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Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa,
Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0PA
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22/9/23

Lisa Evans

01545 570881

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to inform you that a Meeting of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held HYBRID - NEUADD CYNGOR CEREDIGION, PENMORFA, ABERAERON / REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE on Thursday, 28 September 2023 at 10.00 am for the transaction of the following business:

1. **Apologies**
2. **Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)**
Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011
3. **GCSE and A Level Results 2023 (Pages 3 - 6)**
4. **The Post-16 Education provision in schools (Pages 7 - 52)**
5. **To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes (Pages 53 - 58)**
6. **To consider the draft Forward Work Programme (Pages 59 - 62)**

Members are reminded to sign the Attendance Register

A Translation Services will be provided at this meeting and those present are welcome to speak in Welsh or English at the meeting.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Edwards'.

Miss Lowri Edwards
Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services

**To: Chairman and Members of Learning Communities Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

The remaining Members of the Council for information only.

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO: Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 28th September 2023

LOCATION: Online / Council Chamber, Penmorfa

TITLE: GCSE and A Level Results 2023

PURPOSE OF Information

THE REPORT:

REASON OVER THE Information
COMMITTEES' REQUEST:

BACKGROUND:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, external examinations in their traditional form was not held in schools in the Summer of 2020 nor the Summer of 2021.

For the Summer of 2022, Qualifications Wales decided that the National results would reflect a halfway point between the results of Summer 2019 and Summer 2021.

To that end, the 2023 results are not comparable with previous years.

See below the provisional percentages for Ceredigion (official data will be available in early October).

THE CURRENT SITUATION:

GCSE Results 2023

National Comparison – Summer 2023 exams (WJEC GCSE only)

	Ceredigion 2023	Wales 2023
Grade A* - A	24.8%	21.7%
Grade A* - C	68.6%	64.9%
Grade A* - G	97.2%	96.9%

A range of indicators are considered when evaluating results locally. These look at pupils' best grades at the end of Year 11:

Indicators	Definition	Ceredigion 2023
5A*-C(IM)	Percentage of pupils who have gained 5 GCSEs grades A*-C (or equivalent) including Language and Maths/Numeracy	55.0%
5A*-C	Percentage of pupils who have gained 5 GCSEs grades A*-C (or equivalent)	66.0%
5A*-G	Percentage of pupils who have gained 5 GCSEs grades A*-G (or equivalent)	92.2%
5A*-A	Percentage of pupils who have gained 5 GCSEs grades A*-A (or equivalent)	22.4%
Welsh	Percentage of pupils who have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in Welsh First Language	70.1%
English	Percentage of pupils who have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in English Language	62.3%
Mathematics	Percentage of pupils who have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in Mathematics	58.5%
Numeracy	Percentage of pupils who have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in Mathematics Numeracy	57.2%
Science	Percentage of pupils who have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in Science	62.8%

A Level Results 2023

National Comparisons – Summer Exams 2023 (WJEC A-levels only)

	Ceredigion 2023	Wales 2023
Grade A* - A	37.5%	34.0%
Grade A* - B	61.4%	n/a
Grade A* - C	82.5%	n/a
Grade A* - E	99.1%	97.5%

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed?

If not, explain why

Summary:

THE WELL-BEING

OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:

Long term:

Co-operate:

Content:

Prevent:

Intergrate:

RECOMMENDATIONS (S):

N/A

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Contact Name:

Clive Williams & Elen James

Officer :

Corporate Lead Officer of Schools & Corporate Lead Officer of Lifelong Learning

Date of Report:

1st September 2023

Acronyms:

N/A

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Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO: Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 28 September 2023

LOCATION: Online / Chamber, Penmorfa

TITLE: The Post-16 Education provision in schools

PURPOSE OF REPORT: For decision

REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION: For decision

BACKGROUND:

At the Cabinet meeting held virtually on 11 January 2022, it was agreed that it would be timely to undertake a review of the post-16 provision in Ceredigion.

The aim of the review was to provide an analysis and appraisal of the current post-16 provision in Ceredigion and identify sustainable options for the future, along with their potential advantages and disadvantages.

The aim of the review was to:

- create a set of agreed principles that were learner-centric
- offer a range of accessible and sustainable options whilst ensuring that the voices of the learners, governors, parents, headteachers and Local Authority officers are an integral part of the process
- ensure that full consideration has been given to the findings and recommendations of Estyn's national reviews and the background to Welsh Government's current policy, including the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- consider rurality and the implications for carbon footprints.

There was also a wider context to this review, namely:

- Welsh Government's decision to establish the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) which will be responsible for the strategy, funding, and oversight of the further education sector, including colleges and the sixth forms in schools.
- Estyn's Thematic Report regarding Post-16 Partnerships (January 2021).
- The opportunities available through the Mid Wales Growth Deal, the Economic Strategy, and the Regional Partnership Board with regards to the needs and skills of

the workforce for the future and the central role of the Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) in the collection and analysis of information.

- The need to ensure a broad and quality vocational offer, along with a wider offering of A-Level subjects, which allows learners to pursue different combinations of subjects and to specialise in their interests, regardless of where they live in the county.
- Estyn Report – A review of the current 16-19 curriculum in Wales (October 2022).

It was agreed that a set of “agreed principles which were learner centric” should be created, to ensure that the voices of learners, governors, parents and headteachers are an integral part of the report.

6 principles were created -

- 1) The needs of the learner should be prioritised over any organisational needs.
- 2) The generally high standards in Ceredigion schools should be maintained and improved.
- 3) There should be more fairness and equal opportunities for all learners across the county in terms of the offer, advice and guidance, pastoral care and wellbeing, travel requirements, learning pattern and access to support. This includes ensuring bespoke and specialist support for pupils with additional learning needs ensuring a continuum of education for them in the absence of a special school in the county.
- 4) The Welsh-medium offer should be improved to be at least consistent with the English-medium offer to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion and to contribute to a bilingual workforce and community.
- 5) Access to a wide range of quality academic and vocational courses should be ensured, increasing the number of vocational courses currently available for pupils in all parts of the county.
- 6) The governance of the post-16 provision should promote the above principles, consider the strategic quality improvement processes, ensure that expenditure is kept as much as possible within the post-16 budget and allow decisions to be made that consider environmental sustainability and carbon footprint.

A key part of the review included gathering the views of a broad group of stakeholders. Surveys were sent to key groups, namely learners, parents / carers, teachers and employers, and a total of 1,306 responses were received from these individuals. In addition, interviews were conducted with representatives from educational providers, the local authority and other partners.

The responses were analysed and placed under six main themes -

- Wide choice
- Language
- Location
- Connections with the world of work
- Collaboration between schools or the establishment of centres of excellence
- Teachers and good, unbiased advice

The next step was to consider the current situation, i.e, the number of pupils, the financial situation, the range of subjects available to the learners etc, and to produce options to consider that look at the advantages and disadvantages in the context of the principles.

In short, the review asks for views regarding four possible options:

Option 1: Maintain the Current Situation

Option 2: Develop the Current Situation

Post-16 provision would continue on the 6 existing sites. The 6 current Governing Boards would continue with their current roles in terms of governance up to 16 but agree with the Local Authority to form a Strategic Board which would manage the Authority’s post-16 budget, ensure suitable arrangements for joint planning of the curriculum and then commission the provision from the schools, e-sgol and other partners.

Option 3: Provision in some schools

This option would be a development of Option 2 above. It would mean closing the post-16 provision at one or more sites. Then, as in Option 2, those Governing Boards would continue with their current roles in terms of governance up until the age of 16 and agree with the Local Authority to form a Strategic Board that would manage the Authority’s post-16 budget, ensure suitable arrangements for joint planning of the curriculum and then commissioning the provision from the schools, e-sgol and other partners. The Board would also be responsible for monitoring the quality of the provision and make recommendations to the Local Authority and the providers for improvement.

Option 4: One Centre

This option would offer a more far-reaching change. It would mean closing the current post-16 provision and establishing a Centre of Excellence, involving a range of partners, at one or more suitable geographical sites. A Governing Body independent of the schools would be responsible for the funding and the curriculum and would appoint a small number of core staff to steer and manage the work.

WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why
 Not applicable at present

Summary:
Long term:
Collaboration:
Involvement:
Prevention:
Integration:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Note the contents of the report – ‘A REVIEW OF THE POST-16 PROVISION IN CEREDIGION’.**
2. **Undertake a Feasibility Study to give detailed consideration to Option 2 and Option 4 in the Review.**

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **The Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to note the contents of the report.**
2. **Further consider the advantages and disadvantages of Option 2 and Option 4 in the context of the six principles.**

Contact Name: Elen James & Clive Williams
Designation: Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning & Corporate Lead Officer: Schools
Date of Report: 10 September 2023
Acronyms: None



A REVIEW OF THE POST-16 PROVISION IN CEREDIGION

Summer 2023

Contents

1. Background and context
2. Agreed principles
3. Evidence base
4. Analysis of the responses received
5. Current situation
6. Analysing the principles in the context of the current situation
7. The number of sixth form pupils
8. The financial situation
9. Options to consider
10. Consideration of the different options in the context of the principles

Post-16 provision in Ceredigion

1. Background and context

This review is intended to provide an analysis of the current post-16 provision in Ceredigion and identify sustainable options for the future, along with their potential advantages and disadvantages.

‘To establish a brief and conduct a review of post-16 education to be presented to Cabinet’ and the reason noted for the decision was ‘to gain a recent analysis and appraisal of post-16 provision within the County.’

The aim of the review was to:

- create a set of agreed principles that are learner-centric
- offer a range of accessible and sustainable options

and in doing so:

- ensuring that the voices of the learners, governors, parents, headteachers and Local Authority officers are an integral part of the process
- ensuring that full consideration has been given to the findings and recommendations of Estyn’s national reviews and the background to Welsh Government’s current policy, including the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- considering rurality and the implications for carbon footprints.

There is also a wider context to this review, namely:

i) Welsh Government’s decision to establish the **Commission for Tertiary Education and Research** (CTER) ¹ which will be responsible for the strategy, funding, and oversight of the further education sector, including colleges and the sixth forms in schools. The responsibilities of the CTER will be as follows:

- protect the interests of learners, ensuring vocational and academic learning are equally valued

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/tertiary-education-and-research-commission>

- align education and training more closely with the needs of employers
- monitor performance and governance whilst protecting the academic freedom of institutions
- monitor and promote improvement in education and training providers
- take a whole system approach to research and innovation funding with an ability to provide funding to a wide range of higher education and further education institutions
- increase the availability of Welsh-medium tertiary education and encourage individuals to learn through the medium of Welsh.

The intention is that local authorities will come to an agreement with the Commission on how funding is used. In addition, the Commission will have a strategic responsibility to ensure suitable facilities for educating 16–19-year-olds. The Commission shall have the right to direct local authorities to terminate or commence sixth form provision in a particular school or area. The Commission will be operational from September 2023.

- ii) **Estyn’s Thematic Report regarding Post-16 Partnerships² (January 2021)** which includes the following recommendations:

Schools and colleges should:

- ensure strong partnership working to develop collaborative provision with other providers where this helps to improve quality or expand choice
- ensure that post-16 provision delivered in partnership with other providers is underpinned by written agreements of responsibilities, and is included fully within improvement planning processes
- ensure that advice and guidance to learners is impartial, focused on learners’ needs, and informed by the provision, standards and support available at all local post-16 education and training providers.

² <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2022-01/Post-16%20partnerships%20en.pdf>

Local authorities should:

- ensure that strategic planning involves the wider community of local schools and colleges
- work together with colleges on joint professional learning activities where appropriate
- work with colleges to ensure that a suitable range of post-16 provision is available locally through the medium of Welsh.

iii) The opportunities available through the **Mid Wales Growth Deal**, the **Economic Strategy**³ and the **Regional Partnership Board**⁴ with regards to the needs and skills of the workforce for the future and the central role of the **Regional Skills Partnership (RSP)** in the collection and analysis of information.

iv) The need to ensure a broad and quality **vocational offer**, along with a **wider offering of A-Level subjects**, which allows learners to pursue different combinations of subjects and to specialise in their interests, regardless of where they live in the county.

v) Since commencing the work on the review, Estyn has published a further report in this field, **A review of the current 16-19 curriculum in Wales**⁵ (*October 2022*).

The recommendations from this report include:

Post-16 education and training providers should work together to:

- ensure that all learners have equitable access to vocational options, and that these options are valued as equally as general education options
- ensure that all learners have equitable access to Welsh-medium education
- ensure that all learners in key stage 4 receive impartial information, advice and guidance that covers all post-16 options available in their local area

³ <https://growingenglish.powys1-prd.gosshosted.com/MidWalesGrowthDeal>

⁴ <https://growingenglish.powys1-prd.gosshosted.com/midwaleskillspartnership>

⁵ https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2022-10/A%20review%20of%20the%20current%2016-19%20curriculum%20in%20Wales_0.pdf

and, more generally, that it is necessary to:

- ensure that providers collaborate to offer learners access to a wider range of courses that individual providers either do not offer or offer but do not run due to low numbers (including Welsh-medium provision).

In addition to the above it became apparent during the review, in conversations with senior officers and elected member, that the economic outlook for the authority, particularly considering the findings of the 2021 census, is not promising and that rationalisation of services was inevitable. It was noted that there is a lack of certainty regarding the sustainability of Ceredigion's relative generosity in school funding, and that the post-16 provision would be no different in this regard. The Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills noted the importance of maintaining the education standards in Ceredigion and that the standards should not be negatively affected by any change.

2. Principles

It is stated in the brief, as part of the compass of the review, that a set of “agreed principles that are learner centric” should be created when preparing options for the County Council’s Cabinet and Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These principles should ensure that the voices of learners, governors, parents and headteachers are an integral part of the process. Their purpose is to assist the Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet to create a suitable criterion for deciding which option they prefer from the continuum presented in section 9.

In making decisions on the development of the post-16 provision in Ceredigion, the evidence presented in this review has led us to propose the following principles:

Principle 1:

The needs of the learner should be prioritised over any organisational needs.

Principle 2:

The generally high standards in Ceredigion schools should be maintained and improved.

Principle 3:

There should be more fairness and equal opportunities for all learners across the county in terms of the offer, advice and guidance, pastoral care and wellbeing, travel requirements, teaching method and access to support. This includes ensuring bespoke and specialist support for pupils with additional learning needs ensuring a continuum of education for them in the absence of a special school in the county.

Principle 4:

The Welsh-medium offer should be improved to be at least consistent with the English-medium offer to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion and to contribute to a bilingual workforce and community.

Principle 5:

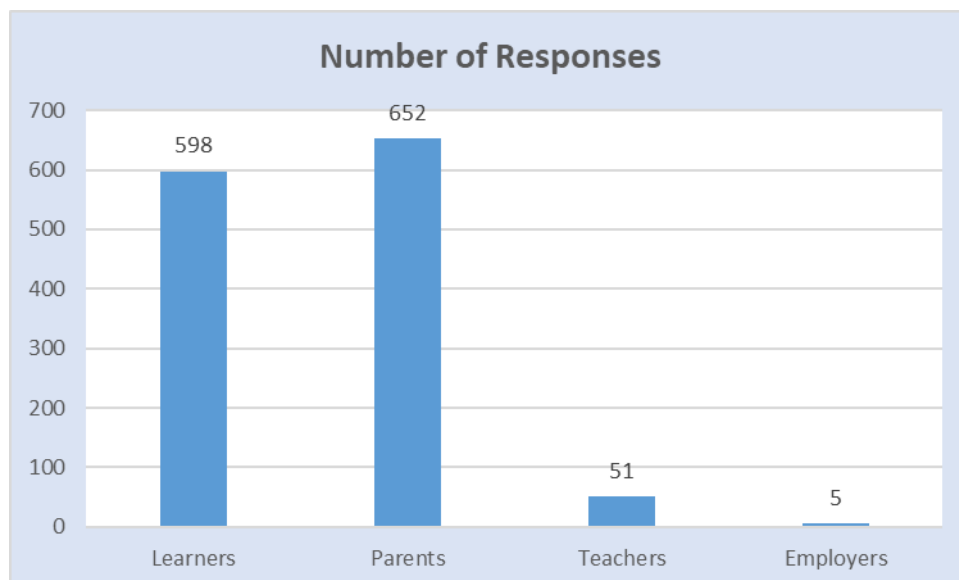
Access to a wide range of quality academic and vocational courses should be ensured, increasing the number of vocational courses currently available for pupils in all parts of the county.

Principle 6:

The governance of the post-16 provision should promote the above principles, consider the strategic quality improvement processes, ensure that expenditure is kept as much as possible within the post-16 budget and allow decisions to be made that consider environmental sustainability and carbon footprint.

3. Evidence Base

The review gathered the views of a broad group of stakeholders. Surveys were sent to key groups and a total of 1,306 responses were received from these individuals.



In addition, interviews were conducted with representatives from educational providers, the Local Authority and other partners.

The following contributed fully to the discussions (see Appendix 11.1 for further details):

- **Learners** – an online questionnaire was created with appropriate questions for learners from primary school age to 25 years of age. 598 responses were received.
- **Parents** – an online questionnaire was created with appropriate questions for parents of learners from primary school age to 25 years of age. 652 responses were received.
- **Headteachers and Chairs of the Governors of 3-16, 11-18 and 3-19 schools** – virtual meetings were held with each school separately followed by a further face-to-face meeting with all headteachers together.
- **Deputy Headteachers, Heads of Sixth Forms and Senior Managers** – a virtual meeting was held with representatives from the above schools.
- **Teachers** - an online questionnaire was created with appropriate questions for all school staff. 51 responses were received.

- **Coleg Ceredigion** – a virtual meeting was held with the Headteacher and Senior Manager.
- **Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training (HCT)** – there was a visit to the site in Aberystwyth and a discussion was held with the Headteacher and Senior Manager.
- **Representatives from Ceredigion Council** – as well as regular virtual meetings with the staff in the education department, meetings were held with the Chief Executive and Corporate Director and with the Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills.
- **Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership** – a virtual meeting was held with the Partnership’s Manager.
- **Employers** – an online questionnaire was created with appropriate questions. 5 responses were received.

The review also considered historical and current data. This included information regarding:

- learner numbers
- finance
- number of courses in Welsh and English
- number of learners taking individual courses in Welsh and English
- destinations and information on existing partnership arrangements.

4. Analysis of the responses received

Following the interviews and the analysis of the questionnaires, trends were considered. A more detailed analysis of the questionnaire is available in Appendix 11.1. Below is a summary of the main themes that arose in the responses.

- **Broad selection** – the need for an rich choice of courses with high quality learning was identified. The need for a curriculum to meet the needs of a full range of vocational learners, apprenticeships and Additional Learning Needs was noted.
- **Language** – the ability to learn through the medium of Welsh or English and the importance of continuity from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5.
- **Location** – several responses noted the benefits of staying in the same organisation in terms of aspiration, ethos, and transport.
- **Connections with the world of work** – experiences in the world of work were identified as beneficial to help with choices, particularly with vocational courses.
- **Collaboration between schools or the establishment of centres of excellence** – Aberystwyth and Cardigan were named by some respondents as locations for centres. Others wished to combine the sixth forms in the schools in Aberystwyth, whilst the other proposal was to combine timetables and allow staff to travel between schools.
- **Teachers and good, unbiased advice** – the importance of having supportive specialists who know the learners was noted. In addition, when transitioning to post-16 education there is a need to raise awareness of jobs and opportunities beyond the traditional offering.

5. Current situation

5i) Pupil numbers, the range of choices and the options available to learners

The table below notes the average number of pupils per course, the qualifications per school and the language medium of their exams (Summer 2022). Further details are available in Appendix 11.2.

		2022 Summer exams data		Aberaeron		Aberteifi		Penglais		Penweddig		Bro Pedr		Bro Teifi		Ceredigion	
Excluding BACC	Language of qualification	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG	WEL	ENG
		Number of courses	1	15	0	18	0	27	17	10	5	22	12	8	20	45	
	Pupils average	1.0	5.3	-	5.6	-	12.7	4.4	4.2	3.4	7.3	4.2	6.5	7.1	17.2		
	Total courses	15		18		27		21		23		20		50			
	Pupils average	5.3		5.6		12.7		5.5		7.7		5.1		18.3			
Including BACC	Total courses	16		19		28		22		24		21		51			
	Pupils average	7.2		7.1		16.3		7.0		9.8		6.6		24.2			
	Number of courses ≥ 12 pupils	1		3		13		2		5		1		21			
	As a %	6%		16%		46%		9%		21%		5%		41%			

* It's not possible to know the "language" of the BACC from the official data, so it's been excluded from the first half of the table above

The average number of pupils on post-16 courses is less than 12 pupils in 5 out of 6 schools and less than 6 pupils in 4 out of 6 schools, if the data doesn't include the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (referred to in the table above as the 'BAC'). When including the Baccalaureate, the average remains less than 12 pupils in 5 out of 6 schools.

A limited number of subjects are taught in partnership, with one school providing the subject to others, including their own pupils. For example, in 2021 Bro Pedr provided Further Maths, Drama and French for Bro Teifi; but there was also provision from outside the county with Penweddig receiving German lessons from Crickhowell and Bro Teifi receiving Criminology from Bro Myrddin.

Ceredigion's retention rate has fallen across the past five years, and now only 54% of year 11 pupils remain in school into year 12. At its peak, the retention rate was 69% in 2017-18. Further detail on individual schools is available in Appendix 11.3.

Ceredigion

	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Y13	448	461	409	358	382	308	367
<i>Retention rates from...</i>							
Y12	-	86%	84%	80%	83%	83%	93%
Y11	-	-	56%	51%	58%	49%	52%
Y12	535	485	449	459	372	393	390
<i>Retention rates from...</i>							
Y11	-	66%	64%	69%	59%	55%	54%
Y11	736	698	662	631	711	728	709

There are sound examples within the authority of key post-16 provision for learners with more significant Additional Learning Needs to help their transition to living an independent life in their communities.

Coleg Ceredigion and Hyfforddiant Ceredigion (HCT) are very eager to avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure that post-16 curriculum planning is done more strategically across all partners. It should be noted that Coleg Ceredigion doesn't offer any Welsh-medium courses, and further detail about their courses is available in Appendix 11.4.

5ii) Wellbeing

Schools have many provisions that support the wellbeing of sixth form pupils, such as having learning mentors who offer sound pastoral and academic support to learners, librarians and access to counselling where appropriate.

5iii) The Welsh language

There is a significant difference between the numbers who start in year 7 and are recognised as learners with bilingual skills, and the number studying through the medium of Welsh by the time they reach the 6th form.

Two of the schools, Ysgol Penweddig and Ysgol Bro Teifi, define themselves as dedicated Welsh medium schools and are currently hastening their journey towards protecting the Welsh medium provision from year 7 to year 13.

Generally, only very small numbers study through the medium of Welsh in 6th forms across the county. Concern was expressed about the possibility that one option of trying to solve the post-16 challenge would be offering learning in both languages in the same classroom as

the norm. In addition to the subject provision through the medium of Welsh, some leaders noted that there was a concern about the loss of the Welsh ethos in the 6th form.

5 iv) Vocational provision available to learners

All of the schools offer some vocational subjects, which are generally within the Health and Care, Business, Leisure and Sports fields. In some cases, it's possible to take courses such as Product Design, Photography (BTEC), ICT (BTEC), blacksmithing, agriculture and support for learners to pursue an Engineering diploma which is equivalent to 3 A levels. Further detail is available in Appendix 11.2.

It has become apparent that the offer varies significantly and unevenly across the county, which inevitably raises a question about the fairness of the offer for post-16 students. Also, the offer varies from year to year which makes it difficult to pre-plan e.g. photography, outdoor activities, and engineering may be available during one year but not the next due to learner demand or staff availability.

The schools note different levels of confidence in the courses available from the college – with high praise for the carpentry course at Coleg Ceredigion.

There is a strong feeling among the schools that there should be effective provision within Ceredigion for vocational education in agriculture.

5 v) Learning and staffing situation

In recent years several schools have mentioned the growing challenge of recruiting for certain subjects – especially the sciences and vocational subjects. When recruitment challenges arise, as well as having a potential impact on the quality of provision, staff who aren't fluent Welsh speakers sometimes join the schools, which in turn reduces the schools' ability to offer equal options in both languages.

In some cases, this has started to affect the medium of choices lower down in the school and the day-to-day language of the school.

Several teachers are dedicated to trying to develop their bilingualism. There is a sabbatical provision available to them on a national level, but schools feel that a flexible approach to learning Welsh needs to be developed for their development to fit in with their work in the

school. It has been noted by some schools that they do not have staff who have changed to teaching through the medium of Welsh following periods on the language programme. However, the authority's contribution to this initiative is greatly appreciated.

Some of the schools have developed their partnerships with the teacher training centres across Wales, to attract new teachers when they enter the profession. However, there is a strong feeling that the recruitment challenges are increasing annually in those schools requiring bilingual staff.

5 vi) Partnerships between schools and partnerships with other providers

There has been an increase in interdependence between schools, with the growth of e-sgol and other forms of collaboration. Often the links between two or three schools around a particular subject are positive. There is also a strong view that the partnerships' practical arrangements, including travel and timetable restrictions, are significantly impeding the development.

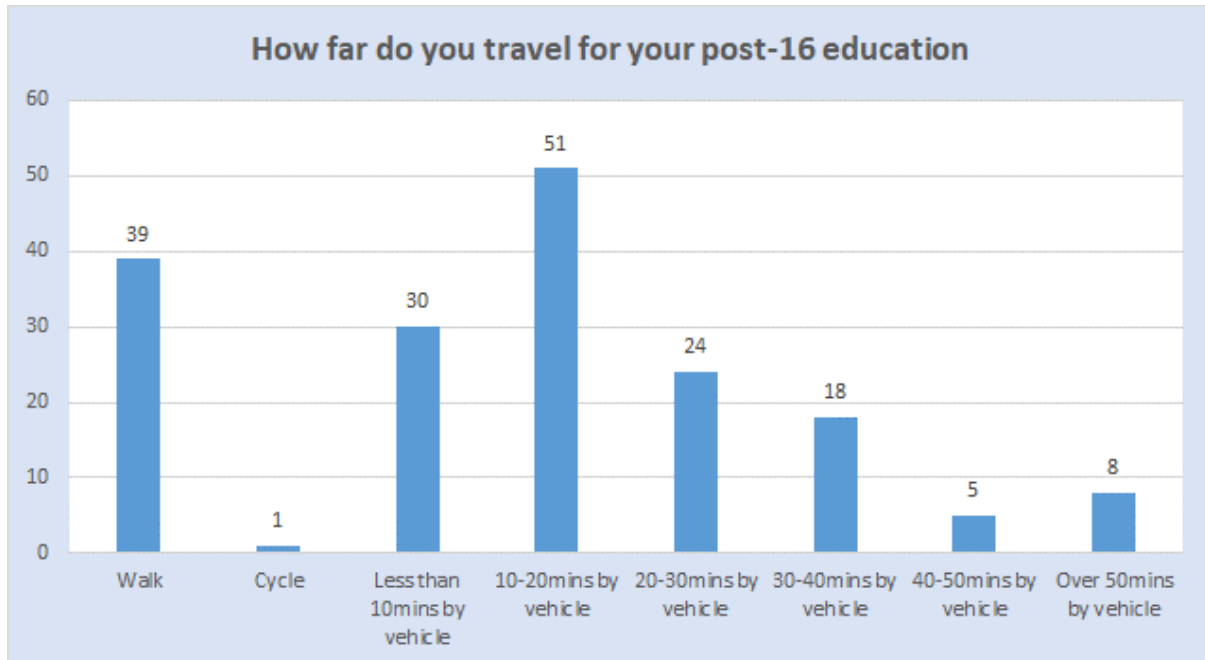
There are some obstacles, such as sharing tracking data and balance between the providers and recipients. It has been noted by two schools that things work better when the two schools are responsible for teaching different modules to shared A-level courses, thus retaining expertise and a sense of ownership in both schools.

Reference was made to the collaboration with Skillstart in Engineering which is an additional cost for schools, and blacksmithing work with HCT. However, this offer isn't available to all schools within the county.

It was also noted that too often learners return to school during their first term due to difficulties with their college experience, which is often associated with travelling great distances for their sixth form education, or to Pembrokeshire College in Haverfordwest.

Examples of co-working were identified across county boundaries, with schools in Powys evident in this. Examples are also developing of collaboration with schools in Carmarthenshire, which clearly demonstrate the challenge that exists in seeking county-wide solutions in a county that is geographically vast and sparsely populated.

The learners who share courses between schools / organisations noted that they travel varying distances to reach their post-16 provider. Some reported being able to walk there whilst others travelled over an hour.



When asked how far they would be willing to travel for a wider choice of courses, that increased to around 30 minutes. When questioned, on average the parents confirmed the same willingness to see the travel distance increase from around a quarter of an hour to around half an hour if a wider choice of courses were available. However, many indicated that better transport arrangements are needed, especially from the more rural areas.

Some schools raised a question about the need to look to the University as a partner for post-16 education, particularly due to the veterinary and nursing training now available in Aberystwyth. It was vital for the schools to see possibilities for post-16 students to begin forward planning to benefit from these courses in higher education after they finish school, but after the schools and university have created learning pathways towards higher education. The Chief Executive and Strategic Director were supportive of the concept of a centre or centres of excellence, with Coleg Ceredigion and HCT as partners as well.

6. Analysing the principles

P1. The needs of the learner should be prioritised over any organisational needs.

Overall, this principle was not consistently applied across the county when making decisions on the offer available to the learners. As a result, some opportunities have been missed to forge stable and deeper partnerships between organisations that would have allowed the offer to be expanded, limit the number of unviable classes⁶ and reduce recruitment problems. Where larger classes allow smaller classes to be run in other subjects, the strategic benefits of that should be considered more widely than within a single organisation. Estyn's report on Post-16 Partnerships (January 2021) provides useful guidance.

P2. The generally high standards in Ceredigion schools should be maintained and improved.

As previously noted, the results of Ceredigion schools' post-16 external assessments are generally good and there are hard-working and enthusiastic members of staff who are well led by their headteachers and committed governors. They have a key role to play going forward.

P3. There should be more fairness and equal opportunities for all learners across the county in terms of the offer, advice and guidance, pastoral care and wellbeing, travel requirements, teaching method and access to support.

The offer, as well as the advice and guidance available to the learners, is currently over-reliant on the institution in which they are enrolled. There needs to be greater consistency across the county not only in terms of the courses offered but also the teaching method (face-to-face, virtual, blended, e-sgol, etc.). Where there is virtual or e-sgol provision, consistency is also needed in the support offered beyond the usual lessons.

⁶ A viable class is considered to be 12 learners. This is the number of learners that attracts adequate post-16 funding directly from Welsh Government to be sustainable without having to draw on funding delegated by the Local Authority for 11-16 education.

P4. The Welsh-medium offer should be improved to be at least consistent with the English-medium offer.

The offer through the medium of Welsh is currently severely lacking, linguistic continuity is weak and some organisations are reporting of recruitment difficulties in specialist areas. Considering the objectives of Ceredigion's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, this needs to be addressed in a robust and swift manner.

P5. There should be more focus on the vocational offer.

With around 40% of Ceredigion's Year 11 cohort leaving school at 16, the partners need to pay more attention to the vocational offer, including apprenticeships, across the county. The needs of the local economy and the demand for specific skills have been identified within the plans of the Growth Deal and the Regional Partnership Board. The Regional Skills Partnership will build on this and it will be the basis for developing learning pathways that develop skills to meet the requirements of local employers and beyond.

P6. The governance of the post-16 provision should promote the above principles, consider the strategic quality improvement processes, ensure that expenditure is kept as much as possible within the post-16 budget and allow decisions to be made that consider environmental sustainability.

At present, the nature of the governance arrangements means that the main focus is on the offer within one organisation rather than looking more strategically across the county and, where necessary, beyond. In all schools except Penglais, over 80% of post-16 courses are unviable (see table in section 5i). The result of this is the need to draw funding from the funding earmarked by the Local Authority for 11-16 education in order to provide a subsidy to maintain post-16 education.

7. The numbers of sixth form learners

The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 provides a statutory basis for 14-19 Learning Pathways. It obliges 16-18 education providers to develop a local curriculum offering with at least 30 courses as options, including at least five general courses and five vocational courses. This offer should be in conjunction with other post-16 providers. Introducing the 30 options is more of a challenge for schools with small sixth forms. This has led to concerns about the ability of such schools to deliver the curriculum in a cost-effective manner, with maximum benefit for learners. These concerns increase when trying to provide a full post-16 curriculum through the medium of Welsh.

The numbers of year 12 learners within Ceredigion schools' sixth forms have fallen from 535 in 2014/15 to 390 in 2020/21. See more detail in Appendix 11.3. The transfer rates vary between schools.

Inevitably, the aforementioned reduction in learner numbers has had a negative impact on the funding awarded by the Welsh Government for post-16 provision in Ceredigion. Following two stable years in 2020/21 and 2021/22, the 2022/23 financial year saw a reduction of over £273k (7.05%) in funding, the highest reduction of any authority in Wales. The predictions in terms of future learner numbers do not suggest that this funding will be recovered soon.

8. The financial situation

Funding to maintain post-16 education provision is provided by the Welsh Government in the form of an annual grant.

The total amount of this grant for 2023-24 was **£3,786,591**

This grant has been allocated according to a formula which includes the following:

- Pupil numbers: £4333 is allocated for each post-16 learner. PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) data is used annually on the basis of actual numbers over the previous 2 years and an estimate of transfer numbers for the current year;
- Deprivation (a total of £16k is allocated to each sixth form based on the numbers who are entitled to free school meals);
- Sparsity - a total of £332k; and
- Welsh medium – a total of £186k

When estimating the true cost of maintaining a sixth form in a school, the following costs are considered:

- Teaching costs (the cost of the teacher) modelled on teaching hours + 15% PPA (Planning, Preparation, Assessment) and assumptions of the teacher's salary modelled on the main pay scale + TLR1a to consider that teachers who teach post-16 classes are likely to carry additional Teaching and Learning Responsibilities, some more than TLR1a and some less.
- The cost of the head of the sixth form based on a 30% non-contact timetable
- Data and examination officer on a 0.5fte basis at pay scale 8
- Cost of exams @£109.20 per whole qualification
- Teaching resources: a total of £200 per pupil (not for all courses)
- Additional Learning Needs Support (1:1 support and additional intervention)
- Free School Meals

The estimated cost of running sixth form courses in 2023-24 is **£4,194,750, which is £408,519 more than the sixth form grant.**

Modelling the above on a lower cost basis of 10% PPA and TLR 2c for teachers and 0.3fte for the examination officer, the total falls to **£3,946,208, which is £159,617 more than the sixth form grant.**

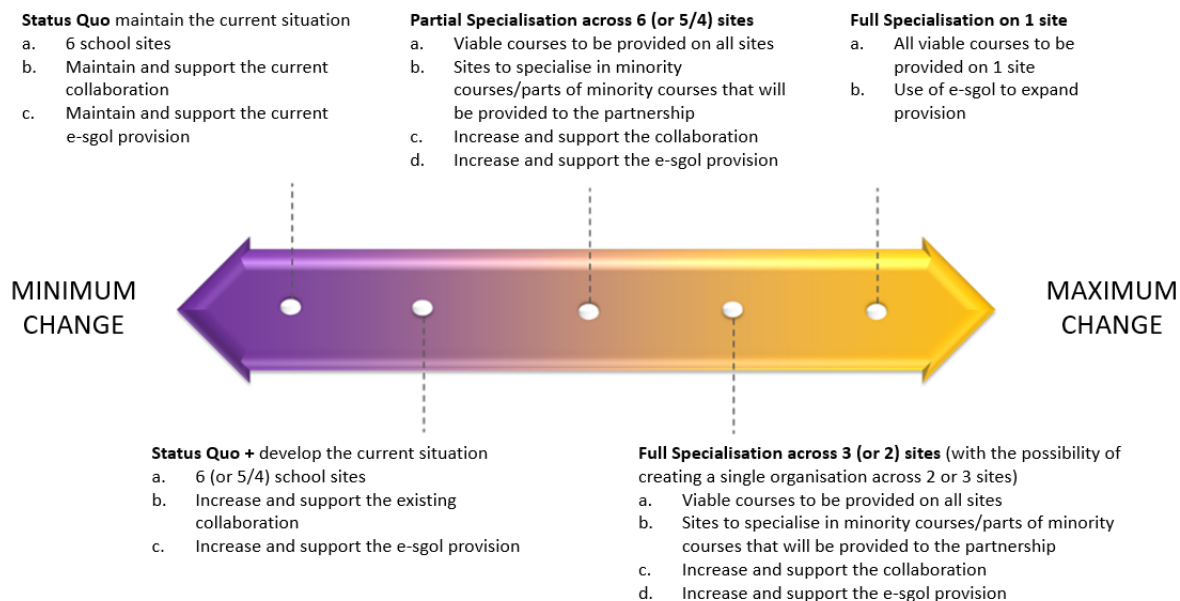
All schools have overhead costs and these can be calculated per pupil as a basis for calculating these costs for post-16 pupils. These costs include energy (mainly fuel), maintenance, cleaning, leadership, administrative team, exam invigilators (where appropriate) and librarians (where appropriate). The total of these overhead costs for post-16 in Ceredigion schools is **£1,412,280**. An analysis of these costs can be seen in Appendix 11.5.3.

From the above, it is clear that the Post-16 grant from the Welsh Government is not sufficient to maintain post-16 provision in its current form in Ceredigion as the expenditure is between **£1,571,897** and **£1,820,799** more than the value of the grant.

Based on the assumptions above, all but one school in Ceredigion have to use core 11-16 funding to varying degrees to maintain their sixth forms. Ysgol Penglais is the exception, where relatively large numbers in the sixth form allow more viable classes and economies of scale to maintain their provision.

9. Options to consider

Possible post-16 model



At the right end, which is the maximum change, the post-16 provision can be combined with other partners such as Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training and Coleg Ceredigion (Coleg Ceredigion is part of the Coleg Sir Gâr Cyf company within the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Group and does not come under the control of Ceredigion County Council.) In addition, it is recognized that joint work could be done to varying degrees with the college and HCT as part of the other options.

10.Consideration of the different options in the context of the principles

The intention of this section is to consider options based on what has been set out in section 9 in turn and to consider each one’s potential to meet the principles from section 6. This is done by looking at the advantages and disadvantages of the different options in the context of the principles.

OPTION 1 - Maintain the Current Situation

Description of the option

This option would mean that the current situation in Ceredigion would remain the same. Post-16 provision would continue on the 6 existing sites. The Local Authority would continue to maintain, develop and support the current collaboration arrangements between the schools and with partners. That would include the e-sgol provision. Formal partnership agreements would be in place including e-sgol. The 6 current Governing Boards would continue with their current roles in terms of post-16 governance.

Advantages of Option 1	Disadvantages of Option 1
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. This is the option that creates the least change within Ceredigion’s post-16 organisation. It would meet the aspirations of those learners who are eager to see the current sixth form arrangements remain as they are.2. In the short term, at least, staff and unions would not see this option as one that would threaten their job security and thereby create uncertainty in the schools.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In the past, the learners’ needs were not consistently prioritized across the county when making decisions on the offer to them. As a result, some strategic opportunities have been missed to create stable, deeper partnerships between schools. This would have allowed the offer to be expanded, limited the number of non-viable classes and reduced recruitment problems. Where larger classes in terms of numbers allow smaller classes to be run in other subjects, the strategic

	<p>benefits of that were not fully considered beyond a single institution.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. The current arrangements with partners beyond the schools for curriculum planning or for monitoring and improving standards are not satisfactory.3. There are major shortcomings in the Welsh medium offer, linguistic progression is poor and some institutions note recruitment difficulties in specialist areas.4. The current arrangements do not effectively address the significant financial challenges facing the authority and the schools, and schools will continue to rely on 11-16 funding to provide subsidies to maintain post-16 education.5. There is no fairness or equal opportunity for all learners in the county in terms of the offer, the pastoral care and well-being, the travel requirements, the learning method or access to support. All of this is highly dependent on the institution in which the learner is enrolled. There is no consistency in terms of the courses offered or the learning method (face-to-face,
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	<p>virtual, combined, e-sgol etc.).</p> <p>Where there is virtual or e-sgol provision there is also a need for consistency in terms of the support offered beyond the usual lessons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. In general, the advice and guidance given to learners is too focused on the provision within the school.7. Although approximately 40% of Ceredigion's Y11 cohort leave school at the age of 16, the vocational offer, including apprenticeships, has not received due attention and does not respond to the needs of the local economy.8. The current governance arrangements, particularly the lack of strategic partnership agreements, lead to decisions being made that do not necessarily take into account the wider needs of the county's learners.9. The disadvantages above suggest that Ceredigion's current post-16 arrangements could be challenged by the CTER when it is established in 2023.
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OPTION 2 – Develop the Current Situation

Description of the Option

This option would build on the current situation in Ceredigion. In the first place, post-16 provision would continue on the 6 existing sites. The 6 current Governing Boards would continue with their current roles in terms of governance up to 16 but agree with the Local Authority to form a Strategic Board which would manage the Authority’s post-16 budget, ensure suitable arrangements for joint planning of the curriculum and then commission the provision from the schools, e-sgol and other partners. The Strategic Board would be supported by an Executive Board in order to implement the curricular offers. The Strategic Board would be responsible for monitoring the quality of the provision and making recommendations to the Local Authority and the providers for improvement. Over time, these recommendations could include adjusting the number of sites and what is provided at each site. All providers would be represented on both boards, with representation from the Local Authority and an appropriate place for the voice of the learner and parents.

Advantages of Option 2	Disadvantages of Option 2
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 This option would not destabilize Ceredigion’s current post-16 organization in the short term and is therefore likely to meet the aspirations of those learners who are eager to see the current sixth form arrangements remain as they are. 2 While recognizing the need for a strategic overview, the system that led to the generally high post-16 standards in Ceredigion schools would remain. As with Option 1, it is likely that this would be seen as 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The slowness of partnership developments to date (even with a strategic board in place) suggests that continuing on this path would not deliver the improvements quickly enough or to the necessary extent. 2. Some governors might oppose the surrendering of post-16 responsibilities to a Strategic Board. 3. The Board might not be able to act at the necessary speed to make changes in a timely manner.

<p>supporting the efforts and successes of school staff and governors, learners and their parents.</p> <p>3 In the short term, at least, staff and unions would not see this option as one that would threaten their job security and thereby create uncertainty in the schools.</p> <p>4 The formation of a Strategic Board would provide a structure to allow the needs of learners across the county to be prioritised when making decision on the offer to them. This could lead to the creation of stable, deeper partnerships between schools and other providers, expand the offer, limit the number of non-viable classes and reduce recruitment problems. Where larger classes in terms of numbers allow smaller classes to be run in other subjects, the Board would be able to consider that across the entire provision.</p> <p>5 The Board would be responsible for developing arrangements with partners beyond the schools for curriculum planning and for monitoring and improving standards.</p>	<p>4. Mistrust and a tendency to protect the needs of individual institutions could undermine the work of the Board.</p> <p>5. The Board may struggle to reach an agreement on making more challenging recommendations and therefore fail to effectively address the significant financial challenges facing the authority and the schools.</p> <p>6. There is no guarantee that the scale of change in this option would be sufficient in order to reach a point where the sixth form provision is self-sustainable (i.e. without subsidy from 11-16 funding).</p>
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<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. One of the core roles of the Board would be to ensure an improvement in the offer through the medium of Welsh, in line with the aspirations and objectives of Ceredigion's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.7. The Board would have a responsibility to ensure greater fairness and equal opportunity for all learners in the county in terms of the offer, advice and guidance, pastoral care and well-being, travel requirements, the teaching method and access to support.8. The Board would consider the suitability of the vocational offer, including apprenticeships.	
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OPTION 3 – Provision in some schools

Description of the Option

This option would be a development of Option 2 above. It would mean closing the post-16 provision at one or more sites. Then, as in Option 2, those Governing Boards would continue with their current roles in terms of governance up until the age of 16 and agree with the Local Authority to form a Strategic Board that would manage the Authority’s post-16 budget, ensure suitable arrangements for joint planning of the curriculum and then commissioning the provision from the schools, e-sgol and other partners. The Board would also be responsible for monitoring the quality of the provision and make recommendations to the Local Authority and the providers for improvement. These recommendations could include further adjusting the number of sites. All providers, including all schools, would be represented on the Board, with representation from the Local Authority and an appropriate place for the voice of the learner and parents.

Advantages of Option 3	Disadvantages of Option 3
<p>1 The formation of formal federalism would provide a structure for allowing the needs of learners across the county to be prioritised when making decisions on the offer to them. This could lead to the creation of stable, deeper partnerships between schools and other providers, expand the offer, limit the number of non-viable classes and reduce recruitment problems. Where larger classes in terms of numbers allow</p>	<p>1 This option would begin to destabilize Ceredigion’s current post-16 organisation.</p> <p>2 Closing the post-16 provision of one or more schools while keeping others open would likely create animosity between areas and the perception that some areas are gaining at the expense of other areas.</p> <p>3 Staff and unions could see this option as one that would threaten their job security and</p>

<p>smaller classes to be run in other subjects, the Board would be able to consider that across the entire provision.</p> <p>2 The Board would be responsible for developing arrangements with partners beyond the schools for curriculum planning and for monitoring and improving standards.</p> <p>3 One of the core roles of the Board would be to ensure an improvement in the offer through the medium of Welsh, in line with the aspirations and objectives of Ceredigion’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>4 The Board would have a responsibility to ensure greater fairness and equal opportunity for all learners in the county. This would be specific in terms of the offer, the advice and guidance, the pastoral care and well-being, the travel requirements, the teaching method and access to support. This would include learners from other schools where there would be no post-16 provision under this option.</p>	<p>thereby create uncertainty in the schools.</p> <p>4 The expectation for teachers and staff to travel would likely increase and therefore increase costs and the carbon footprint.</p> <p>5 The Board might not be able to act at the necessary speed to make changes in a timely manner.</p> <p>6 The Board might struggle to reach agreement on making more difficult recommendations and therefore fail to effectively address the significant financial challenges facing the authority and the schools.</p>
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5 The Board would consider the suitability of the vocational offer, including apprenticeships.	
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OPTION 4 – One Centre

Description of the option

This option would offer a more far-reaching change. It would mean closing the current post-16 provision and establishing a Centre of Excellence, involving a range of partners, at one or more suitable geographical sites. A Governing Body independent of the schools would be responsible for the funding and the curriculum and would appoint a small number of core staff to steer and manage the work.

Advantages of Option 4	Disadvantages of Option 4
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 This option would allow the needs of learners across the county to be prioritised when making decisions on the offer for them. This could lead to the creation of stable, deeper partnerships between the new centre/centres and other providers. It would also expand the offer and limit the numbers of non-viable classes. 2 The Governing Body would have a responsibility to develop arrangements with partners beyond the schools for curriculum planning and for monitoring and improving standards. 3 There would be a clear responsibility for the Governing Body to ensure improvement in 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 This option would destabilize Ceredigion's current post-16 organisation. It could create significant local opposition. 2 Staff and unions could see this option as one that would threaten job security and morale. That could create significant uncertainty in the schools. 3 The expectation for teachers and staff to travel would likely increase and therefore increase costs and the carbon footprint. 4 Although there is a solid opportunity here to develop the curriculum through the medium of Welsh, there is no guarantee that the Welsh ethos of the schools will be maintained in the new institutions.

<p>the offer through the medium of Welsh, in accordance with the aspirations and objectives of Ceredigion’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>4 There would be a clear responsibility and opportunity to ensure greater fairness and equal opportunity for all learners in the county. That would include the offer, the advice and guidance, the pastoral care and well-being, the travel requirements, the teaching method and access to support.</p> <p>5 The Governing Body would consider the suitability of the vocational offer, including apprenticeships. By co-locating provision on one or more sites, there is the opportunity for students to combine A-level and vocational courses.</p> <p>6 The formation of a single Governing Body would allow quicker action than Options 2 and 3.</p> <p>7 A single Governing Body would have a better chance of responding to the significant</p>	<p>5 If the Centre of Excellence were to follow a model of commissioning staff from the County’s schools, those schools might not prioritize post-16 requirements when appointing.</p>
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<p>financial challenges in the future.</p> <p>8 As there is only one Governing Body in this option there is no opportunity for individual schools to opt out.</p> <p>9 An experience for students in a larger institution, whether socially or in terms of experiencing a life more similar to what they will face when moving on to University.</p> <p>10 This option would allow co-location with providers such as Coleg Ceredigion / HCT in order to further expand the offer and allow learners to follow different combinations of courses. This would also likely increase the number of learners, with the benefits of that including providing a wider range of courses and extracurricular opportunities.</p> <p>11 Without having to maintain a sixth form, schools would be free to spend all money delegated by the Local Authority for 11-16 education in accordance with the basic intention of this funding.</p>	
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A SUMMARY OF THE OPTIONS AGAINST THE PRINCIPLES

Option	Principle 1	Principle 2	Principle 3	Principle 4	Principle 5	Principle 6
1						
2						
3						
4						

Met to a large extent
Met to some extent
Met to a lesser extent
Met to a low extent

Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone who has given their time and expertise to assist in the production of this report. Thanks to the headteachers, staff and governors of the schools, to Coleg Ceredigion and Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training, to the Regional Skills Partnership and to the learners, parents and employers for responding to the questionnaire. A special thanks to Ceredigion Council staff for their support throughout.

11. Appendices

11.1 – Summary of Questionnaires

Parents of primary age learners

- **Wide choice** - a large number have identified the need for a rich choice of subjects with high learning quality. The need for a curriculum to meet the needs of a full range of vocational learners, apprenticeships, ALN, was noted.
- **Language** – there was a whole continuum of attitudes on this subject. From ensuring Welsh language pathways in all subjects through all key stages, to not learning subjects through the medium of Welsh as it does not prepare learners for their future in further education and the workplace.
- **Local** – The opinion of many was that post-16 education should remain local within the schools.
- **Pathways to the world of work, work experience** - many identified the need for a curriculum that developed the skills needed for Ceredigion’s workforce. Early world of work education in order to generate interest and prepare learners and put them on the right paths.
- **Collaboration between schools or the establishment of centres of excellence** – Aberystwyth and Cardigan were named as centres of excellence by some. Combining the 6th form of Aberystwyth schools was another suggestion, while another proposal was to combine timetables and allow staff to travel between schools.

Parents of Y7-11 learners

- **Wide choice** – across traditional and vocational courses, apprenticeships and ALN learners.
- **Local** – The opinion of many was that post-16 education should stay local within the school including a number noting the reopening of Henry Richard. The importance of a 6th form within schools was noted and the need to travel across the County for College courses.
- **Collaboration between schools or the establishment of centres of excellence** – Aberystwyth schools were noted by a few as an opportunity to combine, others noted 1 Centre in the County for all provisions.
- **Connections with the world of work** – Experiences in the world of work to help with choices especially with vocational courses. Developing strong links with employers to build the necessary skills is also noted.
- **Language** – the ability to learn through Welsh or English was noted by a number of people

Parents of KS5 learners

- **Offering** – Choice is limited, need more vocational options and ones that are relevant to the agricultural nature of the county, and apprenticeships.
- **Local** – Many felt there were great benefits to staying in the same institution in terms of aspiration, ethos, mental health and transport.
- **Create 1 College or develop and add to what we have** – Staff expertise, increased choice, flexibility, prepare learners for further education, eliminate the attitude of College v School and A Level v Vocational.
- **Workplace advice and work experience** – Develop the understanding at pre-16 level so that they can make meaningful choices.

Parents of post-18 learners

- **Offering** – Increasing the offering across all qualification types was the main theme with the majority noting this.
- **Development of a centre/college** - a number noted this as a way of getting a better offering and higher quality provision with expertise in subjects.
- **Keeping post-18 education local** - a few expressed that this is the way forward.

Yr 7 and 8 Learners

- **Wide choice** – options to suit learners' interests
- **Local** – stay in their school and don't want to travel far
- **Language** – choose the language in which they study
- **College** – Somewhere central to everyone
- **Work experience**

Yr 9 -11 Learners

- **Wide choice** – equality, diversity, practical, vocational, ALN
- **Good teachers** – Experts, face to face, supportive, know the learner, good advice about post-16 options
- **Local** – a mixture here of staying at their current school to more local Colleges
- **Language** – ability to study in the language of their choice, ability to learn subjects in Welsh
- **Facilities** – Learning, computers, sports, relaxation

Yr 12-13 Learners

- **Wide choice** – Beyond traditional subjects, get rid of the Bacc, apprenticeships
- **Good advice** - when transitioning to KS5, raise awareness of jobs and opportunities beyond the traditional offering
- **Language** – study in the language of their choice and continuation from KS4 to 5

Post-18 learners

- **Local** – consider travelling to be an obstacle
- **Offering** – More options especially in line with technological developments
- **Small classes** - a number noted that good results have come as a result of this

11.2

A level subjects

Data Arholiadau BI13 Haf 2022 Summer 2022 Y13 Exams Data	Aberaeron		Aberteifi		Penglais		Penweddig		Bro Pedr		Bro Teifi		Ceredigion	
	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Art and Design	-	8	-	4	-	7	1	3	1	4	6	-	8	26
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Biology	-	5	-	9	-	34	6	3	-	15	-	9	6	75
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Business	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	8	-
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chemistry	-	3	-	15	-	32	4	1	-	11	-	6	4	68
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Design and Technology	-	-	-	2	-	16	4	-	-	10	-	-	4	28
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Drama and Theatre	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	1	-	6
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Language and Literature	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	15
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Literature	-	9	-	-	-	14	-	13	-	6	-	-	-	42
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in French	-	-	-	1	-	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	4
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Further Mathematics	-	1	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	7
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Geography	1	5	-	6	-	19	8	-	7	4	6	-	22	34
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care, and Childcare	-	8	-	3	-	11	4	-	-	8	6	-	10	30
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in History	-	7	-	4	-	26	8	-	2	17	6	-	16	54
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in ICT	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	-	-	-	7	-	12	4
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Mathematics	-	4	-	9	-	24	3	5	1	9	6	-	10	51
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Media Studies	-	7	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	30
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Music	-	-	-	2	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Physical Education	-	-	-	-	-	11	6	-	-	10	-	-	6	21
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Physics	-	5	-	6	-	13	3	8	-	6	-	7	3	45
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Psychology	-	-	-	13	-	36	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	49
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies	-	-	-	8	-	-	3	-	-	6	-	-	3	14
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Sociology	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	39
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Spanish	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Welsh First Language	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	6	-	3	-	12	-
WJEC Eduqas Level 3 Advanced GCE in Electronics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
AQA Level 3 Advanced GCE in French	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
AQA Level 3 Advanced GCE in Polish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in Classical Greek	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in Computer Science	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in Latin	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
WJEC Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate	35		35		115		38		57		37		317	

Vocational Subjects

Data Arholiadau BI13 Haf 2022 Summer 2022 Y13 Exams Data	Aberaeron		Aberteifi		Penglais		Penweddig		Bro Pedr		Bro Teifi		Ceredigion	
	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG	CYM	ENG
WJEC Level 3 Applied Diploma in Criminology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-
WJEC Level 3 Certificate in Criminology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-
WJEC Level 3 Certificate in Food Science and Nutrition	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
WJEC Level 3 Certificate in Medical Science	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
WJEC Level 3 Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
WJEC Level 3 Diploma in Medical Science	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Art and Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Business	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Travel and Tourism	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Sport	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Sport and Fitness	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Art and Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Blacksmithing and Metalworking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Business	-	2	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	20	-	9	-	42
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Engineering	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Public Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	7
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Sport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	4	-	7
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Travel and Tourism	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma in IT	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6

11.3 Retention Rates

Retention Rates to the 6th Form (PLASC)								
Aberaeron								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	64	58	59	56	51	53	48
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	74%	89%	91%	102%	102%
	Y11	--	--	49%	60%	65%	60%	60%
	Y12	74	80	63	56	52	47	46
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	66%	68%	71%	58%	59%	47%
	Y11	121	93	79	89	80	97	96
Aberteifi								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	42	62	31	40	40	26	33
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	89%	75%	75%	74%	89%
	Y11	--	--	39%	49%	40%	30%	31%
	Y12	56	35	53	53	35	37	43
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	44%	65%	54%	40%	35%	36%
	Y11	79	82	99	88	105	121	101
Penglais								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	151	144	139	96	105	86	119
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	84%	66%	70%	70%	93%
	Y11	--	--	70%	49%	58%	53%	60%
	Y12	172	166	145	151	122	128	142
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	83%	74%	84%	75%	64%	75%
	Y11	199	195	180	162	200	190	184
Penweddig								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	63	77	55	62	60	45	49
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	92%	87%	93%	80%	92%
	Y11	--	--	67%	63%	67%	51%	62%
	Y12	85	90	71	63	56	53	41
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	73%	72%	70%	64%	67%	45%
	Y11	82	98	90	88	79	92	97
Bro Pedr								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	66	74	77	63	68	64	71
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	84%	85%	96%	96%	91%
	Y11	--	--	72%	53%	68%	59%	62%
	Y12	95	92	74	71	67	78	72
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	86%	62%	71%	62%	68%	73%
	Y11	107	119	100	108	114	98	109
Henry Richard								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	-	-	-	-	-
	Y11	--	--	-	-	-	-	-
	Y12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Y11	56	32	36	30	43	43	29
Bro Teifi								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	47	46	48	41	58	34	47
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	92%	93%	89%	83%	94%
	Y11	--	--	56%	63%	81%	59%	56%
	Y12	53	52	43	65	40	50	46
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	61%	66%	90%	69%	60%	59%
	Y11	85	65	72	58	84	78	88
Ceredigion								
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Y13	448	461	409	358	382	308	367
Retention rates from...	Y12	--	--	84%	80%	83%	83%	93%
	Y11	--	--	56%	51%	58%	49%	52%
	Y12	535	485	449	459	372	393	390
Retention rates from...	Y11	--	66%	64%	69%	59%	55%	54%
	Y11	736	698	662	631	711	728	709

11.4 Courses offered by Coleg Ceredigion

<i>Course</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Location</i>
Art	Foundation/3	Aberystwyth
Creative Arts	2	Aberystwyth
Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair	1/2/3	Cardigan
Public Services	2	Aberystwyth
Business	3	Aberystwyth
Accounting	AAT	Aberystwyth
Public Services	3	Aberystwyth
Construction	2	Cardigan
Construction and Building Services Engineering	2	Cardigan
Construction Trades	Level 3 Apprenticeship	Cardigan
Construction Trade Skills	1	Cardigan
Brickwork	3	Cardigan
Carpentry and Joinery	1/2	Cardigan
Brickwork	2	Cardigan
Furniture	2/3	Cardigan
ESOL		Aberystwyth
Vocational studies	Intorductory Diploma	Cardigan
Vocational	Access	Aberystwyth
Hairdressing	Certificate/1/2/3	Cardigan
Beauty Therapy	2/3	Cardigan
Beauty	1	Cardigan
Leadership & Management of Children's Care, Play, Learning & Development	5	Aberystwyth
Children's Care, play, learning and development	2	Aberystwyth
Health & Social Care	3	Aberystwyth
Early Years Health and Social Care and Childcare	1	Aberystwyth
Children's Care, play, learning and development	3	Aberystwyth
Health Science	Higher Education Access Diploma	Cardigan
Professional Cookery and Food & Beverage Service	1/2/3	Aberystwyth
Professional Cookery and Food & Beverage Service	1/2/3	Cardigan
IT	2/3	Cardigan
Creative Media	2	Aberystwyth
Creative Media Production	3	Aberystwyth
Animal Care	1/2/3	Aberystwyth
Online Introduction to Animal Behaviour	Access	Aberystwyth
Performing Arts	3	Aberystwyth
Creative Arts	2	Aberystwyth
Sport	2	Cardigan
Sport & Outdoor Activities	3	Cardigan

11.5 Estimates of post-16 costs

11.5.1 Costs of providing post-16 courses 2023-24 (Model 1)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
		Aberaeron	Aberteifi	Penglais	Penweddig	Bro Pedr	Bro Teifi	TOTAL	Notes
1									
2	No of pupils	81	66	221	106	127	101	702	
3									
4	Teaching costs	370,478	344,016	683,347	511,869	549,102	447,697	2,906,508	UPS3 + TLR1a, and Includes 15% PPA plus extra
5	Coleg Ceredigion		42,642					42,642	Aberteifi Uwch
6	Head of 6th form 30% non contact time	25,801	25,801	25,801	25,801	25,801	25,801	154,807	UPS3 + TLR1a, and Includes 15% PPA plus extra, @ 30% for 6 schools
7	Data & Examinations officer 50% Gr8	17,111	17,111	17,111	17,111	17,111	17,111	102,666	0.50 FTE Grade 8
8	Exam costs @ £109.20 per exam	16,052	9,500	37,674	16,708	18,346	17,363	115,643	353 pupils @ £109.20 per A level
9	Capitation (Teaching materials)	16,200	13,200	44,200	21,200	25,400	20,200	140,400	702 pupils @ £200
10	SEN 1:1 Support	153,930	68,023	161,589	59,385	138,666		581,593	Not included TA3 - 3 in Units. TA2 - 4 in units
11	SEN - Extra intervention	4,928	3,584	4,032	2,240	6,272	3,584	24,640	55 @ £448
12	Free School Meals	23,492	18,458	26,848	13,424	30,204	13,424	125,850	75 @ £1678
13	TOTAL	627,993	542,335	1,000,602	667,738	810,902	545,180	4,194,750	
14									
15	Grant available 23/24 (excl 3% admin)	475,634	409,782	1,081,969	582,245	675,809	561,152	3,786,591	
16									
17	Variance	- 152,359	- 132,553	81,367	- 85,493	- 135,093	15,972	- 408,159	
18									
19									
20	ASSUMPTIONS								
21	Teacher cost based on teacher at top of scale, plus TLR1a, plus 15% non contact time								
22	Head of 6th form, assumed extra 30% non contact time								
23	Data & Exam officer - based on 50% of a Gr8 post								
24	Teaching materials @ £200 per pupil								

11.5.2 Costs of providing post-16 courses 2023-24 (Model 2)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
		Aberaeron	Aberteifi	Penglais	Penweddig	Bro Pedr	Bro Teifi	TOTAL	Notes
1									
2	No of pupils	81	66	221	106	127	101	702	
3									
4	Teaching costs	345,315	320,650	636,934	477,103	511,807	417,289	2,709,098	UPS3 + TLR2c, and Includes 10% PPA plus extra
5	Coleg Ceredigion		42,642					42,642	Aberteifi Uwch
6	Head of 6th form 30% non contact time	24,049	24,049	24,049	24,049	24,049	24,049	144,293	UPS3 + TLR1a, and Includes 15% PPA plus extra, @ 30% for 6 schools
7	Data & Examinations officer 30% Gr8	10,267	10,267	10,267	10,267	10,267	10,267	61,600	0.30 FTE Grade 8
8	Exam costs @ £109.20 per exam	16,052	9,500	37,674	16,708	18,346	17,363	115,643	353 pupils @ £109.20 per A level
9	Capitation (Teaching materials)	16,200	13,200	44,200	21,200	25,400	20,200	140,400	702 pupils @ £200
10	SEN 1:1 Support	153,930	68,023	161,589	59,385	138,666		581,593	Not included TA3 - 3 in Units. TA2 - 4 in units
11	SEN - Extra intervention	4,928	3,584	4,032	2,240	6,272	3,584	24,640	55 @ £448
12	Free School Meals	23,492	18,458	26,848	13,424	30,204	13,424	125,850	75 @ £1678
13	TOTAL	594,233	510,373	945,593	624,374	765,010	506,175	3,945,758	
14									
15	Grant available 23/24 (excl 3% admin)	475,634	409,782	1,081,969	582,245	675,809	561,152	3,786,591	
16									
17	Variance	- 118,599	- 100,591	136,376	- 42,129	- 89,201	54,977	- 159,167	
18									
19									
20	ASSUMPTIONS								
21	Teacher cost based on teacher at top of scale, plus TLR2c, plus 10% non contact time								
22	Head of 6th form, assumed extra 30% non contact time								
23	Data & Exam officer - based on 30% of a Gr8 post								
24	Teaching materials @ £200 per pupil								

11.5.3 Post-16 overhead costs 2023-24

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
		Aberaeron	Aberteifi	Penglais	Penweddig	Bro Pedr	Bro Teifi		TOTAL
1									
2	Energy	162,102	166,398	249,413	239,006	209,381	155,000		1,181,300
3	R&M	20,500	41,500	35,696		31,000	66,000		194,696
4	Cleaning	74,792	110,659	151,117		175,476	134,864		646,908
5	Caretaker	48,974	39,999	72,978		38,754	53,759		254,464
6	Leadership	461,888	904,862	1,298,066	463,897	614,528	565,680		4,308,921
7	Admin team	222,905	220,230	486,130	185,450	164,952	188,475		1,468,142
8	Exam Invigilators	20,000	47,407	18,000	13,573	-	4,000		102,980
9	Librarian	14,394	29,744	31,416	-	30,839	-		106,393
10	TOTAL	1,025,555	1,560,799	2,342,816	901,926	1,264,930	1,167,778		8,263,804
11									
12	Total Pupils		599	604	1085	619	669	554	4,130
13	Total Post 16 pupils		84	66	221	106	134	101	712
14									
15	Overheads for Post 16		143,817	170,551	477,200	154,449	253,364	212,898	1,412,280

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Chamber, Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron and remotely on Thursday, 6 July 2023

Present: Councillor Endaf Edwards (Chair), Councillors Chris James (Vice-Chair), Euros Davies, Meirion Davies, Amanda Edwards, Elizabeth Evans, Eryl Evans, Paul Hinge, Gareth Lloyd, Ann Bowen Morgan and Mark Strong.

Also in attendance: Rhodri Evans, Jonny Greatrex (Co-opted Member) and Cathryn Charnell-White (Co-opted Member).

Cabinet Members present: Councillor Wyn Thomas.

Officers in attendance: Barry Rees, Corporate Director; Elen James, Corporate Lead Officer- Lifelong Learning; Clive Williams, Corporate Lead Officer- Schools; Carys Davies, Childcare Strategic Manager, Gwion Dafydd, Corporate Manager- Accountability and Progress, Llifon Ellis, e-sgol Head of Strategy, Lisa Evans, Scrutiny and Standards Officer and Neris Morgans, Democratic Services Officer.

(10.00am- 12.39pm)

1 Apologies

- i. Councillor Marc Davies apologised for his inability to attend the meeting.
- ii. Councillor Elizabeth Evans apologised for having to leave the meeting early.

2 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations) Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

There were no disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests (including whipping declarations) from Committee Members.

3 Personal Matters

- i. Councillor Wyn Thomas congratulated all involved with the Talwrn y Beirdd competition arranged for the local authority's secondary schools held recently during Gŵyl Fawr Aberteifi.
- ii. Councillor Wyn Thomas congratulated Ysgol Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn who celebrated 185 years this year.
- iii. Councillor Wyn Thomas congratulated Kay Morris and Eryl Jones for organising a successful robotics workshop for over 300 pupils recently.
- iv. Councillor Ann Bowen Morgan noted there was a Language Fair in Lampeter on 8 July at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

4 Verbal update on the GCSE reform (Made-for-Wales GCSEs)

Barry Rees, Corporate Director thanked the Committee for the opportunity to address the matter under consideration. An overview was provided of the

changes proposed following a public consultation held between October and December 2022 on the reform of GCSEs by Qualifications Wales, an independent statutory body funded by the Welsh Government (WG). The final decision would be done by WG whilst the examination board WJEC would implement the changes.

The outcomes of the consultation had very recently been published hence the verbal update as opposed to a written report. Several concerns could be drawn from the outcomes, including combining Biology, Chemistry and Physics to GCSE The Sciences (Double Award), which would result in the abolishment of separate science GCSEs (Triple Award) offered by 80% of schools throughout Wales.

Evidence from the Consultation's outcomes suggested that the consensus of 456 respondents had been disregarded, as reflected in the findings below:

- Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for GCSE The Sciences (Double Award)? Overall, 13% agreed with the proposal for GCSE The Sciences (Double Award), whilst 78% disagreed.
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal for GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) meets the reasonable needs of learners in Wales? Overall, 12% agreed that the proposal for GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) meets the needs of learners in Wales, whilst 75% disagreed.

Despite clear responses, Qualifications Wales had announced that GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) would be developed, replacing separate science GCSEs. This decision could lead to challenges for pupils who wished to follow traditional routes, such as studying medicine or veterinary science at university and for apprenticeships. As outlined by the local authority's Corporate Strategy, one objective was to boost the economy, support businesses and enable employment, therefore, strong scientific skills were key for ventures such as AberInnovation and Food Centre Wales available locally. Barry Rees explained that information had been shared about the proposals with the Political Group leaders, the Chair of the Committee and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to Barry Rees. The main points raised were as follows:

- The higher education sector was involved in the consultation and confirmed that the pathway from GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) to A Level and onto higher education was legitimate. Despite this, concerns were raised by Officers and Members that it would create a more difficult pathway for pupils compared to pupils in England who would have the benefit of studying separate science GCSEs and would retain the linear pathway.
- Concerns were raised that the changes that would possibly be introduced from September 2025 onwards were a significant step back and would prevent pupils from specialising in subjects.

- It was suggested that the changes may be due to the lack of teachers, however, this solution would create another problem.
- Changes to other subjects were also being proposed; a report would be presented at a later meeting.
- The rationale for the changes was questioned. It was noted that there was an ambition for pupils to have a balanced education. In addition, it would allow some time in the Curriculum for pupils to study other subjects including the Welsh Baccalaureate. A combination of traditional/academic and vocational subjects was deemed important but removing the choice from pupils was concerning.
- The next step for Qualifications Wales was to present the proposals formally to WG for decision. During this period, there were opportunities to voice opinions on the changes to the decision-makers, and to two key figures (the Chief Executive of Qualifications Wales and Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language).
- Members expressed concerns about whether the changes would have an impact on university applications. Qualifications Wales alleged that GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) would be sufficient as the entrance points were based on A-Level grades. Courses such as medicine were already difficult to access given the high grades required, and as a result, foundation courses had been established. This created a long pathway for pupils to reach their goals, however, the changes proposed would make it more challenging again.

Following recommendations from the Committee Members, it was agreed for Barry Rees, Corporate Director to draft a letter to be sent to the Chief Executive of Qualifications Wales, Welsh Government and Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language to express deep-seated concerns, focusing on three principles: removing the choice from pupils, disregarding the views of respondents and the impact on pupils' educational pathway. It was agreed that the letter would be shared with the Committee and submitted in their name.

5 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2022-2027 - Year 1 Progress Report (2022-2023)

Councillor Wyn Thomas (Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills) presented the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2022-2027 – Year 1 Progress Report (2022-2023). An overview of the following as outlined in the report was provided:

- Background
- Current situation
- Concerns
- Actions to address gaps
- Sustaining/enhancing provision (population - live births, childcare places, child poverty, Flying Start Outreach)
- Welsh Language (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wesp))

Carys Davies shared a short video of the work carried out at different childcare establishments throughout the county following successful grant applications made by the providers.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions which were answered by Officers present. The main points raised were as follows:

- Flying Start had worked closely with a private provider in Lampeter to explore options to expand their provision, but they had decided against this. Due to the need for further provision in the area, options were being explored including locating a suitable venue.
- It was noted that the Council should work with planning applications for childcare as there was a lack of provision in the county.
- Capital grant funding has benefitted the sector to develop the environment of the setting, but the real need is for revenue funding to support staff wages. This has been raised with WG.
- WG's focus at present was to expand the Flying Start provision for 2-year-olds in Ceredigion. WG had approved additional Flying Start areas in March 2023 and work was ongoing to implement the Flying Start childcare element on a phased basis.
- Ceredigion has been identified as one of five LAs in Wales to work with HMRC and Hempsall's in the coming year to support an increase in take-up of Tax-Free Childcare. The financial support could support working parents with the costs of childcare for 0–12-year-olds. Hopefully, by raising awareness, it would lead to an increase in the take-up by families.
- Members highlighted that 'Y Dyfodol', previously a private nursery in Cellan was vacant. It was reported that the local authority had no funding to secure the provision and the small amount per head from Flying Start only funded childcare provision. In addition, Flying Start's terms were specific and depended on the postcode of the child's address and whether it was within a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).

Following a proposal by Members, Committee Members agreed to recommend that the Cabinet/ Leadership Group explore options related to 'Y Dyfodol' in Cellan, given the need for childcare provision in the area.

In addition, Committee Members agreed to note the progress made in implementing the current action plan and the issues facing the Local Authorities in meeting their duty of securing sufficiency of childcare.

6 Overview of e-sgol

Councillor Wyn Thomas explained that the e-sgol project had been running since September 2018, with the original intention of supporting schools by providing lessons via e-sgol to pupils post 16 which would not have been available without this provision. The project was funded by WG, and Ceredigion was responsible for coordinating the project nationally. Following trialling the project in Ceredigion, it was moved on to Powys and GWE, where the positive effect of e-sgol was now going from strength to strength. The team had increased to include a Headteacher, 3 Secondary School leaders and one Primary School leader to commence in the near future. The project had also absorbed some of the work of the "Ymlaen a'r Dysgu" project which supports Welsh speakers post-16 within the English medium schools who wished to carry on developing their skills in the sixth form. In January 2021 e-sgol was commissioned by WG to develop a series of live revision sessions for students sitting their GCSEs, AS and A Levels (Carlam

Cymru). They were also recorded so that students could revisit them at any time. The sessions aimed to enrich the information of the students in different subjects and to offer further assistance to the exceptional work the teachers undertake in their schools. These live revision sessions were free and were available to all students across Wales and beyond.

Since the Pandemic remote learning has become very familiar to all pupils in Wales and the leaders of e-sgol have been progressive in offering support and training to schools in this area. Other successful elements that have been launched recently by the e-sgol team are working with Mudiad Meithrin across Wales; and the scheme of linking Pupil Referral Units with nearby schools as a means of providing GCSE courses to vulnerable pupils whilst training mainstream teachers on the specific teaching techniques.

Llifon Ellis provided a presentation to the Committee outlining the following:

- e-sgol team structure
- What is e-sgol?
- In the pipeline
- Recent projects
- Hybrid learning models and how it works
- Pupil and teacher setup
- Pupil voice
- Training and support

Members thanked Llifon Ellis for providing an informative presentation and that it was great to hear that Ceredigion was leading the work.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions which were answered by Officers present. The main points raised were as follows:

- In response to concerns raised related to digital connectivity, it was noted that there had been no issues at educational institutions as the infrastructure in place was generally good.
- Discussions about who provided courses were held between schools within the cluster. Funding for the provision varied from authority to authority, but in Ceredigion, there was a funding model in place between schools to support this.
- Generally, learners studied one e-sgol course at a time and accessed other courses face-to-face.

Following questions by the Committee Members, it was agreed to note the report.

7 To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes

It was agreed to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 08 June 2023.

Matters arising: None.

8 To consider the draft Forward Work Programme

It was agreed to note the contents of the Forward Work Programme presented subject to the following:

- 2023 GCSE & A Levels results (September 2023)
- Post-16 education (September 2023)
- GCSEs Reform (September 2023)
- Feedback on Individual Development Plan (November 2023/ May 2024)

Following a proposal, Democratic Services were asked to conduct enquiries around whether there were hybrid facilities in place at Cwrtnewydd School to hold November's meeting. If this was not possible, a visit to see the work undertaken at the school would be arranged as part of the workstream, which would be looked at by Officers in September.

9 Any other business

- i. Councillor Wyn Thomas noted that the Junior Proms Concert would be held on 6 July 2023 and the Senior Proms Concert would be held on 11 July 2023. Ceredigion Music Service were thanked for their work.
- ii. Councillor Wyn Thomas explained that work had commenced at the site of the new Aeron Valley area school. Progress updates would be provided to the Committee in due course.
- iii. Members noted that there continued to be difficulties with the hybrid system, which led to missing parts of the discussion. It was noted that ICT Officers had been informed of the issues during the meeting.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 September 2023

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO: Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 28 September 2023

LOCATION: Hybrid

TITLE: Draft Forward Work Programmes 2023/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: Review the current work programme of the Committee

REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION: The forward work programme of the Committee is reviewed and updated at each meeting

BACKGROUND:

Overview and Scrutiny Committees oversee the work of the Council to make sure that it delivers services in the best way and for the benefit of the local community.

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to look at the services and issues that affect people in Ceredigion. The process provides the opportunity for Councillors to examine the various functions of the council, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and to make recommendations to this effect.

Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision making process and the way in which it delivers services.

The main roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

- Holding the cabinet and officers as decision-makers to account
- Being a 'critical friend', through questioning how decisions have been made to provide a 'check and balance' to decision makers, adding legitimacy to the decision making process
- Undertaking reviews of council services and policy
- Undertaking reviews to develop council services and policies
- Considering any other matter that affects the county
- Ensuring that Ceredigion is performing to the best of its ability and delivering high quality services to its citizens
- Assessing the impact of the Council's policies on local communities and recommending improvement
- Engaging with the public to develop citizen centred policies and services

Effective Overview and Scrutiny can lead to:

- Better decision making
- Improved Service Delivery and Performance
- Robust Policy Development arising from public consultation and input of independent expertise
- Enhanced Democracy, Inclusiveness, Community Leadership and Engagement
- Adds a clear dimension of transparency and accountability to the political workings of the Council
- Provides an opportunity for all Members to develop specialist skills and knowledge that can benefit future policy making and performance monitoring processes
- Creates a culture of evidence based self-challenge

CURRENT SITUATION:

Questions to consider when choosing topics

- Is there a clear objective for examining this topic?
- Are you likely to achieve a desired outcome?
- What are the likely benefits to the Council and the citizens of Ceredigion?
- Is the issue significant?
- Are there links to the Corporate Strategy
- Is it a key issue to the public?
- Have the issues been raised by external audit?
- Is it a poor performing service?

Choosing topics

Overview and Scrutiny Committees should consider information from the Corporate Strategy, Improvement Plan, Strategic Plan, Service Plans, the Corporate Risk Register, budget savings – proposals and impact, Quarterly Corporate Performance Management panel meetings and departmental input in choosing topics and designing their Forward Work Programmes, as well as any continuing work.

RECOMMENDATION (S):

To review and update the current Forward Work Programme.

Contact Name:	Lisa Evans
Designation:	Scrutiny and Standards Officer
Date of Report:	22/09/2023
Acronyms:	FWP – Forward Work Programme

Overview and Scrutiny Draft Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Committee	Item (description/title)	Invited Speakers	Purpose i.e. monitoring, policy, recommendation
Learning Communities			
8 June 2023	Mid Wales Education Partnership Business Plan	MWEP Strategic Lead and the School Support Adviser	Recommendation
	ALN transfer document		Recommendation
	Ceredigion Youth Council Minutes		Monitoring
	Estyn inspections		Monitoring
6 July 2023	Child Sufficiency Assessment	Carys Davies	Monitoring
	E-sgol	Gwion Dafydd	Monitoring
28 September 2023	Post 16 education review		Argymhellion

27 November 2023	GCSE / A level results Sgiliau Bywyd, Sgiliau Gwaith & Multiply	Mark Gleeson	Monitro
22 February 2024 1.30pm	Budget		
9 May 2024			
Future meetings	Play Sufficiency Assessment Mid Wales Education Partnership (reported every autumn)		
Workstreams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that local and national priorities are delivered effectively 2. Ensure equity for all pupils 3. Ensure an effective and efficient infrastructure to meet our priorities 		