG Llwynceilyn Welsh School which is very much required to meet demands of existing and future classes at YGG Llwynceilyn

- There is no proven case of educational value of 3-16 education in Wales. As stated in your consultation document Lampeter research is only at a pilot stage. In smaller primary schools you have the benefit of close relationships with parents and increased nurture which is vital in our areas of deprivation. ( Points to be addressed further under Tonypandy proposals) -The expectation for children and parents to walk through dangerous routes to get to school is unreasonable.

Again pupils in the Porth cluster may become demotivated to carry on into KS5 if they have to move schools. Also by closing the Infants and Junior schools you will be taking away a sense of community that currently surrounds these schools. I believe children of primary age will become lost being part of a 3-16 school, teachers and senior leaders won't have the same personal relationships that they currently have families in their small schools when they become part of a much larger school. Lastly I am also concerned for the safety of children attending the new 3-16 school due the number of buses and cars that already enter in and out of the school site. This will no doubt increase and cause more problems if the school accommodates children of primary age.

as question 1

Not only will the children's education be effected greatly, and the children must be a priority, bigger classes, more children, less personal, more upheaval for parents, further to walk to school, small fish in a big pond rather than big fish in a small pond, but our communities will suffer such as shops, churches, places of interest in the local area. Children's education will undoubtedly suffer and standards will fall. It is inevitable. Look at the current problems with the new school in Aberdare, still based on three sites with staff spending their free time travelling between the three.

I am totally against then creation of a 3\_16 school at Porth. I realise that a new 3\_11 school will give more opportunities to the students but believe this school should be created in the vicinity of the present Porth Junior school . The site proposed at Porth comprehensive is too far from the community of Llwynceilyn , Brittonia and the Charles street area and leave that area of Porth without a local school.

The building proposals for Porth and Tonypandy has concentrated on appeasing the parents of the Infant and Junior school sector while decimating the facilities for the secondary school. What PE facilities will they be offering in Porth for example if you remove the swimming pool?? What will happen to the primary schools that are closing. Is the land to be sold? There is no evidence of 3-16 schools raising the standard of the education so it appears that this is a way of raising money to subsidise a decimation of the education system in the Rhondda.

Exposing small children to things they shouldn't see or hear especially with recent incidents that have occurred around porth county that are all over social networking sites. The proposed new school building does not keep them separate or safe from this. Children of junior school age will no longer be able to gain independence by walking themselves to school as it is unsafe and proposed road safety measures are laughable. This would mean I personally would have to give up my job as would be unable to get to work on time as there would be no way I would allow my children to walk this. There is nowhere for parents to drop off the younger children, although this does not have to be provided and seems to have been overlooked it is ridiculous not to be taken into consideration. The safety aspects of all children with the increased amount of traffic this will cause seems to have been dismissed completely. Personally I feel very strongly that this is more a cost cutting exercise and children's safety and education are being put at risk. If it is passed I think the school will struggle for numbers as people will try to place their children into near by schools placing them under more pressure.

what help will there be for children having to travel further to school?

To mix young children with older children is not going to work, it has been well documented on social networking sites the troubles at Porth County with drugs and fights and to mix it with young children cannot happen, a lot people including myself are looking for other schools. This is merely a cost cutting exercise where the safety and education of the children has not been considered.

**Please let us know the reasons for your choice****Please let us know the reasons for your choice**

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Our primary schools have what we need for a good education. Junior schools provide the children with some independence to walk to and from school which they will not gain if schools are moved out of their community due to the journey being long. The roads they will have to travel along are busy with traffic and can be dangerous to such young children.

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It will give the schools a chance to be better schools as now they are under performing

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The proposed site is not big enough. I would have no objection to creating a new primary school.

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I don't think putting that amount of primary age school children in one school is beneficial to them. Closing local schools will take the community away from most towns and children will lose out on the closeness of a primary school that they have now and will be lost in a sea of faces that now happens with secondary school pupils. Also there will be considerable traffic issues with so many parents taking kids back and forth to school.

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agree with the closure of several old schools. But not sure of preposal to form only two sixth form schools due to travelling, would suggest three sixth form schools in treorchy, porth and tonyrefail due to catchment areas.

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I don't agree with very young children being within the same school premises as teenagers. My answers about children being discouraged about doing a levels due to having to change schools also still stands.

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As previous

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

I emailed Cllr xx and Cllr yy regarding this matter when the proposals were first announced. I am yet to receive any response. To save repeating myself, I have copied and pasted my e mail, though I have removed some of the more personal elements I included, as I know Cllr xx personally. Since the announcement of the proposed closure of Porth Infant and Junior Schools and Llwynceilyn Infant School, I have spoken to many of the parents of the affected children. I myself am one of those parents. We have many concerns and questions about the proposed so called "super school" which will be on the site of the current Porth County Community School. I for one feel that such a large establishment will be detrimental to the community. Our small schools have a welcoming caring ethos, and I feel this will be lost in a school catering for so many pupils. How, for instance would things like the recent McMillan coffee morning happen? Not to mention school concerts and activities such as the successful FAST (Families and Schools Together) programme run in LLwynceilyn Infants in 2012, or the LIFT (Learning Increases Family Ties) and Family Values sessions run in Porth Juniors. Each of these programmes were run (on a volunteer basis by staff and parents) with one objective in mind - including families of the pupils in school life, and therefore enhancing the children's school experience. This hands on approach would be almost impossible on a larger scale, and the children's well-being will suffer for it. As I mentioned above, I have spoken to many parents to gauge their feeling, and I set up the "Save Porth Cluster Schools" Facebook page along with some other concerned parents. The following points have been raised which we would like you to consider before you make your decision.

- The traffic surrounding the current site of Porth County Community School is very heavy during "school rush hour". This will be unsafe for the younger pupils travelling on foot to the school. The very logistics of the school will mean more parents having to drive, which will only exacerbate the problem.
- What percentage of staff will be lost? None of us want to see any staff redundancies. I cannot think of a single staff member in any of the schools (and I have personal experience of all three) who I would want to say goodbye to.
- How will the Headship be decided? Wouldn't the resulting hierarchy be just as expensive as the current one? Any head of such a large school cannot possibly have a relationship with all the pupils and this would be lost. Mrs A Mrs B and even Mrs C in her short time at Llwynceilyn have excellent relationships with the pupils and parents alike.
- The behaviour of some of the older pupils travelling to school may be unsuitable or even frightening for the younger pupils to witness.
- The younger pupils' break times may disturb the older pupils during exam times.
- The current school days for the schools are different (8.30-2.40 for the older pupils, 9.00-3.30 for the younger ones). Won't this mean more disruption for everyone? Or will these be changed?
- How will disruption to the pupils due to sit their GSCEs during transition be minimised?
- What exactly are the proposed changes to the building? Will there be a completely new building? or just refurbishment to the current ones? My own children will be in Year 9 and Year 5 when the changes are set to happen, and I am very concerned about how such a school will affect them. I agree that the status quo cannot remain. The current buildings are too old to cater for modern educational needs, and are not effective either financially, nor ecologically, so something has to change. I would prefer if you could build a Primary School, combining the three schools to provide a 3-11 education (perhaps on the site of the Fire Station? Or turning the current site in Llwynceilyn into an English medium Primary, and created a brand new Welsh medium primary school elsewhere. This wouldn't address the problems with staff redundancies or the decision over the headship, but the other concerns would go away. I think most families would be ok with such a proposal. Please take these thoughts into consideration before putting the proposal through. Our children need to feel part of the community, and that starts in school. In fact, by my children attending the schools they do made me a more active member of the community. Yours faithfully (NAME PROVIDED) Further to this, since I wrote this e mail on 27/09/14, they Year 6 pupils of Porth Junior School have had a transition visit to Porth County. During the visit, (I quote this from some pupils I have spoken to) "I saw people kissing, I heard lots of swearing and I saw children fighting". Another pupil who hopes to attend a different school said "I'm glad I'm not going there!". She witnessed a Year 7 pupil in an altercation with a member of staff. Whether it was serious or in jest, it shows a lack of courtesy and respect. They were supposed to be encouraging the children to attend the school, not scare them off! Now, that was a 10/11 year old's reaction. What would a 3-4 year old make of it? I have been told that the children will be kept separate, but there is insufficient space at the site to prevent them not being exposed to this behaviour. Instead of throwing money at the problem, the LEA need to intervene and

bring it up to standard. Buddy the "poor teachers" who were mentioned in the cabinet meeting with the "excellent teachers" to learn better practices. Put them on performance review – anything! I do not have much personal experience of the school, and I understand what I have written is hearsay, but I have serious concerns about sending my now 10 year old to Porth County. Exposing my now 5 year old to it doesn't bear thinking about. They do not hear or witness such behaviour at home, and I do not want them exposed to it.

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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The walking distance is too far for young children/mothers with prams, crossing busy main roads and maybe doing multiple trips dependent on the 3 year old part time provision. The site access is not safe for the increased volume of traffic. There will be the loss of community, it would be far better for a Porth primary school to be provided for 3-11 year olds, maybe near the land at Porth fire Station.

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The site at Porth county is not nearly big enough to do this effectively. 3yr olds and 16yr olds should be kept completely separate. At Porth county there are known drug problems, bullying issues and have been several teen pregnancies over the last yr or so, children as young as 3 should not be exposed to this under any circumstances, the only way to ensure this is the case is to have very separate schools, separate entrances, outdoor spaces, drop off areas, canteens etc etc. The plans put on show to date show that the site is not big enough to accommodate this. Interestingly you had the head of a current 3-18yr school at the open days to try to show us how easy it could work but this only convinced me further that it is inappropriate. Her site was huge, she basically has two full schools on one site with room for further expansion. She even has two separate bus stops. So yes I can fully see how this works in their area, but it has completely convinced me that it won't work here, you barely have room for one bus drop off area let alone two. The outdoor spaces depicted on the proposals are far too small given the amount of children, in fact they appear to be less than each individual school already had and you want to cram more children into them. Outdoor space is incredibly important, especially for the infants to run around. Whilst I'm aware that the proposals displayed aren't necessarily the way you will use the space there clearly isn't room to add extra outdoor space as this is in a residential area. Porth county is already hard to get to by car at school times, traffic is congested and it is hard to drop children off, this will be even worse when there are so many younger children there, young children need to be escorted into the building, this means parking the car. It is hard enough to find somewhere to pull over and drop kids off at the moment as the residential streets are very busy. The proposals showed a very limited amount of parking and presumably staff would take up most of this so there would be no where to legally park and leave the car, unless you plan to use even more of the outdoor space to build huge car parks - leaving even less play space. For those who walk is equally ridiculous. The roads are busy and dangerous and even with the proposed traffic calming measures I would not feel especially safe walking my children across some of those roads during rush hour. Closing the small local schools means that children on the other side of Porth, Ilwyncelyn or Britannia areas for example, will have a very long walk before and after school. Cemetery rd is a large hill for 3 or 4yr old legs to walk up especially if they've already been walking a while. This will undoubtedly lead to more absences, especially in very bad weather when parents decide to stay gone rather than walk their children for an hour in horrendous rain. The distance problem is exasperated by the proposals to take away full time places for 3yr olds, you expecting parents to walk all the way up there for 9am, walk all the way home, be back up there by dinner time to collect part time children, walk home, then go back up again at 3pm to collect full time children and then home?? that's six trips in a day (and that's presuming you don't have staggered start and finish times for full timers), parents will not only be annoyed and inconvenienced by this, but it also limits their abilities to find work. Besides from the practicalities of the proposal, it is important to consider the experiences of the children. Small local schools promote a sense of community. They provide a comfortable and secure environment for learning, and their small numbers mean that the child knows all the other children in the school, as well as knowing all the members of staff very well. The staff are able to get to know the families and build a rapport with parents. In the event of any concerns or issues this helps ensure the child and the parents feel comfortable approaching the school to take the issues. In these schools a child is never just a number, they are an individual and always made to feel this way. I find it hard to believe that in a school this large the head will know all of the children and families personally. In fact you will probably need several people in charge, with several deputies and heads of departments under them etc etc. 'Too many chiefs and not enough Indians' springs to mind. Whilst I appreciate that cuts need to be made I can't think of any scenario where this proposal is the answer.

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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The Learning support class at Ysgol Yr Eos is currently Foundation phase, this proposal will need to add an additional class for KS2 or to redesignate classes to cover the full provision. Consistent provision for these pupils may be appropriate, however the removal of post 16 provision means that for our most vulnerable pupils there will be no option but to leave at 16 at what is a most difficult time. Is it logistically sensible to expect significant numbers of pupils to walk an unsafe route, across the whole distance of Porth? It is not just distance but geography that must be a concern here. What about the increased issue with traffic onto a small site? All traffic would be needed to turn right across a main road - in itself causing safety issues. The proposal does not seem to have enough space planned for pupils - projected numbers for 2019 put the expected R-Y6 intake at beyond the planned school capacity for the primary phase. The planned size and space for the nursery is lower than the current number in Porth and Lwyncelyn Infants currently. Whilst it may not be wise to build in too much spare capacity - a certain amount is needed. To build or convert something with a planned capacity less than the actual numbers needed is shortsighted and ridiculous! There is very little in the proposal that gives any detail on refurbishments for the 11-16 part of the facility. No plans seem to have been developed to ensure that sufficient space is given for all subject areas. All these areas need consideration before any agreement on this proposal can be given. This seems to be about reassuring primary parents without addressing the needs of secondary pupils. The proposal for the primary facility needs to take into account the massive use of a school hall for nursery and primary pupils - assemblies, PE, lunchtime, whole / part school singing etc.

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.It is neither feasible nor safe for young children to travel from Lwyncelyn / Porth to Porth Community School - the roads are too busy and distance too far. There is no transport provision for these younger children. The site of the "new school" is not suitable. It is too small to accommodate the numbers especially the outside space. The outside space is not only too small but also unsafe. It really is not clear where cars / delivery vehicles will be separated from children at play

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No one can prove if 3-16 schools are good at educating children. We know how good primary schools are but don't know if children will have as well as education in a 3-16 school. Why close 3 schools that performed as 'good' during recent inspections? Our primary schools have what we need for a good education. Our outdoor areas are very good for learning. The new outdoor plans for the new school do not seem sufficient according to the plans provided by RCT. Space and size of the proposed outdoor area for over 300 pupils remains a major issue.

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I completely object to the idea of having children from 3-16 on the same site. It is unrealistic and I do not believe that the individual needs of each age group will be met.

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Porth County is currently the only underperforming school. Reports from Estyn have all showed good to very good results from all schools that are earmarked for closure. It seems very illogical to close these simply as a method to save face with the re-branding of an already failing school ??? Obviously another view is that there are substantial financial gains to be made in terms of operating cost savings and resale of associated land etc. The consultation document fails to address these points

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The three schools in the Porth area suggested for closure have all received "good" Estyn reports, which is testament to the fact that these schools are providing well in all areas for the children in their care. They are situated within the areas that they serve and are well supported by the local community of which they are a part. This will be lost if the children have to be transferred to a much larger school outside of these communities. Both starting school initially and making the transition from Junior school to Comprehensive school at the age of 11 years can be daunting enough, but to have to attend such a large establishment from the age of 3 years will be very frightening and unnerving to many children. This situation hinders a child's learning, something I have seen previously. After seeing the displays and information at the consultation event at Porth County Community School, I am very concerned that children of primary age will be sharing facilities with secondary age children. The areas of the school they would occupy will be in very close proximity to that occupied by children up to the age of 16 years, which I think is very inappropriate. Also, the playgrounds to be used by the younger children are very small for the numbers who will use them.

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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I am strongly against this proposal. It is a long way for small children to walk, they will end up tired and with a lack of energy and enthusiasm before they have even started the school day. Many grandparents take children to school, how will they manage this when they have children/grandchildren of various ages attending the school, and therefore have to make a two way trip, as many as 3 times a day due to the recently implemented cuts to nursery provision? This will seriously affect working parents, resulting in many being forced to give up work and rely on benefits as a way of living - is this really the good impression we want to be setting for our children? The route to the Porth site is dangerous; there are no barriers or fences along the already very busy main road, and no pavements around one of the main entrances to the school. The plans show that there will be speed bumps introduced on the main road, however these are actually ON the crossing, surely drivers are meant to stop before they reach the crossing, not slow down and stop after it? Although it cannot be said for all children, in one school day recently police were called to the site in response to a knife incident, there were drugs present at the school, videos posted online of students relating to indecent exposure, and foul language. This is absolutely no environment for 3-11 year olds! It is ridiculous that they should be around this type of behaviour and will have a negative knock on effect of the behaviour of children in the future - these children will not even have the good role models of sixth form to look up to. Starting a new school is intimidating and difficult as it is now, even in a welcoming, nurturing and friendly environment; can you imagine starting school as a three year old, in a huge building, surrounded by older children who appear to these little ones as giants? Ask yourself the question, could I have imagined myself, or would I put my child in such an intimidating and often dangerous environment? The plans for the buildings show a serious lack of child friendly facilities - huge concrete steps, and a tiny playground where children will be fighting for space to play? Less facilities than the schools up for closure have now? Where are the Forest School areas, the ponds, the lovely grass areas for children to run and explore and play freely? There aren't any - so why take away excellent facilities and place these innocent children in a school with mediocre facilities that they will just have to 'make do' with. This doesn't sound like my idea of a 'Super' school. The main priority in this proposal are the needs and best interests of the children, neither which I feel will be met to the standard they should be. As stated perfectly in the Welsh Assembly Government document - 'Well-being is at the heart of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) and is a Crucial core element of the work of education settings.' If this is the case and well being is at the heart of school effectiveness, how effective do you think this school will be, when children arrive tired, cold, drained and soaking wet after a long walk to school, early in the morning? Do you think these children will be ready to learn in this state? Children's well being is paramount and I am certain that this has not been considered, or rather, considered and brushed to the side as unimportant. Children's self esteem and confidence is a huge factor in their wellbeing; although I can't imagine either of these being particularly high in this proposed school. The document also states the importance of children having a community that supports their physical and emotional wellbeing; at the moment, this is what we have - small schools that are not just a part of the community but the heart of the community. The schools work closely with the community to carry out various events, trips, local walks to learn about our surrounding area and heritage, fundraising events, and many more things, that could all be taken away in a flash. These things will no longer be possible with the distance between them and the school, and the risks involved, meaning that both pupils and community members will lose out. At the moment, junior school age children get their first taste of independence when they are allowed to walk to school with their friends ; this will no longer be possible as the dangers and risk will be far too high. Infants school children need to be taken into class - they cannot simply be dropped off, however in the plans there are no facilities for parking near the proposed primary school building, for parents to do this, instead people were told that they can drop their children off where the buses drop off - I don't know who ever thought that dropping tiny three year olds off in amongst double decker school buses, would be a good idea, more like a recipe for disaster , especially when taking into consideration the road traffic accidents in recent years involving pupils on that site and school buses. There will be a serious lack of communication if parents cannot bring the children into the school themselves; there will be a lack of time and opportunity for parents to chat to staff or discuss any issues, worries or concerns, however small , which could lead to further problems. The primary and comprehensive buildings are joined and can be accessed internally simply by walking through the door - this is very dangerous, along with the fact that the children will have to cross a main access road into the school, including delivery lorries, to get to their playground. As well as the negative effects this will have on younger children, it will have just as much negative impact on the older children. The primary playground is situated right next to the examination hall - how will this work during busy exam periods ? - Will the primary school children be expected to stay inside, or will the older children just have to put up with the noise during their examinations that will affect the rest of their lives? Also to provide adequate outdoor learning space in accordance to the Foundation Phase. the comprehensive will

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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I am strongly against this proposal, I feel that it is a terrible injustice on behalf of these children, Ridding them of their rights to a comfortable learning environment where there are excellent standards of teaching and mentoring. Taking away their already existing friendship circles and plunging them into a whole new scary and evermore challenging environment. Cramming so many children into one facility is going to produce drastic side effects, And effect our community's future in the long run.

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Same as proposal one to varied age range, too large school.

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VERY STRONGLY DISAGREE!!!! The infants and junior schools in Porth that you are proposing to close are lovely community based schools that are the hub of our local area. They are performing well and although the buildings are old they have been looked after and are definitely still fit for purpose. Porth infants has a lovely outdoor area including separate playground for nursery, a forest school area with pond, a trim trail and a separate area for outdoor learning for the foundation phase. In the 'NEW' school (which ISN'T NEW but a building which was built for secondary school use) there is far less space and no natural areas or separate outdoor learning facilities to support the Foundation Phase. The total outside space is LESS for 330 pupils than there is in Porth Infants for 90 children! What are these children gaining from this proposal? What will they have that will enhance their learning, health and wellbeing when they will have less than they already have? Very young children will have to walk a fair distance to school often in bad weather. What impact will this have on the child? They will have to get up earlier, walk a long way and arrive often cold and wet. They will be tired and irritable before they start and I'm sure will not be in the best frame of mind to have a productive day. The route to school will be dangerous for families. Imagine a parent or grandparent walking with a baby in a pram, a three year old and a five year old, the adult, baby and three year old will be walking this dangerous route THREE TIMES a day due to the recent cuts to nursery provision! There are no barriers along the route and no pavements along the road to one entrance. The distance and danger will mean many parents will drive their children to school. Where will we park? We cannot drop infant's age children at the gate, on the plans there was inadequate parking for staff in a school that size let alone parents of young children! Parents will no longer be able to chat to staff while dropping their children off. This is important as in our small schools we are able to talk to staff and alert them of anything which may affect our child that day (bad dreams so tired, family member ill, dad working away etc). something small can impact on a child in a big way. I really don't think that 3 year olds should be around secondary age children. There are many who display undesirable behaviour such as extremely bad language, smoking (which they currently do behind the building proposed as the primary school) fighting and littering. I also know of more serious issues such as drug use, incidents involving knives and pupils exposing themselves! This is bad enough for older children to see but how would you feel if your three year old was subjected to this sort of behaviour? We were told that they would be completely segregated but on the plans this is not so! They share the same access with young children going into school where the busses will drop off older children; the secondary pupils can freely walk just outside the fence of the playground. I've seen food, bottles cans etc being thrown and would be concerned that some would target the youngsters while out playing. Exaggeration?? Definitely not – I have this behaviour on camera as I currently live by the school and have reported it to the school and police!

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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I am head teacher of School A. I have expected the LA to end provision in School A as it is now for some time- despite this school serving the Porth Community for over 150 years- I realise that history and heritage have poor weight in the 21st century. Our school is very precious to me and I had hoped that any change would be for the better. I am a strong labour supporter brought up in Llwynypia on a council estate. My father was a miner. My children went to Porth Infants, Juniors and Porth County. I am passionate about the heritage and future of the Rhondda. I have attended the consultation events, read the community impact studies and have looked for convincing research to support the 3 to 16 model. I am not convinced this development is the best, especially for the children of Porth. The 3 to 16 model is unusual and from what I have read there is little credible, independent research evidence to support it as apposed to the traditional primary model. If this is to be considered as a way forward then a purpose built school should be built. Why not try it out on the Garth Olwg site first if it is so beneficial? The Llanhari model cannot be compared to Porth- it has not completely rolled out yet and the site is totally different and better suited. The other examples offered by the council cannot be compared to the Porth site. I have considered the plans- the Porth site is, in my opinion, too small and adapting the existing buildings does not work. The primary department is surrounded by secondary provision, it will not be possible to segregate adequately (a fence does not stop sound or sight and the normal teenagers behaviour and topic of conversation is not always for the eyes and ears of a three year old). The outdoor play areas for Foundation Phase and Junior age children are poor. When my children went to County they complained about the lack of flat, outdoor space. Even with the changes proposed the outside areas are inadequate for the 21st Century. Our outdoor provision is excellent, ESTYN and our Eco school report says so. We have a grassed area, trim trail, vegetable garden, Forest School area, pond etc. The new school needs to offer better than we have already not poorer provision. Other issues- the route to school for some will be challenging - especially for those who don't drive and have a number of children. Again the geography of the area is ignored with just distance mentioned. Parking and drop off space was also poor. Young families who used to walk may now drive due to the distance, all uphill. Parents need to walk young children to the door and will need to park, staggered start times will just mean parents sit and wait for each child to go in- I was told there was no expectation to provide parent parking- so do we just make things difficult for parents and ignore this concern? We also have many grandparents who support working parents and walk their grandchildren to school- many have said they will not be able to do this. As I said for sixth form, we should be making it easier for families to access education, not harder - for many of our disadvantaged families life is hard enough. My final concern is for the community of Porth. The impact study was inaccurate and superficial. Of course moving the primary provision out of the catchment area will impact on the community- our school events are attended by parents, grandparents, members of the local church and chapel. We are at the heart of the community. I am saddened by the site of the many derelict Victorian schools already in the area, left for rats to infest. Instead of our lovely village school residents will have an eyesore, another blight on their quality of life. The Victorian schools are part of the cultural and historical heritage of the Rhondda- they should be preserved. The only building on the Porth county site that has any character is proposed to be demolished. I am not adverse to change, change for the better. This proposal is not better than what we have now, it is flawed, a cobbled together hotchpotch masquerading as innovation. There must be a better solution.

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

As previously stated mixing infants with junior and comprehensive age groups is completely inappropriate unless they are kept separate at all times. Porth county is known to have drug problems, bullying and had had several teenage pregnancies over the last few years - these are not things young children should be exposed to. Having seen the proposed plan for the new school I fail to see how there could possibly be enough space to house all the children separately whilst still providing enough learning and recreational spaces. The plans show part areas for the infant children that are even smaller than what some of the individual schools have now, how can you possibly expect to cram a large amount of children to share a space that is smaller than they have currently and call it a super school, nothing super about that! And to try stagger break times to share the spaces would not only be a timetabling nightmare for staff, but a huge distraction to the children who are trying to work whilst they can see other classes playing in the yard through the windows. You say it will be a modern school with modern technology that will benefit all age groups, but given the age differences I cannot foresee how the children could possibly all benefit, a 3, 4 or 5 year old would not need access to a science fitted out with equipment suitable for gcse level science. Parking in and around the school will be a nightmare. The area is already heavily congested at school times with parents trying to drop off their children, especial in bad weather when more people drive. At least at the moment though, parents only have to pull over long enough to let their teenager climb out. With an infants on the same site there needs to be sufficient parking to allow parents to park and escort their children into the building. Again there is clearly not the space to accommodate this under the new proposals and the surrounding roads are not nearly big enough to be able to park roadside. For those who walk to school, the journey will be equally difficult. For some the walk will be very long - especially for small children - I am sure that this coupled with bad weather will encourage parents to keep children of school more often than if they went to a closer local school. The walk is a dangerous one and the traffic calming measures proposed in the open days wouldn't nearly be enough given the amount of extra traffic that the school would create. If the costs to nursery provisions go ahead this will be an even worse proposal. Parents who have both full and part time children in the school would be expected to make the journey up to six times in a day (3 there and back). Besides from these practical issues, I am also concerned about the welfare of the children. Small local schools provide a sense of community, they allow parents to get to know the teachers well and the staff - including the head - to have an excellent relationship with the children. Not only is this an excellent environment for children to grow up and learn in, it also means that everyone is comfortable approaching staff about any issues experienced at school. I doubt that a big school with such vast numbers of both staff and students could provide such a personal experience. On top of this there are peripheral problems that this would cause - road congestion and extra noise for residents of the area. Difficulties for parents to work if they have to walk such a long way 6 times a day. And job losses to staff at the current schools.

This will remove the community focus that the schools currently experience. It is quite a distance to expect children from Llwynnelyn to travel to the Cemetery Road site.

**Proposal 3: Close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Infants School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypandy Primary School, Ysgol Yr Eos and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College; transfer the sixth form provision to a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail.**

### Do you agree with proposal 3?



**Please let us know the reasons for your choice****Please let us know the reasons for your choice**

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Yes but again transfer 6th form provision to one central site for the whole of Rhondda.

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Same points as before, Penygraig Infants, Jonuiors and Ysgol Yr Eos are good performing schools. Why merge them making classes larger and loosing the individual skills each school brings to education. Tonypandy Community College is not easily accessible to those parents who walk their children to school. Most in the community work hard and have to use child careers to take the children to school. Standards in education will slip.

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again this does not affect my childs schooling so I am unable to comment

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## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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As previously stated-There is no proven case of educational value of 3-16 education in Wales. As stated in your consultation document, Lampeter research is at a pilot stage. In smaller primary schools you have the benefit of close relationships with parents and increased nurture which is vital in our areas of deprivation. Your educational case on page 15 is without proof and yet the position at present, with the strong cluster working of the Tonypandy schools, can be easily proven. We have already created a common ethos through shared policy, and PLC working across the cluster. Teaching triads are taking place across the Primary schools in the cluster to ensure the sharing of expertise and consistency in teaching and learning approaches. Assessment has to be in line with LNF and statutory expectations in all schools. Cluster schools use the same SIMS tracking system. We all have to deliver the National Curriculum and mixed age classes should not effect this as schools should deliver the curriculum to a child's stage of development not age. In my opinion smaller schools know pupils personally and are completely aware of individual additional needs and meet these with consistency. In my years of teaching in larger schools this is not always the case as pupils are more likely to go under the radar and needs not met so consistently. We already have a Cluster attendance PLC and are working on adapting RCT policy in all our cluster schools. In terms of accommodation, we have already adapted our facilities to meet the needs of 21st century requirements( we are all at least B category schools for our buildings) and I do not think that some of the secondary school facilities will be suitable for the Primary curriculum or at a height which would be suitable for this age group. We already work closely with the secondary school and are able to use their outdoor facilities and have joint extra curricular after school transition club as and when appropriate. Parental engagement is easier in smaller schools as many of our parents lack confidence and find larger environments daunting. You are arguing points that already exist and the proposals would not bring any new educational benefits in relation to the points made. Though Estyn makes a case for larger schools, nevertheless in their report-'How do surplus places affect the resources available for expenditure on improving outcomes for pupils?' May 2012, they clearly state that the total costs and financial benefits of each individual reorganisation scheme should be evaluated and "weighed against other non-financial costs and benefits, both educational and social". One main objection is that you will be removing schools from the heart of the community. At present pupils are in walking distance to shops, churches, the Soar centre and play a vital active citizen role. For eg. Penygraig Infants and Juniors have a 'Community Ambassador' programme and have worked with traders, parents and community members in 'Give and Gain Days', 'Community Fayres' and in producing a 'Rights of the Community Accord'. The disagreeable position of the new school site, would create an obstacle to Community involvement and this is objectionable for the people of Penygraig and their aim to re-generate our Community. At present many parents walk their children through the main street and purchase goods on their way to school. The position of the new site would mean that more parents have to take cars and trade would be lost. Obviously one major objection is the position of the school site which is already a health and safety hazard in terms of access and traffic management. The site access in its present form is totally unacceptable to accommodate another 500 pupils and their parents. Cars and buses already have great difficulty in accessing the site much to the dismay of residents and these are pupils who are of an age to be dropped off and walk into school independently. The majority of new pupils will have parents who will need to park cars and accompany their children into school and it begs the question as to where on earth these parking arrangements can be made? The parking and access arrangements are already considered to be a health and safety issue over many years and if it hasn't been resolved by the authority to date, how much more problematic will it become with this huge increase in traffic. Surely we must take lessons from the parking fiasco at the new Williamstown Primary where the headteacher has to go out and direct traffic each day! This certainly will not reduce workload. The position of the site at the top of the mountainside is also going to make the journey extremely arduous for parents who do not have transport. A parent who lives in Dinas flats may have young children and have to push a pushchair back and fore school, possibly a few times a day. This is a totally unreasonable expectation especially in adverse weather conditions and will certainly have a detrimental impact on attendance. Your reasons for the proposals on page 10 can be refuted in every regard- R1- Standards are already good in the Primary schools. We are all B category schools as listed on Page 53 and the outcomes and levels mostly place schools in the first and second quartiles over a three year period. Standards at Tonypandy Community College however are unsatisfactory and combining these schools will certainly not help to raise standards in the Primary sector. The 4 primary schools currently have strong leadership and management (unlike the Community College) and this is likely to be lost if the schools are amalgamated. The primary schools feel they are being penalised because of poor leadership and standards at the secondary phase. R2- attendance rates as stated will not be helped by the inappropriate position of the school site. R3- Evaluation and analysis of data is driven by strong leadership which is currently the case in the

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Again pupils in the Tonypany cluster may become demotivated to carry on into KS5 if they have to move schools. Also by closing the Infants and Junior schools you will be taking away a sense of community that currently surrounds these schools. I believe children of primary age will become lost being part of a 3-16 school, teachers and senior leaders won't have the same personal relationships that they currently have families in their small schools when they become part of a much larger school. I also believe that the current site of Tonypany Community College, where the new middle school will be situated causes concerns for the safety of the children that will attend the new 3-16 school due the number of buses and cars that already enter in and out of the school site. This will no doubt increase and cause more problems if the school accommodates children of primary age. Primary schools in the area already have problems with parents picking up children and also the Community college already has problems with transport at the start and end of the day. Combining these schools is just going to put more pressure on an already problematic situation.

as question 1

Our library has been closed, the site currently has health and safety issues, how much more will this escalate with an additional 500 children on site. What thought, if any, has been given to problems parents will have in accessing the school, many with transportation problems and buggies. The village of Penygraig will suffer, less visits to the village such as to the Soar Centre, the Church, local businesses, local park due to the problems with the steep hill and dragging primary children up and down it. They will be taken further away from their community and feel less part of it. Children will be in larger classes and this cannot enhance their education as staff cannot spent quality time with larger classes. Children will be small fish in a big pond rather than big fish in a small pond. Children's Well being will suffer and this is a core area of primary education that underpins the rest of the curriculum.

Again, as a retired educationalist I see no evidence that a 3\_ 16 school would benefit the younger children. This proposal must take into consideration the topography of the local area and the site of the present Tonypany Comprehensive. The access to the school is poor and again would leave the area of Penygraig now served by Ysgol yr Eos without a school within sensible walking distance of the area.

The building proposals for Porth and Tonypany has concentrated on appeasing the parents of the Infant and Junior school sector while decimating the facilities for the secondary school. What PE facilities will they be offering in Porth for example if you remove the swimming pool?? What will happen to the primary schools that are closing. Is the land to be sold? There is no evidence of 3-16 schools raising the standard of the education so it appears that this is a way of raising money to subsidise a decimation of the education system in the Rhondda.

What help will children get to travel further to school? For many young children it will be too far to walk and not all parents can afford bus fares.

Same reasons as I gave for the previous questions.

agree with proposal with amendment due to access by pupils to a safe route to school

Loss of jobs, young children and teenagers shouldn't be mixed and again many teenagers would not do a levels as they would not want to go to a different t school.

This proposal does not affect me, but I still have concerns. Many of the issues surrounding this proposal about traffic safety and access to the site are the same as those for the Porth County site, but in addition, I know this site is unsafe. There are constant drainage issues, and subsidence problems. How the council think this proposal will save money I don't know, because if nothing else, the insurance premiums will be astronomical (I'm a former insurance underwriter, so I am well aware of this). The safety of the children seems to be not a concern to this Council.

Again the site a Tonypany is just a concept and doesn't show adequate provision for the number of pupils which would be there. far better to site a penygraig primary school which would negate the need for mixing 3-11 yr olds with secondary school children. the better teachers would prefer to teach a provision providing 6th form. Tonypany community college is already performing below standard and how could this improve during the implementation of changes.

Same as previous comments

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Currenly both Penygraig Infants and Penygraig Juniors are successful schools, they are federated allowing for experitese to be shared between the two. This is at an early stage and needs time to determine how successful such a process is. These schools serve very distinct communities and removing the individual school ethos will be detrimental to a sense of community and partnership. On a logistical and safety front the access to the current Tonypandy College site is appalling and downright dangerous. 400 plus primary ppuils accessing the site is a recipe for disaster unless major improvement work is carried out.

.Tonypandy Community School is not an appropriate site to accommodate younger children .There is no current transport provision

Same concerns for Porth area.

Exactly the same reson as for Q1, more transport, disruption to students, time wated etc etc the reasons against this far outweigh the reasons for it.

Similar reasons to Proposal 2

Same reasons as proposal 2.

Same as previous proposal.

for mainly the same reasons as proposal 2

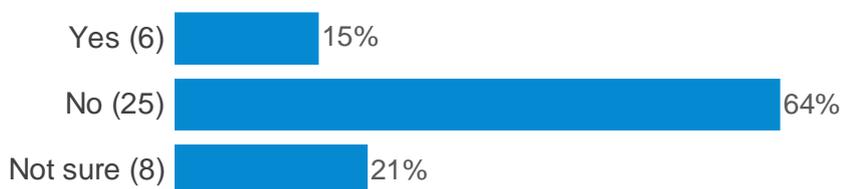
My concerns are the same as for the Porth school. I went to Tonypandy 'Comp' as it was then. As well as my concerns over the merits of the 3 to 16 model, the geographical concerns for the Penygraig mountain site are worse than Porth, although the site is bigger, I believe. The site is geographically isolated with poor road access. It is exposed and unpleasant - I hated walking up that hill as a healthy teenager, especially in winter. It was always freezing up there, that's how I remember it. I pity the poor mother who has to push a buggy up there with a three year old in tow. Again, why is the authority considering making it so hard to access education? Keep primary provision in the centre of the communities.

As per previous response.

Tonypandy option cannot work. The site is a traffic blackspot with just secondary aged pupils. When FOUR junior schools are added to the mix, the roads in Penygraig will not cope. This needs re-thinking.

## **Proposal 4: Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the current Tonyrefail Comprehensive School; Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.**

### Do you agree with proposal 4?



## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

As before

does not affect my childs schooling

The schools and community welcome the proposals and staff and pupils would not be adversely affected.

## Please let us know the reasons for your choice

### Please let us know the reasons for your choice

I believe children of primary age will become lost being part of a 3-19 school, teachers and senior leaders won't have the same personal relationships that they currently have families in their small schools when they become part of a much larger school. I am also concerned for the safety of children attending the new 3-19 school due the number of buses and cars that already enter in and out of the school site. This will no doubt increase and cause more problems if the school accommodates children of primary age.

as question 1

Although I am dubious about the benefits of a 3 \_ 16 school, this is the only proposal to offer a new purpose built school. Though since the present Tonyrefail Comprehensive is only barely 40 years old I would hope that a new school would be designed to last a lot longer. The old Grammar school was built in 1933 and is a solid construction. As this is also a listed building, I hope it will be incorporated into the plans. A larger 6th form would also be able to offer a wider range of subjects.

I had not realised that Tonyrefail was part of the Rhondda???

What support will there be for children to travel the extra distance to the new school? Young children won't be able to walk the distance and bus fares for them and accompanying parent will be beyond the budget for many family budgets. Also there will be traffic congestion caused by parents who are able to drive their children to school. Parking on Gilfach Rd. is already a problem.

Same as previous answers

agree with proposal with amendment due to access by pupils to a safe route to school

Again, this proposal does not affect me, and I have little experience of the area, but that being said I have spoken to parents who will be affected, and they are largely positive about the move. The site there is much larger though, and will not incur the same problems as the Porth and Tonypandy sites.

Again i'm against putting 3yr-19yr old on the same site without clear plans for segregation. however i'm not too familiar with the geography of tonyrefail.

Isn't it funny how the only new school, and the one which may well be big enough and actually fit for purpose is in the ward of a certain cabinet member???

This part of the proposal has more to recommend it in that there will be a complete move for one school to another site and pupils will have consistent and continuous education. However of course it introduces differences for pupils within the catchment area

.This could work as the site is more central and accessible

Same concerns as Porth area.

Learning support has highlighted the need for specialist and or one to one support for those children that have been identified with specific needs that may not be catered for within mainstream education. This proposal seeks to reverse this

Similar reasons as to Proposal 2

I disagree with the principle of 3-19 schools, however this may be more affective as it is a larger site with a proposed brand new school ensuring completely separate primary and secondary areas.

I do not agree with such a vast age range within a school environment, education is priceless.

I dont believe that 3-19 school is a good idea even though Tonyrefail will get a NEW school with complete segregation

I am less knowledgeable about this area and have not seen the plans. My concerns over provision for an even wider age range stand but I understand the site is more easily adapted to the model and they will keep their sixth form. Of the three proposals this presents as the least absurd.

As per previous response

The pupils of other junior schools in the catchment area will be at a disadvantage, creating a TWO-TIER education system. The officers at the exhibition evening gave contradictory opinions - some stated that other schools WILL have time-tabled access to the facilities, others said there is NO WAY that the school would be able to offer time-tabled access to the facilities!

**Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account.**

**Please state any alternative views or points which you wo...**

My biggest concern is the disruption to students and staff during the transition period. My daughter for example will be in the middle of A level studies at Porth by then. As a parent governor at Ynyshir primary during their transition, I found the children were well looked after but it was extremely disruptive for staff with redundancies and the change of heads and deputies. It created much friction internally and within the community. This would be magnified on a larger scale through the Rhondda. Any schools having inspections during this time would find it very difficult. As a parent governor at Porth County now, I'm particularly concerned about students approaching years 11-13 as a downturn in staff moral in any of the schools could have a detrimental effect on their studies, especially as some staff are already applying for jobs elsewhere. We need concrete assurances from the Director of Education and his team about how they intend to safeguard these students during the most critical time of their education.

Review the educational standards of individual schools, speak with the teachers, parents and careers in a formal manner. Spend less on glossy leaflets advertising the super schools. It costs more to make the super schools than it does to improve the current education system.

Option 5 stated on page 22 would be far more viable and acceptable to the Primary Schools, parents and the community. Penygraig Juniors has a large site which surely could be developed to accommodate an amalgamation of the Infants and Juniors and possibly one or both of the other Primaries. Combining good schools which are already forward looking surely is more likely to raise standards and create the possibility of an excellent, flag ship primary school. Surplus places would be removed and there would be financial viability. The Infants and Juniors have already made a successful transition to Federating and would support an amalgamation process. The school would remain in the heart of the community, at a central point for all to access. In terms of traffic management, school times can be staggered for Infants and Juniors, different entry points could be made and this would capitalise on the space surrounding the school grounds. Developing the current buildings at the Junior site would likely cost less than the proposals at Tonypany Community College and money would be saved in this regard. This is a proposal I feel has been dismissed without close scrutiny and research and I believe it deserves close consideration due to the range of objections for the TCC site. As previously stated, in Estyn's report - 'How do surplus places affect the resources available for expenditure on improving outcomes for pupils?' May 2012, changes made must not be carried out for financial gains only and I would urge the council to strongly consider the educational and social benefits which would be made by amalgamating Primaries on Penygraig Junior site.

transport/road links will be crucial to the success of this proposal. Current provision will not suffice

As a teacher, I have grave concerns about putting children in a setting high on a mountain i.e. Tonypany College which already has major health and safety issues.

\*The distances involved for young children who will arrive at school tired and possibly wet would be detrimental to learning. \*The access to after school clubs would not be feasible for younger children. Parents would be reluctant to allow them to walk home in the dark during the winter months. \*Some of these routes involve main roads and are dangerous for children of any age but especially younger children. \*The removal of schools from their local community is a concern. \*The sharing of facilities between primary and secondary is fine in theory but as a retired Secondary teacher know how difficult it is for Secondary pupils to access these facilities and they will have priority. \* The disadvantages far out weigh the few advantages. \* I realise that changes have to be made but can see no evidence to suggest that these " super schools " are going to improve educational standards. Please rethink these proposals, create a couple of 11 -18 schools, make other secondary schools 11-16, amalgamate separate infant and Junior schools, but keep primary and Secondary education separate.

If this decision goes ahead there will be no going back if it does not work. The education of the present and future children of the Rhondda is at risk and I feel that insufficient investigations have been made in to the education risks of this decision and it has been totally financially led.

Bigger isn't always better especially for young children. Local schools and Nurseries are best. I accept that 2 centres of excellence for 6th Formers makes sense but there has to be transport provided by the council.

Combined porth infants and juniors

Leave the schools as they are and put the money your going to use in sorting out the new schools into the schools that are already in use

**Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account.****Please state any alternative views or points which you wo...**

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I understand that there are too many spare places in schools in the area, but do not agree that this is the way forward. A far better solution would surely be to look at amalgamating some of the primary schools. It is claimed that pupils in primary , schools who amalgamated with secondary schools will benefit yet what about the other feeder schools, surely they will be losing out. This is an unfair system. This system will not drive up standards. Putting primary and secondary schools together is not the answer.

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I agree that the three schools in Porth are not sustainable in their current form so I we could have a primary school built it would be the best outcome. I do not believe that the current site of Porth county is big enough to house all the requirements that a primary would need.

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I agree new schools need to be built but I don't think 3-19 schools are the answer to this problem. Moving sixth forms to Treorchy is a good idea except if you live in the Rhondda fach. Perhaps making one for each valley would be more appropriate. Primary schools need to stay as community schools.

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would recommend having more than two sixth form locations due to size and transportation of catchment areas

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I feel that younger children should be educated within their own age group and that there could be too much in the way of bad influence with older children being on the same site.

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I think I have said enough. I sincerely hope that my comments will be read and taken into consideration. With regards to the "super schools" proposed, I really do feel that Primary and Secondary education should be kept separate on different sites. I have suggested alternatives in my comments for the proposals.

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Primary school for Porth instead of the closure for Porth infants, Llwnceleyn Infants and Porth Juniors, maybe sited near the fire station at Porth. Increased traffic at Llwynceleyn due to the provision of extra places at the Welsh school, which would not be filled by pupils on foot. Any child trying to get an education on a site where these new provisions are being proposed would be at a disadvantage due to the disruption and "bedding" in of these proposals. Are these children to be "casualties"? ONE chance of an education they get!

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Where do you intend to house the children of the schools whilst the work is being carried out? there will be children in Porth county for example who are studying for their gcse exams, are they just expected to put up with the lack of space and increased noise? how will this affect their education and results?? Dont try to say that work will take place in holidays, RCT can't fix a road in under 6 wks, they have no chance of doing all this in that time. Also who will take responsibility if this school does fail, if education standard drop after out l'd built? Are you going to hold your hand up and admit it was a terrible idea, or probably more likely just blame the teachers? The parents of RCT will definitely hold this Labour council accountable, the same goes for cutting 3 yr old full time places. When RCT falls further behind in education standard over the next few years you have yourselves top blame!!! Everyone else in this country is moving forward and trying to put money into education, RCT is moving backwards... and to try to counter by saying that you are being 21st century is rubbish! Regardless of how much technology you throw at them there is nothing 21st century about small buildings being over crowded with pupils who were perfectly happy in their smaller schools which were well run and well loved!

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**Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account.****Please state any alternative views or points which you wo...**

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The NUT's position is that there is currently no evidence to substantiate the assertion that there will be improved educational outcomes for pupils. Many issues with the logistics of the primary pupil day do not seem to have been addressed in this proposal ie use of hall, creation of a large body of primary pupils on one site (420). Much of the research tell us that pupils learn best in schools that are part of communities that address their needs , that they feel ownership of - creating a large 3-16 will not engender that feeling of security so necessary for a good start to learning. Many of the issues that would concern primary teachers are not even discussed in these proposals - space, storage, play areas, exits to meet and greet parents, lunchtimes, hall usage etc. The idea that primary pupils will be able to access specialist facilities shows a lack of thought, planning and common sense - ok for year 6 pupils but not younger and physically smaller ones! The idea that there are currently safe procedures for moving younger pupils around secondary schools and that these would be utilised on a day to day basis shows absolutely no understanding that extra staff are often taken to ensure safety on a trip such as this. On a day to day basis KS2 classes have one teacher and no additional staff - safety of pupils is paramount and this proposal does not adequately address it. It also does not address the difficulties that some pupils find themselves in - parents and pupils have conflict with schools - some pupils find it much easier in a small more personalised setting. Some pupils need a fresh start elsewhere to ensure they remain within the education system, these proposals to form 3-16/19 schools takes away the flexibility and choice that parents and pupils have now, gives fewer opportunities for a fresh start and may condemn some pupils to a difficult school life for 13 years! The other discussion that has not been addressed in this proposal is to remove the sixth form from Fendale and transfer catchment to Treorchy - this involves one of our most deprived wards and expects pupils to transfer over a mountain to another school , a much larger school, to complete their post 16 education. This is likely to result in lower takeup of post 16 provision. Whilst reducing the number of sixth forms is likely to have a positive result in terms of the options open to pupils and the chance to take a wide range of subjects it has the opposite effect on staff as it reduces their professional development opportunities at KS4 and 5. There will be new opportunities to teach at lower phases but this may not be appropriate, suitable or desired. This is a significant effect on staff. In light of the Donaldson report we may be in need of developing further proposals based on the new curriculum. It may be appropriate to delay this process to allow further information to be presented by WG before these plans can go further forward. Should the proposal be passed by Cabinet:- We have additional concerns with regard to building and remodelling work being carried out on sites where education is continuing, safety for pupils, support for staff in reorganisation prior to schools being merged and sensitivity over proposed changes. Significant opportunities need to be made for staff to have input into the proposals and the project as it progresses, if any new project on this scale is to be successful staff need ownership. We would also anticipate a sensible approach to managing any change - that the new schools are not created until they are actually ready ie they should not be operating on multiple sites as one school. The shadow governing bodies will obviously be in place but that it is not planned for the new schools to be in formal existence until they are ready for opening and that the plans contain practical sensible deadlines/ timescales that will allow for setbacks ( we do not need another Aberdare where schools merged before they were physically able to be on the same site) For the NUT the major needs are in terms of jobs - protection of staff, their livelihoods and futures is vital to ensuring if this proposal does go ahead that staff are treated with the utmost dignity, given all the support and advice needed, given opportunities to retrain/ gain experience in other phases and that all posts are ringfenced in the new structures. I would expect that as part of the transitional arrangements additional funding for extra staff should be made available to allow for smooth transition processes.

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This is a huge re organisation and whilst I understand that it would be more cost effective for the education authority am not at all sure it is the way ahead for the younger children in our area. Pastoral care is vital for infants and I'm not convinced that their well-being is being sufficiently safe - guarded. This plan needs re thinking

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**Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account.**

**Please state any alternative views or points which you wo...**

1. When the children want to go to 6th form, I don't know if they will be able to do the same courses as they do now, only be able to do A level which some children do not want to do. Also, I don't know if they will be able to afford the travel costs. 2. My son will have a long and difficult walk to school. Walking to school will take half an hour longer and during bad weather, he will arrive wet and cold. Porth is an extremely busy place, and even with proposed speed ramps, the walk will remain difficult and dangerous. 3. Young children can not be just dropped off by an outside gate as proposed to me during the opening evening at Porth Comp. They must be walked to the school door. With the new location, even junior children will not be able to walk by themselves due to danger and distance. Junior children will not be able to gain independence as they do now.

I believe that primary schools are an acceptable alternative. Trying to squeeze a "super school" into an already small site is unrealistic; the pupils will suffer and they'll have to put up with mediocre standards of education. School years should be the most enjoyable of your life, not a time of disruption and mediocrity.

The whole proposal appears to be branded by promising better facilities and enhancing the learning experience for children which we all would agree is of great importance. Little point has been made to the fact that although branded as a "new school" at the Porth County site this simply means a reworking and re allocation of existing buildings and space in order to try to accommodate all the children from the proposed schools that will close. It is my opinion that the Porth County site does not have sufficient access for the extra numbers of both parents and children that will be attending the site throughout the day. There is already limited access and limited parking available and the proposal only seems to offer to increase this without offering any solutions. Although branded as a 21st century proposal this decision would appear simply to have been made for financial reasons. From an educational viewpoint there is little to show how this will provide a better learning environment than presently offered by the schools that are proposed to close given that they already have more physical space and better learning opportunities than this proposal has to offer

Not all families drive, including myself and my husband. Our daughter and I both work full-time and our son-in-law works away all week, so it is down to my husband to take our grandsons to school. At 2018, our youngest grandson will be 5 years old. They will have to walk quite a distance to and from the proposed new school and in all types of weather. The route was recently walked with young children to attend the consultation event at Porth County Community School. It was raining and the children were very wet on our arrival. The younger children were also very tired and some needed to be carried for part of the route. For those that drive, there is no provision in the plans for parking and taking your child into class to ensure their safe arrival. It was suggested by RCT staff present that teachers leave the classes to meet the children as they are dropped off in the car park. This seems a highly impractical suggestion and children of such a young age cannot merely be "dropped off" in a carpark, a very dangerous situation. While I strongly disagree with the proposals, I can understand that having surplus places is not ideal. If this applies to the schools in question, why is it not being proposed that the same solution is applied as in other areas, such as Ynyshir and Williamstown. If building is to be carried out to implement the proposals, why not build a new school to merge Porth Infants, Llwyncelyn Infants and Porth Junior schools? Only one building will need to be maintained instead of three and this will provide a modern school, but on a smaller scale to the proposal. It can also be sited within the communities of Porth and Llwyncelyn. I am sure that a similar solution could be applied to Tonypanddy and Penygraig schools.

I am aware that there is often a need for progress or change and would welcome a Primary school within the community as opposed to a 3-19 school completely outside the local area.

Please consider the individual learning needs of each and every child.

Individual children individual learning needs, community schools should be just that a community, small schools with a small varied age range pre school and primary completely separate from teens. I am strongly against this proposal, I feel that it is a terrible injustice on behalf of these children, Taking away their rights to a comfortable learning environment where there are excellent standards of teaching and mentoring. Taking away their already existing friendship circles and plunging them into a whole new scary and evermore challenging environment. Cramming so many children into one facility is going to produce drastic side effects on learning and self esteem and natural progressive growth through a nurturing environment.

**Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account.**

**Please state any alternative views or points which you wo...**

small schools are the heart of our community. we have parent and toddler pre school groups, parent/school workshops, coffee morning fundraisers. excellent parent/staff relationships where as a parent you feel valued and any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with quickly before they can escalate. this ethos will be impossible to replicate in such a big school. will the head know my child? will staff know my family and background? No they wont, and who would expect them to it would be nigh on impossible! they do in a small school though! i understand the need for change but this is a step too far! a Porth Primary would be a far better option and im sure the money could be spent to provide this.

I know the authority is faced with a massive task of making cuts, meeting ESTYN targets and fulfilling the 21st Century school agenda. I have tried to find the positives in this proposal but have struggled. The proposals seem to go against socialist principles- they are further disadvantaging the already disadvantaged. These are deprived areas, expectations of education, of life, are low for many valley people. I was saddened by the closures of Rhiwgarn Infants and Aberllechau Primary- geographically isolated, deprived areas where life has been made that bit harder. Will the attendance and achievement of the children from these areas improve?- time will tell but I think not. Those schools had, I understand, issues which may or may not have been overcome. The schools facing closure now are all GOOD schools, the educational arguments do not stand. There is a weight of concern - I hear it from parents, grandparents and staff. They may not have filled in forms but they are saying it- these proposals are not popular in Porth or Tonypany. I have worked in a very large primary on a deprived estate in St Mellons, Cardiff- it was not ideal and too big. The staff could not get to know all the children or know how to handle the most challenging as they had no relationship with them- there were around 400 primary children in that school - the Porth school will have nearer 1400. I believe little children need little schools, my experience in both has shown me this what ever statistics may say. The 3 to 16 model is something of an educational experiment- these communities are not resilient enough to be toyed with. I suggest that primary provision is kept in the Porth catchment area - there are a number of possible solutions that could be considered. One suggestion is that an English medium primary uses the Llwyncelyn site, with improvements, and Welsh medium provision be reorganised- I understand there are some large primary buildings further up the valley that could be used to increase capacity in Welsh medium and it is more usual for Welsh medium pupils to access provision outside their local catchment area. I do not claim to understand planning or building rules but wonder about sites in the Porth area where a new Primary could be built e.g. the old dairy/ Remploi site. If something better cannot be achieved by spending all that money then just spend it on the schools we already have. Just because a school is small and the building is old does not mean it cannot be effective or efficient. The RCT motto is 'Strong Heritage, Strong Future' I believe these proposals honour neither proud sentiment.

We have had modern buildings in the 70's & 80's. They are failing. The Victorian buildings are outlasting these cheap structures. What life-span will the proposed new buildings have?

**Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)**

**Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at na...**

Parent governor at Porth CC School ( child in year 11).

Parent to be that will be affected by the proposal to merge schools in 2018, the futures children.

Parent at YGG Llwyncelyn Welsh School

Teaching Staff

Parent of a pupil that will attend a named school

Staff at Ysgol yr Eos

Governor of Porth Infant School and at Porth Juniors.

Retired secondary school teacher

parent

parent/grandparent

parent

**Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)****Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at na...**

---

parent

---

parent

---

Parent of 2 year old

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Parent of a pupil at Cwmlai Primary but living in catchment of Tonyrefail Primary.

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Parent/Governor

---

Parent and Governor

---

parent of pupil at porth county community school

---

parent of a pupil at williamstown primary.

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Grandparent

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I am a parent of pupils in Llwynhelyn Infant and Porth Junior schools, I am also a parent governor of LLwynhelyn Infant School, and a volunteer in Porth Junior School

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Parent

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Parent of year 4 pupil at Porth Junior School

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parent at Porth infants school

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Rhondda Cynon Taf National Union of Teachers

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Governor at Hafod Primary

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Parent of a pupil at one named school and a future parent of another named school.

---

Relative of a young child

---

Local resident / Business Owner

---

Grandparents of pupils at named school

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Community member

---

Community member.

---

Parent and foster carer

---

Parent and community member

---

Parent

---

Head teacher of School A, previous Governor of Porth Junior School and Porth County Community School, children went to all three schools, resident of Llwynypia.

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parent at Porth infants

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Parent of pupils at Tonyrefail School

# **APPENDIX 6**

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### Summary of Consultation Responses From Secondary School Online Survey

#### Which school do you go to?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ferndale	21	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Porth	149	22.2	22.2	25.3
	Tonypandy	129	19.2	19.2	44.6
	Tonyrefail	321	47.8	47.8	92.4
	Treorchy	51	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	671	100.0	100.0	

#### What year are you in?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sixth form	149	22.2	22.6	22.6
	Year 10	133	19.8	20.2	42.8
	Year 11	114	17.0	17.3	60.1
	Year 7	58	8.6	8.8	68.9
	Year 8	49	7.3	7.4	76.3
	Year 9	156	23.2	23.7	100.0
	Total	659	98.2	100.0	
Missing	97	12	1.8		
Total		671	100.0		

#### Have you heard about proposed changes to schools in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail area?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	83	12.4	12.4	12.4
	Not Sure	100	14.9	14.9	27.3
	Yes	488	72.7	72.7	100.0
	Total	671	100.0	100.0	

**Do you understand what these changes could mean for your school?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	120	17.9	17.9	17.9
	Not Sure	167	24.9	24.9	42.8
	Yes	383	57.1	57.2	100.0
	Total	670	99.9	100.0	
Missing	97	1	.1		
Total		671	100.0		

**Do you think the changes suggested are good or bad?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bad	284	42.3	44.9	44.9
	Good	150	22.4	23.7	68.6
	Not Sure	199	29.7	31.4	100.0
	Total	633	94.3	100.0	
Missing	97	38	5.7		
Total		671	100.0		

**Do you think the changes suggested are good or bad?**

			Do you think the changes suggested are good or bad?			Total
			Bad	Good	Not Sure	
Which school do you go to?	Ferndale	Count	14	3	4	21
			66.7%	14.3%	19.0%	100.0%
	Porth	Count	92	15	28	135
			68.1%	11.1%	20.7%	100.0%
	Tonypandy	Count	78	17	23	118
			66.1%	14.4%	19.5%	100.0%
	Tonyrefail	Count	84	98	128	310
			27.1%	31.6%	41.3%	100.0%
	Treorchy	Count	16	17	16	49
			32.7%	34.7%	32.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	284	150	199	633
			44.9%	23.7%	31.4%	100.0%

**Do you think the changes suggested are good or bad?**

			Do you think the changes suggested are good or bad?			Total	
			Bad	Good	Not Sure		
What year are you in?	Sixth form	Count	60	33	49	142	
			42.3%	23.2%	34.5%	100.0%	
	Year 10	Count	59	30	40	129	
			45.7%	23.3%	31.0%	100.0%	
	Year 11	Count	63	14	28	105	
			60.0%	13.3%	26.7%	100.0%	
	Year 7	Count	29	12	9	50	
			58.0%	24.0%	18.0%	100.0%	
	Year 8	Count	19	12	16	47	
			40.4%	25.5%	34.0%	100.0%	
	Year 9	Count	51	47	52	150	
			34.0%	31.3%	34.7%	100.0%	
	Total		Count	281	148	194	623
				45.1%	23.8%	31.1%	100.0%

**Please give your reason for why you think the suggestions are good**

A bigger school.

any

be a bigger school

because

because if all, the teachers get no know them they will not be scared

Because it gives the school a better opportunity

Because it gives them an advantage later on in life

because it will be better

Because it will be easier for people to make friends with others from other schools around the area

because it will help other people

Because little kids can know the teachers in advance

Because people in the Tonyrefail area can just go to the Comphrehsive and not go to the primary schools that are scatered around Ton and Gilfach

because people will meeet new friends and socialise

Because pupils will be able to see what's it like to work with different age ranges

because the 6 form will get new exiting opetunitys

Because the school will be more developed and be updated.

because the school will have better facilities and wioll be funded more

because the school will improve

because the younger children get more experience

because the younger children have more experiance

because there are more people

Because there'll be more jobs

because they can make the place much better and meet new people

Because you know the teachers for a longer time.

better and more efficiant education

Better facilities.

Bigger areas for pupils

dont know

dont know tbh (*comment deleted*)

everything will be new

For a education

good because all together

good because it will transform our school better

Good for my school because the repetation might increase

good because if the people got sisters or brothers it will be easy for there perants

I believe it is a good idea that all different schools infants, primary and secondary all come together as one. it would mean they would meet different friends and friends from further around.

i cannot think of a reason sorry

I don't know

I think it is a good idea because there are more upsides to the change than there is negative. Personally i believe it will have a good effect in the future because they will not have to fund for as many schools.

i think it is good because their will be new facilaties which could improve pupils learning  
 I think it would be good tbecause we will have a new, modern school with new facillities.  
 I think it's brilliant that Tonyrefail is having a new school because there are 21st century facilities that will be better for pupils in Tonyrefail school.  
 I think its good  
 I think its good because it will be bigger and people can make new friends.  
 I think its good because they get to meet new people which if someone doesn't have a friend they can meet a new person to be there friend.  
 i think its is a good idea because you will not have to wear uniiform.  
 I think that it shall be good by letting all siblings stay in one school  
 i think that more people will get the opportunity top attend sixth form  
 i would enjoy the new change to our school because it desperatly needs improving  
 i would enjoy the new changes  
 instead of moving schools you cuold stay till six form  
 It can make great improvements to the valley.  
 it good because they will have a better edication and you could stay in one class  
 It is a good thing because this is a change that school to become more important and useful for children  
 It will be beneficial to pupils overall.  
 it will be benificial to the children in an overall aspect  
 It will be good to have new facillities  
 It will be more modern and cleaner, chance to make more friends.  
 It will bring new facilities.  
 it will encourage and bring affluence to the commuunity of tonyrefail  
 It will give a lot more opportunites for us as students and the change for the age groups may not be as substantial or as worrying as the parenst may think  
 it would be better  
 It would be good as it would mean that the school is more diverse  
 it would inhance modern education  
 It's about time something has been done about school education as the system is so faulted and flawed at the moment.  
 It's exiting  
 it's good because more of the funding they get can benefit more people in one school  
 its good because its save  
 its good because people will all go to one school  
 Its nice to have a new place to study  
 meeting new people and making friends  
 More oppoportunities for young people  
 More people can come to the school  
 More teacher and better buildings  
 more/better facilities  
 much better facilities for the school  
 our school will have better grades and making kids have better jobs  
 see my friends from other schools  
 So long as i can learn in peace, i don't mind...  
 The changes will result in a higher level of facilities and resources  
 The Council can save money and the economy can grow, therefore, more money can be spent on building or running facilities within the Rhondda.

The new larger school could provide better services for the school  
the younger children have more experience in what its gonna be like in the future  
there are more good things than bad  
there will be better facilities and more opportunities for the pupils  
There's a chance of better qualifications and A to C levels, there is a big opportunity of meeting new people at the same age range and carry through same interests!  
There will also be more staff which means that teaching resources will be better.  
they are the truth  
They will be good  
This can only lead to better GCSE results  
We all get to experience new things and get to improve social skills  
when moving it gives them the opportunity to face their fear. plus, they will evolve around their surroundings.  
You could make new friends  
you will have all ages there for a super school

**Please give your reason why you are unsure about the suggestions**

As a pupil here at Treorchy i dont think that the school is big enough,but we may gain as a school with higher standards to make these changes.

because i dont know

Because if you got friends inside post 16

because im not sure about the changes

because it makes everything more difficult and annoying

because it will be bigger cueses for dinner,more staff and it will be confusing

because my school gets more money:)

because the age range will leave a big age gap and the new pupils might struggle with the new development.

because the school would be crowded

because there are good points and bad points

because there is mixed opinions about it.

Because they might not be as good for the school as the school once was without the changes

Because they might not get along with each other but it might be a good opportunity for work experience so you don't have to go far if you want to work with children

because three year olds should not be in the same school as 19 year olds

because we wont do much fitness outdoors and there will be lots of new friends

becouse people know the youngers and would worry about them

could be good could be bad

doesnt affect me

don't know how it will effect all the pupils

dont really care

Due to the big changes this school will face I don't think that it will be very beneficial for new students to struggle in this school within the new development. However, i do think it is beneficial to develop a wider range of friends and a bigger support system which the school can give.

DUNNO

duno, just not sure

eh

*(comment deleted)*

half and half

Have to go to a different school for time being

hmmm, I do not understand

i am not sure because i dont know whats going to happen.

I am not sure because some points i think are good,such as more jobs available,and people could have more friends to bother with.I also think some points are bad because it will cost a lot more money to build bigger buildings and the younger children could feel intimidated by the older children.

i could be a lot better because once the pupils are ready to move to comprehensive they dont have to move schools, but theres a big gap between the ages

I do not know the possible advantages and disadvantages

i don't know if it will be a good idea, it could be a lot of money for a bad idea

I don't know

I don't really get why all these changes are being made as it will only benefit Wales looking good in econmical and social aspects that are only for adults not children

i dont knopw i wont be here.. i hope

i dont know

i dont know if it will be good because it would be too cramped

i dont really know since there is both good points about it...

I feel that there are several beneficial points of the proposed changes. The often challenging transition from Primary school to Secondary School would be abolished possibly getting rid of the problems that may occur as a result. However, I feel that the mix of ages that would be attending the school could cause difficulties and the number of people on the premises could be an issue. Parents may feel threatened with their young children attending the same school as far older young people.

I have mixed emotions on whether the changes are good or bad because some are good and some are bad.

I have not yet looked into depth of the sixth form re-organisation and I wish to create my own opinion of both the bad and good points once I am more educated of this proposed idea.

I like the idea of the school becoming more 'known' around Wales etc. etc. but the overflow and the amount of people that would be joining wouldn't be such a good idea :( But, like the brochure thing said (or what I read of it) you're planning on making the 6th form bigger to house all of these new pupils. But I', still not sure if it'd be big enough - we already have too many people in our 6th form from other schools. :)

I never did this before.

I see no reason for things to change from how they are at the moment.

I THINK BOTH BECOUSE IT WILL BE GOOD THAT WE HAVE THEM UP HERE FOR TRANSITION REASON BUT THEN IT BE BAD IF WE HAVE TO HAVE LUNCH AND BREAK AND STARTING AND FINSHING AND IF WE DO GO ON WE HAVE TO HAVE A BETTER SECURITY SYSTEM BECOUSE ANY ONE CAN GET IN

I think it will be crowded

I think it's a good idea but then a bad idea too

I think it's both bad and good, there are many reasons for this. It's bad because the place will get to over croweded and also the area will get to over crowded. It's good because children won't be scared to move schools because they will still be with all their friends. Personally if I was to build a new school conected on my school I would probably only add a junior school. This is because the school will be far too over crowded, it is also too over crowded even with just the secondary school built on the land. It could cause serious injuries.

I think that there are many good points but there are loads of bad thngs too.

i think the chool mwill be crowded but they will meet new friends

I think there is some bad things and some good things

i think this because its good because we get better facilities and its bad because there could be a chance of bullies.

i think this could be a good idea because there will be more facilities but the trouble is traveling if you live far away and

I will not be in school, so I dont know how it will work

i won't affect me in the future

I'm half and half in opinion as I like the design but I don't like the idea of the primary school

I'm not sure how well the project will go

I'm not sure on how people are going to react to these changes

Im not exactly sure if it will be good or bad.

im not sure

It can be seen in a good way because the reputation of the school will grow due to more talent and more intellectual people attending the school, but the school isn't big enough to be the host for a large number of people who wish to attend Sixth Form. I think this because there is already a large number of pupils who attend the school from years 7 - 13.

It could allow people to make new friends and it could make bullying a bigger issue

it could be crowded but you could meet new people.

It could be good or bad because there are different affects.

It could be helpful but at the same time accidents could happen

it could turn out to be either a good or bad idea

It is good as it will allow all the Sixth Form of a local area to communicate easier as they are around people their own age, but are forced to leave places they know and have gotten used to. This forces people to travel further and spend more time choosing whether or not to go to Sixth Form as it would be easier to go to college.

It is good because the sixth form will have better resources but it could also be bad because of the transport to getting to school if the pupils do not have trains nearby or school buses.

it scared for the little kids and good to meet people from differnet schools

It will save money and be easier for kids and parents. But it will be inconvenient in terms of traffic and parking

it won't affect me in the future

It wont affect me because when they plan to build the school, i would have left beofre they could build it.

It's good and bad in a way.

its evenlly

Many people could have their say and view on this. But personally I am really not sure on this current stage of development on the idea of six form going.

many people will not be happy with the change

more opportunities and qualifacations

nobody can know the outcomes

not surte because they might be good to be honest

the changes are both good and bad because parents will only have to drive to one school when dropping pupils off but it can be bad as it could get overcrowded when parents drop children off to school because of parking facilities.

The changes suggested are both good and bad

The points are both good and bad.

There are benefits and drawbacks.

There are both bad and good opinions on the topic, it isnt a balanced answer.

There are both good and bad points to the proposed changes so I'm not clear on how the students will be affected without being given information on students development in a similar school system

There are good and bad points

there are good and bad points about this

There are good and bad points which make me feel neutral on the changes.

there are good and convincing arguments for boths sides of the debate

There are good points and bad points so i'm in the middle

There are many good points and many bad points of this proposal, so I have decided to stay neutral on the matter.

there are some good points but way to many bad points

There's both positive and negative things about the changes. There will be improved facilites but for people in years 8-13 there will be disruption to their learning when the changes occure.

they are good for more learning pupils who chose this schoolthey are bad as there might be not enough classes to put them in

This is because there are a range of advantages and disavantages on both sides

we dont know if its going to be bad unless we try it

We will see results when it happens.

well i cant relly say much because i dont know if i will see how the change will take afect

why is it porth

you need to explain this to your current pupils what is going to happen, a lot of people dont understand.

**Please give your reasons why you think the suggestions are bad.**

. the six form will be going . older children could of been rude to younger children

... school will be packed ...

1. Children will have to walk miles to school 2. The younger children May be

3 year olds will be influenced by smoking

3-16 students shouldn't be in the same school together. A-level students should be able to take A-levels in their own school

again, children will be anti social, they will not grow up the way they should do, they will catch on with the swearing and the violence. you really want kids to grow up like this, probaaly turning into druggies or alcholics when they are older, you really want society to be like this . STOP IT NOW BEFORE ITS TOO LATE.

as stated in the last 2 questions its not good for 3 year olds to be brought up with secondary students and if you are wanting to go to six form your having to travel to whatever school you choose

bad as there they say it will take hardly any time to make and bulid the new schools etc. when in reality we know something will go wrong and it will all go in the air.

bad because it will be a primary school and a secondary school together

Bad because It will change the option of going to sixth form or collage and it isn't a good combination of 16 year olds and 3 year olds because sixteen year olds are very immature and tend too behave in a bad way and this may influence or make the younger children think this kind of behaviour is acceptable.

because the students should stay in there own school

because 3 year olds should not be in a school with 16 year olds

because all ready there are alot of people in treorchy and there is no need for more

because children in secondary schools will find it difficult to get lunch, also the school might be too full. also they might not feel comfotable with younger children in the school.

because I don't think its right that such a big variety of ages of children are in the same school, they should be seperated

because I just told you my anwer

because I just told you the anser

because i think bringing everyone into the same school would be way to caotic and there might not be enough teachers

because i think that the schools should stay the way they are

Because I wouldn't want my children to go to school with the older generation where there is more issues with the drugs. I also wouldn't want to have my kids to be stood on by the older generation because they push around the corridors.

because it is bad for the younger pupels and we need to think of them

Because it means parents will have to travel further

because it will be like primary and half of secondary school together, they will be in our way all the time

because it will be over crowdead and some of them may not understand the rules

Because it will effect my future in educational ways. Teenagers now have to stay in some form of education until the age of 18 and so sixth form will provide education until that age. If you take away our sixth form it will make our lives harder. Also if you have a school with children age 13-18 the traffic will be very annoying with buses coming in every morning along with cars coming too drop off the younger ones. It will mean loosing some of our buildings aka the English Block, Because if I heard rightly that is wear the younger ones will be. Our school will be too overcrowded. Its busy here as it is if you add more children it will be ridiculously annoying.

Because it would increase the number of people in schools which would increase the number in classes, the number of people walking around and more of a crowd. Also the school is very full already and we don't need anymore pupils.

Because it's not fair on the younger pupils to feel intimidated in front of the older ones and the older pupils will have to put up with loud noise from the younger pupils  
 Because it's not fair on us  
 because it's not fair the the little ones if older people (teenagers) they could get hurt or something  
 because it's not nice for 3 year olds to come up here and listen to bad language  
 because little kids will run around  
 because not everyone will be able to take what they want, and even be allowed to stay on due to high numbers  
 because of bullying  
 Because of less education  
 because of travelling and transport  
 because people have to go to different schools and we might not know how to get there  
 Because Porth County is part of the RCT community and changing it is basically changing a really good community!  
 because some of the teachers are horrible, so they need new staff  
 because some people will not see their friends anymore  
 because there are more bad reasons like they can get hurt and then I think younger ones will be happier with kids their own age so they won't get hurt and older ones swear and then setting a bad example and could get the little ones swearing to. older ones like to push in the dinner line which means that the little ones might not get any which isn't fair  
 because the comp has always been as it is destroying it will destroy the heritage and the year groups will be too big. you should just improve the schools both primary and secondary  
 because the little children would grow up in the same school and would not experience what we did when we came here  
 Because the little ones will get pushed around  
 because the school could become over populated and corridors could be blocked  
 Because the school is too big  
 Because there will be a lot of ages which will be too large for the younger children  
 Because there are more faults than good  
 because there is a competitive attitude between the existing schools to achieve high grades  
 because there isn't enough space for everyone to have food or get to lessons  
 because there will be a lot of pupils in one school and it will be very overcrowded, also a lot of primary will be shut down.  
 because there will be bigger lines for lunch  
 Because there will be disruption and confusion, jobs will be lost.  
 because there will be too many people and it would be harder for people to come from different areas from other schools.  
 Because they make school harder  
 because they might have to go to different schools and different buses and it causes arguments  
 Because they need to think of the children and parents and how it will affect them..because it will  
 because they only think about themselves  
 because we are a scruffy school  
 because we have to wear school uniform and carry heavy bags around with us all day. also it would be better if we had lockers to be honest like. school is pathetic! so many people are moaning about their backs it's because we have to have heavy bags due to our books  
 because we will not have as much space and the school will be overcrowded at the end of the day  
 because you need your brain checked if you think this is a good idea and you need to think of the children instead of money .  
 Because you will have young children with teenagers.  
 Because young people may be pressured into bad things

Big change and isn't really necessary, it'll be hard to adjust to for many people due to the fact it's been this way for so long  
 Bully and Young children with older people #peerpressure  
 bullying will happen a lot  
 children will be brought up around older kids, the children will be pressurized into doing things  
 children will have developed bad habits! They will have the influences of older pupils of the schools. also older pupils don't want to be around little children.  
 could have more bullies  
 coz it'll be (*comment deleted*) around  
 cus  
 Cuz school (*comment deleted*)  
 Difficult and stressful  
 difficult to travel from a far distance for some families.  
 Don't change it  
 Don't see any advantage of doing it  
 don't think children ages 3 years old should be mixed with 16 year olds, if people are unable to travel to Tonyrefail they won't be able to attend sixth form  
 don't know  
 drugs and every other teen issues will become little children issue  
**DRUGS DRINKING SMOOKING**  
 everything is fine as it is and there is no reason why this should take place  
 from a parent's point of view I would not want my child to be in a school that ranges up to 16 year olds. children will be at more risk of danger and  
 bullying. teenagers will set bad examples with their foul language and their attitude towards teachers. teens may also encourage younger children to throw  
 litter, fight and fit in with the wrong crowds. it will put younger children's education at risk.  
**HARRY SAID SO**  
 i already have. -\_-  
 i believe it will effect the education of future students and I as disruption increases causing concentration to lack.  
 I believe that primary and secondary schools should remain independent because of the work and age gap.  
 I can't.  
 I do not think that teaching students with an age range of 3-16 years would be beneficial. I feel that extra money needs to be spent on supporting parents in  
 parenting skills as I feel that this has a huge impact on a child's learning. I do not feel that extra teaching needs to be put in place, I feel that the teaching  
 staff are at times unable to teach, I feel this is mainly due to poor behaviour and I feel, lack of parenting!  
 I don't see what's wrong with the schools as they are. I don't wouldn't like to travel any further to attend sixth form. I wouldn't like to be in school with 3  
 year olds and I wouldn't like my child to be in school with 16 year olds.  
 I don't think it'll work well in the long run and will lower the standard of education and deter from the main reason many people return to sixth form Not as  
 many people will return to sixth form  
 I don't think it's necessary  
 I don't think little ones would be comfortable with older ones.  
 i don't think that mixing three year olds and nineteen year olds  
 I feel it's wrong, children should enjoy going to school, where they can enjoy playtime. If children from the age of 3 are going to a school full of 16 year olds,  
 they will be around an environment full of smoking and bad language. Children will be in danger and most parents will not be happy with this choice.  
 I have already stated my reasons why I feel this is an appalling idea in the previous questions that I have answered!!!.  
 I just don't think it's a good idea  
 I just like the way, the school is now.  
 I just like way the school is now

I may not like school but I like how it is now please don't make me be around 3 year olds.

I put more bad reasons than good

i think it can be an increase in bullying due to the range of ages

i think it is bad because there will be more kids coming to the school and they will have to make the school bigger

I think it is ridiculous that we have to move schools and young children will have to come up the comprehensive schools.

i think its a pointless exercise as 5 things are good as they currently are

i think its bad because its always been secondary and primary and all thats going to change ;[

I think its unfair on young children to be put with older and its unfair on the children who have to travel far distances

i think that it is wrong to have all ages in the same school.

I think they are bad because pupils have to travel some distance to get the education they can currently have close to home

I think they are bad changes because i dont like the fact of being in a super school.

I think this because it is forcing pupils to travel and teachers at the 'super schools' would be inundated with the stress of having to teach so many pupils.

i think this because the children should not be with the older pupils

I think you should keep six form in school but keep three year olds in primary

i wouldnt like having a 3 year old surrounded by people 16 years and younger being in the same area. children will be picking up foul language that is spoken.

i'll be gone

Influenced by smokers

Influenced by smokers

It could be dangerous for the younger students to be around older students. They might be hurt because of the size difference and they would probably be exposed to things they shouldn't be like bad language and violence. Also, I don't think people who are staying on in school for sixth form should have to go to a different school after staying at their original one all their lives.

it is inconvenient for people who will have to travel

it is not ideal location

It is not safe for the younger children and will cause confusion to the older children, it could cause bullying and decrease in attendance. The cost will also be a problem for single parents and parents with low income.

it just is

it may react on their education

It may react on their education.

It take a lot of time to build a nursery

It will disturb the teaching of the current pupils while the school is being reconstructed and built and there will be far too many pupils.

It will effect a lot of peoples education.

It will not only effect the students, it will also effect the community greatly.

It won't work

it wont be very good, i reckon more people will get bullied!!

It would be overcrowded and there would be a lot of issues with the traffic outside of the school which could cause risks for accidents. It would also be difficult for the younger children in the school when it is eventually time to make the transition to leave school to start college/university/work.

It would mean some of the teachers who have helped me all through my comprehensive and 6th form education losing their jobs.

It would not be fair on anyone that's meant to be in primary, because they are more likely to get bullied

It's a stupid idea to mix children between ages 3-16

It's bad

It's confusing and unnecessary, this would mean that parents and children would have to travel further for school and even further for sixth form.

It's unnecessary

Its bad because its not the same as its going to primary on to comp and stayiong in the same school for years isn't a very good enviroment.  
 Its bad because the younger kids are not ready to move up to a bigger school like this I think they need to be a certain age to move up a big school but for this age its not right.  
 its going to cause more problems than it will solve  
 Its not fair on staff. Also younger children will be frightened  
 Just keep it like it is it's fine as it is  
 Kids could fall over and get hurt  
 Like I previously said, young babies should not be in the same school as 16 year olds. That is a very large age gap, not only for the safty of the young children being around the young adults, but its an important step coming from primary to secondary school, so that opportunity is being taken away from people in year 6.  
 little children getting into bad habbits  
 Little kids get beaten up Starting to smoke because of older kids  
 Little ones could get pushed around  
 Loads of students want to go into sixth form and most wouldn't enjoy 3 year olds attending  
 Location  
 Loss of jobs for teachers, and the rest of the staff  
 Increase in traffic  
 The site can be dangerous for younger children  
 Younger children pick up bad language and behaviour from the older generation  
 Smoking habits from the older generation can occur in the younger generations  
 May bully younger children and behave innapropriately. Also because the age range is too large.  
 More crowded Six form looks good enough as it is  
 More traffic  
 more traffic and crowds and accidents and fighting and swearing and bad behavior towards younger children  
 my reasonb is this because why mix little kids and big kids together its pointless  
 no 6 form  
 NO IM A (*comment deleted*)  
 no need to reshuffle so many schools  
 no point in the changes everything is fine as it is  
 no room  
 No.  
 Not suited for young children  
 older kids are bad example for younger kids  
 Other Primary schools will be shut down and there will be alot of pupils in one school.  
 People at the age of three should not be mixed with older ages  
 People should stay on and mixing age groups is a really bad idea  
 Please refer to previous opinions :)  
 Please see previous page  
 Pupils who take consortium subjects already find travelling long distances just to attend school an nuisance and a waste of time. Schools which are already small may suffer whilst super schools offer a lesser quality of education since teachers and students lack closer relationships which are essential to education. It will be difficult for students to adjust to new people, new school, new teachers and a new style of being taught. Schools are the heart of communities and we are at risk of losing these within our localities. Parents may be inclined to send their children to super schools from a younger age to prevent disruption and unsettlement for their children. We are also at risk of losing other important features like school shows, and community involvement from sixth form students. Schools operate as more than just a place to obtain an education and many people feel a very personal connection to the schools that they attend. To lose these connections which have always been here will not be beneficial for former, current or future students of the

sixth form. Key stage 5 operates as a place of role models for younger students and a help to teachers and students alike. It could be damaging to lose these altogether.

Really 3 year olds REALLY.

reasons stated on previous questions

same as previous answer

see page 12

seriously an age 3-16 school

six form have been in this school for so many years that on their last year they haft to move schools

Sixth form brings a lot to Ferndale community school and I believe that taking it away would result in a decrease of spirit and a decrease within links to our surrounding community. Some people may not be able to afford to travel to other locations further afield also. We have a successful sixth form and this success would be lost if it is taken away from the school.

sixth form students will have to go to college to do their a levels

Some people have to travel too far and the youngest kids are too young to start coming up here

some people may need to travel further away than they would have needed if the A level was already at this school - idea is pointless to those people stated earlier in the survey

Students will find it difficult to fully engage in new environments, will find it difficult to travel long distances and many more things.

the children will learn bad stuff from the older ones

the little kids could get influenced by smokersolder kids can climb fences and the little kids could get knocked over

The school has loads of people already and I would rather be with the friends I have now.

the school is already big enough!

The school will be crowded

the school will be much busier

The school will be to crowded

The school will be too crowded and full on parents evening.

The schools are already okay as it is... Why the need of the change? It's been like it has been for years, by having all of the havok of moving each of the schools into one big one might not be the best idea because it'll be so much of a dramatic change for everyone around the area, not just pupils and their parents. it'll effect the entire community. There is only 3 access points into the school and each of these individual areas will be extremely cramped when arriving to, and leaving the school. The traffic will slow everything down from leaving work in the evenings,picking up the children from school and even it raises the probability of having car accidents in the area.

The schools are fine as they are now. The government say they want to save money but the cost of building the super school is going to be extremely high.

It is just going to disturb routines and cause mass traffic

The schools will be over crowded and a really bad thing will be the cars dropping people off

The sixth form was created to enable higher-education and taking it away is counter-productive. It's a stupid decision and should not be allowed. In my opinion, I believe that there should be a choice between staying in a comfortable environment to learn or to go to a more formal environment to learn.

The system that already works relatively well will be detrimentally effected. The students going through their crucial years (such as my younger relatives) will be disrupted, and would indubitably effect their learning.

The travel costs are very expensive and means traveling for miles away where some can go through the back door of their houses

the yonger kids might akt notty

The young children could get bullied

the young children will pick up stuff from the big children

The young kids could be influenced by the smokers

The younger kids could get influenced by smokers

There is going to be more people up the school, and the school is full enough anyway  
 there is no need to do it  
 there will be no outside space  
 there will be most children coming to this school then.  
 there will be too many people around, this will cause a lot of trouble around the place. also i dont like loads of people.  
 there would be no escape from bullies  
 There would be too many people in one school. Sometimes ages will range from 3 to 18 years old so a lot of stress is put on senior management and also on teachers.  
 There's going to be more arguments and are going to feel like a little kid  
 They are kicking people out of schools and they are making them to go different schools  
 They are too young to come up here  
 They can get influenced by smokers  
 They can get influenced by smokers  
 They should keep the schools the same as 3 years olds shouldn't be with 18 year old students, it might have a bad influence on them  
 they will be harming others education and may get bullied in other school  
 They will be picking everything up all bad and it will be out of hand!  
 This is because I don't like the suggestion of young children from the age of 3 being in the same school as people up to the age of 18.  
 too many people in the school, this will cause a lot of trouble and more bullying.  
 too much hassle.  
 Too much to write  
 too big.  
 too crowded  
 Too many ages in one school are going to be mixed in together  
 too many pupils in one area  
 Too many smokers  
 too many year groups will be in the school  
 Too young Could get run over Influenced by smoking  
 Traveling is harder, more children more fuss to many Teachers and behaviour will get worse  
 Too many problems would be caused  
 Very bad idea. There are much better ways to spend money!  
 very stupid idea not thought through very well  
 we are all fine the way we are, you just want us to look good to other countries, what's the point?  
 well younger children may not understand big words that comp teachers use and might not be able to do the work  
 what if the year 7's-11's have gotten used to the system here and are looking forward to 6th for here but they have to travel to another school to do so  
**WHAT IF WE DONT WANT PEOPLE AGE 3 OR PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS TO COME TO THIS SCHOOL WHAT IF THEY HAVE BAD MANNERS.**  
 Where will be more bullying  
 Why 3 years old? People who want to go 6 form they will have to go to a different school.  
 why mix little kids and older kids its pointless  
 why the school has to be made bigger  
 Younger ages will be intimidated and pushed around.  
 younger children wont experience the change of school and the young children will learn things from older pupils that aren't appropriate

**Do you have any other suggestions or questions about these plans**

1.better food.2.better toilet.

Are the plans going to extend the school grounds?

bigger classrooms

bigger classrooms

change the plans

Close the school

different teachers for each year group

do it

do not build it up here just keep the schools as they are people will be MUCH happier and the parents will know for certain that their kids are safe

Do not change it           KEEP IT

do not change the it is nfine how it is this school is good how it is and most of the people dont want to change it so please dont change it

Do not change the schools

Do not do the changes

Do we stay in one class because of younger ones?

Don't change how schools are please keep it the same!

don't do it

Don't do it it is bad

DON'T DO IT M9

Don't do it. There is genuinely no point in changing what already exists. If it ain't broke...

Don't do them

don't do them????

Don't expand the sixth form to here.

Don't go ahead with them

Don't go ahead with this disgusting plan!!!. I have attended porth county from year seven through to my current year in sixth form (year 13). It is an excellent school, and all that you are doing is making stupid decisions (in regards to effecting 'Porth County' sixth form!!!. If you go ahead with this plan - just remember that is is NOT going to be 'Porth County' anymore!!!. It will be the school that REPLACED 'Porth County'!!!. I hope that if this decision goes through, that you don't have the cheek to use the name of 'Porth County Community School'. 'Porth County' is what it is now!!!.

DONT BRING 3 YEAR OLDS TO A SCHOOL FULL OF 11-18 YEAR OLDS.

dont do it

dont do it because everything is fine as it is and money is just being wasted

dont do it m8

Dont do it! keep the school the same, RCT will not save money on this, it is the only reason they are doing it

dont do it!!

DONT DO IT!use the money to improve existing schools rather than recreate schools

dont do it.

DONT DO THEM JUST SO YOU LOT LOOK GOOD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

dont go ahead with it! kids and teenagers should not be in the same school environment!

Dont have age 3 - 10 people coming to this school.

dont knwo

dont make them happen

Fence off the primary school from the comprehensive but build them next to each other.

get more (*comment deleted*).

GIVE US IPADS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

goal line technology on the astro turf

Has anyone thought about the possible increase of bullying?

have a (*comment deleted*)

HAVE A MCDONALDS ROUND THE CORNERHAVE IPADS ANA

How are you going to pull this off?

How big will the school be?

How can you ensure the safety of pupils in and around school with such a large number of varying ages to care for?

How does this plan effect a persons education? Why is this change necessary?

How is the school going to afford it?What is wrong with the over pupils sixth form?

how long will it take to build the new school?

How many new teachers are going to be employed?Would every child have the same attaention and the same support to success?How are you going to

help decrease the chances of bullying?Is there going to be any sort of seperation between the younger school to the older school?

how much space is the new buildings going to take up? is the school going to create a new dinner hall? will there be more teachers?

how will people travel to the schools?

How will this benefit anyone?

How would the required facilities be provided for each of the age groups and high numbers of pupils?

I dont.

I have expressed all my views and feel that this change would hinder people's education.

i have heard that you can only attend certain schools with the new arrangements depending on your address, will this mean that current pupils will have to be removed and placed in a new school or does this only apply to new attenders?

I have no questions.

I have one suggestion. Don't do it.

I hope there will be free travel provided, as petrol is quite expensive.

I personally think that it should stay like this and have no changes !!!!!

I suggest you stop asking me these questions

I think a sixth form should be kept in the Rhondda Fach and the Rhondda Fawr. I believe that making one super sixth form would be a hassle when something could be done in which not so much disruption is caused.

I think removing sixth form from Porth County is a bad idea as it is good for the school and offers good support in further education

I think that removing the Six Form from Porth County is a negative because students might not want to travel further distances to pursue their education.

I think that the schools should stay as they are now as it is more efficient.

I think these plans are stupid.

I think you should keep six formers in school and keep three year olds in primary

I would like to be shown how a school with a similar system where there is also a primary school in a secondary school so I can make a more informed decision as to whether the development is good or bad.

I would suggest to keep things as they are, as the past and current pupils can't express enough when saying how much sixth form have helped them in life and provided opportunities that would not be offered elsewhere. Therefore by taking away the sixth form the opportunities needed for pupils to get where they need to in life would be in jeopardy.

If we lose the six form what are the travel arrangements

its gonna be really bad cuz of all the perents

Just keep the schools as they are

Just keep the schools as they are

Just leave the schools as they are and plus if you will not have a six form there will be lots of young people on there door or move out of the rhondda

Keep things as they are. Passing this decision is stupid. Keep schools the way they are. If this goes through I think we should do it again but at the level of which this was created. The entire point of education is to prepare the younger generation for the world of work but getting rid of the sixth form will halt this process. Speaking from experience I believe that the sixth form is a very good idea and I've already learnt a lot even though I've only been in this year for a few months. This decision is stupid.

Leave the schools as they are please

Let people have a voice as to whether or not they should allow this plan. Let the children decide whether or not the school system should be reorganized.

Who does it benefit? The adults or the children?

make a few little changes for year 7 to year 11 so they dont get angry witht the changes thta are going to happen

make a new primary in the bingo hall in Hannah st and block the bottom end off to cars but keep the top open

make sure *(comment deleted)*

make sure the younger students (primary ages) are away from the older children

Maybe try to have the schools a little closer for other people.

Maybe we should merge other schools

maybe you should get a pavement by the entrance to porth county as many people have been clipped by cars on the way into school.

maybe, come back later

more money :p

Personally, it would be simpler and less hassle by keeping things the same

referbish the inside of the lower school make it feel more modern

Save our sixths form!

should just improve schools (refurbish) should contribute more money to sport centres

spend the money on making the schools we have now better rather than making a new school

**STOP THIS FROM HAPPENING. AND LEAVE THE SCHOOLS ALONE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CHILDREN. IF THIS GOES ON THIS IS ABSOLUTE MADNESS**

that is all

The changes shouldn't happen

The young pupils could get pushed in the corridor

There is no need to bother to change anything everything is fine as it is.

There needs to be enough safety for children to attend school as normal, and learning shouldn't be disrupted much by the opening of the new school. The new building should be constructed during holidays so no learning is disrupted.

They Are Very Bad.

They shouldn't change it because its just not right.

They shouldn't to a

Think about the effects that this will have on the people of the communities the schools serve. The decisions do not only affect students, but also teachers, parents, local people and charities within our locality. Is the sake of saving more money more important than impacting upon so many lives of those whom

are served by schools. I suggest more considerations are taken and more options are explored which will be beneficial to the whole community , students, teachers and other local people.

to keep the schools the same otherwise little kids will pick up on the bad influence

To not go ahead with them and leave everything as it is!

Use the budget to improve the facilities of the already existing schools rather than a complete reshuffle of the local education system.

use the money to improve school equipment, facilities and the amount of support given to the students

we should be able to use some of the gym equipment dinner time to help with GCSE and BTEC sport classes

WHAT ABOUT THE SECURITY ? AND IF WE DO GO ON THEN WE NEED A DIFFRENT TIMES OF STARTING AND FINSHING AND BREAK AND LUNCH .PLEASE CAN YOU TAKE THOUGH SERIOUS LY AND IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET HOLD OF ME HERE IS MY EMAIL (*comment deleted*)

What benefits do you feel would come from this?

What made you come up with this idea I mean I understand the financial benefit is reasonable but that doesn't necessarily mean they have to take away sixth form and mix three and sixteen year olds together

what school will be coming here and what time will they arrive to school

what type of changes will they be doing?

What will be placed on the old school sites??

What will happen to primaries further away

What will my remaining school be when the new school is built?

when do they really think it will be bulit by because il garentee it will take longer than what they say

when is this going to happen?

Where are they going to find the space to build a new building in order to have so many new pupils to the school? Are they going to have to get rid of other buildings to ensure they have the right amount of space / room? Are people going to suffer, educational wise, as so many new people are going to come to the school; will they get the support they need?

where are you going to build the school to ?

where will the school be placed

Where will this school be

where would parents park to take younger children to school?

where would the school be?

Who came up with the idea? The only way this is good is by reducing the stress of transition of primary to secondary, but then adding stress on transition of secondary to Sixth Form.

why are some schools closing and only two schools will have sixth form

why are these plans terrible?

why are they doing it why dont they leave it how it is

Why are they doing this for?, there is no point because the school is fine as it is.

why are they moving children to a different place and they would be used to their primary's

why are we makeing a super school?!

why are you do it why why ? if you go ahead with the plans make sure the new school has batter food.

Why are you doing this and breaking the system we and siblings have had for years? This is not beneficial to the parents or childern it is beneficial to the government and helping them save money which they should be spending it on more important things so why are you changing something that doesn't fixing?

Why can't things stay the same?

Why change?

Why do this everything was peaceful you put up here it's going to be chaos

WHY DO WE NEED A SUPER SCHOOL ANYWAYS WE HAVE ALL WE NEED IN OUR SCHOOL NOW IT IS NOT FAIR WITHOUT ASKING US IF WE WANT A SUPER SCHOOL.I PERSONALY DONT WANT ONE. CHILDREN THE AGE OF 3 COULD FALL DOWN THE STARES AND COULD HAVE A HEAVY BAG AND COULD DAMAGE THEIR BACKS!ITS NOT FAIR I DONT WANT ONE I WOULD RATHER BE HOME SCHOOLED.

why do you have to change !

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO DO THE SUGESGEN

why do you have to move 6 forms and why do you want to do it

why do you have to stop people going to 6 form when they have planned to go to porth county school

why do you want these plans to go ahead? have you thought about how young children may feel being in the same environment as 16 year old children.

Why do you want to do it in the first place you are getting in the way of our iuture

Why have they come up with these plans?Can they suggest something else other than this?Theres going to be too many people in the same school.Can they think about it more than setting it as quick as they did?

Why have you picked porth's sixth form too go?Not too change our school because its perfectly fine the way it is.

why is it hapopening?

why is it happening

why is it happening? why is it starting at such a young age?

why is the reason that you want to get rid of the sixth form in other schools?

Why is this happenning?Why is it such a young starting age?Why can't things just stay the same?

why make a mega school when every thing is fine the way it is?

Why merge primary and secondary schools when everything is fine as it is? It is a daft idea, and would be bette off forgotten

Why must there be a change? The schools are already okay as it is and it's always been that way for years.

Why remove Sixth Form if you're expanding the age groups? Either way it's gonna scare young children and also put a lot of stress on the older ones.

why they should not have a primary

why would people from other schools need to come to our school when they have chosen the school they want to go to?

WHY?!!!!??!

will my year (year 9 ) be able to go to this school or will I already be gone? im staying for 6th form?

Will the school stop the illuminati from taking over?

will there be departments for the children aged three?

Will we all be in one building?

would it mean studnet one on one time would drop though? and how would the uniform work?

would the main rugby pitch still be there for games?

yea dont do it

yea i think you should re consider makeing this desishon and if you think this is a good idea you need your brain cheacked and stop thinking about mony and start thinking about the children . so i think you should forget about this hole idea or you will be puting the children at risk of not haveing a edacition and there safty .

yea keep it as it iis

Yeah I thing the studio shud see the plans

yes

yes don't bring it keep it as it is

Yes why do we need to change the school

Yes why do we need to change the school because there will be to many people.

yes will we have more classes if 6 form closes

yes, add wifi

YES? WANT ME TO SAY MY QUESTION?WHAT (*remainder of comment deleted*)

Yes.

yes. don not do anything at all.

you should get all of the 6th form from every school and give a speech to them about this topic and hear their opinion about it and make a judgment from that.

# **APPENDIX 7**

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## **Estyn response to the proposed changes to sixth form provision and changes to 11-16, and 16-19 catchment areas in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail.**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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 which 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 Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Introduction**

This consultation proposal is from Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

The proposal is to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail; and
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypany, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail.

To achieve this, the council proposes to

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypany Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Change the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypany and Tonyrefail.

These proposals are part of the local authority's wider reorganisation of primary, secondary and sixth form provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail.

The authority's intention is to invest £75m in high quality, flexible and sustainable learning environments that comply with standards set by the Welsh Government for 21st Century Schools.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal is coherent with the local authority's aims to provide improved and more efficient post-16 provision, reduce surplus places, broaden curricular opportunities and provide greater equality of opportunities for students. It is Estyn's opinion that this proposal is likely to at least maintain educational standards in the locality.

### **Description and benefits**

The local authority provides a well-reasoned rationale for the proposal. The proposal appropriately identifies a wide range of benefits. The local authority demonstrates clearly that current sixth form provision is inefficient and does not lead to appropriately broad curriculum opportunities for learners or good enough performance outcomes at key stage 5. The proposal identifies fairly that the creation of two larger sixth form facilities has the potential to provide greater equality of access to a wider range of courses and to raise overall standards of provision and attainment. The proposal identifies clearly, through a detailed analysis of data, how the number of surplus places will be reduced and how the proposed arrangements will meet the demand for places in the locality in the coming years. The proposal reasonably asserts that too much funding designated for 11-16 pupils is used to subsidise small sixth form classes, currently £740 per pupil across the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area. The proposal recognises that a potential disadvantage of the reduction in the number of sixth forms is that some learners will have further to travel; however, it convincingly asserts that this will be mitigated by learners no longer having to travel during the school day to access collaborative provision. The proposal provides appropriate information regarding future admission arrangements. However, there is little reference to the future transition arrangements. For example, for those students joining the sixth form at Treorchy Comprehensive School from other schools.

The local authority identifies several possible disadvantages to the proposal, and generally assesses the risks involved in a well-considered manner. The proposal gives a clear outline of the alternatives to the proposal that were considered, and gives a coherent and balanced summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each one. The proposal evaluates the implications of potential changes in comparison to the status quo fairly and concludes that change is likely to bring about improvements in efficiencies and standards. Estyn agrees that the likely benefits of the proposal outweigh the benefits of retaining the status quo. The proposal refers to relevant evidence regarding positive outcomes in other 3-19 schools in its assessment, it does not consider well enough the potential parental and community objections to the proposals on the grounds of, for example, the loss of perceived status of a secondary school which no longer has a sixth form. The proposal pays due attention to the implications for learner travel, and provides detailed evidence which asserts convincingly that learners will not be disadvantaged by school reorganisation, especially in light of the home-school transport arrangements planned by the local authority.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The local authority cites appropriate evidence to support the argument that the proposed reorganisation will enhance provision in the schools concerned. The proposal provides an appropriate and balanced analysis of data regarding current performance, and would appear to suggest that current standards would be at least maintained. However, it provides only limited specific evidence regarding how performance outcomes would be improved.

The local authority provides information on recent Estyn judgements on the schools concerned, although it only refers to the grades or judgements given and does not consider or analyse specific aspects of inspection reports. The proposal provides relevant information regarding the local consortium's current categorisation of schools. In the case of Treorchy Comprehensive, all recent evaluations of leadership both by Estyn and the local consortium are positive and suggest that the existing staff have the capacity to lead the significant changes planned in the proposal effectively. The most recent Estyn inspection of Tonyrefail Comprehensive School was in 2010. The local consortium's most recent assessment of the school is that it is a category C school because 'there is not yet a strong enough record of continuous improvement and there is too much inconsistency in performance between different subjects and in the capacity of middle leaders.' This assessment does not suggest strongly that the existing staff have the capacity to lead the significant changes planned in the proposal effectively. This is relevant because the proposal states that staffing will be 'ring fenced'. However, the proposal does indicate that the governors of new 3-19 school will undertake an appointment process for the position of Headteacher and develop a leadership and management structure to meet the needs of the new school.

The proposal provides adequate evidence that provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs will be improved by the reorganisation. It pays due attention to minimising the disruption to learners, for example by ensuring that Year 12 learners during the reorganisation will only follow courses that they will be able to continue in the new sixth forms.

## **Estyn response to the proposed changes in primary, secondary and sixth form provision in Porth.**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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 which 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 Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Introduction**

This consultation proposal is from Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

The proposal is to:

- Close the sixth form of Porth County Community School (Porth CCS) and transfer sixth form provision to schools in Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth CCS, Porth Junior School and Porth and Llwynceilyn Infants Schools and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of Porth CCS;
- Transfer the Learning Support class at Ysgol Yr Eos to this new middle school;
- Move Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn (YGG Llwynceilyn) to the current site of Llwynceilyn Infants School.

These proposals are part of the local authority's wider reorganisation of primary, secondary and sixth form provision in the Porth, Tonypany and Tonyrefail areas.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal is coherent with the local authority's aims to provide more fair and efficient post-16 provision, reduce surplus places, broaden curricular opportunities and increase the number of Welsh medium learners. It is Estyn's opinion that this proposal is likely to at least maintain educational standards.

### **Description and benefits**

The local authority provides a well-reasoned rationale for the proposal. It credibly asserts that it needs to undertake reorganisation of its schools in order to make progress towards meeting the recommendations in Estyn's inspection report of 2012. The local authority clearly identifies the key issues facing its education services, particularly the number of surplus school places, the quality of learner outcomes, the efficiency of its sixth form provision and the fitness for purpose of its school buildings. It uses clear success criteria to identify the schools included within the proposals for the Porth area, and in the wider reorganisation.

The proposal appropriately identifies a wide range of benefits. It provides evidence that the reorganisation would significantly reduce surplus places in the Porth area over the next five years and also that it would lead to significant financial savings. These savings would amount to £323k in the Porth area, and the savings from the wider reorganisation would enable the local authority to fund 50% of a planned £75m investment in improving school buildings.

The local authority demonstrates clearly that current sixth form provision is inefficient and does not lead to appropriately broad curriculum opportunities for learners or good enough performance outcomes at key stage 5. The proposal reasonably asserts that too much funding designated for 11-16 pupils is used to subsidise small sixth form classes (currently £740 per pupil across the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area) and that this money should be spent on developing better provision at key stages 3 and 4. The proposal recognises that a potential disadvantage of the reduction in the number of sixth forms is that some learners will have further to travel; however, it convincingly asserts that this will be mitigated by learners no longer having to travel during the school day to access collaborative provision.

The proposal reasonably asserts that the creation of fewer, larger schools has several potential benefits for learners. For example, the reduction in mixed age classes would mean that teachers are more able to plan effectively to meet the needs of all learners. It is also reasonably envisaged that access to extra-curricular activities would be improved for many pupils as a result.

The local authority identifies several possible disadvantages to the proposal, and generally assesses the risks involved in a well-considered manner. The proposal gives a clear outline of the alternatives to the proposal that were considered, and gives a coherent and balanced summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each one. However, whilst it refers to relevant evidence regarding positive outcomes in other 3-19 schools in its assessment, it does not consider well enough the potential parental and community objections to the proposals on the grounds of, for example, the loss of perceived status of a secondary school which no longer has a sixth form, or the desire to maintain a small primary school setting.

The proposal pays due attention to the significant implications for learner travel, and provides detailed evidence which asserts convincingly that learners will not be

disadvantaged by school reorganisation, especially in light of the home-school transport arrangements planned by the local authority.

The proposal provides appropriate evidence that surplus places will be significantly reduced. The exception to this is the expansion of YGG Llwynceilyn, which will take over the site currently occupied Llwynceilyn Infants School; however, the proposal reasonably asserts that this increased capacity in Welsh medium education will assist the local authority in moving towards its targets under the Welsh Education Strategic Plan.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The local authority cites appropriate evidence to support the argument that the proposed reorganisation will enhance the curricular and extra-curricular provision in the schools concerned. It also asserts convincingly that learners' wellbeing will be effectively supported by these changes, for example through the more coherent delivery of support services. The proposal provides an appropriate and balanced analysis of data regarding current performance, and would appear to suggest that current standards would be at least maintained. However, it provides only limited specific evidence regarding how performance outcomes would be improved.

The local authority provides information on recent Estyn judgements on the schools concerned, although it only refers to the grades or judgements given and does not consider or analyse specific aspects of inspection reports. The proposal provides relevant information regarding the local consortium's current categorisation of schools. The proposal refers to appropriate evidence, for example Estyn reports on school size and poverty, to identify how leadership and management and staff development may potentially be strengthened. However, as the proposal asserts that staffing will be 'ring fenced', strong evidence is not provided that the existing staff have the capacity to effectively lead the significant changes planned in the proposal, especially in light of the fact that Porth CCS (whose staff would likely constitute most of the staff of the new school in Porth) currently has relatively poor outcomes and is assessed to be a category C school by the local consortium, where 'the capacity of leadership is not yet proven'.

The proposal provides adequate evidence that provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs will be improved by the reorganisation. It pays due attention to minimising the disruption to learners, for example by ensuring that Year 12 learners during the reorganisation will only follow courses that they will be able to continue in the new sixth forms.

## **Rhondda Cynon Taf Council: Proposed Changes to Primary and Secondary Provision in Tonypanydy**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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 which 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 Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Introduction**

The proposals form part of the authority's wider intention to improve pupil outcomes, reduce surplus places and improve education provision in the Rhondda valleys.

The authority's intention is to invest £75m in high quality, flexible and sustainable learning environments that comply with standards set by the Welsh Government for 21st Century Schools.

The proposals for Tonypanydy include the closure of Tonypanydy Community College, Penygraig Infants School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypanydy Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos and the creation of a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypanydy Community College. It also includes the proposal to relocate the specialist primary Pupil Referral Unit provision from the Tai Centre to the site of the current Ysgol Yr Eos.

The proposals clearly state the education and financial rationale for change and demonstrate the authority's intention to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities.

## **Summary/ conclusions**

The proposals set out arrangements that appear to give primary age pupils better access to specialist facilities. This has the potential to broaden the curriculum and improve outcomes for pupils.

## **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given a clear and succinct rationale for the proposal and has set out the limitations of the existing provision clearly. The document provides a detailed analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the options considered by the authority and outlines the expected benefits of the proposal in reducing surplus places and improving academic and wellbeing outcomes for pupils. These link well to the proposals purpose and rationale.

The document contains a general overview of the proposals benefits and risks and makes useful reference to the impact of similar changes made elsewhere both within the authority and in neighbouring authorities. It sets out the impact of the proposals on pupils and outlines the arrangements for safeguarding pupils of all ages in a 3 – 16 setting.

The financial and educational rationale for reducing the number of schools with sixth form provision is clearly set out, and the specific benefits and risks of the proposals for provision in Tonypanyd are explained clearly.

The proposer has identified appropriate criteria for selecting the schools that form part of the review and provides detailed information about the schools it plans to close. This includes information about current performance, trends in performance against national benchmarks over a three year period and surplus places.

The consultation document provides useful detail about how the transition process to the proposed arrangements will be managed to minimise disruption to the pupils. The possible risks associated with the proposal for children and families who currently attend these schools are well defined. The proposal notes that any facilities currently offered in the schools, such as after school and breakfast clubs will be retained in the new provisions.

However, whilst the proposal states that equality, community and Welsh language impact assessments are available on the authority website, they are not easy to locate and are therefore not likely to be read as part of the consultation process.

## **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposals are likely to improve the facilities available to children aged 3 – 16 in Tonypanyd who should benefit from accessing a modern purpose built facility. The proposals are likely to improve transition arrangements between the primary and

secondary phases by eliminating the transfer of pupils at the end of key stage 2. This has the potential to improve continuity of learning between key stage 2 and key stage 3.

The proposal to create an all through school with an integrated management team should improve the liaison of staff across phases and result in improved sharing of subject knowledge, skills and expertise. This has the potential for a positive impact on pupils' standards across the curriculum.

The proposals appear to improve the facilities available to the children attending the primary pupil referral unit who would access a modern building with purpose built education and play facilities.

The proposal directly addresses the recommendation of the Estyn inspection report of 2012 that the authority reduces surplus places.

The proposed timescales appear realistic.

**Estyn response to the proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf to: close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School.**

**Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the current Tonyrefail Primary School.**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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 which 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.

### **Introduction**

This is a consultation proposal from Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.

The proposal is:

- close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the current Tonyrefail Comprehensive School;
- provide a 1,490 capacity 3-19 School for Tonyrefail, for 300 pupils aged 3-11, 690 pupils aged 11-16 and 500 post 16 students;
- transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail; and
- relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the site of the current Tonyrefail Primary School.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £44.8m to build a new 3-19 school at the Tonyrefail Comprehensive School site, and upgrade the existing Tonyrefail Primary School site to ensure they are 21st Century learning environments.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

In the overview, the proposer has set out a clear rationale for the proposal to create 3-16 schools and to create larger sixth forms. In the specific section regarding proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Tonyrefail, the proposer

refers to the adverse impact of the small sixth form on the funding for the quality of the education provision for key stage 3 and 4 pupils. It also refers to the adverse of the poor state of the buildings at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail and the effect this has on the quality of educational provision and the curriculum provided.

The proposer clearly identifies the changes the proposal will make to the sixth form provision, the primary education provision and the improvement to the facilities available for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail on the current Tonyrefail Primary school site.

**It is therefore, Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to address the current adverse impacts identified and improve the educational environment. It is also likely that the proposal will at least maintain the current educational provision in the area.**

The proposer has set out a clear rationale for the proposal. It appears that the proposal is consistent with the Council's aim of 'creating educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities'.

The proposer has set out clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo. The proposer has clearly identified the current position and the options available to the Council to improve educational performance and to ensure the provision represents value for money. The specific proposal identifies the reasons for the proposed changes, which would appear to be in line with the overview and the priorities of the Council.

The proposer has identified potential disadvantages appropriately in the overview of the proposals. These include a:

- 3-16 and 3-19 schools are a new concept in Rhondda Cynon Taf and parents will have concerns; and
- many sixth form students will have further to travel to access the provision.

The proposer has not identified any specific risks associated with the proposals.

The proposer has detailed a number of alternative models considered by the Council. The document clearly outlines both the advantages and disadvantages of these alternative models.

The proposer has referred to the current provision for learner traveller arrangements. If the policy remains as it is, while sixth form pupils may travel further, they will still receive the free transport. The current County policy as detailed in the proposal states:

'Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time

attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner's home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered'.

The report does however state that the policy may be subject to review in the future and this may impact negatively on the sixth form learners in the future.

For pupils in the primary and secondary sector the proposer has not identified any impact on traveller arrangements. The proposal does not provide details about the distance primary pupils who are currently at the Tonyrefail Primary school will need to travel to the new site at the secondary school. The specific proposal states that the current Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail is located a very short distance from the site of Tonyrefail Primary and therefore it would appear that this will not impact on the travel arrangements for these pupils should the proposal be accepted.

The proposer has effectively shown how surplus places will be reduced. The specific proposal includes data on current surplus places, pupil projections over the next five years and the forecasted pupil numbers should the proposal go ahead.

The proposal includes the relocation of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the current Tonyrefail primary school site. The specific proposal identifies the significant shortcomings in the suitability of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail's buildings, which, it states has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision and the curriculum provided. It appears therefore that the proposal is likely to have a positive effect on Welsh medium provision in the area.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer suggests that the proposal is likely to have a positive impact on improving provision and the learning environment for the pupils in the schools. The overview of the proposals clearly outlines the council's view that the changes proposed will improve educational outcomes, improve provision and leadership and management which would seem reasonable. While the specific proposal identifies the current outcomes for the schools and the current categories of the school, it does not provide any information on the expected impact of the proposals on the schools in terms of outcomes. The proposed changes focus on the reduction in surplus places, the improvement in the accommodation for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail and the financial benefits in reorganising provision for sixth form pupils

In the overview, the proposer states that the proposal could provide the opportunity to improve education across the schools, which would seem reasonable. Examples include more opportunities for staff to move between key stages, sharing of skills and expertise across teams and providing a more appropriate curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities, which can contribute to improving attendance and educational outcomes. There is no reference in the specific proposal to the delivery of the curriculum, but the proposer identifies opportunities for the primary school to have supervised and timetabled access to the specialist facilities available in the

secondary school, including the science and sporting facilities and the main hall. The proposer indicates that the relocation of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail would provide the school with additional games facilities and an improved learning environment. The proposer has included evidence from the report on the current condition of the existing schools commissioned by Welsh Government, which would support this. It is reasonable to assume that the improved facilities would support the delivery of the full curriculum.

In the overview, the proposer has stated that the proposal would enable greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils. The proposer refers to the outcomes of a study which highlights the scope provided by all-through schools for establishing teams which support children with additional needs. It states the continuum of care and support would be advantageous to pupils across periods of transition, particularly for vulnerable pupils and pupils with additional needs. It would appear that vulnerable pupils would not be disadvantaged by the proposed arrangements.

The proposer identifies the negative impact of possible longer or different routes to school and the positive impact of the likelihood of single aged classes in all primary schools. However, there is no reference in the overview or in the specific proposal on how any disruption to learners would be minimised, should the proposal go ahead.

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# **APPENDIX B 1**

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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directorate:** Education & Lifelong Learning

**Service Area:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

**Responsible officer:** Julie Hadley

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (updated 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2015)

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:** **Reorganisation of School Provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas**

The Project is to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypandy, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources. It offers opportunities for cross-age learning, shared teaching practices and access to excellent facilities for all age groups;
- Increase the number of Welsh medium primary places in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £75m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

This investment will include:

- A new sixth form block and improved facilities at Treorchy Comprehensive School;
- A new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail;
- New and refurbished buildings at the Porth and Tonypany secondary school sites to create two 3-16 schools;
- Extending, remodelling and refurbishing YGG Llwyncelyn;
- Relocating YGG Tonyrefail to a refurbished and modern primary school site;
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century improvements to a number of other schools in the area.

**2. Policy Aims**, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?

How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

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.

Estyn's conclusion in March 2012 on the quality of education services for children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf was:

- Overall Judgement – Adequate (Strengths outweigh areas for improvement);
- Capacity to Improve – Adequate.

In addition Estyn made the following recommendations for the Council:

- 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 two years the Council has 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. Where there is little evidence of significant progress, the Council is intervening using a range of its powers. One of the powers is to close schools that over an extended period continue to under-perform providing an education to children that is not good enough.

Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.

The 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;
- 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.

The 9 primary schools and 5 secondary schools are included within this proposal have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- 7 primary schools and 3 secondary schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- 2 schools are “small” schools with less than 90 mainstream pupils;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the 14 schools is £18.7m , which equates to £2,690 per pupil;
- 8 primary schools have mixed classes with more than two age groups;
- The educational performance and pupil attendance of 4 of the 5 secondary schools is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales;
- 3 of the secondary schools for the past three years have been in Band 4 and 5 of the Welsh Government national banding;

In addition 4 of the 5 secondary schools have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils, and with mixed educational performance.

The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. This proposal seeks to achieve this.

#### **Educational Considerations –**

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 larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- **Improve educational outcomes;**
  - Create larger Foundation Phase, KS2 and sixth form departments that will promote the sharing of skills and expertise across more viable teams;
  - Provide teaching and support staff with more opportunity to develop professionally;
  - Enable greater opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
  - Provide a more appropriate curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which will improve attendance and educational outcomes;

- **Improve educational provision;**

- Provide the conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term;
- Improve the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils;
- Enable greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
- Allow for the potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to a larger school;
- Broaden the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term;
- Deliver the future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of a small number of institutions rather than many;
- Create schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability;
- Release significant resources that will be reinvested in improving the buildings and in improving standards of teaching and learning, which otherwise would not have been available;

- **Improve leadership and management;**

- Provides the opportunity for the headteacher to distribute key leadership tasks such as child protection, literacy, numeracy, special educational needs etc to a greater number of staff. Often in a small school, the headteacher takes responsibility for the vast majority of these tasks;
- Creates leadership opportunities for other staff, and for others to specialise in key areas, which will enhance educational provision and outcomes;
- Allow teaching and support staff access to a wider range of responsibilities:
  - 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.

These benefits apply equally to the mainstream and the Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils in the schools. This argument is supported by Estyn in its recent report "School Size and Educational Effectiveness" (Dec 2013), which stated:

- *"Pupils' standards are good or better in a higher proportion of large primary schools than small and medium-sized primary schools. This may be because large schools tend to have more expertise and capacity to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and the more able and talented pupils."*
- *"Examination results for large secondary schools are better than those for small and medium-sized secondary schools for nearly all measures";*
- *"In general, curriculum provision is broader and better balanced in large secondary schools. Nearly all large secondary schools provide good or better learning experiences for their pupils. Large secondary schools are able to offer a wider range of options due to economies of scale".*

Furthermore, in Estyn's report "Tackling child poverty and disadvantage in schools" (2010), the inspectors identified Neath Port Talbot as a local authority where disadvantaged learners achieved well, 60% better than the Welsh average. Estyn stated that:

*"One structural factor that has helped to raise the performance of disadvantaged pupils in Neath Port Talbot has been the existence of mainly 11-16 schools. The heads in most of these schools feel that this has made sure that their full attention is given to the 11 to 16 age range and that resources are not deflected towards the sixth form".*

### **What is the educational case for creating larger sixth forms?**

Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their pupils. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. Only one sixth form in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area, Treorchy Comprehensive School, will have greater than 250 pupils in September 2014;
- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be over 4,000 by 2018 and over 1,400 in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area (English medium schools) by 2018. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf funds amounting to £300 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of £740 per pupil across the 5 English medium secondary schools in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area;
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement for the County Borough;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) and Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.
- In 2013, in 4 of the 5 secondary schools included in this proposal, less than 50 students were entered for 2 or more A Levels or equivalent. While this improved slightly in 2014 only 2 schools entered more than 60 pupils. Providing an educationally and financially viable curriculum in a number of the schools is difficult.

Creating two sixth forms of approximately 500 students creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing progression to Higher Education and employment.
- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for all young people to choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and attendance rates.
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail is able to access the curriculum of choice.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – Re-skilling and up-skilling the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, to allow people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, and the duplication of provision between providers.

### **What is the educational case for creating 3-16 schools?**

In bringing schools together whether that is through amalgamation, federation or informal clustering, the purpose has to be to improve teaching and learning and pupil outcomes. The benefits of 3-16 schools can be summarised as follows:

- A common ethos means pupils do not have to adapt to a new culture on moving schools;
- Coherent and consistent styles of teaching and learning progressing through the years gives stability to pupils' learning experiences;
- A comprehensive and common system for assessing, recording and tracking pupil progress throughout his/her schooling;
- Flexibility to provide the appropriate curriculum for individuals regardless of age;
- Increased access for pupils to a range of specialist accommodation, facilities and learning resources;
- Pupils with additional needs can maintain relationships with supporting agencies throughout their school career if required;
- A common attendance and behaviour policy means that routines are established and values understood from an early age;

- Parents may remain more involved in their children's education as they do not have to establish new relationships with staff.

The great strength of all-through education is the continuity of educational experience which negates the transition "dips" in pupil performance. A 3-16 school provides the opportunity to provide a "bridge" between key stages in order to create a seamless transition for pupils in terms of curriculum planning, learning and teaching. It can allow for a significant sharing of subject expertise and primary pedagogy in particular across key stages 2 and 3.

A study of the pilot 3-19 school in Lampeter has highlighted the scope provided by an all-through school for establishing a single unified team of specialist support staff and learning support assistants working closely with professionals from health, social care, and family services. This has the potential to further enhance the already high standards of care provided for pupils with a wide range of additional learning difficulties, social and emotional needs. For many children with specific needs, the continuum of care and support provided by the school is more important than the particular age of the pupil concerned and there are obvious advantages in prolonging the relationships between teachers and other adults with support roles and individual pupils across the period of transition.

Another important benefit of all-age schooling is being able to achieve greater effectiveness through the sharing of resources, and being able to target these resources, whether financial, physical or human, at key areas of school improvement. Some reported benefits include:

- Provision of specialist teaching in KS2 or extending literacy and numeracy programmes into KS3;
- Access for primary phase pupils to the facilities of secondary phase;
- Providing scope for acceleration programmes;
- Joint Professional Development;
- Directing resources at early intervention;
- Planning a joint curriculum;
- Sharing equipment, hardware and accommodation;
- Increasing the range and capacity for extra-curricula/after school learning;
- Creating common administrative appointments.

**Will primary and secondary pupils have to share facilities and resources?**

It needs to be stressed that a 3-16 school would not result in young children sharing playgrounds or break times with much older pupils. There are already strict safeguarding protocols which are observed when any primary aged pupils visit a secondary site (walking in pairs in line with teachers or adult helpers at the front and rear).

The primary aged pupils will receive the majority of their lessons in a specialist remodelled primary school building. Nevertheless, the pupils will have the opportunity to be taught in the secondary school to develop their curricular skills through the use of specialised facilities e.g. science and technology. Secondary phase pupils will also be able to have learning opportunities in the primary phase especially around any care related vocational activities and meeting some of the requirements of the Welsh Baccalaureate. These learning opportunities will also provide support to the primary phase staff through such activities, for example year 12 and 13 pupils assisting primary school pupils with their reading. This is the case in Ysgol Llanhari, the first 3-19 school in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**What will be the impact on the other “partner” primary schools in the community?**

Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal and be able to enjoy use of facilities at the ‘through schools’ for educational and social/sporting purposes.

In Lampeter, where there is a similar arrangement, the pilot evaluation has highlighted that these primary schools have sought to further strengthen their relationship and transition arrangements with the primary and secondary phase of the 3-19 school, in order that their pupils might benefit fully from the future all-through developments and to ensure that they will not be disadvantaged when they join the new school in Year 7. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council recognises the importance of transition, and measures will be planned and implemented to ensure, that those pupils that transfer to secondary education at age 11 are able to achieve, at the same level, as those pupils for whom the transition from Primary to Secondary education occurs without changing school.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposals on school pupils?**

In making the proposed changes, many things will be different for the pupils from the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail, depending on parents' exercising their right of choice, but some things will remain the same:

- Some may have a longer or a different route to school, and some may be transported to school by bus;
- For the primary aged children, the pupils in their classroom are more likely to be in the same year group and there will be more opportunities to make friends with children of a similar age;
- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer the primary pupils a wider and more varied curriculum to support all learners, including the least and most able;
- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, the majority of teachers and teaching assistants should be able to transfer between the schools, if they wish to do so;
- For sixth form students there could be less travelling during the school day to access the curriculum and therefore there will be greater opportunities for more unstructured/informal interaction between students and teachers during the school day. The time saved from not travelling can also be used to focus on studying or completing course work;
- 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 run school sports teams, debating team etc. The children attending the SEN Classes will also have the opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

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. This will bring about improvements for **all** pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or disability. It should be noted that of the approx 12,600 pupils attending schools in the area under consideration (Rhondda and Tonyrefail), only 2 are indicated as being Gypsy or Traveller children; to reiterate, these proposals are not seen as being detrimental to any particular group of pupils, they are intended to improve educational provision for all.

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe “walking distance” to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe “walking distance” is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner’s home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.
- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

Many local authorities across Wales have reviewed the discretionary elements of their Home to School Transport Policy and often only provide the statutory minimum transport provision or require a contribution from post 16 learners to the cost of their travel. As with other local authorities, Rhondda Cynon Taf’s policy may be subject to review in the future. Any proposed changes will be subject to consultation with learners and parents having regard to the relevant Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance. Clearly, if the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy was to change in the future this could impact on the views of the consultees of this proposal to reorganise primary

schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail. In providing feedback, consultees may wish to consider the impact such a change could have on their response to this consultation.

For all the proposed changes the Council's policy regarding free school transport will continue to apply. The Council has already taken steps to assess the safety of a number of the change in routes to school, for example the primary changes and the increased distances to sixth forms that are within the qualifying distance to access free home to school transport. For the vast majority of the routes, the Council consider the routes to be a safe route to school. Nevertheless, the Council will seek to further improve the safety of a few routes through additional crossing points, wider pavements, and measures to reduce the speed of the traffic. Pupils that attend SEN Classes will continue to be transported from their home to the classes relocated to the new proposed Porth 3-16 School.

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 communities of the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

All of the Primary schools under consideration as part of these proposals have breakfast club provisions, which are not only considered to be of benefit to the pupils but can greatly assist working parents as well. These clubs will continue if the new Middle schools are created. Many schools also offer some after school provision which has the same benefits as the breakfast clubs; it is hoped that transferring Primary aged pupils to school sites that have improved facilities will allow for the expansion of this provision.

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

For the school changes in Treorchy Comprehensive School, YGG Llwynceilyn, YGG Tonyrefail, and the Tai Centre the governing bodies and staffing arrangements will remain the same, except that the staffing structure for Treorchy would have to reflect an increase in the sixth form students.

For the school change in Ferndale Community School, the staffing structure will need to be developed for the 11-16 school taking into account a curriculum for a secondary school without a sixth form provision.

For the school changes in Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail, all the schools involved in the proposal will close and new schools will be opened with a new governing body. Should the proposal proceed, the proposed new schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail will need to appoint temporary governing bodies for the interim period until the new schools open.

The temporary governing bodies will need to appoint new headteachers, who will then formulate and propose the leadership, management and staffing structures for the new schools. The staffing structure for Porth and Tonypandy 3-16 schools will need to be developed for the 3-16 school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum for a secondary school without sixth form provision. Whilst, the staffing structure for Tonyrefail will need to be developed for the 3-19 school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum for a secondary school with an enhanced sixth form provision

The Council recommends that if the proposal is accepted that the temporary governing bodies of new schools and the governing bodies of those schools increasing in size through pupil transfers “ring fence” all teaching and associated staff posts to staff within the existing schools in the first instance.

The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change, as illustrated by the recent school organisation changes in Aberdare.

### 3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public    School Staff    Other    Please state: children aged 3-19 years in the communities comprising the Rhondda and Tonyrefail, parents and carers of the children.

**4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:**

New      Review      Cessation

All 3.

**5. Identifying Impacts** – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager's guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Yes	Yes		<p>Improved learning facilities and environments for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that all the children in the larger Primary education provisions feel safe and secure,</li> <li>• make the learning environments comfortable and attractive for all children and young people who access them.</li> <li>• Primary pupils being able to access specialist facilities at their own school site, Secondary pupils being able to access work experience and assist the learning of their younger counterparts.</li> <li>• access services to improve the lives of children and their families.</li> <li>• improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities.</li> <li>• improved transition between the Primary and Secondary school sectors</li> <li>• promotion of more independent learning for post-16 pupils to better prepare them for higher education and employment, reduction in number of young people who become NEET.</li> </ul>

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger sixth forms will reduce the need for consortia arrangements and travelling between sites; time can be better spent learning than travelling.</li> <li>• The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential.</li> <li>• More choice of learning pathways at post-16, more subject options which will improve the higher education and employment prospects of all learners</li> <li>• Increased travel distances for some primary school pupils and some sixth form pupils</li> </ul>
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			New build school facilities will be fully compliant with all disability legislation and will be accessible to all users; refurbished and remodelled premises will have reasonable adjustments undertaken to make them as compliant as it is possible to do. The proposed 'all through' provision for pupils with ALN (for children from the Foundation Phase right through to Key Stage 4) at the new Porth Middle school is seen as a distinct advantage to pupils placed in this provision, creating what will be a 'centre of excellence' for this provision, with the need for transition, which can be disruptive for pupils with ALN, completely removed.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language	Yes			Improved school environments at two Welsh Medium Primary schools with additional capacity provided to allow more choice for parents as to which language medium they can choose for their children.
Carers			Yes	

## EVIDENCE

### **6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below**

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - October 2014.  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

### **7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.**

The only negative impact that could be identified is that Primary Schools pupils will have to travel longer distances to schools, likewise sixth form pupils will have longer journeys to the new sixth form provisions. In the case of the Primary pupils it is highly unlikely that any child will have further than 1.5 miles to travel to their new school; this is the distance at which RCTCBC currently provides home to school transport, which is more generous than that provided for by legislation, i.e. 2 miles. It is the full responsibility of parents to transport their children to school where they do not qualify for free provision, they also have to determine and provide appropriate supervision for children and decide the mode of transport to be used. Free provision will be made available where pupils meet the qualifying criteria.

No sixth form pupil will have to undertake any journey, whether by public or private transportation that will take longer than 30 minutes to undertake, which is within the Council's target of ensuring that secondary aged learners do not have journey times exceeding 60 minutes. Full assessments of all available walking routes will be undertaken to ensure that they meet all safety criteria and standards laid down in the Learner Travel Measure 2014. Appropriate improvements will be made where identified.

## INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

### 9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events are being held.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2014, 4 – 6pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive
<b>Llwyncelyn Infants'</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Llwyncelyn Infants'
<b>Porth Infants'</b>			
<b>Porth Junior</b>			
<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>			
<b>Penygraig Junior</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Penygraig Junior
<b>Tonypandy Primary</b>			
<b>Ysgol yr Eos</b>			
<b>Tonyrefail Primary</b>			
<b>YGG Tonyrefail</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	YGG Tonyrefail
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	School Council	4th November 2014, 2 – 3pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	School Council	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	School Council	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	School Council	11th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	School Council	13th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Llwyncelyn Infants'	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Llwyncelyn Infants'
Porth Infants'	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Infants'
Porth Junior	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Junior
Penygraig Infants'	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Infants'
Penygraig Junior	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Junior
Tonypandy Primary	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonypandy Primary
Ysgol yr Eos	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Ysgol yr Eos
Tonyrefail Primary	School Council	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonyrefail Primary
YGG Tonyrefail	School Council	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	YGG Tonyrefail
<b>Sixth Form Changes All Schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Treorchy Comprehensive School
		13 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Porth County and Porth Primary Schools – all Porth schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive and Tonyrefail Primary Schools – all Tonyrefail schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Tonypandy Community College and Tonypandy Primary Schools – all Tonypandy schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonypandy Community College

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>All schools, staff, parents, pupils, governors and members of the community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	18 <sup>th</sup> February 2015, 9am – 6pm	Ystrad Sports Centre (Lesser Hall)

In addition to the meetings with the school councils, all pupils in the affected schools are being given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire online, with tablet computers being provided by the Council to assist them with this, to tell us what they think about the particular proposal involving their school and whether they think it is a good, or bad idea.

Interested parties are also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

e-mail [schoolplanning@rctednet.net](mailto:schoolplanning@rctednet.net)

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

### 10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?

The Council's school improvement team will be fully engaged in supporting all head teachers, school staff and the governing bodies of all schools involved during the first year or so, or for however long they require such support. Support with staff recruitment and for the temporary governing bodies, including a clerking service will be provided by the HR Division and the Governor Support service.

## ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

### 11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?

- Continue the Policy

#### Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.

### 12. ACTION PLAN

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
To finalise the plans for school building construction and repair/refurbishment of existing buildings	Director of Corporate Estates	By September 2018		
To undertake any highways works that are identified as	Director of Highways and Transportation	By September 2018		

required to improve walking routes and to make arrangements for any transport provision that may be identified.				
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**13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.**

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team  
 The Pavilions  
 Cambrian Park  
 Clydach  
 CF40 2XX

Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Chris Bradshaw                      Date: 20/10/14 (updated 23/01/15)  
 Job Title: Director of Education & Lifelong Learning

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## **APPENDIX B 2**



**Proposal to create two Sixth Form 'Centres of Excellence' at Treorchy and Tonyrefail and to remove sixth form provision at Porth, Tonypandy and Ferndale**

**Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is being consulted on between 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that has been widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

It must be noted that we are not removing or closing any schools as a consequence of this particular proposal. All schools that may lose 6<sup>th</sup> form provision will remain in situ, albeit with changes made to the age range of pupils they wish to admit (amended from 11 – 19 years to 3 – 16/19 years). Treorchy and Tonyrefail schools will have additional accommodation and facilities provided, also Tonyrefail will have the age range of pupils it is able to admit extended, from 11 – 19 years to 3 – 19 years. Separate Community Impact Assessments have been prepared in respect of all other proposals being consulted upon at the current time.

Taking into account the information provided above, it is considered that the 6<sup>th</sup> form element of our Rhondda and Tonyrefail School Reorganisation Proposals will have a neutral effect on the communities they serve. All facilities and services provided by these schools to their communities will remain in place. It is for this reason that a more detailed Community Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this proposal, as it is not deemed to be applicable or appropriate in the circumstances.

The only potential impact will be on the pupils who may require 6<sup>th</sup> form education in the future, in that they may have to travel longer distances to access this provision. There are far too many different 'permutations' to outline the distances involved for individual pupils in this report.

Transportation for pupils will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of the 6<sup>th</sup> forms to their new locations. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

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**Proposal to close Llwynceilyn Infants, Porth Infants, Porth Junior and Porth Community Secondary School and to create a new 3 – 16 school on the site of the current Porth Community School**

**Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is being consulted on between 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- Llwynceilyn Infants – 61%
- Porth Infants – 47%
- Porth Junior – 76%
- Porth Community – 88%

For the two Infants Schools, the largest percentage of pupils attending Llwynceilyn from out of catchment reside in the Porth Infants catchment (12%); the same scenario applies for Porth Infants, where the largest percentage of pupils residing out of catchment come from the Llwynceilyn catchment area (23%). The catchment area of Porth Junior encompasses that of the two Infants Schools. The proposed catchment area of the new Primary department of the Middle school will be that of Porth Junior School, therefore all of the pupils referred to above will be resident within the catchment area of the new school.

The three Primary schools offer breakfast clubs to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new Middle school if these proposals are agreed.

There are no after school clubs at Porth Infants; Llwynceilyn Infants has one club on one evening per week (run by an outside provider), Porth Junior runs clubs on four evenings each week. The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

The only outside organisation that regularly uses any of the current Primary schools are the Brownies, who use Porth Junior School on one evening per week. Communities First also hold activities in the Junior School on one morning each week, plus a mother and toddler group meets in Porth Infants on two mornings each week. There is no reason why these organisations cannot utilise the facilities at the new proposed Primary department of the Middle School; this is something we would actively encourage.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Porth area, to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed Middle School). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The distance between Llwynceilyn Infants School (the school furthest from the Secondary school) and Porth Community School is 1.3 miles, which takes less than 10 minutes by car or bus. The address within the Llwynceilyn Infants catchment that is the furthest away from the Secondary school (at Nythbran Terrace) is 1.7 miles by road, but only 1.49 miles on foot. It is not considered that this distance will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new Middle School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Porth area in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being up to 1.3 miles away as it is at present. Having a single Primary age phase will also remove the transition between Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 in separate schools which all pupils must undertake at present.

Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new Middle School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

**Proposal to close Penygraig Junior and Infants, Tonypandy Primary, Ysgol yr Eos and Tonypandy Community College and to create a new 3 – 16 school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College**

**Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is being consulted on between 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- Penygraig Infants – 65%
- Penygraig Junior – 51%
- Tonypandy Primary – 64%
- Ysgol yr Eos – 76%
- Tonypandy Community College– 89%

For the Primary Schools, the majority of pupils attending from out of catchment reside in the catchment areas of one of the other schools included in this consultation (eg, the majority of out-catchment pupils attending Penygraig Infants reside in the Ysgol yr Eos catchment area). The proposed catchment area of the new Primary department of the Middle school will be that of the four Primary schools listed above combined, therefore most of the pupils referred to above will be resident within the Primary catchment area of the new proposed Middle school.

All four Primary schools offer breakfast clubs to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new Middle school if these proposals are agreed.

All the Primary schools provide after school clubs for their pupils, encompassing a range of activities on varying evenings each week. The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

The Girl Guides utilise Tonypandy Primary on one evening per week; a playgroup is also based at this school on 2 mornings each week. There is a Flying Start provision based at Ysgol yr Eos, which could remain at this site. Penygraig Junior and Infants do not have any regular external usage. There is no reason why these organisations cannot utilise the facilities at the new proposed Primary department of the Middle School; this is something we would actively encourage. Alternatively, accommodation can be provided at other schools in the area, especially for the Flying Start provision if required.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Tonypandy area, to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed Middle School). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The distance between Tonypandy Primary School and Tonypandy Community College is 0.9 miles; the distance between Ysgol yr Eos and Tonypandy Community College is 0.7 miles (the two Penygraig schools are even closer), journeys from either school are less than 5 minutes by car or bus. The address within the Tonypandy Primary catchment that is the furthest away from the Secondary school (at Gilfach Road) is 1 mile by road; the address within the Ysgol yr Eos catchment that is the furthest away from the Secondary school (at Appletree Road) is 1.7 miles by road and 1.58 miles on foot. It is not considered that these distances will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new Middle School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Tonypandy area in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being up to 0.9 miles away as it is at present.

Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new Middle School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

**Proposal to close Tonyrefail Primary and Tonyrefail Comprehensive Schools  
and to create a new 3 – 19 school on the site of the current Tonyrefail  
Comprehensive School**

**Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is being consulted on between 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as part of a wider consultation regarding the reorganisation of school provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

At the current time, the percentage of pupils attending the respective schools who reside within the catchment areas of those schools are as follows:

- Tonyrefail Primary - 57%
- Tonyrefail Comprehensive – 92%

For the Primary School, the majority of pupils attending from out of catchment reside in the catchment areas of one of the other primary schools in the Tonyrefail Comprehensive catchment area that are associated to this school, i.e. the large majority of pupils transfer there at Year 7. These schools are Tref y Rhyg, Hendreforgan and Cwmlai Primary Schools. The catchment area of Tonyrefail Primary School will remain unchanged by this proposal.

The Primary school offers a breakfast club to all pupils at present; we will recommend that this provision should continue in the new Middle school if these proposals are agreed.

The Primary School does not offer any after school clubs to its pupils at present. The Secondary school runs a full programme of extra-curricular activities after school each day. The full facilities of the current Secondary school will be available for the younger children to use, under supervision, so the programme of after school activities available to them can in fact be enhanced and extended.

There is a Flying Start provision based at Tonyrefail Primary School, which can remain at this site. There is no other regular external usage. Alternatively, accommodation could be provided at one of the other schools in the area for the Flying Start provision if required.

This proposal seeks to enhance the school accommodation and facilities available to both Primary and Secondary aged pupils resident in the Tonyrefail area , to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future from its catchment area (which will differ for the Primary and Secondary departments of the new proposed Middle School). This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The distance between Tonyrefail Primary School and Tonyrefail Comprehensive School is 0.8 miles. The journeys between the two schools are less than 5 minutes by car or bus. The address within the Tonyrefail Primary catchment that is the furthest away from the Secondary school (at Collenna Road) is 1 mile by road. It is not considered that these distances will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at the new Middle School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. Having all Primary aged pupils in the Tonyrefail area in one school, along with their elder siblings who may attend the Secondary department is considered to be of benefit to parents in future, as their children's school provision will be located on one site, as opposed to being up to 0.8 miles away as it is at present.

Transportation for children will be provided in accordance with the Council's Learner Travel Policy in force at the time of the transfer of school provisions to the new Middle School. Assessments will be undertaken in accordance with legislation in force and will involve the application of both distance and dangerous route criteria, if applicable.

If this proposal is agreed, YGG Tonyrefail will relocate from its existing site to that of the current Tonyrefail Primary School. The two school sites are immediately adjacent to each other. This will have a neutral community impact as all services currently offered by YGG Tonyrefail will simply relocate to the building next door. As indicated overleaf, the intention is for the Flying Start provision located at Tonyrefail Primary School to remain on this site, even if the Welsh Medium school takes it over, so the impact on this facility will also be neutral.

## **APPENDIX B 3**



## **Proposals to Reorganise School Provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail Areas**

### **Welsh Language Impact Assessment**

As part of our proposals in respect of the above, we are planning to undertake improvements at two Welsh Medium Primary schools in this area of Rhondda Cynon Taf, which will not only improve and enhance the learning environment but also increase the pupil capacity of the two schools in question, namely YGG Llwynceilyn and YGG Tonyrefail.

It is important to note that these proposals will not involve new school provision or alternative school provision; neither will they involve any fundamental or significant change to the provision currently being made to the communities both schools currently serve. As such, many of the issues suggested for inclusion in a Welsh Language Impact Assessment, as outlined in Annex D of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, document 006/2013 do not apply to these proposals.

The proposal in respect of YGG Llwynceilyn involves this school incorporating the site and buildings of Llwynceilyn Infants School, which is located immediately adjacent. The two sites can easily be combined in to one by simply removing the boundary wall and fence that separates the two schools. Refurbishment and repair works will also be undertaken on both school buildings to improve the facilities for all pupils and staff and some redundant, poor quality mobile classroom accommodation will be removed.

This proposal will also increase the pupil capacity at the school by approximately 100 places and increase its published admission limit per year group, enabling more pupils to be admitted each year.

The proposal in respect of YGG Tonyrefail involves this school relocating to the site of the current Tonyrefail Primary School. This school was extended and refurbished just 5 years ago, with additional outside play areas and car parking added to the site, including an all weather multi games pitch. Further refurbishment works, including upgrading of pupil toilet facilities will be undertaken prior to the school transfer. The new school site is located immediately to the rear of the existing school so there will be no travel implications if this is implemented.

The transfer to a new site will increase pupil capacity to at least 377, which includes increased Nursery capacity also. The admission number per year group will also increase. This is in addition to the considerable educational benefits that will be realised by moving to a building which is of far higher quality than the current school site.

These proposals will enable both schools to enhance and extend their extra-curricular provision, as they will have far more space and building capacity to allow them to offer such provision. This could also include making facilities available for use by the wider community.

The proposal to increase capacity at two of our Welsh Medium schools (adding almost 200 pupil places in total) will also assist the Council in achieving the target outlined in our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), which is to increase the percentage of seven year olds taught through the medium of Welsh in the future.