



Diocese of St Asaph Church Schools

12th September 2017

Mr Garem Jackson
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
Caernarfon
LL55 1SH

Dear Mr Jackson

Thank you for the pre-consultation documentation. Cyngor Gwynedd has considered carefully the future of education in Bala and Penllyn. We appreciate that this second consultation is required after the decision by cabinet to reconsider the future of educational provision in Bala and Penllyn.

The consultation documentation reiterates the current position of all schools in the area and we firmly believe that at the heart of any school is its children and their needs are the most important consideration. We have considered the contents of the documents that you sent carefully.

The Diocese of St Asaph is the trustee of Ysgol Beuno Sant, but the day to day running of the school is the responsibility of the Governors. The Governors of all three schools indicated in their response earlier this year to the informal consultation that they wished to support a new proposal that would see a community campus built in Bala.

This will mean the end of any Church School provision in Bala and there is no alternative provision within a reasonable distance for pupils to attend. Whilst the Diocese would find it difficult to support any proposal that removes parental choice for a school with or without a religious character, the foundation governors who have the corporate responsibility for the school have indicated their support for such a proposal.

Our hope from the outset was that the new school would give the children of Bala and Penllyn the very best opportunities and experiences. There has been much debate about the new school and what it might be like, our vision was for an education rooted in Welsh culture, language and heritage based on Christian values.

However, despite the best intentions of officers and the cabinet of Cyngor Gwynedd and the Diocese as partners in this project, we have been unable to persuade the Governing Bodies of the three schools to support our proposal. As we are not a proposer this leaves us with

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limited options to protect and safeguard the project. If we continue as planned, we proceed without the support of the Governing Bodies, which cannot be good for the stability of the new school. The Diocese recognises that implementing the proposals could prove to be unreasonably difficult and the authority must now begin a new statutory consultation. There is also the question of the funding. This was granted for a new Church school. We do not wish the project to lose the much-needed investment in a new school.

The needs of the current and future pupils at the new school are our priority, the Diocese of St Asaph wishes to support a way forward that protects the investment of £10million and allows the new school to open as soon as possible so that the children of Bala and Penllyn and the wider community can benefit.

We have discussed the matter at length with officers of Cyngor Gwynedd, locally elected members and the Chairs of Governors and we all agree that we should work together to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

To enable this to happen the Diocese will in partnership with Cyngor Gwynedd concur with the request of the Governing Bodies and wider community regarding the status of the new 3-19 learning campus. This will allow a new consultation to be held but also allows the building work to continue and safeguards the investment in Bala and Penllyn.

We wish to work together with all stakeholders creating a school that gives every child the very best opportunities to learn and achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosalind Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rosalind Williams
Director of Education and Lifelong Learning