

**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CRYNODEB O'R GWRTHWYNEBIADAU  
OBJECTION SUMMARY**

**CYNNIG: AD-DREFNU YSGOLION CYNRADD, YSGOLION UWCHRADD A  
DARPARIAETH CHWECHED DOSBARTH YN ARDAL PONTYPRIDD**

**PROPOSAL: REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE PONTYPRIDD AREA**

**1. Bwriad Crynodeb o'r Gwrthwynebiadau / Purpose of the Objection  
Summary**

Mae'r crynodeb yma wedi'i lunio yn unol â'r Hysbysiadau Statudol a gafodd eu cyhoeddi ar 30 Ebrill 2019. Ei fwriad yw darparu crynodeb o'r gwrthwynebiadau a ddaeth i law yn ystod y cyfnod gwrthwynebiadau a ddaeth i ben ar 31 Mai 2019 ac ymatebion y Cyngor. Yn unol â dogfen statudol 006/2013 Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion Llywodraeth Cymru, bydd CBSRhCT yn cyhoeddi Adroddiad Gwrthwynebiadau cyn pen 7 diwrnod o wneud penderfyniad ar y cynnig.

This summary is prepared in accordance with the Statutory Notices which were published on April 30th 2019. Its purpose is to provide a summary of the objections received within the objection period which ended on May 31st 2019 and the Council's observations. In accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 006/2013, RCTCBC will publish an Objection Report within 7 days of the determination of the proposal.

**2. Crynodeb o'r Gwrthwynebiadau ac Ymatebion / Summary of the  
Objections and Responses**

Bydd iaith yr ymatebion yn cyfateb i iaith y gwrthwynebiadau. Bydd y tabl isod yn adlewyrchu hyn.

Objections detailed in the report reflect the language used in the submission. The table below reflects this.

<p><b><u>Hysbysiad Statudol 1 - Tynnu'r chweched dosbarth o Ysgol Cardinal Newman. (mae gwrthwynebiadau i Hysbysiadau arall wedi eu cynnwys yn yr adran hon ar gyfer cyflawnder)</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Statutory Notice 1 - The removal of the sixth form from Cardinal Newman.</u></b></p>
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**(sixth form objections relating to the other Notices have been included in this section for completeness)**

**If the objective of the Council is to increase the number of our young people continuing in education post-16, I fail to see how moving sixth form provision further away from those young people helps.**

**The proposed substitute provision at Coleg y Cymoedd and Bryncelynnog is too remote for many learners and, in the former case, falls outside the oversight of the local education authority. Many children, such as my eldest daughter who is diagnosed with ASD, benefit from being able to remain in a familiar, local environment with academic and pastoral staff who know them.**

Response: The objectives of the sixth form proposals are clearly set out in the Consultation Document and increasing participation is just one of the outcomes that are noted within this document. Other benefits include, raising standards, increasing curriculum choice, providing equality of provision and delivering an efficient and sustainable sixth form provision. The proposals aim to deliver each of these objectives and the case for change defined within the Consultation Document is clear. Poor retention rates in current 6<sup>th</sup> form provisions suggest that the majority of learners in the Pontypridd area are already opting for post-16 education in settings other than school and alternative post-16 pathways.

RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and it has been confirmed that all learners currently residing within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynnog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. This policy also provides free transport to Coleg Y Cymoedd for those students who meet the specified criteria.

Meaningful and positive transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school settings with little disruption to their well-being and education. This is supported by providing effective pastoral and academic support and structured opportunities for learners to become familiar with the new school environment and staff. For learners with additional learning needs, person centred plans will be central to ensuring their successful transition into a new school setting. This will require careful planning and liaison with the young person, families, school staff and external agencies where appropriate.

Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all the schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible.

The proposals aim to provide opportunities for learners to access a wider and more diverse curriculum within a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment. This will ensure that learners with the most diverse needs are able to pursue the most appropriate pathway suitable to their needs.

**I also have concerns over the extent to which Rhondda Cynon Taff Council can hold Coleg Y Cymoedd, a likely beneficiary of these plans, to account for the service they provide.**

Response: The relationship between the College and the Council is stronger than ever with opportunities for collaboration between both parties being developed in many new areas. The Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Education are governors on the College Board. The Council will continue to ensure that they have an effective working relationship with Coleg Y Cymoedd. The college, schools and Local Authority are all accountable for the outcomes achieved by the learners in their care and are subject to inspection by Estyn.

**It should also be noted that that Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School already have a joint sixth form that works well across both schools. Basing these at the same site would remove the need for transport between the two schools, but retain a provision in Pontypridd. We therefore urge the Council to retain.**

Response: The rationale for the changes to sixth form provision is specified within the Consultation Document. The Council is aware of the consortia arrangements between both schools but despite these arrangements being in place for a number of years, concerns in relation to outcomes, pupil retention rates, small class sizes and the financial unviability of both provisions persist. The rationale specified in the consultation documents remains unchanged and valid.

Merging the 6<sup>th</sup> form provision across these two schools would not provide an efficient and effective model for delivering 6<sup>th</sup> form provision as the numbers would still be too small due to the reducing post-16 retention rates in these settings. There is currently too much duplication in provision in this area and the proposal offers an opportunity to make more efficient use of existing resources, to redirect much needed resources to learners in key stages 3/4 and to provide an extensive key stage 5 offer which offers greater choice for learners.

**We have deliberately chosen Cardinal Newman as the school we wish for our children to complete the WHOLE of their high school education. Cardinal Newman has shown consistently that an excellent level of education can be achieved with little financial investment/support. Cardinal Newman also has a very special ethos which will be very difficult or even impossible to instil elsewhere (as if that were not the case then other schools in the area would already be following the same principles). We also feel that these proposals are taking away the right for our children to fulfil their post-16 education at a school that has been classified as 'Green/Excellent'.**

Response: The decision to propose the removal of the sixth form at Cardinal Newman is set out within the Consultation Document. The case for change is multi-faceted and is not based on the current education standards or results achieved by the school. The 6<sup>th</sup> form retention rates at the school are low which has had a detrimental impact upon the school budget, which is in a significant deficit. The school is not able to sustain a 6<sup>th</sup> form provision based on existing numbers.

The success of Cardinal Newman and the ethos that exists within the school community is not in question. It is recognised that outcomes are good in this school, but retaining 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in this setting is not viable as it is heavily reliant on resources intended for

learners in key stages 3 and 4. The financial challenges faced by the school due to the reducing post-16 retention rates are such that the curriculum offer will have to be significantly reduced which will inevitably have a further negative impact on curriculum choice and pupil numbers. The proposals offer an option to attend St David's College, which is another good educational setting that offers strong pastoral support, a positive Catholic ethos and good outcomes for its learners.

**We understand that an option to attend St David's college for existing Catholic pupils will be made available, however can it be guaranteed that sufficient capacity will exist? It is our belief that the college is already at capacity and therefore cannot see how this is a feasible option.**

Response: The Principal of St David's College has confirmed that there will be sufficient capacity.

**Even if space is guaranteed we understand that pupils will need to find their own way to Cardiff should a 'suitable' school be nearer?, Firstly I think it should be the parents who decide what is 'suitable'; and the logistics could possibly prevent our children going to the school we wish them to.**

Response: Free transport will be provided for those who meet RCT's Home to School Transport criteria. Pupils that do not live in RCT will have to contact their own Council's School Transport Department for further information on criteria and eligibility. Parental choice is at the heart of the School Admissions Code and should a faith education be deemed as 'suitable' then Free Transport will be provided in accordance with the above.

**Cardinal Newman has been discriminated against as a faith school as they are the only school not to receive funding with the sixth form closure.**

Response: Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School is a voluntary aided school and is governed and managed by the Roman Catholic Church. It is the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Diocese to apply to Welsh Government for capital funding to improve the quality of the buildings. However, despite this, RCTCBC has made significant investments into the school to ensure that the buildings are suitably maintained.

Welsh Government has a capital funding allocation available at favourable terms for church schools, where 85% of the capital investment requirements are met by Welsh Government. The Council is supporting the Diocese to develop a business case to secure 21st Century Schools funding for investment in this school and will work in partnership with them to present a strong case for improvement.

**It discriminates against people of faith and these children are being treated unfairly by making them travel to Cardiff to complete their education.**

**In relation to Cardinal Newman it is unacceptable that this administration should choose to be so dismissive of the further education needs of the students there – it borders on flippant to suggest that they should just go to Cardiff if they wish to continue being educated in a faith school. Surely there is a duty of care, or at the very least some sense of responsibility that extends beyond this.**

**Pupils who travel from Merthyr Tydfil and other areas will also be stopped from their right to follow an education that confirms with their religious beliefs. You are not just taking away this education from local children but from a much wider community as it is the only catholic school covering a very large catchment area.**

**The closure of Cardinal Newman's sixth form will have a detrimental effect on the Catholic community. Many will choose not to send their children there for secondary school, this could be seen as trying to remove catholic faith schools from RCT.**

Response: School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Council has ensured that all procedures are in line with this Code and that due diligence has been undertaken so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this Code and the Diocese has been fully consulted with throughout this process.

The Local Authority has every confidence that Cardinal Newman will continue to attract high numbers of learners for key stages 3 and 4 as it is a good school. Despite drawing learners from other County Boroughs, the retention rates for post-16 are still low in comparison and has contributed in a provision that is not sustainable or financially viable. A new approach to post-16 education is now needed which offers choice for learners.

To note, the January 2019 PLASC records only 3 pupils from Merthyr attending the sixth form in Cardinal Newman.

**Cardinal Newman's school meeting was after the initial consultation. It was not the wishes of the Archdiocese to close and parents' wishes and concerns were not considered.**

Response: This is not the case. The meetings held at Cardinal Newman with pupils, staff and governors, were held on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2018; and in addition, the open evening at the school was held on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2019. The consultation period ended on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019. No formal response from the Diocesan was received in relation to the proposals during the consultation period; and no objection to the Statutory Notice has been received.

**The consultation document fails to recognise that attempts have been made by Cardinal Newman to move their sixth form to Coleg y Cymoedd, but then had to restart their own sixth form due to problems. We would ask the Council to examine this in further detail, and learn lessons from this experience.**

**Similarly to above in relation to Cardinal Newman, representations have also been made to us in relation to the fact that different consortium models with Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw have been initiated and then abandoned, with the individual schools choosing to return to teaching their own pupils, following doubts having been raised about student support.**

Response: The decision to end the collaboration between Cardinal Newman and Coleg Y Cymoedd for post-16 education was a decision taken by the Diocese. Any suggestions that this decision was made as a result of any problems or lack of support for pupils at the

college is speculation. The main issue was that the provision in the college was provided by teachers employed by 3 different organisations. Coleg Y Cymoedd now employ all its teachers and is responsible for the day to day management of the workforce which has seen a significant improvement in the quality of learning, as evidenced by the College's A-Level results in 2018.

Feedback received from learners in the college and the Estyn Inspection suggest that student support services are good.

**Many students and parents have contacted us to raise concerns about the plans to remove the sixth form from Pontypridd High School, Hawthorn High School and Cardinal Newman and base all at Bryncelynog High School. Given that Bryncelynog is already partnered with Y Pant for sixth form provision, many are questioning how merging five sixth forms will work in practice.**

Response: Bryncelynog Comprehensive does currently collaborate successfully with Y Pant for a number of subjects in a consortia arrangement. However, the current proposals do not suggest the merger of 5 sixth forms. Y Pant do not form a part of these proposals.

The sixth form pupil retention rates at the 4 schools that are included within the proposals are low, as are the post-16 pupil projections. However, cumulatively they will provide the numbers needed to deliver a sustainable and viable sixth form, both educationally and financially, providing greater options for students by enabling a greater breadth of subject choice. Through the planned investment the proposal will offer learners a more diverse curriculum and enhanced opportunities in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century School environment.

**Though the status quo is not sustainable, this public consultation could have been an opportunity to have a frank discussion over a series of different options for post-16 education in Pontypridd, instead it was focused around just one option, which the Cabinet adopted, without exploring a range of alternatives.**

**That on the basis of the information presented the rationale for proposing Bryncelynog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd as post-16 centres of excellence from September 2022 remains unclear.**

Response: No proposals have been adopted. The decision by Cabinet was to progress with the School Organisation Code statutory protocol and publish the Statutory Notices and commence the Objection Period.

The criteria for the school organisation review, the educational case, and the benefits for all proposals put forward for consideration were included within the Consultation Document, as were alternative options for all proposals.

Estyn's response in this regard is *'The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits when compared with the status quo in relation to improvement in educational provision and the effective and efficient use of resources. They also explain clearly how the proposal fits with the local authority's broader plan for the review of school provision as part of its 21st Century Schools programme. The local authority has provided sufficient evidence to show that the plan is likely to at least maintain the standard of education in the local area.'*

Issues relating to the unviability of 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision in this area have been the focus of discussions with the headteachers concerned for many years. Despite numerous discussions and attempts of collaboration, difficulties persist and radical changes are now needed.

The proposals offer an opportunity to significantly invest in the development of a post-16 centre of excellence in Bryncelynnog School. The decision to select this school is based on a number of factors including the outcome data, budget position and retention rates. The school is a green school and is considered to be best placed to deliver on these exciting proposals for change.

**The consultation process has presented information about PHS (and the PSF) which is inaccurate, unfair and misleading.**

Response: This was raised during the consultation stage and responded to within the Consultation Report. This response is still valid. The data and information contained within the Consultation Document is factual, accurate and formed the basis for the case for change for the reorganisation proposals. The format adopted by the Council for presenting school reorganisation proposals for change is consistent and standardised and these proposals are aligned with this approach. Data included in the consultation report is based on All Wales Core Datasets and references to benchmarking data is included for key stage 4 datasets.

For key stage 5 data sets, the FSM profile is very different to that of key stage 4 and despite representations made by the school in relation to the key stage 5 outcomes, it is the Local Authority's view that key stage 5 outcomes are in need of further improvement. For clarity, the performance of Pontypridd High School in relation to the percentage of learners achieving 3A\*-A and 3A\*-C was below the all Wales average for 4 consecutive years (2015-2018). When considering local averages for the same period, the percentage of learners achieving 3A\*-A were on a par with the local average in 2015, above the local average in 2016 and 2017, and below the local average in 2018. The percentage of key stage 5 learners achieving 3A\*-C over this 4 year period was consistently below the local average for Rhondda Cynon Taf and all Wales. It is acknowledged that results in the school were more favourable on the Level 3 and Average Wider Points Score. In terms of the Average Wider Points Score, this measure is no longer utilised as an assessment criteria comparator by the Welsh Government as the measure includes such a wide variety of level 3 qualifications that includes academic A-level courses along with vocational and other courses. This decision was taken by the Welsh Government as so many different styles of qualifications are used within this measure it is not possible to fairly compare the performance of schools and many other providers with similar settings or a national average.

Comparisons across schools in relation to the outcomes at key stage 5 are entirely appropriate as the fsm profile of schools are very different from key stage 4 to post-16. Only 10% of the end of key stage 5 outcomes for 2017/18 were attributable to fsm learners compared to 17.6% of key stage 4 learners.

It is important to note that the rationale for these proposals are multi-faceted and not solely based on outcome measures. Collectively, the key stage 5 datasets, post-16 retention rates, small class sizes, surplus spaces and the deficit position in Pontypridd High School all highlight that there is strong evidence that the post-16 provision is not efficient or sustainable. Due to the low retention rates, the post-16 provision is heavily subsidised by resources intended for key stages 3/4 learners and this inevitably impacts on the quality of provision on offer for statutory school age learners. Whilst Pontypridd High School has a number of strengths, the wealth of data collated to inform the proposals for change and the ongoing deficit position in the school clearly illustrates that the current post-16 arrangements are impacting on the resourcing and quality of provision in all key stages.

**The removal of Sixth Forms will make Pontypridd a less desirable place to live for parents and is likely to lead to falling house prices and deprivation.**

Response: There is no evidence that this will be an outcome of these proposals. This has not been reported to be the case in other areas of RCT that have been through a rationalisation of post-16 education. However, issues relating to house prices should be raised with the HMRC Valuation Office.

The proposals offer a sustainable plan for improving the quality of provision in the area and considerable investment in school facilities. If the proposals proceed, £37.4m will be invested in school buildings across the County Borough so that pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment. The proposals offer an opportunity to improve schools in the locality and school investment elsewhere has impacted very favourably on the demand for school places and learner and parental perceptions.

**I am concerned that local children will not get the same opportunities to attend a 6 form in their own school as children in other areas do. Making children travel a longer distance will put some children especially poorer children at a disadvantage.**

**I would have thought that reducing the number of young people who are NEET would be high on the agenda of RCT. How is reducing the number of providers offering courses going to improve the situation? There are growing number of young people suffering with anxiety and mental health difficulties. Many of these would opt out of education if they are forced to attend a different educational provider than one that they know well and feel comfortable in.**

**Instead of closing these Sixth Forms, extra effort should be made to encourage young people to carry on into further education.**

**I believe it represents an abnegation of responsibility on the part of RCT Council for A Level education within the town, and will have a deleterious impact on both the numbers of pupils staying on post-16 and the education of those who do, at a time when such matters must be a target for investment rather than cost-cutting. This in turn will have a concomitant impact on the numbers proceeding to higher education from the borough and the wider benefits to the local area of that process, for example at the University of South Wales campus in Treforest.**

Response: Data on the number of pupils that choose to stay in Hawthorn High School, Pontypridd High School and Cardinal Newman for their sixth form provision is very low. Over 60% of all pupils in all 3 schools chose not to return to sixth form in September 2018 and opted to pursue post-16 education in settings other than schools, many of whom were eligible for free school meals.

The proposals are aimed at offering choice to learners and creating schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity and providing educational and financial stability. This investment will improve school facilities and enhance opportunities.

The NEETS data for post-16 learners in RCT is favourable and with the vast majority of learners opting to go into further education, training and employment. Nevertheless, the majority of school leavers are not choosing to attend their local 6<sup>th</sup> form provision in the Greater Pontypridd area. There is a need to improve this offer so that more learners opt to pursue 6<sup>th</sup> form study in school settings. The proposals under consideration provide an exciting opportunity to improve and extend the local offer within a 21<sup>st</sup> Century School environment, offering choice to learners and the most appropriate pathway for their needs. It is recognised that mental health issues are an increasing challenge for our young people. Finding the right course and educational pathway is critical for engaging our most vulnerable learners. Larger school settings often provide enhanced opportunities for pastoral support and more specialist roles, due to the economies of scale that are afforded in larger settings. The proposals offer an opportunity to significantly invest in the future of our young people by creating new 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments, and greater curricular opportunities for learners with a wide range of needs and abilities.

**How many pupils from Tonypany, Porth and Ferndale are choosing to stay on now that they have to travel to Treorchy or Tonyrefail for sixth form education? Surely these figures would have formed a more relevant basis for your consultation.**

Response: The data below replicates the trend for post-16 learners in the Pontypridd area, in that the majority are already opting to choose their relevant learning pathway and continue their education in a further education college.

Ferndale – Of the 97 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 40 returned to sixth form and 57 went to college, employment or other.

Ysgol Nant Gwyn – Of the 102 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 23 returned to sixth form and 79 went to college, employment or other.

Porth – Of the 134 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 44 returned to sixth form and 90 went to college, employment or other.

Tonyrefail – Of the 134 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 79 returned to sixth form and 78 went to college, employment or other.

Treorchy – Of the 250 Year 11 learners leaving school in July 18, 165 returned to sixth form and 85 went to college, employment or other.

The schools admissions data shows that over 350 students returned to a Rhondda sixth form school in September 2018, sufficient for two financially and educationally sustainable sixth forms. The Rhondda schools reorganisation retained two sixth forms in Treorchy and

Tonyrefail and the sixth form admissions data evidences the rationale as set out in the Consultation Document is that students are attracted to larger sixth forms, that create a great offer and are academically and financially viable.

**Aspects of the consultation process have not followed the 'School Organisation Code' (2013)**

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

**We feel very disappointed of the proposed closure of the sixth forms in Pontypridd. We currently have two children in Pontypridd High School and we have nothing but praise for the dedication and commitment of the staff and governors.**

Response: It is acknowledged that the staff and governors are dedicated and committed, and care about their learners and the education they receive. Pontypridd High School has many strengths as a school. However, the datasets used to underpin the rationale for change clearly highlight that there are significant and long standing issues relating to post-16 provision and escalating budget deficit positions in schools that have diminishing numbers of learners. It is not sustainable and viable in its current form, even with consortia arrangements in place.

**We appreciate that the current situation of the sixth forms needs to change, but we don't understand why there can't be a sixth form in a town the size of Pontypridd, which would allow the children in the three schools to attend.**

**There is a University in Treforest but no sixth form in the immediate vicinity for the children to attend.**

Response: Coleg Y Cymoedd is based on Treforest Industrial Estate within the catchment area of Hawthorn High. It offers a range of A-Level and vocational courses. Data clearly indicates that retention rates for post-16 education in schools in the Greater Pontypridd areas are relatively poor and there are insufficient numbers to justify retaining post-16 provision in the locality. Data suggests that the majority of learners are opting to attend further education, training or other opportunities. Cumulative data suggests that a viable provision could be established by removing the post-16 provisions in the identified schools and establishing a centre of excellence in Bryncelynog School. It is likely that a significant number of learners from Cardinal Newman will seek post-16 education in a faith setting.

**The inclusion of the student comments from Coleg Y Cymoedd was not in line with the formal consultation process and made public comments about staff and students which were misleading, unfair, unsubstantiated, deeply upsetting and in opposition to the duty of care role that the LA assumes on behalf of our school.**

Response: In relation to compliance and adhering to the statutory consultation process, the School Organisation Code lists those consultees who must be consulted with, but there is no list identified within the Code that stipulates who should not be consulted with. However, Coleg Y Cymoedd are named as a consultee in the Consultation Document.

The decision to discuss the proposals with students from the college was made following feedback from the meetings held with pupils, staff and governors at the schools affected

by the proposals. It was felt prudent that all learners affected by these proposals were included, and as such students from the college were given an opportunity to express their views so that they too could be represented within the consultation process, and their experiences of the College put on record.

The students' comments were noted and were included solely within the appendices of the Consultation Report and were not explicitly referenced within the overarching Cabinet report. This record reflects the personal opinions of learners based on their unique personal experiences, as are all of the comments that were made and received by other stakeholders during the consultation process. This is clear from the language used and the contributions recorded in the notes of the meeting. The LA did not edit the perceptions of college learners, school council, school staff or governing body representatives. It could be argued that some of the views articulated during other consultation events were also unsubstantiated and potentially upsetting to other parties but these also remained as this is central to consultation and allowing individuals to have their say. It is acknowledged that consultation processes can be very emotive but all views are recorded and included for transparency.

**Mae diffyg cydraddoldeb o ran mynediad a gwariant ar addysg ôl-16.**

**There is a lack of equality of access and expenditure on post-16 education.**

**Sixth form pupils attract more money per head, and that without this, and the pupils themselves, job cuts would be required, possibly leaving the schools with too few high quality staff to teach GCSE's as well, to the detriment of all, as many teachers do not wish to be restricted to purely teaching up to GCSE level only.**

Ymateb: Mae mynediad i addysg ôl-16 ar gael ar hyn o bryd, a bydd yn parhau i fod ar gael, i bawb sydd am barhau ar y llwybr dysgu yma.

Mae cyllid ôl-16 yn cael ei ddyrannu'n deg rhwng pob ysgol gan ddibynnu ar nifer y disgyblion ar y gofrestr yn y mis Hydref ar ôl dechrau'r flwyddyn ariannol a dechrau'r rhaglen astudio. Mae ymgodiad amddifadedd ychwanegol yn cael ei ddyrannu yn ôl y plant sy'n byw yn yr ardaloedd cynnyrch ehangach haen is. Dylid nodi bod Addysg Ôl-16 yn cael ei hariannu'n uniongyrchol gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn seiliedig ar nifer y disgyblion a'r rhaglenni astudio. Mae hyn yn sicrhau ecwiti. Dylid nodi bod modd i ysgolion pob oed ddarparu cyfleoedd dysgu a gyrfa proffesiynol ardderchog i staff a chyfleoedd o ran dysgu ar draws y cyfnodau yn yr ystod 3-16 oed. Fel arall, fyddai'r cyfleoedd yma ddim ar gael mewn ysgol gynradd neu ysgol uwchradd. Bydd cyfleoedd i ddysgu ôl-16 mewn nifer o ysgolion uwchradd a safleoedd 3-19 oed yn Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Mae pwysau anochel ar gyllidebau sy'n gysylltiedig â chyfraddau isel o ran cadw disgyblion y chweched dosbarth a dosbarthiadau â nifer isel o ddisgyblion. Rhaid rheoli diffygion cyllidebau ysgolion trwy weithredu cynlluniau adfer diffygion sydd, o bosibl, â goblygiadau ar lefelau staff a chynaliadwyedd pynciau sy'n llai poblogaidd. Mae'n anochel felly nad yw

grwpiau dysgu bychain yn gynaliadwy yn y tymor canolig ac mae angen gweithredu'n gyflym ym mhob ysgol lle mae yna ddiffyg ariannol.

Response: Access to post-16 education is currently, and will remain to be, available to all who wish to continue on this learning pathway.

Post-16 funding is allocated equitably across all the schools dependant on the number of pupils on roll in the October preceding the start of the financial year and the programme of study being undertaken. An additional deprivation uplift is also allocated which is weighted to those children who live in the lower super output areas. It should also be noted that Post-16 Education is funded directly by Welsh Government based on the number of pupils and the programmes of study being undertaken. This ensures equity. It should be noted that all through schools can provide excellent professional learning and career opportunities for staff and opportunities for cross phase teaching across the 3-16 age range that wouldn't generally exist within a primary or secondary school settings. There will continue to be opportunities for post-16 teaching within a significant number of secondary school and 3-19 settings in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

There are inescapable budget pressures associated with low retention rates in 6<sup>th</sup> form and small class sizes. Budget deficits in schools have to be managed through implementation of deficit recovery plans, which potentially have implications for staffing levels and the sustainability of less popular subjects. Inevitably, small teaching groups are not sustainable in the medium term and swift action is necessary in all the schools where significant deficit budgets are evident.

**Mae yna ddiffyg archwiliad o'r effaith ar gydraddoldeb a faint fydd am gymryd llefydd oherwydd problemau trafndiaeth.**

**There is a lack of examination of the impact on equality and take up of places because of transport.**

Ymateb: Fydd dim effaith ar gydraddoldeb o ganlyniad i gludiant ysgol neu fel arall. Mae Polisi Cludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol hael RhCT yn rhagori ar rwymedigaethau statudol Llywodraeth Cymru. Cadarnhawyd y bydd disgyblion sy'n byw yn nalgylchoedd y Ddraenen Wen ac Ysgol Uwchradd Pontypridd yn gymwys am gludiant am ddim i Ysgol Gyfun Bryncelynnog os ydyn nhw am barhau â'u haddysg ôl-16 mewn ysgol. Mae gan yr Uned Cludiant Ysgol feini prawf clir a manwl sy'n sicrhau cysondeb o ran gwneud penderfyniadau.

Response: There will be no impact upon equality as a result of school transport or otherwise. RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and it has been confirmed that all learners who reside within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynnog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. The School Transport Unit has clearly set and well defined criteria that ensures consistency in decision making.

**Another consequence of these proposals is that many young people will have to travel further to receive their post-16 education, yet the increased congestion on our roads and the inevitable increase in vehicle emissions as a result is something that has not in my view been considered in as great a detail as should be expected. How can we even attempt to present RCT Council as a local authority that takes its obligations to the environment seriously when on one of the major decisions it makes the environment is not taken into consideration to any meaningful extent.**

Response: Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this there will be Traffic Impact Assessments undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding areas. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway, and also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on not just the highway but also on pedestrian and cycling routes.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance with statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact on residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

The criteria used by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to determine the eligibility to receive free school transport is based on walking distance, measured by the shortest, available walking route, with free transport being provided to secondary school learners whose home address is more than 2 miles from the nearest or catchment school. RCT's Home to School Transport Policy exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory obligations and as such it has been confirmed that all learners who currently reside within the catchment areas for Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School will qualify for free transport to Bryncelynog should they wish to continue their post-16 education in school. This equates to fewer individual car journeys and so we anticipate that there will be a net loss in the number of vehicle journeys made.

**Hysbysiad Statudol 2: Cau Ysgol Gyfun Y Ddraenen Wen ac Ysgol Gynradd Y Ddraenen Wen a creu ysgol pob oed 3 – 16**

**Statutory Notice 2: The closure of Hawthorn High School and Hawthorn Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 'all through' School**

**In many of the areas where schools are going to be closed the schools are a big part of the community and the closure will have a negative impact locally.**

Response: A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this information is still available on the Council website. There is no reason why any community links will be adversely affected by these proposals.

**This is a terrible, terrible idea. It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.**

Response: It is acknowledged that a number of pupils will have to travel further to school, however there are numerous benefits to these proposals including school modernisation, improved curriculum offer, improved transition and greater continuity in teaching and learning across the primary and secondary phase. These proposals also reflect significant investment in school buildings and educational facilities.

Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this process Traffic Impact Assessments will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway, and also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, which are set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

**The Council has deviated from due process (as stipulated by the Welsh Assembly 'School Organisation Code') with regard to the conduct of its consultation process about these proposals.**

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. The consultation has been extensive and robust.

**The Council has failed to treat individuals and organisations in a fair and equitable manner (as required by the Welsh Assembly 'School organisation code') during the consultation process**

Response: This consultation has been carried out in full compliance with the School Organisation Code. There is no evidence whatsoever to support this statement. All processes have been transparent.

**The Council has actively striven to create a negative portrayal of standards and provision at Hawthorn High School in an attempt to mislead consultees that the proposed reorganisation will achieve more positive outcomes than might otherwise be the case.**

Response: This is categorically not the case. The rationale for the removal of the sixth form at Hawthorn High and to create a 3-16 all through school is based on a number of differing factors that are detailed in the Consultation Document.

The data used within the report detailing learner outcomes, pupil numbers, class sizes, retention rates and deficit positions were accurate and factual at the time of reporting. This information has not been used to portray or mislead, but to provide a sound and robust rationale to inform the proposals for change. It should also be noted that outcome data is only one aspect of the rationale for change and all data is based on published datasets. All Wales Core Data Sets are reported for key stages 4 and 5, including benchmarking positions based on fsm data. The fsm profile of learners in key stage 4 and 5 are vastly different in Hawthorn High School with 28.6% and 12.96% of learners in years 11 and 13 being fsm when considering the 2017/18 key stage 4 and 5 data.

It is noted that the percentage of learners achieving 3A\*-A and 3A\*-C in key stage 5 over a 4 year period in Hawthorn High School was below the all Wales average and local average for 3 consecutive years (2015-17) but improvement was evident in 2018. A more variable profile is evident when considering the Level 3 and AWPS over the same 4 year period. In comparison, Bryncelynog Comprehensive School has performed better than both Hawthorn High School and Pontypridd High School on key stage 5 measures for 3A\*-A from

2015-17 and for 2 out of 3 years for 3A\*-C. Bryncelynnog key stage 5 outcomes for the Level 3 measure were either above or equal to Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School from 2015-17. In 2018, Bryncelynnog performed significantly better than both Hawthorn and Pontypridd High School for the percentage of learners achieving 3A\*-A, 3A\*-C and 3A\*-E.

The retention rates at post-16 and the budget deficit position in the school clearly highlights that the school cannot sustain 6<sup>th</sup> form provision, even with consortia arrangements with Pontypridd High School. The majority of learners are opting to pursue post-16 provision elsewhere and the current 6<sup>th</sup> form retention rates of 35% and the large financial deficit mean that change is now needed. Furthermore the data for key stage 5 highlights that there is scope for improvement.

**The Council has failed to exercise its duty of care to employees at the school in its willingness to publish unwarranted allegations of poor performance, actively seek out criticism of the school and publicly undermine the teachers and leadership of the school in a variety of public forums.**

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. To reiterate, the data used within the report to depict results and pupils numbers is accurate and factual. It has not been used to negatively portray or mislead, but to provide a robust basis to underpin the rationale for change.

The data used is based on published datasets and the retention rates and the unacceptable deficit position highlight that the 6<sup>th</sup> form provision is clearly unviable and unsustainable. The proposals provide an opportunity to modernise school facilities, offer greater sixth form choice and the opportunity to ensure that key stage 3 and 4 learners access the appropriate level of funding required. The Council strongly refutes the claim that there have been attempts to actively seek out criticism of the school and to undermine the teachers and leadership of the school in public forums.

**It is a bad idea to have infants in the same school as teenage children because of the negative and inappropriate behaviour they will be exposed to.**

Response: The safeguarding and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for the local authority. There are a number of all-through schools operating in the County Borough and this is managed with appropriate segregation of the younger and older pupils. The schools are designed so that there are separate entrances, learning environments, toilets and outdoor learning and play spaces. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for utilising older children's skills within an all through setting which can also be very rewarding for all parties.

RCT currently has two 3-19 schools, two 3-16 schools, and another 3-19 school opening in September 2019. The headteachers at all of these schools are reporting many positive benefits, including the opportunity to break down barriers across key phases and stages thus ensuring greater continuity in teaching and learning, enhanced opportunities for sharing expertise and specialist staff, and flexibility in staff deployment.

These all-through schools are managed differently depending on the leadership style of the Headteacher concerned and the ethos and culture instilled within the schools. The schools operate in unique and creative ways, but are consistent in ensuring that opportunities for cross phase collaboratively working are achieved. All projects are closely supervised and provide opportunities for older school children to act as positive role models to younger children through peer mentoring and buddying schemes.

All through schools also provide enhanced opportunities for developing cross-phase specialisms and for developing positive relationships between staff, children, young people and their families over time.

**It will be much harder for parents to raise issues have a say in their child's education when dealing with a big organisation rather than a smaller local school.**

**Completely against super schools, they are not in the best interests of the children and completely discourage family engagement which is proven to improve education.**

Response: On the contrary, creating larger schools can build capacity within staffing structures and enable opportunities for developing more specialist wellbeing and/or family liaison posts which will clearly benefit more vulnerable children and families.

**There is a lack of detail on the financial savings provided by the proposal.**

Response: The financial deficit position of the three secondary schools, circa £1.5million, is detailed within the Consultation Document. Currently the cost of delivering a sixth form provision in three of the secondary schools is greater than the income received from the Welsh Government. Our experience of the Rhondda schools following the reorganisation, is that the financial position of the school is greatly improved once the sixth form provision has been removed. Further savings realised will predominately be premises related as there will be a reduction in the number of buildings that have to be maintained. However there will be financial benefits from the sale of assets, economies of scale from managing through-schools, sharing resources etc.

Any savings realised from delivering these proposals will be ring-fenced and reinvested in the Council's educational asset portfolio.

**My children both attend Heol-y-Celyn and I have a third child on the way and we personally believe that this will affect are children. This will also disrupt are children's education due to having to move schools and starting all over again.**

**Awful idea with no consideration for the wellbeing of children. The upheaval for some children with hidden disabilities (ASD, ADHD etc) will be too much and may extremely detrimental to their education.**

Response: Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition processes are as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

Schools responsibilities in relation to meeting the additional learning needs of learners are very clear, and through effective person centred planning and partnership working between families and schools, any negative impact on learners with disabilities will be

minimised. The substantial investment will provide improved and modern educational facilities and opportunities for all learners, including the most vulnerable.

**The children of Rhydyfelin who have no transport will suffer due to the fact that through the winter months they will have to walk to school in all types of weather. This will not only affect their health but also their education due to the fact that many children will become ill due to being soaking wet all day.**

Response: This is the case for the majority of pupils that live within the County Borough. Walking to school is encouraged as this contributes to the health and well-being agenda. However, it is acknowledged that during the winter months appropriate wet weather clothing will be required.

The criteria used by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to determine the eligibility to receive free school transport is based on walking distance, measured by the shortest, available walking route, with free transport being provided to primary school learners whose home address is more than 1 ½ miles from the nearest or catchment school. The criteria for accessing school transport within the Council is above the statutory minimum.

**The local authorities are clamping down on poor attendance but have not taken this in to consideration when planning to make Rhydyfelin children leave their local school if they are in the English department. Heol-y-Celyn has been a bilingual school since 1967 and all of our family has attended this school whether it has been the English or the Welsh department.**

Response: All future learners living in this community will access modern school facilities that will benefit from substantial investment and improvement creating a positive 21<sup>st</sup> Century school environment. This type of environment will have a positive impact on teaching and learning, and learner wellbeing and engagement is likely to improve as a consequence.

The Council is required to produce a Welsh Education Statutory Plan ('WESP'), which sets out the Council's vision and objectives to increase the number of Welsh learners; improve the quality of the provision and the educational outcomes; ensure there is suitably trained and qualified educational workforce; and reduce the number of dual language schools within RCT. These proposals have been developed in order to assist in the delivery of these targets. These proposals will result in a much needed new Welsh Medium school and a new 3-16 school in this community. The local authority is committed to enhancing the numbers of learners accessing Welsh medium schools and to promoting the growth in Welsh language speakers.

**There is currently, as the report made clear, a great number of surplus places at both Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High, however, even after these proposals there will continue to be considerable surplus capacity at both locations, leading to doubts over whether simply removing the sixth forms at these locations will actually resolve the situation of both schools running a deficit. If reducing surplus capacity is one of the key objectives of the Council, the Council should explore a range of options to see how this could best be achieved, rather than proposing just one option.**

Response: The reduction in surplus places will not simply be achieved through the creation of the new all-through schools. £16.7million has been earmarked for investment in both

new all-through school sites and it is through the improvements and remodelling of the school sites and utilising the spare capacity available at the schools that the reduction will be achieved.

As stated in the consultation document the justification for the removal of the sixth forms relates to reduced demand and retention rates, improving educational standards, enhancing choice for learners and improving financial viability by developing a sustainable post-16 provision at Bryncelynnog. Current retention rates and the low numbers of post-16 learners in these settings has resulted in a significant drop in Welsh Government post-16 funding and unsustainable 6<sup>th</sup> form provisions with small class sizes and poor curriculum choice. The deficit position and restricted curriculum cannot be rectified without radical changes being made.

**There's little evidence that "super schools" work for students or for teachers. By moving the children into larger schools we place more pressure on teachers, families, have to spend more time each day traveling to school, and - most importantly - we lose important one-to-one attention that is made possible with smaller classes.**

**The school size will be too overwhelming for many pupils, even more so for those with additional needs, learning difficulties and mental health problems- which are growing. I am concerned about the record of the current 3 to 16 schools which don't seem to be doing very well.**

**With respect to the 11 /16 year olds they would lose their role models in the 6<sup>th</sup> which could reduce their determination and attitude to achieve that higher grade.**

**In terms of justification for your proposals you still refer to Ysgol Llanhari and to a though school in Lampeter – just as you were prior to the decision to change Rhondda schools. Are there no tales of success coming through from the Rhondda and Tonyrefail to back up your case? Or do the tales of staff leaving – as we predicted – not help?**

**Surely it would be prudent to hold off in any thought of such changes until the results of your experiment in the Rhondda are known?**

Response: To clarify, the term 'super-school' was a term coined by the press and is not a term that has been adopted by the Council. The Council's first all-through school opened in Llanhari six years ago, and another three all-through schools opened in September 2018, with another due to open in September 2019. There are also a number of other Councils throughout Wales that have opened, are in the process of opening, or consulting on establishing all-through schools. As such it is acknowledged, as has been the case throughout the consultation process, that the data on all through schools is relatively new across Wales. However, discussions with Headteachers of these schools have highlighted the many benefits of leading an all through setting in terms of: opportunities of sharing skills and expertise across phases/stages; extended professional development and careers opportunities; enhanced opportunities for developing specialist posts and accessing specialist classrooms and facilities; extended curriculum opportunities; and improved

transition. The views expressed by learners and staff also suggest that they are very happy in their new learning environments, with some describing the opening of their new school as a career defining moment. The opportunity for getting to know children/young people and parents over many years is an obvious benefit that will become more evident with the passing of time in the newly formed schools.

The Local Authority is gathering information in the form of educational outcomes and attendance data, and perception surveys are planned to evaluate the impact of the new schools. Robust monitoring procedures are in place and school improvement support is provided to ensure that the new schools continue on their school improvement journey and that support is provided where required. Early reports on the new schools are very favourable and progress is ongoing.

Reported benefits for learners include access to regular mentoring opportunities, tangible role models for the younger students and the provision of in-house work-experience opportunities for older learners. A sense of community has been established across all the new schools and this includes the wider community.

However, it can be confirmed that larger class sizes are not an outcome of the all-through school model. All class sizes will be built to accommodate up to a maximum of 30 pupils.

**No due consideration been given to road safety.**

Response: A planning application will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this process a Traffic Impact Assessment will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will consider the current capacity of the highway and will assess the impact of any increase in traffic flow, including the increase in school buses on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes.

This assessment and the associated report will contain recommendations in relation to improving the existing highway infrastructure as well as incorporating pedestrian safety measures such as traffic calming initiatives or additional pedestrian crossing points etc.

In previous school organisations the Council has invested significant sums in improving safe routes to schools in the communities. This investment has also enhanced the area for the whole community and has created opportunities for the community to walk and cycle more safely.

**Hysbysiad Statudol 3: Cau Ysgol Gyfun Pontypridd ac Ysgol Gynradd Cilfynydd a creu ysgol pob oed 3 – 16**

**Statutory Notice 3: The closure of Pontypridd High School and Cilfynydd Primary School and the creation of a new 3 – 16 ‘all through’ School**

**Another key objective of these proposals is to reduce surplus places in our school system. The proposals agreed by Cabinet does not solve this problem to any meaningful extent. One proposal is to close Cilfynydd Primary School, which has a current capacity of 188 pupils, and replace it with 180 pupil places at the 3-16 school at the Pontypridd High**

**School site. To close a Primary School to save just 8 surplus places seems to be totally unnecessary and one has to question whether it is value for money to do so.**

**The Consultation Document refers to Estyn's instruction to reduce surplus places, and states that the only reason for the inclusion of Cilfynydd Primary School in these proposals is because of its surplus places. However, the figures in the consultation document show that the surplus places for Primary-aged children would actually be increased by the proposed changes. Therefore, no valid reason has been given for the closure of Cilfynydd Primary School, and it should remain open.**

Response: The reduction in surplus places will not simply be achieved through the creation of the new all-through schools. £16.7million has been earmarked for investment in both new school sites and it is through the improvements and remodelling of the school sites that the reduction in surplus capacity will be achieved.

The current capacity of Cilfynydd Primary School is 188 and the current capacity of Pontypridd High is 1,338. The new school proposed will provide a capacity of 1,200. This is a net loss of 326 school places not the 8 as mentioned above.

It is correct that this is one of the key objectives of the 21st Century Schools Programme, as is addressing the condition of educational buildings and providing 21<sup>st</sup> Century School facilities. This funding will contribute to the achievement of each priority and the all through school will provide many benefits and opportunities as curriculum reforms begin to be rolled out.

**There is no good reason to close Cilfynydd Primary School. It is a school that is working well and is currently on a green in the traffic light system. The building although old is in good condition. The school also works within its financial budget.**

**The structure of the building of Cilfynydd Primary School is well built, strong and has no health and safety issues, instead of closing a successful school I feel that if a little money was spent to upgrade a small number of things within the school it would help, it will also cost a lot less than moving the school.**

Response: The closure of this school is one element of a wider school organisation proposal. The closure of this school has not been looked at in isolation but forms part of a wider strategic school organisation programme.

It is acknowledged that the school is performing well and even though the school may be structurally sound, that does not make it a school environment that is conducive to delivering a 21<sup>st</sup> Century School curriculum and providing the pupils with a modern and flexible learning environment internally or externally. As stipulated in the Consultation Document the external space at this school is particularly prohibitive and very limiting.

The backlog maintenance for Cilfynydd Primary alone is £850,989 and the proposals provide an opportunity for developing a 3-16 school fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**I do not agree with the changes you propose and believe this will have a detrimental effect on my child's education. Furthermore I believe this is just another cost cutting exercise by rctcbc.**

Response: Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption to their education as well as their well-being. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

It is acknowledged that within the Consultation Document it states that addressing the deficit budgets of a number of the schools are one of benefits of delivering these proposals, as are addressing the condition of educational buildings, providing 21st Century School facilities, broadening the curriculum and providing more opportunities for staff to work across phases and share expertise. This however is not a cost-cutting exercise as any savings realised from the delivery of the proposals will be reinvested within the Council's education portfolio. To note, the Council and Welsh Government has invested over £200m to date in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education Programme.

**Concerns have been raised over the effects of moving 3-11 pupils to the Pontypridd High School site, located just metres away from the heavily polluting A470. Indeed that road very recently was deemed to be such a problem that a 50mph speed limit was implemented on it in an attempt to reduce vehicle emissions. The Highways Department of RCT Council have stated that a pollution survey would be undertaken at this location to monitor the level of pollution, yet that report will not be published until after these proposals start to be implemented. In short, it will be too late. Can we really, given all the recent publications into the effects of pollution on the health of young people, proceed with these plans before we have all the relevant data to make an informed decision?**

**The A470 is a very busy road. The high school children only have a 20 minute morning break and a 35 minute lunch break, less than an hour all day. Factor into this time to eat lunch and go to the toilet etc. then they are outside even less. However primary school children will have a morning play time, a dinner hour and younger ones will also have an afternoon playtime. Foundation phase especially early years spend even more time outside learning through play. This is part of their curriculum. This will mean that the youngest children will be spending the most time in a playground that is right next to the A470 breathing in all the car fumes and pollution. This is not good for children's lungs and there are known health risks.**

Response: Comprehensive and detailed information was included within the Consultation Report in response to concerns that were raised during the consultation period. This information remains valid and for ease of reference is included below:

The Local Authority conducts regular monitoring of ambient outdoor air quality in the County Borough and results of this monitoring are compared against health based Air Quality Objectives. The monitoring network is regularly reviewed to determine the most relevant locations to monitor, with regards to statutory guidance, previous assessments

and local knowledge. The monitoring has demonstrated that the vast majority of the County Borough experiences good air quality, with the areas of poor air quality being highly localised. A copy of the latest Air Quality Progress Report is available on the Council website.

Within the County Borough it has been acknowledged that Nitrogen Dioxide, an air pollutant often associated with road traffic emissions, can be elevated in some discrete locations. This is dictated by the volume of traffic, proximity of buildings/people, climate, topography of the area and the surrounding built environment. It is understood that the A470 can represent a significant source of locally experienced Nitrogen Dioxide along various parts of its length, however, a number of factors may affect its manifestation and dispersion. Therefore not all communities along the length of the A470 experience similar levels of Nitrogen Dioxide or are at risk of non-compliance with an Air Quality Objective. The Local Authority has identified three discreet areas, Cilfynydd (174 properties), Nightingales Bush (11 properties) and Treforest (8 properties) where the close proximity to the A470, the environment and topography of the area, have been significant factors in the need to declare associated Air Quality Management Areas. These three Air Quality Management Areas associated with the A470 all have resident populations in built up areas within 10-15 metres from the A470.

There is statutory guidance which has been utilised by the Local Authority to plan the required monitoring network in Rhondda Cynon Taf since 1998 and it assists with establishing the likelihood of compliance to an Air Quality Objective at a specific location. The current Guidance (Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance .TG16) implies that at locations such as Pontypridd High School, where members of the public/students would congregate beyond 20m from the used area of a major strategic road ( the A470), they are likely to be compliant with Air Quality Objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide. There are other local factors, such as traffic flow, wind direction and topography of the area, which would also be taken into account when assessing air quality at this location. This area of the A470 has a relative free flow of traffic, compared to other more congested areas and the school is positioned on the windward side of the prevailing wind, with the wind commonly blowing in the direction to the opposite side of the A470 at this location. In addition the A470 is situated at a slightly higher elevation to the area occupied by Pontypridd High School, as a result it would benefit from improved dispersal in comparison to areas with a built environment in close proximity and directly adjacent or above the A470.

Therefore in line with statutory guidance and knowledge of the local area outlined above, no monitoring has been undertaken at Pontypridd High School, as it was not deemed to be at risk of breaching the relevant Air Quality Objective. However, to provide reassurance, a monitoring device has been set up at a potential worse case location on the campus since December 2018, to obtain the required air quality data, to enable the results to be compared against the annual Air Quality Objective for Nitrogen Dioxide.

**Nowhere in the consultation document or in the report that went to Cabinet were there estimated figures on the costs that would be incurred by this Council to improve the safety of both the roads and walking routes near the proposed schools, even though the report acknowledged such work would be required. For example, the walking route between Cilfynydd and the Pontypridd High School site would require work to ensure that the walking route is safe for children aged 3-11, yet there were no estimated costs provided. How did the Cabinet meet its obligation of ensuring that taxpayers' money is well spent when they didn't even request the full estimated costs of these proposals?**

Response: If the proposals are to proceed, then a review of this walking route will be commissioned to ensure the safety of pupils. This review will include an independent assessment of the route, and any recommendations made by the independent assessor will be implemented. No costs are available as this assessment has not yet been carried out.

Undertaking this specialist survey work can be a costly and so to ensure that taxpayers money is well spent, these assessments will be undertaken once a decision on the proposals are made.

All avenues to secure external grant monies will be explored to fund this work. The Council was successful in securing funding from the Welsh Government to deliver a number of the 'safe routes in the community' schemes that have been delivered to complement the Rhondda school organisation proposals.

**The proposed closure of Cilfynydd primary will mean a huge increase in cars travelling back and fore to the high school site as the roads are too dangerous for children to cross safely. Children should be able to walk to school safely - this will not be the case for our youngest pupils.**

**There has been no due consideration been given to road safety.**

**Busy road through Cilfynydd – people travelling from North of Cilfynydd, bypass slow moving A470 by cutting through village. Primary age children expected to cross this busy road. Some pavements leading to the school are narrow and because roads are also narrow have cars approaching very close to the pavement edge – High school children have had accidents – some unrecorded.**

Response: If the proposals are to proceed, then a review of this walking route will be commissioned to ensure the safety of pupils. This review will include an independent assessment of the route, and any recommendations made by the independent assessor will be implemented.

**There is currently, as the report made clear, a great number of surplus places at both Pontypridd High and Hawthorn High, however, even after these proposals there will continue to be considerable surplus capacity at both locations, leading to doubts over whether simply removing the sixth forms at these locations will actually resolve the situation of both schools running a deficit. If reducing surplus capacity is one of the key**

**objectives of the Council, the Council should explore a range of options to see how this could best be achieved, rather than proposing just one option.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**There's little evidence that "super schools" work for students or for teachers. By moving the children into larger schools we place more pressure on teachers, families, have to spend more time each day traveling to school, and - most importantly - we lose important one-to-one attention that is made possible with smaller classes.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**It will be much harder for parents to raise issues have a say in their child's education when dealing with a big organisation rather than a smaller local school.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**Awful idea with no consideration for the wellbeing of children. The upheaval for some children with hidden disabilities (ASD, ADHD etc.) will be too much and may extremely detrimental to their education.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**With respect to the 11 /16 year olds they would lose their role models in the 6th.which could reduce their determination and attitude to achieve that higher grade.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**Young children developed not only academically but need a secure, safe environment that is proud of its heritage and nurtures its pupils. Myself and my own children attended Cilfynydd Primary School and we all benefitted from an excellent education and we are all proud of our school. Professionally I have experience of the quality of the young individuals that this school has produced.**

Response: This is acknowledged. These priorities are what the Council aims to deliver through its 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Programme. The proposed new school will aim to deliver continuity in learning, teaching and the high standards achieved to date.

**In many of the areas where schools are going to be closed the schools are a big part of the community and the closure will have a negative impact locally.**

**The school is at the heart of the village community, a village that has lost many its amenities, its library, many shops, chapels and public houses. This closure would have an impact far bigger than the closure of a building, its impact will have serious consequences which cannot be undervalued.**

Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for all proposals, and the reports formed a part of the Consultation documentation. Estyn considers these assessments to be appropriate.

**This is a terrible, terrible idea. It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.**

Response: Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**It is a bad idea to have infants in the same school as teenage children because of the negative and inappropriate behaviour they will be exposed to.**

**Bullying and influences from older children: The profanity which I hear from High School students, when they walk to and from school, is absolutely disgusting. It shocks me to think of primary aged children walking alongside this.**

**Response:** Provided above. Duplicate objection.

**Hysbysiad Statudol 4: Cau Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton ac Ysgol Gynradd Heol Y Celyn a creu Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg newydd**

**Statutory Notice 4: The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton and Heol Y Celyn Primary School and the opening of a new Welsh Medium Community Primary School**

**Thema: Problemau Ymarferol/Lleoliad**

**Theme: Logistical Issues/Location**

**We have repeatedly called for RCT to consider alternative sites for the relocation of YGG PSN. We welcome the investment into Welsh education and we agree that the current facilities at PSN are not adequate for 21<sup>st</sup> Century education. However we have strongly urged RCT to revisit the proposals and consider a site within the current catchment area of the school. We have suggested an alternative site in Glyncoch; we submitted several Freedom of Information Requests regarding its availability and the response was that there were no current plans for this site. We have also suggested keeping the current site at PSN for a smaller number of pupils and renovating the exiting site to meet 21st Century facility expectations. Thus, splitting the current number of pupils between the current site and the alternative site in Glyncoch there by providing all pupils with accessible Welsh medium education within their communities. When asked at the Consultation event at Heol y Celyn, RCT education staff admitted no alternative sites had been considered, as it was deemed 'unnecessary'. How can transporting 300 pupils out of their communities and across town to access Welsh Medium education possibly be the only option considered by RCT? Furthermore when we raised the Glyncoch site at the Cabinet meeting the Chairman stated that there were already plans for this site, which wholly contradict the FOI responses we had. There is an alarming lack of transparency and accountability to this whole process.**

**It's hard enough for Children in these areas to break out of the poverty cycle. Having close accessible schools which give the choice of welsh language is a human right for these children.**

**Families who have sought to give their children Welsh Medium Education feel they are being discriminated against by their County Borough Council. There are nine English medium primary schools in Pontypridd. Rather than increase the current three Welsh medium sites to offer more access to Welsh education RCT CBC are removing YGG PSN from the North of Pontypridd and expecting 300 children – as young as three years old - to travel up to six miles to access Welsh medium education. How is this a fair provision?**

**Parents have suggested an alternative site in Glyncoch; Several Freedom of Information Requests were submitted regarding its availability and the response was that there were no current plans for this site. We have also suggested keeping the current site at Pont Sion Norton for a smaller number of pupils and renovating the exiting site to meet 21st Century facility expectations as already done at Trerobart Primary School. By splitting the current number of pupils between the current site and the alternative site**

**in Glyncoch RCTCBC would provide all pupils with accessible Welsh medium education within their communities. However, when the proposal for the Glyncoch site was raised at the Cabinet meeting the Chairman stated that there were already plans for this site. This totally contradicts the FOI responses received. There is a serious lack of transparency and accountability to this whole process.**

**With Nursery education not guaranteed as full time, parents from Ynysybwl, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch and Cilfynydd are unlikely to even consider the proposed school as an option. Children in part time education are not entitled to free transport. Does this council really believe that parents/ grandparents/ carers will be able to access the new school easily if they have to travel over 24 miles daily? Without transport parents will have to rely on public transport to access the school – does this council seriously believe that this is in the best interests and well-being of our youngest children? The truth is that parents will find it difficult to access the new school especially without transport and relying on public transport. This will mean that in all probability parents will send their children to their nearest local school – an English medium school.**

**Many children from North Pontypridd will be unable to access breakfast clubs or after school clubs because of travel issues and cost.**

**The welfare of the children - please take time to think how this move will affect our children. We are facing a precipice of mental health problems in the uk. How do you expect me to explain to an already anxious child that the school we have excitedly been introducing him to and explaining how close it is to our house will have to at some point move to another, larger school in a completely different area. Yes some of his friends will be moving as well, however, this will not stop the worry and anxiety of integrating him into another environment.**

**I object to Heol y Celyn being chosen as an appropriate school site for the traditional Pont Siôn Norton catchment communities.**

**Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod Heol y Celyn wedi ei ddewis fel safle ysgol addas ar gyfer y cymunedau sy'n bwydo ysgol Pont Siôn Norton yn draddodiadol.**

**I object to logistical barriers being put in place resulting in the poorest communities having their Welsh medium education effectively withdrawn.**

**Rwy'n gwrthwynebu i'r rhwysyrau ymarferol sy'n cael eu gorfodi sy'n golygu y bydd ein cymunedau tlotaf yn cael eu hamddifadu o addysg Gymraeg.**

**I object due to the fact that at the meeting the CEO stated that wrap around care would be available for children in part time placements at the children's centre. I have noted that the Meithrin situated there does not offer wrap around care. Also, not all pupils are entitled to wrap around care and with the facility catering for children from Rhydyfelin, there is hardly likely to be sufficient space to cater for demand. There was no mention of this in published report. The proposed 60 Meithrin places is also a fallacy as in your own document it states that these places will be dual language. Thus, ensuring that nursery age children in the Rhydyfelin area will not have to travel to Hawthorn for their first years in school. This will obviously limit the number of places available for Welsh medium placements with children from North Pontypridd the most likely to suffer as they are furthest from the area.**

Ymateb: Mae Trefniadaeth Ysgolion a Phroses Derbyn Disgyblion yn cael eu gweinyddu trwy Godau Statudol ac maen nhw'n ofynnol o dan Ddeddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013. Rydyn ni'n gwneud yn siwr bod ein holl weithdrefnu yn unol â'r cod yma sy'n sicrhau diwydrwydd fel nad ydyn nhw'n anffafrio unrhyw ddisgybl na'n gwahaniaethu yn ei erbyn. Cafodd yr ymgynghoriad yma ei gynnal yn unol â'r cod yma. Mae cyfnod pontio ystyrllon a llwyddiannus yn rhan annatod o sicrhau bod disgyblion yn ymgartrefu yn eu hysgolion newydd gyda chyn lleied o darfu ar eu haddysg a'u lles. Bydd yr Awdurdod Lleol yn cynnig cyngor a chymorth i bob ysgol sydd wedi'i heffeithio i sicrhau bod y broses bontio mor ddi-dor â phosibl ar gyfer y disgyblion.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi derbyn nifer o Geisiadau am Wybodaeth ers i'r broses ymgynghori ddechrau, roedden nhw'n gofyn am wybodaeth am y safleoedd eraill yn ardal Pontypridd. Mewn ymateb i'r ceisiadau yma, cadarnhaodd y Cyngor y bydd adolygiadau trefnu ysgolion a dalgylchoedd pellach yn cael eu cynnal yn y dyfodol agos. Mae argaeledd y safleoedd yma yn darparu opsiynau i hwyluso'r broses yma, felly bydd y safleoedd yma yn cael eu cadw at y diben yma.

Does dim rhwystrau ymarferol wedi'u rhoi yn eu lle mewn perthynas â'r cynigion yma. Mae bron i 70% o'r disgyblion sy'n mynd i YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn defnyddio Cludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol. Byddai lleoliad yr ysgol newydd yn Rhydfelen yn golygu y bydd 100% o'r disgyblion yma sydd yn nalgylch YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn gymwys am gludiant am ddim o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol. Felly fydd dim newid i'r rhan fwyaf o ddisgyblion YGG Pont Siôn Norton o ran manteisio ar glybiau ysgol a gweithgareddau allgyrsiol. Mae'n gyffredin i ddisgyblion addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg gael eu cludo i'r ysgol ac mae modd i fanteisio ar weithgareddau cyn/ar ôl yr ysgol fod yn heriol yn yr achosion yma.

Cyfrifoldeb yr ysgolion unigol yw darpariaeth clybiau brechwast a gweithgareddau ar ôl ysgol. Er bod y gweithgareddau yma yn bwysig, dylid nodi nad yw gweithgareddau cyn ac ar ôl ysgol yn ofyniad statudol. Dydy pob ysgol sydd wedi'i heffeithio gan y cynigion ddim yn cynnig darpariaeth ar ôl ysgol ar hyn o bryd, felly bydd y cynigion yn cynnwys cynlluniau i wella darpariaeth clybiau brechwast a chlybiau ar ôl ysgol, gan gynnwys manteisio ar gyfleusterau chwarae yn yr awyr agored, neuaddau chwaraeon, manau cymdeithasol a chaeau chwarae. Bydd gan yr ysgolion newydd gyfleusterau gwell o lawer a rhagor o gyfleoedd o ran clybiau ar ôl ysgol, a bydd modd i'r gymuned ddefnyddio'r adeiladau. Mae tystiolaeth glir o hyn yn Rhaglenni Moderneiddio Ysgolion ac Addysg yr 21ain Ganrif Band A. Bydd darpariaeth addysg anstatudol yn cael ei gwella trwy sefydlu'r ysgol newydd yma. Mae hyn yn golygu bydd cyfleoedd gwell i hwyluso cynhwysiant cymdeithasol a'i gynyddu.

Mae Cylch Meithrin Rhydfelen yn cynnig gofal cofleidiol a bydd yr ysgol newydd yn cynnig rhagor o gyfleoedd i'r ddarpariaeth yma dyfu, ac i'r Meithrin gydweithio â'r ysgol newydd. Fydd darpariaeth feithrin yn yr ysgol newydd ddim yn ddwyieithog, bydd hi'n gyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae ysgolion cynradd presennol Heol-y-celyn a Phont Siôn Norton yn cynnig darpariaeth feithrin llawn amser ond does dim rheswm i ddisgwyl newidiadau i'r

ddarpariaeth yma yn yr ysgol newydd. Y corff llywodraethu sy'n gwneud penderfyniadau mewn perthynas â hyd lleoliadau meithrin.

Response: School Organisation and School Admissions are administered through Statutory Codes and are requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. We ensure that all of our procedures are in line with this code which ensures we undertake due diligence so that no pupil is unfairly disadvantaged or discriminated against. This consultation has been carried out in accordance with this code. Meaningful and successful transition is an integral part of ensuring that pupils settle into their new school environments with little disruption to their education as well as their well-being. Advice and support will be provided by the Local Authority to all schools involved to ensure that the transition process is as smooth and seamless as possible for the pupils.

A number of Freedom of Information requests have been submitted to the Council, since the consultation process began, which asked for information on alternative sites within the Pontypridd area. In response to these requests, the Council confirmed that further school organisation and catchment reviews will be undertaken in the near future and so the availability of these sites provide options to facilitate this process and so these sites will be retained for this purpose.

No logistical barriers have been put in place with regard to these proposals. Nearly 70% of the pupils that currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton currently use Home to School Transport, and the location of the new school in Rhydyfelin would enable 100% of those pupils currently within the catchment of YGG Pont Sion Norton to qualify for free Home to School transport. Therefore, for the vast majority of pupils attending YGG Pont Sion Norton access to school clubs and extra-curricular activities will remain unchanged. It is common for learners accessing Welsh Medium education to be transported to and from school and access to before/after school activities can be a challenge in these cases.

The provision of breakfast clubs and after-school activities are the responsibility of the individual schools and whilst these activities are important it should be noted that pre and post school activities are not a statutory requirement. Not all schools affected by these proposals offer after-school provisions currently, so these proposals will include plans to enhance the breakfast club and after school provision, including access to improved outdoor play facilities, sports halls, social spaces and playing fields. The new schools will have significantly improved facilities and many more opportunities for after-school clubs and community use of the buildings will be available. This is clearly evidenced from Band A 21st Century School and Education Modernisation Programmes. There will be an improvement of the non-statutory education provision delivered through the realisation of this new school, and therefore greater opportunities to facilitate and increase social inclusion.

Cylch Meithrin Rhydyfelin does offer wrap around care and the new school will offer more opportunities for this provision to grow, and more opportunities for the Meithrin to work

more collaboratively with the school. The nursery provision in the new school will not be dual language, it will be Welsh medium. The current Heol Y Celyn Primary School and YGG Pont Sion Norton both offer full-time nursery provision and there is no reason to expect changes in this provision in the new school. Decisions relating to the duration of nursery placements is a governing body consideration.

**Thema: Effaith ar Gludiant, ar Deithio ac ar yr Amgylchedd**

**Theme: Transport, Travel and Environmental Impact**

**At the Cabinet meeting Cllr Geraint Hopkins stated that children from these communities (Ynysybwl, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch) already travel by bus to PSN so it will be no different. We respectfully submit it is a backward view to say ‘they travel anyway – let them travel further’ In the current socio-environmental climate local authorities have a duty to make school transport cleaner and more sustainable.**

**RCT’s proposed closure and relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton will inadvertently cause Welsh Medium education in North Pontypridd to become a privilege for the few rather than a provision for all. These proposed changes will place impossible logistical barriers for families who rely on public transport, leaving parents no option other than choose the local school – which will be English medium. Parents are already telling us this is what they will have to do. RCT is in effect withdrawing accessible Welsh medium education from some of the poorest communities in Pontypridd.**

**Councillors similarly raised many concerns regarding the additional travel necessary to reach the Heol y Celyn site which RCT Education staff repeatedly denied on a specific technicality. Namely that the morning buses have to travel up the A470 to then travel south towards PSN to be on the left-hand side of the road for the children to safely dismount. This blatant avoidance of the truth raised shouts of opposition from the public gallery. The fact that parents will not be able to access to the proposed school site unless they have a car has been utterly ignored. Parents, carers and grandparents relying on public transport could face up to a two-hour round trip in the event of a sick child or a special event; ‘One car families’ where the parent in work needs the car will be in the same predicament. Parental engagement in children’s education is essential for the wellbeing of the child yet this aspect of the relocation was deliberately overlooked at the Cabinet and Scrutiny meeting.**

**The proposal that travel time to and from the new school will be shorter is not true. The travel time to the new school is based on children travelling down Holly Street which means that children will disembark on the opposite side from the school. This is against the policy of ensuring children’s safety by ensuring they disembark on the school side (which is the reason buses presently go up the A470), so there would have to be an addition to the route to ensure the safety of the children and so a longer journey.**

**Rwy’n gwrthwynebu i’r rhwystrau ymarferol sy’n cael eu gorfodi ar rieni sy’n golygu y bydd ein cymunedau tlotaf yn cael eu hamddifadu o addysg Gymraeg oherwydd na all rhieni fforddio y gost o gyrraedd eu plant yn ystod y dydd heb orfod dal hyd at 2-3 o fysis. Rwy’n gwrthwynebu na fydd y teuluoedd hyn yn gallu elwa ar ddarpariaeth gweithgareddau y tu allan i oriau ysgol fel clybiau brecwast a chlybiau ol-ysgol oherwydd na allent fforddio i gludo eu plant yno ar drafnidiaeth gyhoeddus os nad oes gan y teulu gar.**

I live in Glyncoch and take my children to school because of bullying by older children on the bus. I will not put them on a bus and in that position again. I take my children to school and go straight to work. Being so close allows me to do so. If you relocate so far away I will not be able to manage to get my children to school on time and I will be late for work. The area is already heavily congested and doesn't need any more traffic. Either I won't be able to continue my employment or you will be denying my children their right to education in the Welsh language locally.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu tynnu cyfle sydd yn annodd nawr oherwydd y pellter allan o cymuned Ynysybwl yn mynd o ddrwg i wawth gan ychwanegu i'r pellter sydd yn 'obstruction' nawr i rhai rhienni; i gael ein hysgol gynradd yn Heol y Celyn sydd yn tynnu'r dewis o rhienni Ynysybwl o gael addysg trwy Gymraeg i plant y dyfodol. Warthus!

For the children of Ynysybwl this will mean a longer and more arduous school day, as the new proposed Rhydyfelin site will mean that children as young as three will need to travel to and from school through two of the most traffic congested areas in Rhondda Cynon Taff at peak times of the day.

Although the distance of the new school may not look too far on paper or in a car, when you are relying on public transport, as I am, it is a significant distance and cost. I went to a birthday party at the Ilan Centre in Rhydyfelin on Saturday which is just up from the proposed school site and it cost me £4 and took over an hour. If my child wants to take part in any after school activities, I will need to do that journey every week, and I will need to pay for her too as she will soon be over 5. If there is a parents evening, I will need to do the same journey. If I want to be involved in the PTA and support the school I will need to do that journey. If she makes friends with children who live close to the school and wants to go and play after school, I will need to do that journey. What is a fairly simple trip if you have car will actually have a huge impact on our lives without the use of one. For this reason I will choose to move her to a local school rather than continue with Welsh medium education which is a huge disappointment, especially as I have started going to a Welsh class at the school in order to support her education and Welsh is beginning to become a part of our lives.

At present the time from YGG Pont Sion Norton to communities in North Pontypridd is much shorter than time taken to get there. So, the Council's transport time argument is invalid.

I object to children as young as three being bussed up to 6 miles away from their community to access Welsh medium education.

Rwy'n gwrthwynebu fod plant mor ifanc â thair blwydd oed yn teithio ar fws hyd at chwe milltir i ffwrdd o'u cymunedau er mwyn gallu derbyn addysg Gymraeg

I am angry at the prospect of being forced to send my daughter on a bus for 30-45 minutes at the start and at the end of the school day in order for her to access Welsh medium education. How can that, in any way you dress it up, be a good thing for her?? It's absurd. We won't do it. So we will be forced to take her out of school, uproot her from friendships and move her to a local English medium school, outside our village but a walkable distance.

I object to 5 or 6 extra busses going through Pontypridd town at the busiest times of day. Are we not in a Climate Emergency?

<b>Rwy'n gwrthwynebu bod 5 neu 6 o fysus ychwanegol yn mynd i orfod teithio drwy dref Pontypridd ar yr amseroedd prysuraf o'r dydd. Onid ydym wedi datgan Argyfwng o ran yr Hinsawdd?</b>
<b>Also the amount of traffic at the moment around the schools during the school run times are already bad. The a470 has also been reduced to 50mph between Pontypridd and nantgarw to try reduce the pollution so by bringing more traffic into the Rhydyfelin area is going to cause more pollution and disruption the roads and local people.</b>
<b>I'm a resident on Holly street Rhydyfelin, and find the prospect of increased traffic abhorrent. There is already carnage twice a day, which forces traffic into heavily pedestrian areas other than Holly street. Increases in fumes from heavy fuel consuming buses, on an already busy bus route is madness. I fear that money and very little common sense is the reason for this decision and disagree totally with these plans.</b>
<b>I am writing this email to express my concerns of Heol-y-Celyn primary school being turned in to a Welsh only school. Firstly this will affect are community due to the higher volume of traffic that is going to be in holly street, it is already a very bad road to be on during school run hours and this is with only local residents attending Heol-y-Celyn.</b>
<b>I would not want my young children on such a long bus ride. Although children currently do attend by bus the journey is not as long. Also the consultation didn't take into account the traffic to get to Rhydfelin at that time of day would make the bus journey even longer.</b>
<b>On paper it doesn't look far but with traffic I can assure you it takes forever. Children leave at 8am as it us and aren't home before 4.15 if mine went to Heol y Celyn they'd be leaving at 7.30 and home by 4.30 when they could easily build a school a lot closer.</b>
<b>The higher volume of traffic through the busses and car will also affect the environment due to the higher volume of emissions from the traffic.</b>
<b>While I've got no issues regarding the actual school becoming a Welsh only school, what does concern myself and most of the residents of Holly Street is the increased school transport and the many parents who are looking for parking spaces during the school run.</b>
<b>Increasing the school pupils to over 500+ will create even more issues with the above concerns unless something is done, drop off/pick up points within the school grounds, Holly Street being made one way from main gates to Dyffryn Road hill and Oak Street being made one way from Dyffryn Road hill to Beechwood Street etc</b>
<b>I object to RCT's decision to move forward with the 21st century schools reorganisation in Pontypridd as my children are due to start pont-sion Norton in sept this year and September next year, my older children and myself went to this welsh school , I think it's unfair for there to be so many English schools within a certain distance and our children will have to travel near enough ten miles to school and from school</b>
<b>I heavily object to Heol-y-Celyn being chosen as a school site for the traditional Pont Siôn Norton communities. I attended a protest march with protesters against the distance of the catchment area last month. It is far too far and secluded for any children to walk unaccompanied and on a regular basis.</b>
<b>It means that children will have to travel further to get to school which takes more of their time and will lead to more pollution and stress from extra travel.</b>
<b>Maureen Webber has stated that none of her constituents in Rhydyfelin are objecting the location of the new school or our concerns about the transport repercussions that</b>

**will negatively affect the residents surrounding the proposed site, yet residents of Holly and Oak streets state that they were not consulted or informed of the likely impact of the proposals.**

**I object as the council have stated that there will be less distance travelled to the proposed new school site by virtue of fact that the current bus route to YGG Pont Sion Norton does not travel the shortest route so pupils are dropped off at the same side of the road as the school. Yet a Freedom Information request has revealed that no traffic survey has been completed for the proposed new school site and therefore no planned route. This survey has yet to consider the congested traffic that is around the Pontypridd area or the actual distance a bus will travel and the time of this journey is dropping the children off on the school side of the road.**

**No account appears to have been taken of this extra traffic. And RCT (along with other local authorities in Wales, and the Welsh Government) has a statutory obligation to promote active travel (Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, subsection 10(1)(a)). This does not appear to have been addressed as it is not mentioned in the Cabinet papers.**

**Pollution is already a major issue, impacting many schools such as Evan James. This will make it worse.**

Ymateb: Mae'r wybodaeth a gafodd ei chynnwys yn yr Adroddiad Ymgynghori mewn perthynas â'r cynnydd o ran pellter teithio yn nodi 'Rydyn ni'n cydnabod efallai bod hyn yn wir ar gyfer rhai disgyblion. Serch hynny, fydd mwyafrif y disgyblion ddim yn cael eu heffeithio oherwydd bod bron i 70% o'r disgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Siôn Norton ar hyn o bryd yn defnyddio'r gwasanaeth cludo disgyblion.

Bydd pellteroedd llwybrau bysiau ysgol y llwybrau newydd arfaethedig yn fyrrach na'r llwybrau bws ysgol presennol. Rydyn ni wedi cyfrifo'r llwybrau, a bydd y pellter cyffredinol cyfartalog ar gyfer y disgyblion hynny sydd eisoes yn defnyddio cludiant ysgol yn cael ei fyrhau ychydig o dros filltir y dydd.' Mae'r pellteroedd wedi'u nodi yn y tabl isod. Rydyn ni'n cydnabod bod modd i dagfeydd traffig achosi problemau i ddefnyddwyr ffyrdd ac effeithio ar gyfnodau teithio ar adegau penodol, ond dyma rywbeth sy'n anodd ei reoli.

Contract 163/01 – Terminws Ynys-y-bŵl	Milltired (am)	Milltired (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	10	5.5
Ysgol Gynradd Heol y Celyn (Arfaethedig)	7.1	7.3

Contract 163/02 – Ynys-y-bŵl / Coed y Cwm	Milltired (am)	Milltired (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	9.5	5
Ysgol Gynradd Heol-y-celyn (Arfaethedig)	6.6	6.8

Contract 163/03 – Glyn-coch	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
YGG Pont Siôn Norton (Presennol)	8.3	3.8
Ysgol Gynradd Heol-y-celyn (Arfaethedig)	5.4	5.6
	Milltiredd (am)	Milltiredd (pm)
Amrywiad – Pellter ar Gyfartaledd	-2.9	1.8

Bydd y disgyblion nad ydyn nhw'n teithio i YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar fws ar hyn o bryd gan eu bod nhw'n byw o fewn pellter cerdded y dalgylch sef 1 ½ milltir, yn gymwys am Gludiant o'r Cartref i'r Ysgol am ddim i'r ysgol newydd. Y pellaf y bydd angen i'r disgyblion yma deithio i'r ysgol newydd fydd 4.5 milltir i'r ysgol ac yn ôl.

Dyma gadarnhau llwybrau'r bysys sydd ar gael, mae bws uniongyrchol i Ysgol Gynradd Heol-y-celyn o ardal Glyn-coch. O ardaloedd Ynys-y-bŵl a Chilfynydd, bydd angen newid bws yng Ngorsaf Fysiau Pontypridd. Dydy hyn ddim yn wahanol i'r sefyllfa bresennol i rieni o ardaloedd Glyn-coch ac Ynys-y-bŵl. Ar hyn o bryd, rhaid i rieni o ardaloedd Glyn-coch ac Ynys-y-bŵl y mae angen iddyn nhw gyrraedd YGG Pont Siôn Norton mewn argyfwng, newid bws yng Ngorsaf Fysiau Pontypridd. Rydyn ni'n cydnabod y bydd y newidiadau yma yn effeithio ar rieni sy'n byw yng Nghilfynydd, ond bydd y sefyllfa bresennol yn parhau o safbwynt y rheiny sy'n byw yn y cymunedau eraill wedi'u nodi yn y gwrthwynebiadau.

Anaml iawn ddylai fod angen i gasglu plant mewn argyfwng. Mewn sefyllfa o'r fath, mae gan staff ysgol ddyletswydd o ofal a chyfrifoldeb i sicrhau bod gofal a lles pob plentyn o'r pwys mwyaf. Bydd pob ysgol yn sicrhau'r gofal perthnasol ar gyfer unrhyw ddisgybl sy'n teimlo'n sâl neu sydd wedi anghofio ei ginio. Yn amlwg, os bydd plentyn yn sâl iawn, bydd angen i deuluoedd wneud trefniadau i'w gasglu, ond yn anaml iawn ddylai fod sefyllfaoedd o'r fath. O ran presenoldeb mewn clybiau brecwast/clybiau ar ôl ysgol, cyfrifoldeb y rhieni a gwarcheidwaid yw gollwng a chasglu eu plant. Mae hyn yr un peth â'r ddarpariaeth bresennol yn YGG Pont Siôn Norton a phob ysgol yn yr Awdurdod.

Mewn perthynas â'r gwrthwynebiadau sy'n gysylltiedig ag oedran ifanc disgyblion y mae disgwyl iddyn nhw deithio ar fws i'r ysgol Gymraeg newydd, dyma'r sefyllfa bresennol ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Mae RhCT yn brofiadol o ran darparu cludiant diogel i ddisgyblion o 3 oed, ac mae'r gwasanaeth yn cael ei ddarparu yn unol â'r Polisi Cludiant Ysgol. Mae'r Cyngor yn cludo dros 2,000 o ddisgyblion oedran cynradd i'w hysgolion, mae dros 250 o'r rhain yn eu blwyddyn gyntaf yn yr ysgol (3-4 oed). Mae holl gontractau ysgolion cynradd yn cael eu cyflawni gan yrwyr a chynorthwyrwyr teithwyr sydd wedi'u gwirio gan y Gwasanaeth Datgelu a Gwahardd. Mae diogelwch a lles ein disgyblion o'r pwys mwyaf i ni ar bob adeg. Fydd dim newid i drefniadau 69% o ddisgyblion sy'n mynd i

YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar gludiant ysgol ar hyn o bryd. Bydd effaith ar y plant sy'n byw o fewn pellter cerdded dalgylch YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn unig, ac rydyn ni'n cydnabod hyn.

Rydyn ni hefyd yn cydnabod y bydd cynnydd yn nifer y bysiau ysgol sy'n mynd i'r ysgol newydd yn Rhydfelen. Bydd cais cynllunio yn cael ei gyflwyno ar gyfer yr ysgol newydd, ac yn rhan o'r broses yma, bydd Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig yn cael ei gynnal gan ganolbwyntio ar yr ardal uniongyrchol a'r ardal gyfagos. Bydd yr asesiad yma yn edrych ar y briffordd bresennol ac asesu effaith unrhyw gynnydd yn nifer y bysiau ysgol ar y briffordd ac ar lwybau i gerddwyr a beicwyr. Bydd yr adroddiad yma yn cynnwys argymhellion mewn perthynas â gwella seilwaith presennol priffordd, yn ogystal â chynnwys mesurau diogelwch i gerddwyr megis mentrau arafu traffig neu fannau croesi ychwanegol i gerddwyr, ac ati. Yn rhan o gynlluniau Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif eraill, mae mesurau wedi cael eu rhoi ar waith, gan gynnwys llefydd parcio ychwanegol ar y safle, manau gollwng i fysiau ar safle'r ysgol a manau troi. Byddwn ni'n sicrhau bod mesurau priodol yn cael eu rhoi ar waith mewn unrhyw ddatblygiad newydd.

Mae'r awdurdod lleol yn cynnal gwaith monitro ac adolygu ansawdd aer i wirio cydymffurfiaid ag Amcanion Ansawdd Aer statudol wedi'u gosod gan lywodraeth genedlaethol i amddiffyn iechyd y cyhoedd. Bydd gwybodaeth ynglŷn ag Ansawdd Aer a'r effaith ar breswylwyr yn cael ei chynnwys yn yr Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig fel sydd wedi'i nodi uchod. I'r gwrthwyneb, dylai'r problemau o ran tagfeydd yn ardal YGG Pont Siôn Norton wella.

Cafodd yr ymgynghoriad ei gynnal yn unol â deddfwriaeth Llywodraeth Cymru, sydd wedi'i hamlinellu yn ei Chod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion statudol. Rydyn ni wedi ymgynghori â'r holl bobl y mae angen ymgynghori â nhw o dan y Cod yma. Doedden ni ddim wedi ymgynghori â phreswylwyr Ysgol Gynradd bresennol Heol-y-celyn yn Rhydfelen yn rhan o'r cynigion yma gan eu bod nhw'n canolbwyntio ar drefniadaeth ysgolion yn unig, felly dydy'r ysgol ddim yn un o'r rhai statudol y mae angen ymgynghori â nhw. Serch hynny, mae'r ddogfen ymgynghori wedi cael ei chyhoeddi ar wefan y Cyngor ac mae modd i unrhyw â diddordeb weld manylion y cynnig a gwneud sylwadau fel y bo'n berthnasol.

Rhaid nodi bod y broses ymgynghori statudol sy'n cael ei chynnal yn berthnasol i gynigion y Cyngor i ad-drefnu ysgolion yn ardal Pontypridd. Dydy hi ddim yn ymgynghoriad ar adeiladu adeilad newydd. Os bydd y cynnig yn symud ymlaen, bydd ymgynghoriad pellach yn cael ei gynnal â'r gymuned leol, gan gynnwys yr hyn sy'n ofynnol o dan Ddeddf Cynllunio Gwlad a Thref, fydd yn cynnwys preswylwyr yr ysgol arfaethedig newydd. Bydd yr Asesiadau o'r Effaith ar Draffig wedi'u nodi uchod yn rhan o'r arolygon ac asesiadau y bydd angen eu cynnal yn unol â'r cais cynllunio statudol y bydd angen ei gyflwyno.

Response: The information that was included in the Consultation Report in relation to the increase in travel distances states, 'It is acknowledged that this may well be the case for some pupils, however the majority of pupils will be unaffected as nearly 70% of pupils currently attending YGG Pont Sion Norton do so utilising school transport.'

The school bus route distances of the new routes proposed will be shorter than the current school bus routes travelled. The Transport Unit have calculated the routes, and the average overall distance travelled for those pupils who already use school transport will be shortened by just over 1 mile per day.' The actual distances are recorded in the table below. It is acknowledged that traffic congestion can cause issues for all road users and impact on travel times at certain times of the day, however this is something that can be difficult to control.

Contract 163/01 - Ynysybwl Terminus	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pontsionnorton (Current)	10	5.5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	7.1	7.3

Contract 163/02 - Ynysybwl / Coed y Cwm	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	9.5	5
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	6.6	6.8

Contract 163/03 - Glyncoch	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
YGG Pont Sion Norton (Current)	8.3	3.8
Heol y Celyn Primary (Proposed)	5.4	5.6
	AM Mileage	PM Mileage
Average Overall Distance Variation	-2.9	1.8

Those pupils who currently do not travel to YGG Pont Sion Norton by bus, as they live within the 1 ½ mile in-catchment walking distance, will qualify for free Home to School Transport to the new school. The furthest that these pupils will have to travel to school will be 4.5 miles each way to the new school.

To confirm the available service bus routes, there is a direct bus to Heol Y Celyn from Glyncoch, but from Ynysybwl and Cilfynydd it would require a change of bus in Pontypridd Bus Station which is no different to the current situation for parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. Currently parents from Glyncoch and Ynysybwl needing to attend YGG Pont Sion Norton in an emergency via public transport are currently required to change buses at Pontypridd Bus Station. It is recognised that these changes will affect parents who live in Cilfynydd but for those that live in the other communities referenced in the objections the status quo will be maintained.

The need for emergency collections should be infrequent. In any event, all school staff have a duty of care and a responsibility to ensure that the care and wellbeing of all pupils is paramount. Every school will ensure that any learner who feels unwell or who has forgotten their lunch will be appropriately cared for. Clearly, if a child is very unwell then

families will have to make arrangements for collections but incidents of this nature should be infrequent. For attendance at breakfast/after school clubs, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to facilitate drop offs and collections, which is the same as the current provision at YGG Pont Sion Norton and all schools within the Authority.

In relation to the objections associated with the young age of the pupils that will be expected to travel on the bus to the new Welsh school, this is currently the situation across the County Borough. RCT is experienced in providing safe transport for pupils upwards from the age of 3, and this service is provided in line with the School Transport Policy. The Council currently transports over 2,000 primary age pupils to school, of which over 250 are in their first year of school (aged 3-4). All primary school contracts are operated by drivers and passenger assistants that have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount to us at all times. To reiterate, for the 69% of pupils that currently attend YGG Pont Sion Norton via school transport there will be no change to their transport arrangements. It is only the children that currently live within the 1 ½ mile walking distance of YGG Pont Sion Norton that will be affected by these changes and this is acknowledged.

It is recognised that there will be an increase in the number of school buses attending the new school in Rhydyfelin. A planning application will be submitted specifically for the new school, and as a part of this process a Traffic Impact Assessment will be undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will look at the current capacity of the highway and also assess the impact of any increase in traffic flow, including the increase in school buses, on the highway, pedestrian and cycling routes. This report will contain recommendations in relation to improving the existing highway infrastructure as well as incorporating pedestrian safety measures such as traffic calming initiatives or additional pedestrian crossing points etc. As part of other 21<sup>st</sup> Century School schemes measures have been put in place including additional on-site parking, dedicated drop off zones for buses within the school site and turning circles. Due consideration will be given to ensuring that appropriate measures are put in place on any new development.

The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above. Conversely, the traffic congestion issues in and around YGG Pont Sion Norton in Cilfynydd should improve.

The consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory School Organisation Code. All persons who are required to be consulted with under this Code have been consulted with. Residents of the current Heol Y Celyn Primary School in Rhydyfelin were not consulted with as a part of these proposals as they solely focus on school reorganisation and as such, they are not

one of the statutory consultees. However, the consultation documentation has been published on the Council website and any interested person could have viewed the details of the proposal and comment as deemed appropriate.

It must be noted that the statutory consultation process being undertaken relates to the Council's proposals to reorganise schools in the Pontypridd area and it is not a consultation on the construction of a new building. If this proposal does proceed, further consultation will be undertaken with the local community, including that required under the Town and Country Planning Act, which will include residents of the new school proposed. The Traffic Impact Assessments mentioned above will form a part of the surveys and assessments that will need to be undertaken in accordance with the statutory planning application that will need to be submitted.

**Thema: Cydymffurfio a Gweithdrefnau**

**Theme: Compliance and Procedure**

**There was no meeting for parents held at YGG PSN, instead the meeting was held at the proposed site which was impossible for most parents to attend. The meeting was held between 4pm-6pm, therefore many working parents could not attend. Being two bus journeys away from our communities, parents who rely on public transport could not attend. The RCT Education representatives at the meeting could not answer our questions regarding the added distance children would be expected to travel and had no knowledge of the extreme traffic build up that occurs around Pontypridd town centre during school run times. We were repeatedly told if we had concerns, we should make them known in the consultation questionnaire. As parents we left this meeting exasperated and angry at the lack of awareness displayed by the RCT Education staff.**

**125 questionnaire responses agreed with the proposal to relocate YGG Pont Sion Norton, compared to 427 official responses against. 500 signatures on a petition submitted against the proposals were not recorded in the Consultation document. 13 out of 14 members of the public allowed to speak at the Cabinet meeting spoke against the proposals, two of whom spoke specifically against the relocation of YGG Pont Sion Norton to Heol y Celyn. Yet despite this overwhelming response from the public against the proposals they were passed by the Cabinet on March 21st as if there had never been any doubt.**

**A voting Cabinet member, Cllr Maureen Webber, is the Chair of governors at Heol y Celyn, the school earmarked to have millions of pounds of investment - How is this democratic? We submit that she had a vested interest in the passing of the proposal and should not have been allowed to vote.**

**The council did not ensure that all parents received a consultation document, they were not issued through the school and therefore not all parents were able to express an opinion. This council presumes that everyone has access to a computer and the internet - this is not the case.**

**This council is creating a two-tier Welsh education system in North Pontypridd while children in Rhydyfelin are given more opportunities to engage in Welsh medium education irrespective of distance or financial implication.**

<b>Ynysybwl is a rural community and RCT fails to recognise this and its distance from the proposed new school.</b>
<b>Children should be protected by The Future Generations Act to accessible education whether English or Welsh. It is discriminatory that RCT is placing logistical barriers for children from some of the poorest communities to access Welsh medium education.</b>
<b>How can a Cabinet that has totally ignored all objections in previous meetings or ensured that councillors answer relevant and important questions be entrusted to oversee fairly the objections raised. This cabinet has consistently refused to take time for proper discussion, To everyone on the outside, it is obvious that this Cabinet has no intention of allowing their decisions to be altered and therefore there will be no impartiality. This Cabinet has already made it intentions clear and once again I fear that this objection period is just a ‘paper exercise’ to meet legal requirements. These objections should be considered by an outside body.</b>
<b>RCT have chosen to ignore the views of the public.</b>
<b>There continues to be a complete failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation.</b>
<b>Despite the number of objections raised at cabinet meetings, council meetings, orally during other meetings, via petitions, via written submissions etc, no consideration nor serious discussions have taken place to answer the points raised.</b>
<b>Cabinet proposed the decision, yet it is the same people who scrutinised the decision to continue with the proposals and the same group of people to “consider” these objections.</b>
<b>There is a lack of transparency within RCT in regards to these proposals, no answers to questions posed despite cabinet and council giving opportunities to ask questions.</b>
<b>I object to the fact that cabinet can push through plans without consideration being given to any of the suggestions raised by the public.</b>
<b>I believe that the consultation process undertaken by RCT Council on the 21st Century Schools proposals for Pontypridd has left a great deal to be desired. Not only did fail to provide multiple options for parents to give their views on, it also failed to provide all the necessary information that you would expect to see in a consultation of this size and was set out in such a way that multiple proposals came under one question, preventing those filling-in the consultation from filling all of it in.</b>
<b>It is a great shame that this opportunity to invest £37million on improving education facilities in Pontypridd has turned into proposals that the parents and residents of Pontypridd don't want, this is clear from your own consultation. I therefore request that the Cabinet do not proceed with these proposals and instead consults again on a series of proposals for the future of education in Pontypridd, so that this £37million can be spent as effectively as it possibly can.</b>
<b>I object the proposals on the basis that RCT feel it is acceptable to risk my children’s education given that Estyn’s opinion is that at best it is hoped that the new school will achieve the same standards as YGG Pont Sion Norton – shouldn’t any proposals at least improve the outcomes for our children?</b>
<b>The decision to close YGG Pont Sion Norton and Heol y Celyn and create only one school on the Heol y Celyn site has been based on the fact that the other proposed education</b>

changes frees up this space – and that this decision therefore has clearly not been made with the welfare of our children/the education of our children/the future of the Welsh Language/the future of our children in mind.

**RCT has set out its wellbeing objectives and in particular the following:**

- **More involved and resilient communities... (The steps for this include: Build stronger partnerships with community groups; and Coordinate and improve the support it gives to communities.)**

- **Rhondda Cynon Taf’s schools will be amongst the best in the country, and with all children achieving the best they can.**

- **Rhondda Cynon Taf’s children and young people will receive a great start in life.**

**I would like RCT to show how your actions as part of the 21st century proposals meet these objectives and how are your actions in this case a reasonable step to meet the objectives and how have you have mitigated any negative impact you decision may have on the objectives.**

**The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act looks at the five ways of working. How has RCT Council demonstrated how they have taken these into account?**

Response: Our consultation has been conducted in accordance with Welsh Government legislation, which is outlined in their statutory code document 006/2013, the School Organisation Code. All persons who are required to be consulted with under this Code have indeed been consulted with.

Our consultation documentation has been published on the Council website and any interested person had the opportunity to view the details of the proposal and comment on it if they so wished. In addition, and in accordance with the Code, hard copies of the Consultation Document was distributed to all schools directly affected by the proposals, to distribute to parents and carers via ‘pupil mail’.

There is no requirement, as specified with the Code, for proposers to hold consultation meetings, or open evenings, with consultees. This is something that the Council undertook over and above what was required statutorily in order to encourage further collaboration and to be able to speak directly to consultees. In addition to the 16 meetings that were convened at each school directly affected by the proposals, 5 public drop-in sessions were also held throughout the Pontypridd area.

The Consultation Report listed the details of the consultation responses that were submitted during the consultation period. These included the number of questionnaires that were received, as well as a breakdown in the number of the general correspondence that was also submitted. Petitions are acknowledged as a singular response and or objection. The Report also confirmed that all responses were scrutinised by Cabinet prior to the meeting, so in addition to the summary of responses that was included within the Report, ALL consultation responses were provided to Cabinet in their entirety, prior to the Cabinet meeting.

As mentioned in one of the objections above, in terms of the numbers of consultation responses specifically in relation to Proposal 4, 125 people were 'for' the proposal, 427 people were 'against' the proposal, 333 people were 'unsure' and 1,283 chose not to respond. If we are to examine these figures in basic terms, just looking at those that chose to respond, 'for or 'against' then the split is 77:23, if those that responded with an 'unsure' are included in the calculations then less than 50% were 'against' the proposals, if all those that responded to the consultation are included in the calculations then less than 22% of respondents were 'against' the proposals. If we were to widen the scope of the consultees in terms of how many people were directly consulted with then the figures increase to the thousands, and then the percentage of those that were against the proposals becomes even lower.

The proceedings at the Cabinet meetings were carried out in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure contained in the Council's Constitution. In accordance with the Constitution, Cabinet Members must maintain objectivity in decision making. Cabinet Members were fully informed of the relevant issues before making their decision through the officer reports and afforded the opportunity to inspect all the Consultation responses received prior to consideration of the Consultation Report at the meeting itself. It is the Council's view that discussions relating to this proposal were open and honest and submissions made resulted in a thorough and robust debate on the proposals. The decisions of the Cabinet were reached through the democratic processes of the Council.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councillors must comply with the Member's Code of Conduct, contained within Part 5 (Codes and Protocols) of the Council's Constitution.

The Member's Code of Conduct requires a Member whilst carrying out their duties, to decide if they have a personal interest in an item of Council business and if so, whether they need to disclose it. The Code sets out when a Member will have a personal interest. A Member will have a personal interest where the business being considered relates to any body to which they have been elected, appointed or nominated by the Council. Therefore a Member who has been appointed by the Council as a Local Education Authority Governor will have a personal interest if the business being considered relates to the School to which they have been appointed.

Where a Member has a personal interest in any business of the Council and they attend a meeting at which that business is being considered a Member must disclose orally to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest before or at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

Where a Member has a personal interest in any business they will also have a prejudicial interest in that business, if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest. However there are certain exemptions to this rule contained within the Code and a Member will not be regarded as having a

prejudicial interest in any business where that business relates to a body to which they have been elected, appointed or nominated by the Council. Note this exemption does not apply where the business relates to the determination of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration (in this regard the Public Services Ombudsman For Wales has stipulated in his Guidance for County Borough Councillors on the Code of Conduct that he considers these descriptions to refer to a narrow category of decisions, such as granting planning consent and licensing decisions and that a wider interpretation of approval, for example, would cover almost every aspect of the Council's business and was clearly not intended).

Therefore a Member would not be prevented from participating in a meeting (and voting) where the business related to a School to which they have been appointed by the Council as a Local Education Authority Governor but to comply with the Code of Conduct should disclose the existence of the personal interest.

The reference to Cllr Webber is incorrect. Cllr Webber is a governor of Heol Y Celyn Primary School but she is not the Chair of Governors.

The 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, which is the driver behind these proposals, contributes positively to RCTs' well-being agenda as well as each of the Well-being of Future Generation Act goals on a number of levels, an example of each is included below:

#### A prosperous Wales

Improving educational outcomes and educational provision are the priority for every project delivered within the 21st Century Schools Programme, contributing to the development of a skilled and well-educated workforce.

#### A resilient Wales

Newly constructed schools are built to BREEAM excellent standards and include features such as photovoltaic cells, rain water harvesting systems, and a biodiverse forest schools' area, contributing to a healthier natural environment

#### A healthier Wales

21st Century Schools include modern and flexible sports facilities that not only benefit the school but also the wider community. The benefits of which have a positive effect on well-being.

#### A more equal Wales

All of our schools are wholly inclusive and all pupils and parents have the opportunity to choose the school of their choice, be it English medium, Welsh medium or faith provision. In addition, RCT's generous home to school transport ensures that all pupils have equitable access to any school regardless of social, economic or geographical factors.

#### A Wales of cohesive communities

Community facilities are included within our new schools so that schools can provide an additional role within its community and act as a catalyst to create a local community hub. Facilities include dedicated community rooms as well as sports facilities that can be

used out of hours thus increasing the connectedness of learners and non-learners alike from different communities.

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

RCT’s WESP sets out the Council’s vision and objectives to increase the number of Welsh learners; improve the quality of the provision and the educational outcomes; and ensure there is suitably trained and qualified educational workforce. This Plan is a key policy and informs the 21st Century Schools Programme.

A globally responsible Wales

The larger 21st Century Schools projects are procured using the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). This is the publication in which all tenders from the public sector which are valued above a certain financial threshold according to EU legislation, must be published, advertising opportunities on a global scale.

In addition, an assessment of the proposals on The Well-being and Future Generations Act five ways of working is below:

<p><u>Long Term</u> (The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p> <p>Maintaining the existing provision of educational premises within Rhondda Cynon Taf places enormous strain on the Council resources. It is recognised that there is an opportunity through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding to manage these pressures more efficiently in future years.</p> <p>The long term vision for RCT education is to provide all learners with the best opportunity possible to achieve their full potential through the means of education by providing access to the very best learning opportunities with modern, flexible facilities appropriate for delivering the new curriculum.</p> <p>Improved learning environments will act as a stimulus to creating a better future for through delivering brand new 21st Century Schools facilities for our young pupils through all phases of their educational journeys from foundation phase through to delivering a more efficient and effective post-16 provision.</p>
<p><u>Prevention</u> (How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p> <p>The Council recognises the challenges of providing everyone with the facilities and opportunities to receive an excellent education in 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities. These proposals will enhance and improve the educational environments for all 3-19 year olds affected.</p>

<p><u>Integration</u> (Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh language as a vital element to achieve and reinforce social and cultural benefits. These proposals will deliver more welsh medium places in the Pontypridd area, opportunities for wider community collaboration and participation, a more sustainable educational building meeting BREEAM targets all providing a more integrated and improved learning experience.</p>
<p><u>Collaboration</u> (Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p> <p>As a part of this school organisation programme the Council has already consulted with thousands of learners, staff, and parents and carers, throughout the Pontypridd area. If these proposal are to go ahead then this collaboration will continue when further consultation will be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to shape the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools provision to ensure benefits and well-being opportunities are maximised.</p>
<p><u>Involvement</u> (The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves)</p>	<p>How does your project / facility involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Consultation meetings were held with the student councils of all of the schools directly affected by the proposals, as well as with staff and governors, and open evenings were held in various locations throughout the area which were open to the public. All comments that were submitted during the consultation process were considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Moving forward, engagement with learners, staff and RCT residents will continue and input and information gleaned from these sessions will shape the new school facilities. In addition information gathered will influence and inform our future projects so all consultation undertaken shapes the legacy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.</p>
<p><b><u>Thema: Derbyn Disgyblion</u></b> <b><u>Theme: School Admissions</u></b></p>	
<p><b>Heol y Celyn is very likely to hit capacity over the next few years with Rhydyfelin families now choosing this new state of the art school on their doorstep rather than walking their children to the nearest English medium provision (Hawthorn) I refer to minutes taken at the Staff and Governors meeting with Heol y Celyn which is in Appendix 3 of the Consultation Report.</b></p>	

Gaynor Davies for RCT replied 'Admission criteria would be applied' she went on to say that 'Catchment areas may be reviewed regularly'

This leaves us as PSN parents in no doubt that our children in the furthest communities away from Heol y Celyn will be the last priority to be given a space at the new school should the school hit capacity. Will siblings then have to be sent to different schools? If one sibling is in Heol y Celyn but another is in Abercynon these schools feed different secondary schools. There are so many unanswered questions and we feel as parents that there will be repercussions to these proposals that have not been planned for; it is the well-being of our children at stake.

There is no guarantee that there is enough space for all the children and future children from this catchment area to attend. I am concerned that there would be no Welsh school available for my children to attend.

Parents in Rhyd are going to send their children there as it's close and new so what will happen to psn children then who have to travel in??

We are concerned with the direction the Cabinet debate went with regard to proposed changes to the traditional PSN catchment areas, which have not been put forward in the Proposal Document. Cabinet debated whether YGG Evan James and YGG Abercynon could be alternative options for parents in the PSN catchment communities. It was agreed that these schools could serve the PSN catchment and the director for transport agreed that free school transport would be available.

6 Councillors called Cabinet's decision in for Scrutiny and on April 3rd we attended the Scrutiny Meeting. Many Councillors drew attention to the lack of clarity of any proposed catchment changes for Welsh medium education in Pontypridd and despite all the previous references to YGG Abercynon as a suitable alternative Gaynor Davies repeatedly denied any planned changes to catchment areas – this does not add up.

I have heard that Abercynon will be the next possible Welsh medium Primary for us if a place is not given at the new site, but this would be unthinkable for us due to an even longer distance to travel.

Response: The planning of School Places is a local authority responsibility and the Council has a statutory duty to match supply and demand for early years, primary, secondary and post-16 provision for parents that choose to educate their children through the Medium of Welsh or English. The Council prides itself on managing school places effectively and efficiently through the successful implementation of the School Admissions.

Based on current pupil numbers if the new Welsh Medium Primary School is built, with a capacity of 480 plus 60 Nursery, there will be 130 surplus places to meet any increase in demand. Nevertheless, if in the future the demand for places from in-catchment children for the Welsh Medium Primary School exceeds the supply, the site has sufficient land to accommodate additional classroom space. This has been the approach taken at other schools within the County Borough.

For clarity the process is that if the number of application exceeds the Published Admission Number, the Local Authority's over subscription criteria is applied, which is detailed below for information. This information is detailed within the Council's 'Starting School' book.

However it should be noted that RCT have never had to apply this criteria, or the school admissions 'tie-breaker' scenario at primary level. No pupil within RCT has ever been denied a school place at compulsory school age in their in-catchment primary school.

#### Oversubscription Criteria

- Priority Category 1: 'Children Looked After (children in public care) and previously 'Looked After' children.
- Priority Category 2: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.
- Priority Category 3: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- Priority Category 4 : Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.
- Priority Category 5: Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

For the avoidance of all doubt the reference to 'home' in the oversubscription categories above and the 'tie breaker' refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives and to which Child Benefit is paid.

The Local Authority has an obligation to keep all catchment areas under review to ensure sufficient supply of school places across the County Borough. This offers choice to parents when there is surplus capacity within a school. These proposals however offer a growth in Welsh Medium places and are not reliant on surplus capacity elsewhere to meet need. The Local Authority is committed to meeting the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambitious target of achieving 1million Welsh speakers by 2050.

**Thema: Effaith ar y Gymraeg**

**Theme: Welsh Language Impact**

**This will lead to a reduction in children attending Welsh medium education from North Pontypridd.**

**Dyma'r tro cyntaf yn hanes addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i gyngor ganoli darpariaeth cynradd. Mi fydd yn amddifadu cymunedau gogledd Pontypridd o addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn eu cymuned. Mae eisoes tystiolaeth fod teuluoedd yn cael eu gorfodi i ddewis addysg cyfrwng Saesneg i'w plant gan nad ydy'r cynlluniau hyn yn ymarferol i deuluoedd sydd yn gweithio neu deuluoedd tlawd heb geir. Mae nodi fod mwyafrif plant Pont Sion Norton yn derbyn trafndiaeth ar hyn o bryd yn dangos diffyg deallrwydd o addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a pha mor allweddol yw gweithgarwch allgyrsiol i lwyddiant y fath addysg. Mae'r cynlluniau yn rhwystr i'r tlotaf ac i deuluoedd sy'n gweithio i fynyachu gweithgarwch allgyrsiol ac felly mae'r cynlluniau yn gwahaniaethu. Mae'r cynlluniau hefyd yn mynd yn groes i bolisi Llywodraeth y Cynulliad tuag at filiwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg gan ei fod yn gosod rhwystrau tuag at fynediad at addysg Gymraeg.**

<b>In this day and age children should be entitled to an education in their own communities – they should not have to travel further than their grandparents did in 1951.</b>
<b>Your Welsh Language Impact Assessment is silent regarding the parents who have stated that this move will displace them from Welsh Medium provision. This silence is a fundamental error. You need to be clear on what you are putting in place to avoid such a negative impact. Just stating that the new location is less than 2 miles away is insufficient.</b>
<b>Mae'r cynnig hwn mynd i niweidio Cymreictod Pontypridd. Mae symud ysgol llwyddianus allan o'r Gymuned a creu rhwystrau ymarferol amhosib i rhieni yn anerbyniol ac yn mynd yn erbyn targedau y llywodraeth i ehangu y niferoedd o siaradwyr Cymraeg.</b>
<b>The proposed changes to Welsh Medium Provision would lead to a reduction in the number of schools providing Welsh Medium education from two and a half to two, and the removal of Welsh Medium education in north Pontypridd. Whilst we of course welcome the new Welsh Medium school on the existing Heol-y-Celyn site, the net gain in the number of spaces is minimal in terms of what is needed to reach the Council's own targets as set out in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan - namely to create 6,054 additional Welsh speakers within the county by 2021.</b>
<b>YGG Pont Sion Norton is too important a school to lose – it has ensured the Welsh language was protected and encouraged the growth of the language in North Pontypridd. The current proposals will deny children in north Pontypridd the same opportunities as their parents and grandparents and will ultimately lead to fewer Welsh speakers.</b>
<b>COFIWCH YSGOL PONT SION NORTON will be written in the history books. It will tell of a fight to ensure the survival of the Welsh language in Pontypridd and its success in the communities it served. The Welsh language as a result of the proposal will now no longer be secure in our communities and we need to remind ourselves that what is precious to us can be lost forever if we don't fight for it. RCTBC need to ensure the language is safe in all communities and this means ensuring that our communities in North Pontypridd are served by a Welsh medium school in our own area.</b>
<b>Dylai addysg Gymraeg fod ar gael yn lleol i bob blentyn yng Nghymru. I orfodi plant 3 oed i deithio mor bell o ardal Gogledd Pontypridd yn warthus. Dw i i methu deall sut mae'r polisi hwn yn hwyluso cyrraedd tardedau pendant y llywodraeth.</b>
<b>I feel strongly about sending my children to Welsh school, but think they should be able to access this locally. This decision may impact whether I continue to send my children to a Welsh school. This is disappointing as I am committed to Welsh education and was under the impression that all children in Wales should be able to attend Welsh school. However I feel this option is being taken away from me as the current proposal is not practical for my family.</b>
<b>Bydd y nifer o blant sydd am addysg Gymraeg yng ngogledd Pontypridd yn lleihau oherwydd eich penderfyniad afresymol i'w cludo yr holl ffordd i Rhydyfelin. Mae hyn yn golygu na fydd RCT yn cyrraedd ei nod o nifer siaradwyr Cymraeg ac yn llesteirio nod y Cynulliad</b>
<b>We urge the Council to urgently secure the future of Welsh medium education in north Pontypridd and support the call for a Welsh medium school to be opened in the north of Pontypridd, in either Glyncoch, Ynysybwl or Cilfynydd. This is in addition to the new</b>

school at Heol-y-Celyn, and suitable properties should be identified before other plans are progressed. This would provide assurances to parents who are now considering removing their children from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pont Sion Norton or not enrolling them for the coming year because of the proposed closure.

We are calling for local Welsh education within the communities of Cilfynydd, Trallwn, Coed y Cwm, Glyncoch and Ynysybwl. We are urging RCT to be aspirational and forward thinking with regards to the Welsh Language and be bold to make provision which will really support the Welsh Government aim to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. This will not be achieved by removing Welsh schools from communities and placing logistical barriers for families who would have considered Welsh medium education but will feel practically unable to make that choice.

We are all meant to be promoting the Welsh language, encouraging our children to use it and utilise it fully. It should be easily acceptable and the heart of every community. Schools themselves need to be encouraging the smaller village school setting, smaller numbers in classrooms etc.

It is disheartening that in 2019 we are having to campaign for equality for the Welsh Language.

It also directly contradicts the ambition of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and fails to address the Welsh Government's aims to increase the use of the Welsh language. Many benefits of being multi-lingual are known, and to risk reducing the number of multi-lingual children and families in our area carries with it risks to meeting the seven well-being goals.

It is making Welsh language education less accessible, in direct contrast to the government's plan to increase the number of Welsh language speakers.

I feel strongly about this because I believe the right for all children to access Welsh medium education is being eroded by this decision. When the Welsh Government is aiming for a million Welsh speakers Welsh medium education should be available and a natural choice to all.

I object as the Welsh Language Impact Assessment does not consider the negative impact that the proposals will have on Welsh Language in the communities of North Pontypridd.

Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN": There are already problems with SEN - this should be looked at further. We also need to look at Welsh medium SEN.

Ymateb: Cyfrifoldeb yr awdurdod lleol yw cynllunio llefydd ysgolion ac mae gan y Cyngor ddyletswydd statudol i fodloni galw am ddarpariaeth y blynyddoedd cynnar, cynradd, uwchradd ac ôl-16 ar gyfer rhieni sy'n dewis addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg neu Saesneg i'w plant.

Ym mis Ebrill 2016, derbyniodd y Cabinet adroddiad a roddodd y diweddaraf i Aelodau ynglych bodloni'r galw am lefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Nododd yr adroddiad y sefyllfa bresennol gan gynnwys yr ysgolion yn ardal ehangach Pontypridd. Amlinellodd yr adroddiad gynlluniau'r Cyngor yn y dyfodol i gynyddu darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a gwella ansawdd y profiad addysgol trwy gyflawni gwelliannau dysgu Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif.

Mae'r cynnig i adeiladu ysgol fwy newydd sbon ym Mhontypridd wedi cael ei ystyried yn ofalus i sicrhau bod llefydd ychwanegol yn ategu ein hysgolion presennol yn ardal Pontypridd. Mae ysgol gynradd cyfrwng Cymraeg ym Mhontypridd yn barod, sef YGG Evan James sydd â 81 o lefydd dros ben, ac YGG Abercynon yng ngogledd Pontypridd sydd â 54 o lefydd dros ben. Does dim modd cyfiawnhau'r galw am lefydd mewn ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg newydd yng Nglyn-coch na chynnal YGG bresennol Pont Siôn Norton yn y cymunedau yma. Mae ysgol fwy newydd yn ardal Heol-y-celyn, yn ogystal â'r ysgolion cynradd Cymraeg presennol ym Mhontypridd, sef YGG Evan James ac YGG Abercynon, yn bodloni galw yn y dyfodol o ran Pontypridd gyfan ac yn rhoi dewis i rieni. Er hynny, bydd hyn yn cael ei fonitro'n agos i sicrhau ein bod ni'n bodloni unrhyw gynnydd yn y galw trwy ymateb priodol ac ystyriol o safbwynt trefniadaeth a chynllunio ysgolion.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi ymrwymo'n llwyr i darged Cymraeg 2050 Llywodraeth Cymru ac i gynyddu ein llefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg trwy gynnal ein Rhaglen Addysg ac Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif. Mae ehangu ein darpariaeth y blynyddoedd cynnar yn sylweddol yn cynyddu nifer y llefydd gwag mewn bylchau penodol i ddarparu manau mynediad ychwanegol ar gyfer addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. I bob diben, mae hyn yn gwneud i'r iaith dyfu ac yn cynyddu'r cyfleoedd sylfaenol.

Mae'r Cyngor wedi buddsoddi'n sylweddol mewn addysg Gymraeg, ac mae wedi ymrwymo i gynyddu darpariaeth a buddsoddi miliynau mewn gwella'r amgylchedd dysgu ar gyfer disgyblion presennol a nifer y llefydd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ein hysgolion.

Fel sydd wedi'i nodi yn yr adroddiad yma, mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod ei bod hi'n bosibl y bydd raid i rai disgyblion wedi'u heffeithio gan y cynnig deithio'n bellach. Wedi dweud hynny, mae bron i 70% o'r plant sy'n mynd i YGG Pont Siôn Norton yn cael defnyddio cludiant am ddim i'r ysgol felly fydd dim effaith ar y rhan fwyaf o ddisgyblion. Does dim modd gwarantu darpariaeth addysg feithrin ym mhob ysgol, serch hynny bydd cyfle i ddatblygu gofal cofleidiol cyfrwng Cymraeg ar safle'r ysgol newydd.

Felly i gloi, mewn ymateb i argaeledd clybiau brecwast a chlybiau ar ôl ysgol, bydd y Cyngor yn cynghori a gwneud argymhellion i gorff llywodraethu arfaethedig newydd yr ysgol i barhau i gynnig clybiau brecwast i ddisgyblion. Dylid nodi nad yw hyn yn ofyniad statudol. Mae clwb brecwast yn YGG Pont Siôn Norton ar hyn o bryd, ond does dim clybiau ar ôl ysgol. Serch hynny, bydd y Cyngor, unwaith eto, yn annog y corff llywodraethu i ddatblygu'r cyfleoedd yma gan y bydd cyfleusterau newydd Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif yn ategu sefydlu darpariaeth clwb ar ôl ysgol i bob disgybl. Eto, rhaid nodi nad yw darparu clybiau ar ôl ysgol yn ofyniad statudol ond mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod pwysigrwydd gofal cofleidiol i gefnogi teuluoedd sy'n gweithio.

Response: Planning of School Places is a local authority responsibility and the Council has a statutory duty to match supply and demand for early years, primary, secondary and post-16 provision for parents that choose to educate their children through the Medium of Welsh or English.

In April 2019, Cabinet received a report updating Members on the demand and supply of Welsh Medium Places in the County Borough. The report highlighted the current position including the schools in the greater Pontypridd area and also outlined the Council's future plans to ensure there is capacity to grow the existing Welsh Medium provision and to improve the quality of the educational experience by providing 21st Century School learning environments.

The proposal to build a brand new larger school for the Pontypridd has been carefully considered to ensure that additional capacity supports and complements our current schools in the Pontypridd area. Pontypridd already has a Welsh Medium Primary School with surplus capacity of 81 at YGG Evan James and to the north of Pontypridd, YGG Abercynon also has surplus capacity of 54. The demand for pupil places specifically for a new Welsh Medium school in Glyncoch and maintaining the existing YGG Pont Sion Norton is not justified within these communities. A new larger school in the Heol y Celyn area, plus the existing Welsh medium primary school in Pontypridd, YGG Evan James, and YGG Abercynon, meets future demand for the whole of Pontypridd and provides parents with choice. Nevertheless, this will be closely monitored to ensure that any growth in demand is met with an appropriate and measured response from a school organisation and planning perspective.

The Council is fully committed to the Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 target and increasing our Welsh Medium Places through the delivery of our 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, and expanding our early years provision significantly increases capacity at targeted gaps to provide additional access points for Welsh Medium Education. In effect growing the language and increasing the opportunities at 'grass roots'.

The Council has invested substantially since 2012 in Welsh Medium and is committed to increasing provision and investing millions in improving the learning environment for existing learners and the number of Welsh Medium spaces in our schools.

As already stated in this report, the Council acknowledges that some pupils affected by the proposal may have further to travel, however nearly 70% of the children attending YGG Pont Sion Norton currently have free transport to school and therefore the majority of learners will be unaffected. Full time nursery education provision in all schools is not guaranteed however there will be an opportunity to develop an on-site Welsh medium wrap around care for parents within the new school.

To reiterate, in response to the availability of breakfast clubs and after school provision, the Council will advise and make recommendations to the proposed new school Governing Body to continue to offer breakfast clubs for pupils, although it should be noted that this is not a statutory requirement. There is currently a breakfast club but no after school clubs operating at YGG Pont Sion Norton. However the Council will again encourage the Governing Body to develop these opportunities as the new 21<sup>st</sup> Century School facilities

will support the setup of the provision of an after school club for all pupils. Again, to note it is not a statutory requirement to provide after school clubs but the Council recognises the importance of wrap around care to support working families.

**Thema: Effaith ar y Gymuned**

**Theme: Community Impact**

**I am absolutely against the plans which I feel are ill conceived and being implemented in the face of strong and very reasonable objections. People are being ignored and communities are going to be devastated by these plans if they go ahead.**

**I live in Cilfynydd and my 4 year old daughter attends Ysgol PSN. It's absolutely disgraceful that you are even considering closing our only 2 primary schools in the village. It was tear a massive hole in our community. Young families will not move to the village and there will be even less sense of community and natural meeting points and shared communities for us to gather around.**

**The communities that serve YGG Pont Sion Norton have no links with Rhydyfelin and the distance will mean that children are excluded from clubs and cultural activities because of distance and cost.**

**It will take children out of their communities and break up friendship and peer groups, particularly if some parents take up the offer of sending their children to YGG Evan James or YGG Abercynon.**

**A vital positive feature of the existing education arrangements is the opportunity for the development of a community spirit. In the five years that we have lived close to Pont Sion Norton School, my wife and I have seen first-hand many, many friendships (including the friendships between school-going families and us – who do not have children of school age) develop, grow and nurture in Cilfynydd and Norton Bridge. These relationships have provided emotional, spiritual, physical, material and practical support in times of need, often grave need. It is my belief that these and similar strong relationships should be given the opportunity to develop and thrive, not be cut off because of an elitist, commuter-based approach to school access.**

**The benefits of a cohesive community filter through to the other well-being goals:**

- they enable people to be more prosperous through gaining confidence, wider social networks and better employment opportunities**
- they enable the discussion and cohesion of people around climate and environmental concerns**
- they enable people to be healthier, particularly having better mental health, largely achieved through strong community support**
- these benefits in combination enable people to fulfil their potential, leading to greater equality**

**Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for the proposals, and the reports formed a part of the consultation documentation which Estyn have deemed to be appropriate.**

**The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme lists community benefits as one of its outcomes, and the Council aims to deliver this priority and achieve this target by providing buildings and facilities that are able to deliver shared community services. In essence, the Council aims**

to create the means to deliver fully integrated community hubs on our school sites. The new 21st Century Schools already delivered and operational in RCT include dedicated community rooms which can be used during the school day, as well as providing facilities which the community are able to utilise outside of the normal core school hours. These include school halls, community rooms, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) and 3G pitches.

In addition, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programme has facilitated and delivered numerous opportunities for job creation. It has enabled dozens of apprenticeships, supported pupil engagement especially in the STEM subjects, and has created a raft of work experience opportunities. This, coupled with the Welsh Government's delivery benchmarks for local labour, and locally sourced business and supplies, ensured that not only are the schools a community facility once opened, but that throughout the delivery and construction element of the projects the community benefits are embedded as a priority throughout every phase.

#### **CYNNIG 5 – Newidiadau i Ddalgylchoedd**

#### **PROPOSAL 5 – Catchment changes**

**Mae'r cyd-ddibyniaeth o ran y cynigion wedi eu heffeithio gan y penderfyniad i beidio newid dalgyrch ardal Gwauncelyn.**

**The interdependence of proposals is affected by the decision not to change the Gwauncelyn catchment area.**

Ymateb: Dydy'r penderfyniad i ddileu'r newid i ddalgyrch Ysgol Uwchradd y Ddraenen Wen, a hynny yn dilyn y cyfnod ymgynghori, ddim yn effeithio ar allu'r Cyngor i gyflawni'r cynigion trefniadaeth ysgolion a oedd yn destun ymgynghoriad.

Response: The decision to remove the catchment change to Hawthorn High School following the consultation period does not affect the Council's ability to deliver the school organisation proposals as consulted upon.

#### **Why did RCT decide at the last minute to alter this proposal?**

Response: This decision was not made at the last minute. It was made at the correct and appropriate time in accordance with the procedures carried out within the consultation period. The reasons for this change are included within the Consultation Report which is available on the Council website.

#### **Roedd yno ddiffyg gallu i gynnig sylwadau ac atebion synwrol ar y cynigion unigol There was a lack of proper ability to comment on individual proposals.**

Ymateb: Roedd y broses ymgynghori 2 ½ waith yn hwy na'r cyfnod ymgynghori arferol, sef 42 diwrnod. Trwy wneud hyn, roedd gan bobl fwy o amser i ymateb i'r cynigion mewn nifer o ffyrdd gwahanol, a hynny trwy ysgrifennu ymatebion a defnyddio'r cyfryngau cymdeithasol. Cafodd 5 noson agored gyhoeddus eu cynnal mewn lleoliadau amrywiol ac roedd ffurflen ar gael ar-lein, yn ogystal â'r ddogfen ymgynghori. Roedd copïau papur hefyd ar gael yn ystod y noson agored. Dylid nodi y daeth dros 2,000 o ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad i law.

Response: The consultation process exceeded that of the standard 42 days for a consultation period by 2 ½ times which allowed consultees more time to respond to the

proposals in a number of different ways, via written responses and social media. 5 public open evenings were held at various locations and a pro-forma was available online, within the consultation document and also hard copies were available at the open evening. It should be noted that there were over 2,000 responses to the consultation.

#### **Gwrthwynebiadau Cyffredinol i bob cynnig**

##### **General Objections to all proposals**

**Mae methiant i ystyried y cynnydd mewn traffig o ganlyniad i'r holl gynigion gan gynnwys ystyriaeth o lwybrau y bysys.**

**There is a failure to consider the increased traffic as a result of all proposals including consideration of bus routes.**

Ymateb: Bydd ceisiadau cynllunio yn cael eu cyflwyno ar gyfer yr ysgolion newydd yn bennaf. Yn rhan o hyn bydd Aseiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig yn cael ei gynnal, gan ganolbwyntio ar yr ardal benodol a'r ardal gyfagos. Bydd yr aseiad yma yn asesu faint o gerbydau sy'n defnyddio'r briffordd ar hyn o bryd ac effaith unrhyw gynnydd o ran traffig ar y briffordd, y llwybrau cerdded, beicio a bysiau.

Response: Planning applications will be submitted specifically for the new schools, and as a part of this there will be a Traffic Impact Assessment undertaken focussing on both the immediate and surrounding area. This assessment will not only look at the current capacity of the highway, but also the impact of any increase in traffic flow, on not just the highway but also on pedestrian, cycling routes and bus routes.

**Mae yna ddiffyg asesiad o effaith y llygredd ar blant a phobl ifanc.**

**There is a lack of assessment of impact of pollution on children and young people.**

Ymateb: Bydd hyn yn cael ei asesu. Mae'r awdurdod lleol yn cynnal gwaith monitro ac adolygu ansawdd aer i wirio cydymffurfiaid ag Amcanion Ansawdd Aer statudol wedi'u gosod gan lywodraeth genedlaethol i amddiffyn iechyd y cyhoedd. Bydd gwybodaeth ynglŷn ag Ansawdd Aer a'r effaith ar breswylwyr yn cael ei chynnwys yn yr Aseiad o'r Effaith ar Draffig fel sydd wedi'i nodi uchod.

Response: This will be assessed. The local authority conducts regular monitoring and reviews of air quality to determine compliance to statutory Air Quality Objectives, set by national government to protect public health. Information pertaining to Air Quality and the impact upon residents will be included within the Traffic Impact Assessment as mentioned above.

**Mae yna ddiffyg ystyriaeth o'r cysylltiad sydd rhwng ysgolion lleol a'u cymunedau lleol**  
**There is a lack of consideration of the links of local schools with local communities.**

Ymateb: Mae Aseidiadau o'r Effaith ar y Gymuned wedi cael eu cynnal ar gyfer pob cynnig, ac roedd yr adroddiadau yn rhan o'r ddogfen ymgynghori. Roedd Estyn o'r farn bod yr aseidiadau yma yn briodol.

Response: Community Impact Assessments have been completed for all proposals, and the reports formed a part of the Consultation documentation. Estyn considers these assessments to be appropriate.

**Mae yna fethiant i ddilyn y Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion**

**There is a failure to follow the School Organisational Code.**

Ymateb: Mae'r broses yma wedi cael ei chynnal yn unol â Chod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion.

Response: This process has been carried out in full compliance with the School Organisation Code.

**There continues to be a complete failure to respect the views of those who responded to the consultation.**

**Mae'r methiant llwyr i barchu barn y rhai a ymatebodd i'r ymgynghoriad yn parhau**

**I object to the manner in which the decision has been made in the face of the predominance of consultation responses that are opposed to the proposals. Your role as our elected representatives is to represent us. It is nothing short of outrageous that the decision appears to be made in a self-serving way to suit the council's own ends, not to serve the people in the local area who elected you, and who you claim to represent.**

Ymateb: Cafodd Adroddiad Ymgynghori ei lunio a oedd wedi crynhoi ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad ac wedi ymateb iddyn nhw, a hynny yn unol â'r Cod. Cafodd yr holl ymatebion a ddaeth i law yn ystod y cyfnod ymgynghori eu rhoi i Aelodau o'r Cabinet er mwyn iddyn nhw graffu arnyn nhw cyn cyfarfod y Cabinet ar 21 Mawrth 2019.

Craffwyd ar y cynigion yma eto oherwydd codwyd amheuan ynghylch penderfyniad y Cabinet i barhau â'r gweithdrefnau statudol Trefniadaeth Ysgolion ym mis Mawrth. O ganlyniad i hyn, trafododd y Pwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu y cynigion ymhellach ar 9 Ebrill gan eu dadansoddi.

Response: A Consultation Report was written which summarised and responded to the consultation responses in accordance with the Code, and all responses that were received during the consultation period were given to Cabinet Members to scrutinise prior to the meeting of Cabinet on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2019.

There was further scrutiny of these proposals as the decision made by Cabinet in March to proceed with the School Organisation statutory procedures was called in, which meant that these proposals were subsequently put before Overview and Scrutiny Committee on April 9<sup>th</sup> for further discussion and analysis of the proposals.

These meetings, and all procedures pertaining to the decision making processes undertaken, were strictly carried out in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

**Mae ymateb Estyn i'r cynigion yn dweud yn barhaus "nad ydyw'n asesu yn briodol effaith y newidiadau ar ddisgyblion gydag AAA"**

**Estyn's response to the proposals continuously state that it "does not evaluate suitably the impact of the changes on pupils with SEN"**

Ymateb: Mae newidiadau sylweddol yn cael eu cynllunio yng Nghymru mewn perthynas â'r ddarpariaeth statudol sydd ei hangen i fodloni anghenion disgyblion ag Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig (AAA) /Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol (ADY). Cafodd Deddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) ei chyflwyno ym mis Ionawr 2018. O dan y Ddeddf, mae'n ofynnol i awdurdodau lleol adolygu trefniadau i gefnogi disgyblion ag ADY

yn eu hardal ac ystyried a ydyn nhw'n ddigonol. Bydd y Ddeddf yn cael ei hategu gan reoliadau newydd a Chod Ymarfer Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol statudol newydd.

Hyd nes i'r Cod Ymarfer ADY ddod i rym ym mis Medi 2020, mae'n ofynnol i Awdurdodau Lleol (All) gydymffurfio â Chod Ymarfer Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig presennol Cymru (2002) a chyflawni eu dyletswyddau statudol o ran plant ag AAA. Mae'r Cod yn nodi bod gan yr All ddyletswydd i fonitro ac adolygu ei ddarpariaeth AAA yn rheolaidd ledled RhCT i sicrhau ei bod yn defnyddio ei hadnoddau mewn modd effeithiol ac effeithlon i fodloni anghenion disgyblion y mae angen darpariaeth arbenigol arny'n nhw. Mae'r Cyngor yn parhau i gynnal ei ddyletswydd ar hyn o bryd, a bydd yn parhau i wneud hyn yn y dyfodol. Mae gan RCT ystod eang o ddarpariaeth AAA mewn ysgolion prif ffrwd a bydd yn parhau i gynnal ac adolygu darpariaeth yn rheolaidd.

Response: Considerable changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) /Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code of Practice.

Until the anticipated implementation of the new ALN Code of Practice in September 2020, Local Authorities (LAs) are required to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN. The Code states that the LA has a duty to continuously monitor and review its specialist SEN provision across RCT to ensure that it is utilising its resources efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of pupils who require specialist provision. The Council does and will continue to uphold its duty. RCT has an extensive range of SEN provision attached to mainstream schools and will continue to regularly maintain and review provision.