

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO:	Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	30.3.23
LOCATION:	Council Chamber, Penmorfa
TITLE:	Sustainable infrastructure principles for education
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:	For Information
REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION:	As a result of the need to update school reorganisation procedures

BACKGROUND:

In November 2018, the Welsh Government updated its statutory code in terms of school organisation and introduced a presumption against closure clause for rural schools. The definition of a rural school has been determined by the Welsh Government using the rural and urban categories of the Office for National Statistics, and as a result, 28 schools in Ceredigion have been defined as rural schools.

Following the Cabinet's decision on 15 September 2021, the School Review Policy was abolished and the handbook was adopted to match the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (Appendix B).

A workshop was held to present the handbook (Appendix C).

With the Education Development Document up to 2020 (Appendix D) having come to an end, it is timely to present a document that outlines the principles of the service for the future.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The statutory code requires Local Authorities to follow a series of more detailed procedures and requirements when drawing up a proposal to close a village school, when consulting on that proposal, and when deciding whether the proposal to close a rural school should be implemented.

Before deciding whether to proceed with a consultation, a proposal paper must be prepared and submitted to the Learning Communities Work Stream. Following the meeting of the Scrutiny Work Stream, the proposal paper is submitted to the Cabinet to consider whether to:

- a) Approve the proposal and proceed to conduct a statutory consultation
- b) Reject the proposal
- c) Offer an alternative option

The proposal paper will then be presented to the Learning Communities Scrutiny Committee before holding a Statutory Consultation.

Any decision will be based on the Principles in Appendix A together with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:	Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why Summary: Long term: Collaboration: Involvement: Prevention: Integration:
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RECOMMENDATION (S):

- (i) Recommend that the Cabinet approve the Sustainable infrastructure Principles Document (Appendix A) for education; and
- (ii) Confirm the membership of the cross-party work stream which will discuss any proposal papers brought forward in accordance with the School Organisation Handbook

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):

That a Strategy is in place for education infrastructure for the future.

Contact Name:	Meinir Ebbsworth
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Date of Report:	10.2.23
Acronyms:	
Background papers:	School Organisation Code (Appendix B) School Organisation Handbook 2021 (Appendix C)

Education Development 2020 (Appendix D)