

Swansea Council

Consultation Report: Future plans for Special Schools in Swansea

Consultation Report on the proposal to:

1. Amalgamate Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and Ysgol Crug Glas into one Special School on 1 September 2025 on existing sites; and
2. Relocate the new school on 1 April 2028 to purpose-built accommodation on Mynydd Garnllwyd Road, whilst increasing the number of planned places.

Contents

1. Background	- 2 -
2. Methodology	- 3 -
3. Consultation with Children and Young People	- 4 -
4. Consultation with parents/carers, staff, and the schools' governing bodies	- 5 -
5. Estyn Response	- 6 -
6. Feedback in relation to the impact on the Welsh Language	- 12 -
Appendix 1 – Summary of Pupil Consultation Responses	- 14 -
Appendix 2 – Summary of Consultation Responses	- 15 -
Appendix 3 – Minutes of Consultation Meetings	- 5 -

1. Background

Swansea has a strong track record for meeting a wide range of additional learning needs (ALN) with a continuum of specialist provision. This range of ALN has expanded over time. As part of the culture change involved in the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (ALNET), much work has been undertaken with mainstream schools to become increasingly inclusive and responsive to a widening range of ALN. The majority of pupils with ALN are educated in mainstream schools.

A significant number of pupils with ALN, who have more severe and complex needs require a more specialist setting for their learning and well-being needs to be met.

In Swansea these more specialised settings include specialist teaching facilities (STFs), which support pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties (MSD) or moderate/severe Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). There are very few spare places within mainstream STFs.

Additionally, there are two special schools providing education for a maximum of 250 pupils, aged between 3 and 19 years:

Ysgol Crug Glas has 55 places for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). This school is made up of three blocks ranging from 1960s to post 2010.

Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn has 195 places. It has 116 places for moderate to severe learning difficulties (M/SLD) and 79 places for pupils with severe autism. This school is made up of five blocks on two sites, ranging in age from 1960s to post 2010.

Over the past five years the proportion of pupils with ALN has risen, driving an increasing demand for special school places within Swansea. In response to this need, Swansea Council increased the planned places available at Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn in Spring 2021, by utilising a recently vacated Pupil Referral Unit. However, this provided a short-term solution, and a longer term, sustainable and flexible solution is now required to ensure that we continue to provide an excellent education for pupils in the coming years.

Swansea Council, as part of a wider review of specialist teaching provision across the local authority, has recently consulted on the following proposed changes to special school provision:

1. Amalgamate Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and Ysgol Crug Glas from 1 September 2025 on existing sites, in order to facilitate the transition to one school when the build is completed
2. Build a new Special School for 350 pupils at Mynydd Garnllwyd Road on land close to the existing Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn site which will be ready for occupation in April 2028

2. Methodology

The consultation took place with the prescribed consultees contained within the School Organisation Code <https://www.gov.wales/school-organisation-code> via a letter/email with a link to the consultation document on the Swansea Council website:

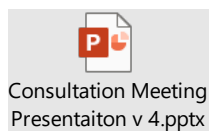
[School organisation - Future plans for Special Schools in Swansea - Swansea](#)

The consultation period was between 9 October and 24 November 2023.

Consultation meetings were held as follows:

Meeting for:	Venue	Date	Time	Attendance
Parents/Carers	Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn	07/11/23	1.30pm	4
Governors	Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn	07/11/23	2.30pm	5
Staff	Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn	07/11/23	3.30pm	52
Governors	Ysgol Crug Glas	08/11/23	2.30pm	5
Staff	Ysgol Crug Glas	08/11/23	3.30pm	36
Parents/Carers	Ysgol Crug Glas	08/11/23	4.30pm	4
Alternative Meeting for all interested parties	Virtual – Online Teams Meeting	13/11/23	11.00am	0
Alternative Meeting for all interested parties	Scout and Guide HQ, Swansea	15/11/23	1.00pm	2

The presentation made at the meetings is included here and available on the website link below:



[School organisation - Future plans for Special Schools in Swansea - Swansea](#)

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process prescribed by the Welsh Government for school reorganisation. The consultation document outlined the changes being considered, the rationale for these, details of the consultation process and incorporated a response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version of the response form and contact addresses to send in comments via e-mail.

3. Consultation with Children and Young People

Ensuring the views of learners were captured and carefully considered was a priority throughout the consultation process. A bespoke, easy to read ‘pupil consultation paper’ was created, and an online pupil survey was also made available for pupils for whom this may be appropriate. Pupils were encouraged to feed back in any form that they felt comfortable with. All learners had the proposal explained to them in a way they can understand by their class teacher, with whom they are familiar and are able to communicate with. For pupils with the most significant special needs, the schools used well-embedded communication strategies, including their own bespoke communication tools to ensure that even those learners who are non-verbal could communicate their feelings around the proposal.

During the consultation period 66 responses were received from pupils from Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn, and a summary response was provided by the school on behalf of pupils at Ysgol Crug Glas. The total number of pupils on roll at both schools on the January 2023 PLASC date was 233 (180 in Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and 53 in Ysgol Crug Glas). The summary of the survey is as follows:

Support Proposal/Happy	42
Against Proposal/Unhappy	0
Don't know	24

No letters/emails were received.

The main positive pupil responses from both schools were broadly around:

- making new friends;
- being excited; and
- the school will be big with more classrooms.

Some of the pupils noted that they:

- didn't care;
- were unsure; and
- will not be a pupil when the new build opens.

One noted they wanted things to stay the same.

A summary of all the pupil responses collated by the schools can be found at **Appendix 1**.

4. Consultation with parents/carers, staff, and the schools' governing bodies

During the consultation period 16 responses were received to the online survey. The summary of the survey feedback is as follows:

Support Proposal/Happy	12
Against Proposal/Unhappy	4
<i>Responses from:</i>	
Pupil	0
Parent/Carer	3
Member of Staff	7
Governor	3
Community Member	3
Other	0

One letter, in support of the proposal, was received from the Governing Body at Ysgol Crug Glas. The Governing Body at Ysgol Pen-y-bryn were also supportive of the proposal, and their Chair of Governors submitted a positive response to the online survey on behalf of the governing body.

Overall, the feedback was very positive. The main positive comments received were as follows:

- Acknowledgement of the positive impact the new school and facilities will have on learners, staff, and the community.
- Acknowledgement that the proposal will allow more pupils to remain within Swansea for their education.
- The proposal will support Specialist Teaching Facilities (STFs) by reducing pressure on mainstream schools and allowing staff learning opportunities.

The main concerns raised were as follows:

- Traffic congestion around the proposed new build site and potential impact on local residents and the environment.
- The potential impact on staff, in particular the headteachers, due to the period of uncertainty and additional workload linked with the new build.
- The amalgamation date of September 2025 may be too soon.
- Concern over staff jobs and roles following potential restructure.

A summary of the issues raised, and the local authority response is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Notes of the consultation meetings with parents/carers, staff and governing bodies can be found at **Appendix 3**.

5. Estyn Response

Estyn, the schools' inspectorate for Wales, were also required to comment on the proposal, as per the School Organisation Code. Their response is as follows:

Estyn's response to the proposal to amalgamate Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and Ysgol Crug Glas into one Special School on 1 September 2025 on existing sites; and to relocate the new school on 1 April 2028 to purpose-built accommodation on Mynydd Garnllwyd Road, whilst increasing the number of planned places.

Introduction

This report has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

Summary/ Conclusion

Estyn considers that the proposal is likely to, at least, maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The local authority has set out a clear rationale for its proposal. It outlines strongly the many advantages of building a new school to meet the needs of the growing number of pupils with complex needs. The local authority has identified that over the past five years the proportion of pupils with complex ALN has risen, driving an increasing demand for special school places within Swansea. Both schools are currently operating at capacity, with no further options to expand. The rationale for the new build seems sound and includes developing more capacity to meet pupils' needs, greater sharing of expertise and efficient reorganising of resources.

The local authority has provided a suitably detailed description of the proposal which includes an estimated timetable for statutory procedures.

In the main, the proposer identifies clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo and how they will manage any risk. The proposed site for the new school is a short distance from Ysgol Pen-Y-Bryn and a 13-minute drive from Ysgol Crug Glas which would mean additional travel for

these pupils. However, the local authority identifies that due to the nature of this specialist provision, all pupils need to travel across Swansea each day and transport arrangements will be made in accordance with Swansea Council's Home to School Transport Policy. It appears that whilst a site for the new build has been identified, this has yet to be confirmed.

The local authority has considered other options such as expansion of the existing schools, but neither site has the capacity to meet the needs of the growing number of places required across Swansea for pupils with complex and profound ALN. In addition, neither school is currently 'fit for purpose' or able to provide a suitable environment for pupils without a huge financial investment. Thus, a new school will be more cost effective and likely to meet the growing demand for places.

Whilst the new school proposal and eventual amalgamation has clear advantages in terms of a purpose-built school with a larger capacity, the local authority's case for the amalgamation of the two schools by 2025 does not appear as compelling. Whilst the school will operate as one with one governing body, one set of policies, one budget, the advantages to the pupils do not appear to be as clear. There will be no additional places available, no further work is planned to improve the sites and staff will still be working on two separate sites which are almost three miles apart. Sharing of facilities and professional development opportunities for staff and pupils between sites would not be easy. It is not clear why an amalgamation is necessary before the proposed new school is built as this appears to be an additional disruption.

After a wide review of specialist teaching provision across the local authority by Swansea Council, the rationale identifies an increasing demand for special school places within Swansea. The local authority has reviewed the language needs of the current cohort of learners across the schools and have concluded that there is no current requirement for a Welsh-medium special school in Swansea. However, the importance of the Welsh language across the current settings is set out clearly. The local authority is planning to utilise the expertise of staff between schools to continue to develop its practices in this area.

No capital funding is being sought for the amalgamation; however, there will be revenue funding implications as the newly amalgamated school would receive one budget share, as opposed to two. This will be calculated using the approved funding formula and will account for the total of 250 planned places that the amalgamated school would have. When the school moves to the enlarged site the budget share will increase to reflect the new site and the 350 planned places.

The local authority had identified that if the shortfall of special school places in Swansea is not addressed, pupils needing out of county or in the independent sector provision would increase which would impact on cost. The new school will be financed through Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and cost have been estimated at £43,600,000. The investment will be funded 75% Welsh Government and 25% council, with 100% of additional costs expected to be met by Welsh Government to deliver the Net Zero Operational

Carbon. However, it is not clear whether this funding is secure. The proposer does not explain what will happen if this funding is not available and if local planning permission is not granted.

The local authority has provided a Welsh Language Impact Assessment and a Community Impact Assessment as part of this proposal. Estyn provides their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals and does not evaluate the Welsh Language Impact Assessment or the Community Impact Assessment.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The local authority considers appropriately the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards in education, including pupil standards, wellbeing, teaching and learning experiences, care support, guidance, leadership, and management. For example, the proposal identifies that transferring to a new site would provide extensive outdoor space, including green space, for pupils to learn and play. The local authority references the recommendations from the Estyn Inspection of Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn which identifies the need for improved outdoor learning. It assumes fairly that pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning would benefit from a diverse and engaging outdoor space. It notes that a fit-for-purpose school building would help staff to provide broader learning experiences which would contribute to the delivery of a balanced curriculum, in line with the new Curriculum for Wales. The proposal also notes that Ysgol Crug Glas will continue its work with Welsh Government on developing authentic learning experiences for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

The local authority considers that the new build will enhance the learning, well-being and therapeutic experiences provided for all the pupils. It also considers how the new school will facilitate the provision of multidisciplinary working with a range of external professionals. Both schools place much emphasis on care, support, and guidance with a focus on meeting individual needs and providing suitable support to develop physical and emotional well-being.

The council appears to have considered the capacity for leadership in both schools and how this has recently developed and improved but does not seem to have considered how this structure will work when the schools amalgamate.

The local authority notes that school reorganisation proposals inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty. It identifies that experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum through meaningful engagement throughout the consultation process and has included opportunities for pupils to respond to the consultation. Nevertheless, the proposal does not consider what these disruptive factors may be in this case, or how the local authority will minimise these for learners.

Local Authority Response to Estyn

The local authority (LA) is in agreement with the positive feedback provided by Estyn regarding this proposal. However, there are some specific comments to which we have provided a response:

“Whilst the new school proposal and eventual amalgamation has clear advantages in terms of a purpose-built school with a larger capacity, the local authority’s case for the amalgamation of the two schools by 2025 does not appear as compelling. Whilst the school will operate as one with one governing body, one set of policies, one budget, the advantages to the pupils do not appear to be as clear. There will be no additional places available, no further work is planned to improve the sites and staff will still be working on two separate sites which are almost three miles apart. Sharing of facilities and professional development opportunities for staff and pupils between sites would not be easy. It is not clear why an amalgamation is necessary before the proposed new school is built as this appears to be an additional disruption.”

The timeline for this proposal has been carefully considered. Cabinet's determination of the proposals contained in this statutory consultation is not due until May 2024. The new build is proposed to be procured using a two-stage tender process. The first stage tender will be to secure a contractor to work with the council and all stakeholders to develop the design leading to the second stage two tender and the construction phase. The second stage tender process cannot commence until Cabinet has made a determination and if that is to proceed as proposed. The project timeline is as contracted as possible and currently indicates that the stage one tender process will commence in Summer 2024, following that determination. The design process is expected to be completed and the stage two submission delivered in the summer of 2026, with the construction phase commencing as soon after that as possible once the legal processes have been completed.

If the amalgamation is not implemented until September 2026, then both schools and staff will be in an unnecessarily long unsettled period between the determination and implementation.

The design period will involve considerable engagement with the schools’ governing bodies, staff, pupils and parents and carers with many decisions required that will not be able to be changed once the design is frozen in the summer of 2026. Whilst in the period leading to the proposed amalgamation in September 2025 the council will work with both schools, there will be considerable benefits in working with the new school, thinking as one and with its new senior leadership team. If the amalgamation is delayed until September 2026, then there is a risk that the new school will not have ‘ownership’ of its new build, and the final design will not reflect the needs of the new school.

The new school build will include, for example, facilities and technology that does not exist in either of the existing schools. If the new school is implemented in September 2025, then this will afford the opportunity for the new governing body and senior leadership team to consider and prepare its new staffing structure to optimise the benefits of the new build and the bringing together of staff, pupils, and other services

on one site. Once the design is frozen, there is expected to be a two-year construction phase, during which time planning for handover and transition planning will commence. This will benefit from the new embedded staffing structure and help to reduce the impact of transition to the new build for pupils.

“It is not clear whether this funding is secure. The proposer does not explain what will happen if this funding is not available and if local planning permission is not granted”.

Funding cannot be guaranteed until the stage two tender costs are confirmed, Swansea Council has committed the funding to the capital programme and Welsh Government has issued a contract award following business case approvals.

However, the project is part of the council’s Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), and below is the latest information provided by Welsh Government with regard to its funding for the new Sustainable Communities for Learning (SCfL) rolling programme:

‘Due to the nature of the programme, despite strategic infrastructure funding being committed over several years, the Welsh Government and the SCfL team still manage the budgets on an annual basis. As the programmes are introduced at different stages it will be incumbent upon the SCfL team to manage the programme effectively in line with the demands of individual SOPs and to smooth out any peaks or troughs of budget pressures, ensuring that funding is available to all delivery partners at whatever time they submit their new SOP.’

The council has consulted the local planning authority regarding the proposed site and undertaken onsite ground investigations, and as such, subject to the appropriate design development, the risk of not securing planning consent is considered low.

“The council appears to have considered the capacity for leadership in both schools and how this has recently developed and improved but does not seem to have considered how this structure will work when the schools amalgamate.”

The structure will ultimately be for the temporary governing body to determine, and the LA will work closely with them to support and advise on structure and implementation. This is something the LA has much experience and expertise in facilitating, having successfully amalgamated several schools on existing sites to date.

“The local authority notes that school reorganisation proposals inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty. It identifies that experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum through meaningful engagement throughout the consultation process and has included opportunities for pupils to respond to the consultation. Nevertheless, the proposal does not consider what these disruptive factors may be in this case, or how the local authority will minimise these for learners.”

The LA will work with school staff, parents, and pupils to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible, and pupils supported throughout. The transition will likely be phased in, so it would not be that everyone moves in straight away. Pupils will have

the opportunity to visit the school prior to their move and have transport 'test' runs so they are prepared for the different journey. Each pupil will have different needs and varying types of support. The teachers and wider school staff will provide pupils with an element of consistency and support throughout, and early amalgamation aids staff consistency. We are realistic and acknowledge this transition maybe difficult for some pupils, but we will do our best to fully support all pupil needs.

Furthermore, the design will be co-constructed with input from the schools' governing bodies, staff, pupils, and parents/carers. During the design and construction phase opportunities will be provided for learners, as appropriate to their needs, for activities and site visits to enable familiarisation with the new build.

6. Feedback in relation to the impact on the Welsh Language

Prior to the consultation, the LA carried out a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. In addition to this, as part of the consultation, we asked responders the following questions:

- Do you have any concerns or evidence to suggest that the Council is treating/using the Welsh Language less favourably than English in relation to the proposal listed in this survey? (Yes/No)
- If you answered yes to the previous question, please give details and state how the proposal suggested in this survey will affect opportunities to use the Welsh Language in your view?

One person responded to this question with a 'Yes' and the details, including the LA response is below:

Concerns raised re Welsh Language. What changes (if any) do you think could be made in order to have more positive effect on the Welsh language?	Local Authority Response
<p>If the ONLY school that is remotely accessible is an English medium school, then yes - it is discriminatory sorry!</p> <p>If all children were welcomed and included in their local school or in their chosen Welsh school, then this would be fair.</p>	<p>Each pupil is assessed and where a need is identified then reasonable steps are made to ensure that pupils can access their education through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Nearly all pupils requiring special school placement within Swansea are English speaking and therefore, the new special school build will remain as an English-medium school.</p> <p>The local authority will continue to take reasonable steps, as required by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, within specialist provision to ensure that pupils are able to access their education through the medium of Welsh. Currently, where this is not possible, the local authority seeks to secure Welsh-medium specialist placements from neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>The local authority is currently reviewing its Specialist Teaching Facility provision across our schools. As part of this review, we are looking to increase the Welsh-medium offer so that more learners with specific needs can be supported locally.</p> <p>As set out clearly in Swansea's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032, the development and</p>

expansion of Welsh-medium education remains our vision and we recognise the importance of creating opportunities for all Swansea pupils to become bilingual/multilingual so that they emerge from our education system, proud of their identity and confident to use all the languages that they have acquired.

In promoting bilingualism, we are giving all our children an opportunity to thrive in the language of their choice, increasing their life opportunities and by learning more than one language, facilitating the learning of other languages.

One of the key strands of our vision is to provide an equal linguistic opportunity to learners with additional learning needs (ALN). This is supported further by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act that requires all reasonable steps to be taken to deliver additional learning provision (ALP) in Welsh where it is requested by a learner and their parent/carers.

This proposal would see the amalgamation of Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn and Ysgol Crug Glas into one Special School on 1 September 2025 on existing sites, followed by the relocation to purpose-built accommodation in April 2028, increasing the number of planned places in the school. We have reviewed the language needs of our current cohort of learners across our schools and have concluded that there is no demand/requirement for a Welsh-medium special school in Swansea. However, the importance of the Welsh language across our current settings is clear and the new school would look to build further on this as both schools are bought together.

Appendix 1 – Summary of Pupil Consultation Responses

Point Raised	Support Proposal/Happy	42
	Against Proposal/Unhappy	0
	Don't know	24
	Local Authority Response	Number of Written Responses Raising Point
Its too long away to think about	<p>Noted. We understand this may be hard for some pupils. If the proposal goes forward, pupils will be fully informed and supported and will often be part of the process. The move to the new school building will be phased, so that not everyone moves on the same day, and pupils will have 'transition' days, site visits and transport 'test runs' to help ease them into the new school. Pupils will also be asked for their views regarding the design and will be part of the decision-making process, including through Pupil Voice, around things like the new school name, uniform and logo.</p>	2
I get a new classroom/school		3
It will be big		2
It will be nice for people to mix with other pupils, make new friends		14
Nervous		6
Will be fun/exciting		3
Its new and will have new things/facilities		11
Unsure if travel time may be longer to get to school		1
More room with big classrooms		1
Make other students know how our school works		1
Will be easier for staffing and pupils to stay close to each other		1
Not going to be a pupil in the school when it happens		3
Don't care		1
Want my school to stay the same		1
I don't know		7
It's a bit random		1
I like to swimming weekly		5
The class understand and meet my needs and I have a good relationship with them		1
I like to go on weekly trips in the community		3
I like my classes/actives		5
I like coming to school to play with my friends		1
Happy		4
Wont know some people		2
Don't know what will happen	1	

Ysgol Crug Glas Pupil Feedback

The below response was received from the school following their consultation sessions with pupils:

During the consultation process teachers shared pupil friendly proposals with all pupils, using pictures, familiar language, and our SAVI (Structured Advocated Voice for Individuals) strategy, to support their understanding of what the amalgamation will mean for them. The general feedback from pupils and staff advocacy was; pupils are looking forward to new friendships and a new school with new classrooms. It was felt that for the majority of pupils here at Crug Glas they will not notice any changes to their learning until the new build is finished and they move to the new school, but a few may have the opportunity to share learning with new friends at Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn when we amalgamate.

Appendix 2 – Summary of Consultation Responses

	Support Proposal/Happy	12
	Against Proposal/Unhappy	4
	<i>Responses from:</i>	
	Pupil	0
	Parent/Carer	3
	Member of Staff	7
	Governor	3
	Community Member	3
	Other	0
Point Raised	Local Authority Response	Number of Written Responses Raising Point
Educational observations/comments		
Point raised that the children and the staff desperately need a new school - one that is safe and in good repair. The UNCRDP article 24 and general comment 4 it states that the special school/ unit model is actually segregation. What is your plan for Inclusive Education which is explained in more detail in the UNCRDP General Comment 4? As we are signed up to be a Human Rights City we need to be thinking about what we do to disabled children and their families. UNCRPD General Comment 4 (II. Normative content of article 24 - point 11)	<p>Swansea Council recently agreed an Inclusion Strategy that outlines fully our approach to achieving a truly inclusive education model in Swansea. We recognise that this starts with a strong, quality assured universal offer for all children with an absolute entitlement to education within their local communities wherever possible. There are a number of ways we can work towards achieving this and the new special school is a part of a comprehensive offer which includes our Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places transformational programme which aims to place specialisms within school communities.</p> <p>We also recognise that choice is critical. We know that for some families a more specialist provision / setting is the preference, and we think it is important to allow for a breadth of choice in our current offer. The new special school, if agreed, will be part of a suite of provision to meet all needs and preferences within our population.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the proposals will help strengthen our</p>	1

	current inreach/outreach offer which aims to upskill staff across our school communities to enable more children and young people to access a local education offer.	
Query regarding whether children's views have been sought and their care plans considered in relation to this proposal	Yes, pupils have been fully consulted as part of this formal consultation process and if the proposal proceeds then they will continue to be consulted throughout design and build phases of the proposal as well as in planning and implementing the transition to the new build. Pupils will be part of the process throughout with views sought on the design at each stage, along with site visits where possible, virtual visuals, drive by and visits to get pupils used to the new site and travel etc. Pupil's care plans will be fully considered. Health partners are key stakeholders along with staff, governors, parents, and carers whose views will all be sought throughout the process. The Swansea Parent Carer Forum will also be a key stakeholder throughout the process to support pupils and families.	1
A purpose built 21st Century special school will be a wonderful addition to the CCoS education estate and nothing short of what the complex learners in our city deserve.	Agree	1
The increase in planned places will ensure greater numbers of our most complex learners have their learning needs met and will in turn enable our STFs to better meet the needs of complex learners who face challenge in mainstream settings.	Agree	1
It will reduce the numbers of complex learners that are educated outside of our local authority provision whether that be in private provisions or schools in neighbouring LAs.	Agree	2
It will afford the opportunity for Swansea to further establish its credentials as an excellent and leading Authority in providing for and meeting the needs of complex learners.	Agree	1
Improved facilities will enable greater flexibility which equates to better use of current innovative, imaginative teaching techniques.	Agree	1
Combining staff on one site will enable mutual support of the wide range of abilities of pupils,	Agree	2

especially with the projected trend towards more G Band pupils.		
Improved outside learning environment will address an issue raised in a recent ESTYN inspection.	Agree	1
Level of expertise, commitment, professionalism and dedication displayed by the staff at the school is outstanding, but there is frustration that current limitations on space and facilities inhibit even better provision being made for our learners.	Agree	1
Concerns regarding the very different groups of children with very different needs, and feel they need a new school each.	<p>These will be important considerations in the design of the building and we intent to work collaboratively with both current schools to understand the requirements of all learners and to build flexible and appropriate accommodation in line with this. The new building offers an opportunity to improve facilities for all and we recognise there will be a need for different spaces and resources in order to accommodate all learners.</p> <p>The new school will be designed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors, parents, and carers considering the needs of all learners. It will be designed sensitively so learners feel safe and secure. Having one school brings the benefits of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of complex needs will be effectively managed with the full range of expertise available on one site • Schools operate as one, sharing best practice and whole school ethos • Equal opportunities for multi-agency working, health provision in reach and outreach • Range of facilities available for all pupils • Avoid health and other staff losing valuable time travelling between schools • Complements the wider additional learning needs strategy to provide a sufficient and flexible statutory provision available to Children and Young People in Swansea. • Most effective use of resources <p>Community use of areas</p>	1

	(internal/external) • Reduced carbon emissions	
The school will be more able to support STFs by inviting teachers into the environment to pick up skills, as well as seconding staff out to STF units.	Agree there would be options available for staff development throughout the local authority.	2
Impact on local traffic/roads/infrastructure/pollution		
Additional pollution from the traffic.	Highways will be consulted throughout the design and planning process. At the early design stage, a traffic impact assessment will be carried out, together with a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. Information contained within the assessments and reports will then influence the design strategy and how we can manage/reduce traffic impacts. Active travel will be a key consideration for the new site and consultants will be part of the project team to support this. A School Travel Plan will be developed throughout this process. Electrical vehicle charging points will be included on site along with bike and scooter storage for staff and those pupils that can actively travel to school. Car sharing among staff will be encouraged.	2
Resident driveways being parked over due to high traffic at school times.	As part of the design and planning application process Highways will be consulted, and the need for Traffic Regulation Orders will be considered as part of this process. A Road Safety Audit will be carried out along with a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to mitigate any issues arising from the new school building. The drop off and pick up and traffic management will be carefully designed.	1

<p>The detrimental effect on wildlife.</p>	<p>Preliminary Ecological Assessments, along with other surveys are carried out as part of investigations to support the design and planning application. Ecologists will be part of the design and planning team and ecologists within the council will have recommendations for the site to maintain green infrastructure and corridors. The Project Design Team will include a planning place maker with a focus on creating areas of biodiversity and enhancing the green infrastructure linking with nearby sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and creating ecologically resilient habitats. The landscaping and drainage strategies will align with this strategic aim. Sustainable drainage solutions may include for example green roofs and swales located in the habitat areas. Both will support varied flora and fauna.</p> <p>SuD strategies will form part of a neighbourhood wide system of drainage and ecology, so it is a holistic system that benefits the whole place, not just the redline of the proposed development.'</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Noise pollution for surrounding residents.</p>	<p>As part of the design stage surveys, a Noise Impact Assessment will be commissioned and carried out to assess the existing noise and background noise levels across the site. Based on the information contained within the report, the design will incorporate mitigation against raised noise levels. Additionally, during the construction stage noise levels will be measured and monitored and mitigation measures considered. The contractor will be required to work within designated hours and newsletters will be issued regularly to inform residents of what is happening and when any 'noisy work' is likely to take place.</p>	<p>1</p>

<p>There is a LDP for 90 houses on the land close by and concerns raised around how the roads will cope with the extra traffic, as roads already gridlocked during school finish time.</p>	<p>The site where the new school will be built is the land that was proposed in the current Local Development Plan for 95 housing units. Therefore, as part of the Replacement Local Development Plan this site has been submitted as a school. As part of the design and planning application process Highways will be consulted, and the need for Traffic Regulation Orders will be considered as part of this process. A Road Safety Audit will be carried out along with a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to mitigate any issues arising from the new school building. The drop off and pick up and traffic management will be carefully designed.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Proposed timeline</p>		
<p>Delay amalgamation of the two schools until a year prior to the opening of the new school, would like to continue working closely with partner school and share best practice wherever possible.</p>	<p>The timeline for this proposal has been carefully considered. Cabinet's determination of the proposals contained in this statutory consultation is not due until May 2024. The new build is proposed to be procured using a two-stage tender process. The first stage tender will be to secure a contractor to work with the council and all stakeholders to develop the design leading to the second stage tender and the construction phase. The second stage tender process cannot commence until Cabinet has made a determination and if that is to proceed as proposed. The project timeline is as contracted as possible and currently indicates that the stage one tender process will commence in May/summer 2024, following that determination. The design process is expected to be completed and the stage two submission delivered in the summer of 2026, with the construction phase commencing as soon after that as possible once the legal processes have been completed.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>The timeline for amalgamation of both schools in advance of the new build is worth considering. The period in which the amalgamated school will operate on its existing sites will provide challenges. The specificity of site provision and the distance between them will render some of the proposed benefits of amalgamation in advance of the new build unachievable. Consideration should be given to reducing the period of time in which the school operates across three sites by delaying the closure of the existing schools and subsequent amalgamation until September 2026. That being said, I am confident that we will be able to overcome the</p>	<p>If the amalgamation is not implemented until September 2026,</p>	<p>1</p>

<p>challenges posed by working across the existing sites, that there will be some advantages to early amalgamation and that any and all challenges we may encounter will be a small price to pay to achieve the ambitious new school build.</p>	<p>then both schools and staff will be in an unnecessarily long unsettled period between the determination and implementation.</p> <p>The design period will involve considerable engagement with the schools' governing bodies, staff, pupils and parents and carers with many decisions required that will not be able to be changed once the design is frozen in the summer of 2026. Whilst in the period leading to the proposed amalgamation in September 2025 the council will work with both schools, there will be considerable benefits in working with the new school, thinking as one and with its new senior leadership team. If the amalgamation is delayed until September 2026, then there is a risk that the new school will not have 'ownership' of its new build, and the final design will not reflect the needs of the new school.</p>	
<p>Why is amalgamation so long before the new build is ready?</p>	<p>The new school build will include, for example, facilities and technology that does not exist in either of the existing schools. If the new school is implemented in September 2025, then this will afford the opportunity for the new governing body and senior leadership team to consider and prepare its new staffing structure to optimise the benefits of the new build and the bringing together of staff, pupils, and other services on one site. Once the design is frozen, there is expected to be a two-year construction phase, during which time planning for handover and transition planning will commence. This will benefit from the new embedded staffing structure and help to reduce the impact of transition to the new build for pupils.</p>	<p>1</p>

Staffing and leadership		
Concerns regarding grade and role.	Noted that this is a period of uncertainty for staff. While it would be for the temporary governing body to determine the new staff structure, staff will be kept supported and informed throughout with regards to any proposed changes. Formal consultation with staff and trade unions will be undertaken as per requirements and pay protection would be offered, where applicable. We hope the new school will provide increased opportunities for staff.	1
There is a large body of work for the newly appointed Headteacher - with the management and leadership of the newly amalgamated school over 3 sites, whilst also strategically supporting the new build.	Noted. Part of the project planning includes supporting the school to ensure that it can build capacity to support the new build project. There will be opportunities for the new school to enhance its senior leadership team in the short term to facilitate this.	1
The senior team working with the new Headteacher needs to be stable, experienced and able to realise the Headteacher's vision of bringing both schools together, with a newly created school staff team.	Agree	1
Concerned about the early stage in the process that this amalgamation takes place (September 2025). This brings with it a level of uncertainty about the near future on the part of a number of key staff at both existing schools. This is especially the case for the headteachers of the two existing schools, for whom this uncertainty is likely already to be a source of potential stress and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. The GB believe that a strong level of care and support for the well-being of both headteachers will be paramount in the weeks and months surrounding this amalgamation process.	Agree. The LA will work hard to support staff during this period of uncertainty but feel the proposed timeline is the most appropriate due to the reasons already outlined.	
Finance, resources, and logistics		
Reduced duplication of physical resources and better procurement opportunities	Agree	1
On site facilities (gym/swimming) will immeasurably impact and reduce the travel and logistics currently involved in achieving activities.	Agree	1

<p>The GB at YCG believes that the interim joint governing body that will be established as part of the proposed process, will undoubtedly have a key strategic role in the development of the new special school. The GB at YCG also believe that this interim GB will also have a vital role in ensuring the effectiveness, efficiency of how this amalgamation is conducted and the extent to which care for the personal well-being of all affected is exercised as part of the process.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	
<p>General Comments in Support of the Proposal</p>		
<p>I am in favour of the proposal and will fully support the Local Authority during the process to the best of my ability, ensuring a smooth transition for all of our pupils, parents and staff as both schools bring their leadership teams together.</p>	<p>Noted and this support is welcomed</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>If managed carefully and with consideration the amalgamation at this stage has the potential to be very powerful in bringing both schools together before the new build is completed.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Proposal will benefit all children with additional learning needs in the community in a new modern super school.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Unified state of the art school will have significant benefits for its pupils, staff and also for the wider education community</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Alternative Option Suggested</p>		
<p>I think as a Human Rights City we should be looking at UNCRPD, article 24 and general comment 4 for our guidance and moving our school system towards it. So how would our local primary schools look like in 10 years' time? Would buildings, curriculum etc etc reflect the human right to Inclusive Education? Inclusive isn't word used for special. Inclusive is children going to their local school in regular classrooms regardless of their protected characteristic. Currently, we systematically segregate based on ability and wonder why we battle discrimination.</p>	<p>Swansea Council recently agreed an Inclusion Strategy that outlines fully our approach to achieving a truly inclusive education model in Swansea. We recognise that this starts with a strong, quality assured universal offer for all children with an absolute entitlement to education within their local communities wherever possible. There are a number of ways we can work towards achieving this and the new special school is a part of a comprehensive offer which includes our Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places transformational programme which aims to place specialisms within school communities.</p> <p>We also recognise that choice is critical. We know that for some families a more specialist provision / setting is the preference and we think</p>	<p>1</p>

	<p>it is important to allow for a breadth of choice in our current offer. The new special school, if agreed, will be part of a suite of provision to meet all needs and preferences within our population.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the proposals will help strengthen our current inreach/outreach offer which aims to upskill staff across our school communities to enable more children and young people to access a local education offer.</p>	
<p>Two separate schools - they are very different children</p>	<p>The new school will be designed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors, parents, and carers considering the needs of all learners. Having one school brings the benefits of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of complex needs will be effectively managed with the full range of expertise available on one site • Schools operate as one, sharing best practice and whole school ethos • Equal opportunities for multi-agency working, health provision in reach and outreach • Range of facilities available for all pupils • Avoid health and other staff losing valuable time travelling between schools • Complements the wider additional learning needs strategy to provide a sufficient and flexible statutory provision available to Children and Young People in Swansea. • Most effective use of resources Community use of areas (internal/external) • Reduced carbon emissions 	<p>1</p>
<p>There are two empty schools nearby Tirdeunaw & Daniel James school. Why couldn't those be utilised.</p>	<p>In arriving at the preferred location for the new school a long list of site options was considered.</p> <p>The outcome of that exercise resulted in a preferred site being identified which;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is close to the existing Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn main site 	<p>1</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would mean pupils currently at Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn have little disruption when they move to the new site • the average journey time for pupils across both schools will remain mostly the same • the site is near to some amenities without need for a vehicle, and • many facilities are within a short car journey • it has close links to the M4 <p>The former Daniel James Community School and the YGG Tirdeunaw buildings would not be suitable for a new special school.</p> <p>The new school build will be designed to national design guidance contained in the Building Bulletin specifically for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability.</p>	
<p>The timeline for amalgamation of both schools in advance of the new build is worth considering. The period in which the amalgamated school will operate on its existing sites will provide challenges. The specificity of site provision and the distance between them will render some of the proposed benefits of amalgamation in advance of the new build unachievable. the experience and leadership of both current Headteachers is clearly working very well and could sustain through the early stages of design and tender, which will be very important as both schools staff, parents and pupils are consulted. This could mean that the focus is clearly and solely on the new build, not split between settling as a newly amalgamated school and contributing to a new build, which may lead to decisions and input not being as focused and meaningful as they could be, if that was the main focus of both schools at the time. Consideration should be given to reducing the period of time in which the school operates across three sites by delaying the closure of the existing schools and subsequent amalgamation until September 2026. That being said, I am confident that we will be able to overcome the challenges posed by working across the existing sites, that there will be some advantages to early amalgamation and that any and all challenges we may encounter</p>	<p>Noted, LA response regarding this provided above on page 21.</p>	<p>2</p>

will be a small price to pay to achieve the ambitious new school build.		
---	--	--

Appendix 3 – Minutes of Consultation Meetings

Future for Special Schools in Swansea

Meeting with Governors – Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn

07 November 2023

Present: Head of Education Planning and Resources
Head of Vulnerable Learners
Team Manager Funding and Information
Lead Additional Learning Needs Performance Specialist
Team Manager, Capital
School Project Business Case Development Manager
Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
Principal HR Officer
Funding and Information Officer
HR Officer
Headteacher, Ysgol Pen-y-bryn

5 members of the Governing body were present, including the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Finance Committee

1.	The head of Education Planning and Resources gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
	Chair of Governors thanked all Officers for all work/effort in driving this proposal forward, noting that it is welcomed by the Governing Body.
	Questions/Answers
2.	<i>The proposed site - is this in the public domain?</i>

	Yes, a map will be uploaded to the website. We have been deliberately vague with regards to the exact location as the location within the site identified has not yet been confirmed. However, we are confident on the deliverability for a school on that site. The build is subject to a planning application process, and we are confident that with the right design, we don't envisage this to be a significant risk. Highways/traffic management/access will be a factor influencing the exact location of the school on the site and will be considered as part of the planning application process.
3.	<i>During the termly meeting with Chairs of Governors, several Chairs were vocal on the strain currently being placed on STF staff. Can we get the consultation out to them for them to comment?</i>
	We have consulted with all schools that have an STF, there is a headteacher meeting on Thursday so we will promote it there too. This proposal is a critical part of the wider suite of specialist teaching facilities in Swansea, and we need to ensure it is as flexible and as responsive as possible as the need arises for pupils. Our STF review is currently ongoing, and we will be providing further updates with regards to this in due course.
4.	<i>With regards to the temporary governing body - will community governors be part of this?</i>
	The governing body will appoint the community governors. In the past we have had community governors "waiting outside" to be formally appointed and then welcomed to the meeting. The temporary governing body sits alongside the two existing governing bodies so there will be three governing bodies for the summer term 2025.
5.	<i>Who determines the size of the governing body?</i>
	There are determined models, and we would want the governing body to reflect the two schools.
6.	<i>Is the temporary governing body inclusive of all governors except community governors?</i>
	Possibly, if the balance does not seem right between the two schools, we can also have observers. There will be a long lead in period and a lot of governing bodies meetings so it is a large commitment of time to be on the temporary governing body as they would still have 'business as usual' meetings for their existing governing body, so some may feel that they cannot commit to sitting on both.
7.	<i>When do you anticipate appointing the headteacher?</i>
	This isn't a tight timeline so as we progress Jeff Fish will provide support. There are options to consider, and it will be up to the temporary governing body whether they choose to ringfence to the existing headteachers of the two schools or advertise externally.
8.	<i>Is it the responsibility of the appointed headteacher to determine the remaining staff structure?</i>
	Yes, with governors
9.	<i>Could you have two structures in place with a shadow structure ready for new build?</i>
	There is a long lead in time so either could work, and there are likely to be changes within that time.
10.	<i>Plan for governing body to submit response to consultation on behalf of the whole governing body. Would it be better to do that or individually?</i>
	We would welcome both individual and a collective response.

Meeting with Governors – Ysgol Crug Glas

08 November 2023

Present: Head of Vulnerable Learners
 Team Manager Funding and Information
 Team Manager, Capital
 School Project Business Case Development Manager
 Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
 Principle HR Officer
 Funding and Information Officer
 Deputy Headteacher, Ysgol Crug Glas
 5 Governors were present

1.	The Head of Vulnerable Learners gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
Questions/Answers	
2.	<i>Considering the increasing number of pupils being diagnosed with autism, are you confident the new school will be big enough?</i>
	Data has been analysed with regards to pupils coming through the system, based on past and future projected trends. This is part of a whole suite of provision, which includes a review of Special Teaching Facilities (STFs) and mainstream provision in place to support pupils with additional learning needs. Not all pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) require a special school place and appropriate support within mainstream schools is also very important.
3.	<i>Many of the pupils within Ysgol Crug Glas are extremely vulnerable, if they are going to be attending a larger school with many pupils with potential behaviour issues, how will they be protected? Will there be two separate sections for the different needs?</i>
	We are not at the design stage yet but if we progress the proposal, there will be extensive consultation with all stakeholders to ensure the school is designed and built so it is suitable for all pupils. Stakeholders will include pupils, parents, staff, governors, parent/carer forum as well as specialist advisors and colleagues within health. A variety of means used to gain input around design – pupil voice, questionnaire and so on.
4.	<i>Will governors be consulted regarding the design?</i>
	Yes, we will be consulting with all stakeholders throughout the design phase – from concept through to final design.

5.	<i>I used to work in a relatively newly built special school designed for 70 pupils and now accommodates up to 120 pupils. They are already seeing design issues within the first 10 years.</i>
	We have done a lot of work looking at recent new build special schools to learn lessons from their experiences and we are hoping to build a highly flexible school that would support potential future needs.
6.	<i>As a member of staff, I know that our main concern is that our pupils have very specific needs, and we want assurance that they would not get 'lost'</i>
	Agreed. We would ensure these needs are fully met.
7.	<i>Would there be a swimming pool as well as a hydrotherapy pool?</i>
	Current thinking was for a hydrotherapy pool only at this stage, but as final designs have not been developed, we are open minded. We are required to follow Welsh Government recommendations regarding design standards and size of school, and anything above those recommended requirement needs to be heavily justified. We acknowledge that the pool in Ysgol Crug Glas is of an excellent size and quality, and we are committed to providing facilities that are suitable and sufficient.
8.	<i>Our hydrotherapy pool is in use nearly all day for our pupils. How would that be shared with additional pupils without compromising the provision for our learners?</i>
	The new school would decide who uses the pool, based on need.
9.	<i>Many of our pupils can only use this pool. They cannot access a public pool. It is the only form of exercise for some pupils.</i>
	Nothing is set in stone yet and we will work with schools and wider stakeholders regarding these design elements, and we will do our best to accommodate additional identified needs.
10.	<i>If you take away any provision this would have a legal implication as it would be contrary to the 'wellbeing Act.'</i>
	Noted.
11.	<i>The hydrotherapy pool is key to all stakeholders</i>
	Noted.
12.	<i>Taking ADS pupils to a public swimming pool is very challenging.</i>
	Noted.
13.	<i>The trampoline is very important</i>
	Noted
14.	<i>Is the funding ring fenced?</i>
	Ring fenced may not be the correct phrasing. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme has been approved in principle, and the new special school is a top priority within that. We will need to submit the next stages of the business case to Welsh Government for approvals, and then secure Cabinet approval. The funding is not secured until we have an award of funding from Welsh Government and an approved Cabinet report after the full business case stage and receipt of tenders for the construction phase. We have a strong commitment from everyone involved within this process.
15.	<i>Welsh Government recently announced budgets cuts due to financial pressures faced. Will those budget cuts affect this proposal?</i>
	We don't know for sure what is going to happen in the future. However, most of the cuts announced were 'in year' cuts relating to this current financial year. Future budget cuts may slow down the pace of progress in relation to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, but this is the next

	priority for us on our programme which Welsh Government are also on board with.
16.	<i>Is there a chance of obtaining funding from health to support this proposal?</i>
	It is important that we have a plan that is deliverable and sustainable independent of contributions from health. Any additional funding would be a bonus. We are working alongside health, but it is important to note that their priorities are very different to ours. We are working with the local health board to ensure that the therapy rooms and the like are appropriate, which again is going back to the importance of stakeholder engagement and health board colleagues are key to that process.
17.	<i>Storage is a huge problem within this school</i>
	Yes, we have already picked up on the need for storage to be key to the design and understand that pupils often have several pieces of equipment that will need storage and easy access. We will allow for the maximum storage allowance available to use within the Welsh Government guidance.
18.	<i>How will the governing body be selected?</i>
	The legislation means that the local authority will select all of the temporary governing body members, except for the community governors. These can be quickly appointed in the first meeting. The local authority will work with schools throughout the process to ensure that there is a fair representation from both schools within the temporary governing body. There will be essentially three governing bodies in operation during the initial stage – the new temporary governing body, and the two existing governing bodies of Ysgol Crug Glas and Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn. It is worth noting that there is a substantial work commitment involved with being a member of the temporary governing body, as there will be a lot of work to be done to prepare for the new school opening, including the staff structure, while also having to attend the business as usual governing body meetings for each of the separate schools, and some members may feel they are unable to make this commitment.
19.	<i>The task of appointing the headteacher and deciding on a new staff structure will likely be a very difficult and emotive one – what support will the local authority provide the temporary governing body with this task?</i>
	The local authority can advise and support on process etc, but it is for the temporary governing body to make the decisions – that is not for the local authority.
20	Will the three governing bodies have equal input in relation to the new school?
	No, only the temporary governing body will have input into the design of the new school and be responsible for staffing structure decisions.
21.	<i>What support will there be for the headteachers throughout this process?</i>
	HR will be able to provide support to headteachers and staff. We are understanding that this would be a difficult time. There will be a separate consultation for the wider staff restructure as this is a separate legal process. HR will be communicating and supporting staff throughout that process.
22	<i>What is the timeline between the decision regarding the new special school and the appointment of the head?</i>
	That again would depend on the governing body, as there are several options available. But there is more than a full year between the cabinet decision and opening of the new amalgamated school. Currently we are looking at the

	broad principles around this proposal and the detailed timetables will be confirmed and communicated if the proposal progresses.
23.	<i>There is concern for the welfare for both headteachers during this process and hope the local authority acknowledges there is a role for both headteachers during this process?</i>
	It is for the governing body to decide that, and care would be taken to be understanding and sensitive during this time.
24.	<i>Will there be consideration with regards to the timing of the headteacher appointment?</i>
	Yes, there will be a window during which the governing body can appoint the headteacher.
25.	<i>If one headteacher was appointed, would the governing body be in a position to decide what happens to the unsuccessful individual?</i>
	This would depend on how the governing body would wish to appoint. It may be that one headteacher is in a redundancy position.
26.	<i>Could they be offered a deputy headteacher position?</i>
	If the governing body were to 'ringfence' then headteachers would be appointed to a headteacher post and deputy headteachers would be appointed to deputy headteacher posts. It is important to note that these are matters for the governing body to decide on and that we are looking at the broad principle within this consultation, and more detail and support with regards to the staffing structure will be provided if the proposal is approved.
27.	<i>We need officers to understand that the headteacher is so important to the school and staff. They provide the leadership, vision and direction and are 'looked up to' by staff and this cannot be understated.</i>
	Noted.
28.	<i>Is there a danger that the headteacher – having to oversee the plan for the new build while running the amalgamated schools – that the schools may suffer?</i>
	There is a lot of work for the headteacher during this period and the local authority will look to support the headteacher as much as possible throughout. But we cannot get away from the fact that we need the headteacher's input during the design and build process.

Meeting with Staff – Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn

07 November 2023

Present:

- Head of Education Planning and Resources
- Head of Vulnerable Learners
- Team Manager Funding and Information
- Lead Additional Learning Needs Performance Specialist
- Team Manager, Capital
- School Project Business Case Development Manager
- Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
- Principal HR Officer
- Funding and Information Officer
- HR Officer
- Headteacher, Ysgol Pen-y-bryn
- NEU Joint County Secretary
- NASUWT Rep
- 52 Staff Members

1.	Kelly Small gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
	<i>Questions/Answers</i>
2.	<i>How did you arrive at the figure of 100 for the increase in planned places?</i>
	Data has been analysed with regards to pupils coming through the system, based on past and future projected trends. This is part of a whole suite of provision, which includes a review of Special Teaching Facilities (STFs) and mainstream provision in place to support pupils with additional learning needs.
3.	<i>Are you confident an increase of 100 places is enough?</i>
	We are aware that the demand is increasing for places and that historical trends aren't as useful as they once were for projecting demand, but we are as confident as we can be that 100 is sufficient, and we will have a flexible provision in place moving forward. If we find ourselves with surplus places, these could be offered up to other Local Authorities.
4.	<i>What are the plans for the current site after the move?</i>
	There are no concrete plans for the site yet. The site we are proposing to use was previously identified for housing under the Local Development Plan (LDP). The benefit of building on the proposed site is that the pupils can remain in the existing sites until it is ready, once the move happens the

	existing sites if declared surplus by the Education Directorate, will then be considered as part of the council's Asset Management Policy, and could potentially be offered up for housing to mitigate the loss of housing from the site allocated in the LDP
5.	<i>Would plans for the site affect the public consultation?</i>
	The new LDP sets out all sites that can build houses on in the next 10 years, we have designated the site as a school, no decision has been made yet on what the existing site will be designated as - this will need to be considered as part of the Asset Management Policy.
6.	<i>Would staff have to work with Crug Glas pupils?</i>
	Envisage that roles will be more or less the same on amalgamation; the staffing structure will be developed with the new headteacher and governing body, and a separate consultation will be undertaken in relation to the new staff structure.
7.	<i>If there is a senior/middle leader in each school and there may only be one required in the new school what happens?</i>
	This will be identified through the staff restructure process, which will be subject to a separate staff consultation process. If the proposed structure is agreed, staff would need to go through a skills matrix/slotting and matching exercise, and salary protection offered to staff affected. The number of staff is unlikely to change except for the headteacher.
8.	<i>The option for a headteacher was clear, are we confirming that there will not be staff left without a job?</i>
	This will depend on what the structure looks like and what posts are required. It could be that there are different posts/job descriptions etc. that staff slot/match to, and this will require a different process - skills questionnaire or interview. Could have staff employed in different roles. The number of staff is unlikely to change, and indeed likely to increase in readiness for the additional planned places proposed.
9.	<i>The new school will be bigger so the need for more staff, would posts be ringfenced before advertised externally?</i>
	Yes, we would offer all posts internally, complete slotting/matching etc. to existing staff first and then advertise externally if required.

Meeting with Staff – Ysgol Crug Glas

08 November 2023

Present: Head of Vulnerable Learners
 Team Manager Funding and Information
 Team Manager, Capital
 School Project Business Case Development Manager
 Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
 Principal HR Officer
 Funding and Information Officer
 Deputy Headteacher, Ysgol Crug Glas
 36 Staff were present

1.	The Head of Vulnerable Learners gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
Questions/Answers	
2.	<i>Why are you proposing to amalgamate so early when the new build will not be ready for some time?</i>
	We believe that bringing the two schools together ahead of moving into the new build would benefit the schools – fostering joint working and a new single school ethos. Furthermore, even though the new build school will not be ready for occupation until 2028, the tender process, which is a two-stage tender – will get underway very soon, including initial design, and this will be done in collaboration with the school staff and governing body.
3.	<i>Looking at the proposed location – all that green space, when we are currently so constrained with outdoor space – it looks fabulous. Will this be used to full affect for forest schools, playing areas and sports fields?</i>
	The design has not been developed yet, but we will be looking to have many different types of outdoor spaces available for pupils and this was a key consideration when we selected the site. We reviewed approximately 147 sites before settling on the one proposed. The area guidelines in Building Bulletin guidance sets out the space required for outdoor spaces including PE, soft and hard informal spaces and habitat, so we will ensure this guidance is adhered to.
4.	<i>Might local residents object to the build?</i>
	The site was already earmarked for housing development in the previous Local Development Plan (LDP) so there was always likely to be development on the site. We have also informed the residents around the boundary of the site of our plans as part of this consultation process. There will be a chance

	for residents to comment during the planning application consultation process. .
5.	<i>Will the new school have sufficient parking?</i>
	There will be parking planned into the design. There is a lot more to be done here before we can comment on the numbers of spaces and this will be part of the design process – we will be factoring in pupil travel plans, local transport assessments and road safety audits. We will also be required to consider options for 'active travel' which is a Welsh Government priority.
6.	<i>Due to the pupil needs, we are a highly staffed school, and we need more parking than a mainstream school – will this be accounted for? I am conscious that Bishop Vaughan is also very busy.</i>
	Noted and this will be considered as part of the design process.
7.	<i>Our pupils have a lot of health needs, and we currently have two nurses working in the school. What consideration has been given to the facilities required by health professionals?</i>
	Yes, we are mindful of this, and we already have that workstream in place, and indeed we are meeting with the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) from Health very shortly. Going forward, we will have health representatives on the design team to ensure we are capturing the requirements for health care professionals as part of this project.
8.	<i>When the amalgamation happens, will there be an expectation for us to work with Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn pupils?</i>
	That will be something for the new headteacher and temporary governing body to consider, but the plan would be not to dilute the current provision that each school currently has, and it is envisaged that staff would remain largely where they are initially.
9.	<i>Would there be any other changes for staff? Other than the new headteacher?</i>
	That would be for the new temporary governing body to decide, but any changes would be considered in partnership with the headteacher and following proper, formal consultation with staff.
10.	<i>Many of the Teaching Assistants are Level 3, which they are not in Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn, and we are concerned for the role that we have.</i>
	Again, this will be for the temporary governing body to decide, and we cannot provide concrete answers here. Staff will be kept supported and informed throughout with regards to any staffing restructures, and formal consultation will be undertaken as per requirements. Pay protection would be offered if appropriate. We hope the new school will provide increased opportunities for staff.
11.	<i>We are very lucky with our hydrotherapy pool at the moment. Arguably the best in South Wales and fully accessible. Can you confirm we will have the same high standard facility in the new school?</i>
	Yes, we have talked extensively about this in the governor meeting, and we can assure you that the pool facility will be at least the same as the current pool, and we would be looking to improve upon other facilities too such as rebound areas and play space.
12	<i>What are the budget implications?</i>
	<i>The new amalgamated school would have a single budget share, this will be a larger budget than both schools currently combined due to the planned increase in planned places, and the size of the school would increase. We</i>

	<i>are making this proposal because we want to improve and enhance the facilities for pupils attending our special schools; it is not a cost saving exercise.</i>
13.	<i>How will the temporary governing body link with community governors?</i>
	The local authority will appoint the temporary governing body, ensuring fair representation from each school. The local authority cannot appoint the community governors, but these would usually be quickly appointed by the temp governing body (usually in the first meeting).
14.	<i>I agree that we do not currently have the need for a Welsh-Medium Special School at present. What are the plans though if and when that changes?</i>
	We have a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) which has an overarching plan for Welsh education in Swansea. When pupils with Additional Learning Needs indicate a preference for education through the medium of Welsh, then there are ways we can accommodate this. Initially this is likely to be an in-reach/outreach model.
15.	<i>What will the new school be named?</i>
	This will be determined by the temporary governing body, with input/consultation with pupils, staff and parents.
16.	<i>The proposed amalgamation is for September 2025. When will staff know what the proposed staff structure will look like?</i>
	We would be advising the temporary governing body to make these decisions sooner rather than later. It would be May 2025 at the latest, to allow for the appropriate staff consultation, but we would hope it would be completed sooner than this.
17.	<i>What is going to happen with the existing school sites?</i>
	We don't know yet. If they are declared surplus to Education requirements then would go through the usual council process for asset management. They could be offered to other council departments or Housing.
18.	Claire Lewis reiterated to staff that we will need their input and support throughout this process so that staff and pupils' ideas are captured. She will be in touch soon to get started with this work.
19.	<i>This is a brilliant opportunity for us to have the best special school facility.</i>
	Agree.
20	<i>Would there be any changes to the way the new school is classified in relation to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for things like finance?</i>
	The two current special schools operate under the primary school model and have a dedicated Primary Support Officer (PSO) who assists and advises the schools in relation to budget setting and monitoring. If the proposal was to proceed, the school could request to change to the secondary model for finance, noting that there would be an expectation that the school Business Manager performs more of the budgeting/monitoring functions and there would not be an increase in budget allocation to support this.

Meeting with Parents/Carers – Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn

07 November 2023

Present: Head of Education Planning and Resources
 Head of Vulnerable Learners
 Team Manager Funding and Information
 Lead Additional Learning Needs Performance Specialist
 Team Manager, Capital
 School Project Business Case Development Manager
 Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
 Principal HR Officer
 Funding and Information Officer
 HR Officer
 Headteacher, Ysgol Pen-y-bryn
 4 parents were in attendance including two parent governors.

1.	The Head of Education Planning and Resources gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
Questions/Answers	
2.	<i>If the school amalgamates in April 2025, and pupils remain on current sites including the 6th Form, does that mean that Crug Glas pupils will attend Arfryn or remain in Ysgol Crug Glas for their sixth form provision?</i>
	Envisage that status quo remains unless it is thought there is a more appropriate provision for the pupil at the alternative site. Pupils may have more access to facilities but for pupils coming to the end of their education, they wouldn't see much change. Crug Glas pupils have very specific needs and until the new build would likely remain in their current environment.
3.	<i>Regarding the change of school name and uniform, how are pupils prepared for this?</i>
	Pupils will be fully supported and will often be part of the process; change will be carefully phased. Until the new build there will be little change for pupils; the only changes they would see would be the name change and uniform. Given the timeline, there is over a year to prepare pupils for the change and the intention will be that pupils would be part of the decision-making process via Pupil Voice for the school name/uniform/logo.
4.	<i>Longer term there will be more pupils, a bigger school. Will class sizes increase?</i>
	No, there will not be a change to the way the special school is funded, and we fund based on pupil ratios so would envisage no change to class sizes.

5.	<i>There is pressure in mainstream schools with regards to Additional Learning Needs (ALN), would the increase to planned places release this pressure?</i>
	Yes, that is part of the wider plan.
6.	<i>Increase in planned places, would this mean an increase in dining spaces/yards etc?</i>
	Sufficient and appropriate dining and yard facilities will be incorporated into the design of the build and pupils needs and sensitivities will be considered. Close attention paid to acoustics etc. It won't feel to pupils like there are 350 pupils onsite. It wouldn't be designed to have 350 pupils eating lunch together in the same space. The build is yet to be designed but we would work closely with staff/specialist advisors on this, but there will be more than one dining space for pupils.
7.	<i>Will there be different options for the design of the new build that parents can have input into?</i>
	The design will be guided by the Building Bulletin guidance that is mandated by Welsh Government, and we are currently at early stages but when developing options for the design of the new build then specific engagement will occur with pupils/parents/carers. Site visits to other recently built special schools have taken place and we have taken on board lessons they have learnt through the process. There will also be a planning application that the public can respond to formally.
8.	<i>What will the catchment area of the school look like, assuming lots of parents would choose for their child to attend the new school.</i>
	Current catchment for the schools is the whole of Swansea; places are based on needs and allocated via the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Panel process. There will be no change to this, matching pupil needs to the places available.

Meeting with Parents/Carers– Ysgol Crug Glas

08 November 2023

Present: Head of Vulnerable Learners
 Team Manager Funding and Information
 Team Manager, Capital
 School Project Business Case Development Manager
 Team Manager, Stakeholder and School Support
 Principal HR Officer
 Funding and Information Officer
 Deputy Headteacher, Ysgol Crug Glas
 4 Parents and one school governor were present

1.	The Head of Vulnerable Learners gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
Questions/Answers	
2.	<i>Pupils that are currently receiving education out of county – will they be transferred to the new school?</i>
	We would not want to disrupt or uproot pupils who are currently receiving provision elsewhere if they are happy and settled; the new school would be to provide for the pupils coming through that will need placements in the future.
3.	<i>How will the transition work? Is it a case of the doors to the old schools would be locked in April 28?</i>
	We have plenty of lead-in time to plan for the transition. We would be working with school staff, parents and pupils to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible, and pupils supported throughout. The transition will likely be phased in, so it wouldn't be that everyone moves in straight away. Pupils will have the opportunity to visit the school prior to their move and have transport 'test' runs so they are prepared for the different journey. Each pupil will have different needs and different types of support. The teachers and wider school staff will provide pupils with an element of consistency and support. We are realistic and acknowledge this transition maybe difficult for some pupils, but we will do our best to fully support all pupil needs.
4.	<i>Some pupils don't have the 'words' to be able to tell you how they are feeling.</i>
	This is where we would need the support of the school staff so that during the consultation and stakeholder engagement we can gain the views of all pupils. Ysgol Crug Glas has very good communication tools for all learners, including non-verbal learners and we will be working to ensure that every tool we have, to advocate for learners, is used – they are key to this proposal.
5.	<i>You noted in the presentation that the building would be 'net zero' – will it be 'self-sustainable'?</i>

	It is the ambition for the building to be self-sustainable, 'Net Zero Operational Carbon' is a requirement of the Welsh Government funding conditions. There is a lot of additional kit required within a special school so this will be a challenge. There are no other carbon neutral special schools in Wales at present, so it is an exciting opportunity. It will include green infrastructure and having the building be as eco-friendly as possible, along with active travel arrangements where possible. Bridgend are a little further ahead of us, and have a similar proposal, so we will be liaising with them regularly throughout the process to ensure we can learn any lessons and support each other.
6.	<i>What are the outdoor spaces going to look like?</i>
	Nothing has been designed yet. We have ideas of what we think the space could look like and have a lot of experience from other special schools that we can draw upon in terms of what works well. We would want to include a variety of outdoor provision, including soft and hard areas for PE, soft and hard informal play areas, regulation zones and forest / habitat areas and are conscious of the need to design these areas sensitively for the needs of all pupils. The school staff and pupils will have input into the outdoor space design as part of the wider stakeholder engagement.
7.	<i>The interim Governing Body – does that have a set number of members?</i>
	We would need to come back to you on that to confirm. Update to minutes 4/12/23 to answer the question: The temporary governing body size will be determined by the Local Authority. The size of the amalgamated school role number will determine the governing body size.
8.	<i>If we want to recruit additional governing body reps – parent governors for example, could we do that?</i>
	Yes, you can.
9.	<i>Will there be options for pupils to learn independent living skills in the new school?</i>
	Yes, there will. Ysgol Pen-y-Bryn has a '24-hour Curriculum' offer that will remain, and the school will allocate/offer places to this provision as appropriate. There will also be spaces within the new build for 'life skills' learning.
10.	<i>Can you sit on both governing bodies? The 'business as usual' and the new temporary governing body?</i>
	Yes.
11.	<i>Will we be informed after the Cabinet decision, or do we need to wait until being formally told when it goes to Statutory Notice?</i>
	Cabinet is a public meeting so you can know straight away.
12.	<i>Why might Cabinet say 'no'?</i>
	It all depends on the feedback to this consultation as that is what they will base their decision on.
13.	<i>Will the wider impact on the community be part of their decision?</i>
	Yes, they will consider feedback from the wider community. There will also be a separate planning consultation process regarding the design and build if the proposal is approved.
14.	<i>Do you envisage any problems with planning that may cause issues or push back the new build date?</i>

<p>We cannot guarantee that date as we are very early in the process and there is lot to be done, but we don't envisage planning to be a significant risk. We will work hard on the details within the planning application, and consult with all relevant specialists such as ecologists, architects, and drainage. April 28 is our best estimate now, but with this being such a large project, we are doing a lot of different things at once so there is an element of risk. If there is any significant change to that date – we will inform all stakeholders.</p>

Meeting with all interested parties – Scout Hut, Brynmill

15 November 2023

Present: Head of Education Planning and Resources
 Head of Vulnerable Learners
 Team Manager Funding and Information
 Team Manager, Capital
 School Project Business Case Development Manager
 Funding and Information Officer
 Headteacher, Ysgol Pen-y-bryn
 Deputy Headteacher, Ysgol Crug Glas
 2 members of the Swansea Parent Carer Forum attended.

1.	The Head of Education Planning and Resources gave introductions and provided a presentation outlining the proposal.
	Questions/Answers
2.	<i>Do you expect any objections from the local community in relation to transport around the proposed site?</i>
	We have had some feedback from residents regarding transport and roads. We are looking at ways to reduce the number of individual vehicles dropping pupils through increased use of minibuses etc. There will be a separate consultation process if the proposal moves forward, and as part of the planning process, residents will have a chance to comment on traffic plans. We have held informal dialogue with the planning department, and if we progress to submitting the planning application, it will include transport assessments, and we may even be able to make improvements to infrastructure as part of that design and planning process.
3.	<i>Pupils will be moving from a small environment to a much larger one. What consideration has been given to this?</i>
	The school will be designed sensitively so that it won't feel like there are 350 pupils in it. For example, the pupils' won't all be having food together in one big hall. We will be working with staff and pupils regarding the design requirements and will be paying particular attention to things like acoustics. We have also spent time visiting other recently built special schools to learn what has worked well for them, and what did not, and this knowledge will feed into our design. We are also working closely with Bridgend Council as they are slightly ahead of us with a similar proposal.
4.	<i>Is the funding for this proposal 'safe' following recently announced Welsh Government funding cuts?</i>
	While the money is not 'ring fenced' as such, it is a priority within our Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which has been

	approved. We will have to go through a business case process, and a two-stage tender process before we get the funding 'secured.' There is no indication that the funding cuts you have referred will risk this proposal. The cuts may slow down the pace of future capital programmes, but this proposal is our next priority in Swansea, and it is a priority for the Cabinet too.
5.	<i>Will the independent living/residential provision on Pen-y-Bryn remain?</i>
	Yes
6.	<i>Will the scale of facilities increase in reflection of the increased numbers? Thinking of the hydrotherapy pool for example, will that double?</i>
	We cannot confirm that yet, but this is something we have already received a lot of feedback on during the consultation meetings at Ysgol Crug Glas last week. Our intention is that we would not reduce or remove any facilities, and we want to increase and improve these where possible. We will work with the schools and stakeholders to establish requirements.
7.	<i>The parent/carer room in Ysgol Crug Glas where parents can chat and have a cuppa is really useful and beneficial. Will a similar room be included in the new build?</i>
	Yes. We will be designing spaces for flexible use so that these types of activities can happen, while maximising the use for pupils too. We will also be ensuring that there is sufficient storage built into the design so that these areas don't get filled up with equipment.
8.	<i>How will the various governing bodies work?</i>
	If the proposal goes ahead, there will effectively be three governing bodies during the run up to the amalgamation in September 2025. One 'business as usual' governing body in each school that will take care of normal day-to-day matters within each school, and one temporary governing body, made up of fair representation from both schools that will be focused on the planning and decision making related to the new amalgamated school.
9.	<i>The new build school would see the planned places increase from April 2028. Would the funding for those places be from the April too?</i>
	Yes, that is the intention – to fully fund the increased planned places from 1 April 2028.
10.	<i>Will there be adequate staff parking?</i>
	We will be following guidelines within the Swansea Parking Standard, and this will be based on the full-time equivalent numbers on roll. There is a lot more to be done here before we can comment on the numbers of spaces as it will be part of the design process, but we wouldn't be able to provide a space for every member of staff. There will be sufficient spaces designated for visitors – such as health care workers. We will be factoring in pupil travel plans, local transport assessments, road safety audits and so on. We will also be required to consider options for 'active travel' which is another Welsh Government priority. We would encourage the schools to start reviewing staff travel arrangements sooner rather than later.