

APPENDIX 1

Objection Report - September 2026

Proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn

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1. BACKGROUND

On 11 February 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet decided to allow the Education Department to hold formal discussions with the Ysgol Baladeulyn Governing Body and other relevant stakeholders regarding the future of the school, as a result of concerns regarding the number of learners at the school. Following this, a School Review Panel was established to consider the school's situation and a range of potential options for its future.

On 14 October 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet decided to support a recommendation to conduct a statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards.

The statutory consultation period was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026. During this period, stakeholders and the public had an opportunity to submit their views on the proposal. Following this, a Consultation Report was prepared to summarise the matters raised and provide the Council's responses to those matters.

The Consultation Report was submitted to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet on **19 May 2026**. After considering the contents of the report, the Cabinet decided to approve the issue of a statutory notice on the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The Statutory Notice was issued on 3 June 2026. The proposal issued through the statutory notice was a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn on 1 January 2027 onwards.

A copy of the statutory notice and the associated documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Schools Organisation Code, any individuals had an opportunity to object to the proposal during the statutory objection period. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026.

This report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Schools Organisation Code and it summarises the objections received during the statutory objection period, as well as the Council's response to the main matters raised.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIONS AND THE MAIN THEMES

25 objections were received during the statutory objection period.

In addition, a petition was received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures. The petition called on the Council to reconsider the proposal to close Ysgol Gynradd Baladeulyn, giving full consideration to the long-term effects of the proposal on the well-being of pupils, the sustainability of the local community and the Welsh language. It was asked whether every other realistic option, such as federalisation or collaboration with other schools, have been fully explored before making a final decision. The issues raised in the petition are included within the relevant themes in Section 3 of the report, together with the Council's response to those issues.

The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. The most common themes were:

- the strengths of the existing educational provision and the advantages of a small school;
- the supportive, caring environment and the individual support provided to learners;
- the emotional and well-being impact of the proposal on learners, staff and families;
- the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and its sustainability in the community;
- the school's central role in the life and sustainability of the local community;
- calls to consider alternative options before closing the school; and
- an objection to the proposal and calls for it to be reconsidered.

The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. The most common matters were the strengths of the existing provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the advantages of a small, rural school, the potential impact of the proposal on the well-being and experiences of learners, the impact of the proposal on the Welsh Language and its role within the local community, and the role of the school as a community focal point that contributes to the sustainability of the area. Reference was also often made to the emotional impact of the proposal on learners, staff and families, as well as concerns regarding travel arrangements and transferring to an alternative school. A significant number of objectors also called on the Council to reconsider the proposal and to give further consideration to alternative options that could enable the school to continue to serve the local community.

To present the objections clearly and systematically, the issues raised have been grouped under themes and sub-themes. The thematic contents list below sets out the structure of Section 3, where a summary of the statutory objections is presented under each theme and sub-theme, together with the Council's response to them.

Theme 1: Education and Learner Experiences at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and the Impact of the Proposal on the Current Provision

- 1.1 The high quality of the education provided
- 1.2 An inclusive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging
- 1.3 Educational experiences and personal development beyond the classroom
- 1.4 Moving to an education provision in a larger school (Ysgol Talysarn), and how that compares with the existing provision

Theme 2: The Emotional Impact of the Proposal on Learners, Staff and Local Families

- 2.1 The emotional impact of the proposal on learners
- 2.2 The emotional impact of the proposal on school staff and families

Theme 3: The Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language

- 3.1 The school's role in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area
- 3.2 The impact of the proposal on progress towards county and national aims
- 3.3 The impact of the proposal on the future of the Welsh language in the community

Theme 4: The Impact of the Proposal on Transport and Travel Arrangements

- 4.1 Eligibility for free transport to the alternative school
- 4.2 The impact of new travel arrangements on the well-being of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners

Theme 5: The Local Community and the Impact of the Proposal on its Future

- 5.1 The school as a community focal point
- 5.2 The school's contribution to the identity and well-being of the community
- 5.3 The role of the school when supporting families in a rural area with limited services
- 5.4 The impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of the community
- 5.5 The demography of the local area
- 5.6 The impact of the proposal on families and the attractiveness of the local area

Theme 6: Objections to the Proposal and Calls to Reconsider

6.1 Objections to the proposal

6.2 A call to keep the school open, prevent or reconsider the proposal

Theme 7: Alternative Options

7.1 To ask to give full consideration to alternative options

7.2 A restoration plan for small schools

7.3 The Sustainability and the Funding Policy of Small Schools

Theme 8: Challenges to the Statutory Process and the Basis of the Proposal

8.1 Criticism on the basis of the proposal

8.2 The impact of the proposal on the alternative school and nearby schools

8.3 The Council's implementation of the statutory process

8.4 Challenging the lawfulness of the proposal and the post-use of the site

8.5 The adequacy of the consultation documents

8.6 The adequacy of the impact assessments

8.7 Direction of wider education policies and direction of Modernising Education in Gwynedd

8.8 Challenge the admission policy that allows parents to choose their child's school

3. SUMMARY OF THE STATUTORY OBJECTIONS AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

In accordance with the requirements of Section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, this section introduces a summary of the statutory objections received during the objection period and the Council's response to those objections. To facilitate the process of presenting the objections, they have been grouped under many themes and sub-themes.

Theme 1: Education and Learner Experiences at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and the Impact of the Proposal on the Current Provision

1.1 The high quality of the education provided

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections demonstrated a high level of confidence and support in the quality of the education provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn. The school is described as a supportive, caring and effective establishment that offers high-quality education in a close Welsh environment, and the school has a positive impact on the education, confidence and happiness of the children. This is reiterated by personal experience from former pupils who describe attending the school as a privilege.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the likely Impact of the proposal on Educational Quality and Standards was carried out and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The revised assessment acknowledges that the current performance of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been evaluated as 'Good' by Estyn, and that the current provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school. In the same context, the Council believes that the provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a more appropriate size and with a narrower age range, which may offer advantages to some learners. This could include greater opportunities for learning and socialising with peers of the same age. However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been based on broader evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and learner number projections that remain low in the medium and long term.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	The Assessment of the Impact on Educational Quality and Standards indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would likely have a neutral or partially positive impact on educational quality and standards. It is noted that the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision and enables some learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age.

1.2 An inclusive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections emphasised the inclusive, supportive and welcoming environment provided by Ysgol Baladeulyn. A view was expressed that the school had a close community that offered more than educational provision only, that it provided individual support to learners and a strong sense of belonging. Reference was made to the excellent advantages of a small and rural school, with some objectors stating that the sense of community and family was a unique and valuable feature of the existing provision. It was also noted that rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn provide a homely environment that is beneficial to learners. The school was described as an environment that helps children to thrive academically and personally. These views were reiterated by evidence of personal experience regarding the positive impact that the school had on the education, confidence and happiness of children, as well as some responders noting that the village's current children are happy at the school.	The Council notes the comments. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards, an Equality Impact Assessment, and a Well-being Impact Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. These assessments are available on the Council's website (www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation) as part of the documents published during the statutory process. The Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards note that, should the proposal be implemented, the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to provide access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experience.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	If the proposal were implemented, the needs of each learner would be considered individually when planning transition arrangements to Ysgol Talysarn. This would include consideration of the learners' emotional well-being, any additional support they may require, and the appropriate steps to help them become familiar with the school and the new learning environment.

1.3 Educational experiences and personal development beyond the classroom

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many objections drew attention to the valuable opportunities and the educational experiences by learners in a small school such as Ysgol Baladeulyn to develop personal skills beyond the classroom. The opinion that the size of the school allowed every child to receive attention and to fully partake in a broad range of activities and responsibilities was expressed. Reference was made to opportunities to serve on the School Council, take on roles at playtime, take part in public presentations and lead in school assemblies frequently. Some objectors stated that these experiences ensured that no child was excluded from opportunities and contributed significantly to developing confidence, self-respect and resilience. Attention was also drawn to special activities such as the local Eisteddfod held jointly with Ysgol Nebo, as well as outdoor activities and local trips, where it was noted that every child is encouraged and acknowledged for	The Council notes the comments. However, the Council does not consider that educational experiences and activities aimed at developing personal skills beyond the classroom are limited solely to small schools. Opportunities to participate in a range of activities such as presentations, assemblies, and eisteddfodau are also available in larger schools. Due to their size and higher number of learners, larger schools may be able provide learners with a broader range of resources, learning experiences, activities, and social opportunities to learners. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards and an Equality Impact

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
their contribution, where it is noted that the experiences contribute to fulfilling the Curriculum for Wales purposes.	Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. These assessments are available on the Council's website (www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation) as part of the documents published during the statutory process. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards note that the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to offer access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experiences.

1.4 Moving to an education provision in a larger school (Ysgol Talysarn), and how that compares with the existing provision

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the possibility of transferring Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to a larger school, namely Ysgol Talysarn as the designated alternative school, questioning whether this would lead to an improvement in the quality of the educational provision. Some objectors stated that the size of the school in itself did not guarantee a better education, and they did not accept the assumption that a larger school would offer better educational results for learners. The view that the Council should provide clear evidence of how the proposal would maintain or improve the educational provision that was currently at Ysgol Baladeulyn was also expressed. There were further concerns relating to the possibility of losing some of the unique advantages of a small school. Reference was made to the individual	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the Likely Impact of the proposal on Educational Quality and Standards was undertaken and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The revised assessment acknowledges that the current performance of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been evaluated as "Good" by Estyn and that the current provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school. In the same context, the Council considers that the provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
support and the personal attention provided to learners, with some objectors arguing that there could be less capacity to provide the same level of support in a larger school. It was also noted that small schools offered a caring and nurturing environment that was difficult to re-create in larger settings, and particular concerns were expressed regarding the potential impact on learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), with some arguing that smaller classrooms and a small school environment was more beneficial to fulfil their needs. Reference was also made to the fact that small schools offer opportunities for every learner to take part in school activities and events. Although some responders acknowledged that experiences of large schools and small schools can be positive or negative, the overall objections reflected a concern regarding losing the advantages of the existing small school provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.	more appropriate size with a narrower age range, which could provide benefits for some learners. These include greater opportunities to learn and socialise with peers of the same age. However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn was undertaken because the school faces increasing challenges, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and learner projections that remain low in both the medium and long term. In addition, enrolment patterns within the catchment area show that the majority of learners choose to attend other schools. Based on a comparison of Estyn reports and an assessment of the options against the relevant criteria, the Assessment of the Impact on Educational Quality and Standards indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would likely have a neutral or partially positive impact on educational quality and standards. The assessment concludes that the provision at the alternative school is, at the very least, equivalent to the current provision and enables learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age. In addition, the Council is not of the opinion that effective support for learners requiring additional assistance is limited solely to small schools. Every school has a responsibility to identify and respond to the needs of its learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), with access to relevant services and specialist expertise according to each learner's individual needs. Furthermore, larger schools, because of their size and higher numbers of learners, can provide a broader range of resources, learning experiences,

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	activities, and social opportunities, together with access to appropriate support and assistance tailored to their individual needs. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards notes that the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to offer access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experience.

Theme 2: The Emotional Impact of the Proposal on Learners, Staff and Families

2.1 The emotional impact of the proposal on learners

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a significant concern regarding the emotional and well-being impact that the proposal could have on the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn. The view that the change could have a negative impact on the emotional well-being of some learners was expressed. Objectors stated that having to move from a small, familiar and supportive small school environment to a larger school could create a disruption for the learners. Reference was specifically made to the possibility of losing the personal support and the sense of belonging that they have from the existing provision. Concerns were also raised regarding the disruption that the change would cause to the children's daily lives, including the need to create new friends, familiarise with new staff and travel longer to school. It was emphasised that this transition period could be challenging for children and full consideration should be given to the potential impact on their well-being. A specific concern was also expressed regarding the timing of the proposal, with some noting	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Well-being of Future Generations Act Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal and was updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. In addition, the assessment was reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment notes that the Council recognises that, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, there may be some negative impact on learners' well-being during the transition period. If Ysgol Baladeulyn were to close, the local authority and the proposed alternative school would work closely with the closing school, learners, and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new school. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, together with appropriate

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
that moving schools in the middle of an academic year or before the Christmas holiday could exacerbate the emotional impact on learners.	support, would be able to mitigate negative effects and support the continuity of educational progress.

2.2 The emotional impact of the proposal on school staff and families

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections drew attention to the significant emotional impact that the proposal could have on staff, learners, families and the wider community. The view that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could cause great sadness amongst those who have personal and professional links to the school, including staff members who have served the school over long periods, was expressed. Some objectors referred to the feeling of uncertainty created by the proposal, noting that it had already had an impact on personal and professional decisions. Concern was also expressed that the impact of the proposal on staff posts and employment had received enough attention during the decision-making process. Objectors also emphasised the harmful impact that the proposal could have on local families, noting that many families had a long-standing connection with the school, with many generations having attended over the years. It was noted closing the school would create a sense of loss and sadness amongst the families and residents here, and some believed that the emotional implications for the community had been fully considered.	The Council notes the comments. Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 be implemented, it is acknowledged that there could be staffing implications that could result in redundancies, as the current posts would end if the school were to close. Throughout the statutory process, the Council has communicated clearly and openly with the staff of Ysgol Baladeulyn. Staff and Trade Union representatives were consulted specifically as part of the statutory consultation period. During the consultation, a drop-in session was held with representatives from the Council's Human Resources service available for any member of school staff who wished to discuss their situation. Staff were also encouraged to contact Human Resources directly at any time if they wished to have a one-to-one discussion. It is noted that any redundancies arising from the proposal would be required to comply with relevant employment law and the Gwynedd Redundancy Scheme. In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	was undertaken and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. Additionally, the assessment was reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. It is acknowledged that, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with confirming the proposal, it would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of learners living within the school's catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), and it is therefore concluded that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Talysarn community, already exist. If the proposal were to be implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. If the proposal were to be implemented, discussions will be held regarding the possibility of ensuring that Ysgol Talysarn's community activities include the Nantlle community where appropriate. Furthermore, it is noted that if the proposal to close the school were to be implemented, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would provide the framework for undertaking further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area, as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.

Theme 3: The Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language

3.1 The role of the school in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A significant number of the objections emphasised the key role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area. Objectors expressed the fact that the school provided an environment where the Welsh language was used naturally as a live language from day to day, supporting linguistic development and strengthening the use of the Welsh language amongst children and local families. Reference was also made to the role of the school as an important centre for the Welsh language, the local community and the Welsh culture. Objectors noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn played a central role in the community life and contributed to maintaining a rural Welsh community, expressing concern that losing the provision could lead to less opportunities for individuals to use, develop and maintain their Welsh skills.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Linguistic Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking into full account of the comments and matters raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment acknowledges the concerns expressed by respondents regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn on the use of the Welsh language within the community. Numerous comments received during the statutory consultation and objection period noted that the school makes a significant contribution to the use of Welsh in informal settings, such as social gatherings, after-school play activities, and interaction between parents and local residents. It was also expressed that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh on a daily basis and weaken the intergenerational transmission of the language, which could pose a significant risk to the sustainability of Welsh in the Nantlle area. The Council acknowledges that the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that some negative effects could arise from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis within the Nantlle community when dropping off and collecting

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	children from school or during school activities. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered such as promoting the use of Welsh through the inclusion of the Nantlle community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as by considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held there. In the educational context, the Council is of the view that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative effect on Welsh-medium education provision or learners' linguistic opportunities for the following reasons: • The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a broader group of their peers. • It is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally with their peers outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger.

3.2 The impact of the proposal on progress towards county and national aims

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections argued that the proposal could have a negative impact on progress towards county and national aims relating to promoting and increasing the use of the Welsh language. The view that Ysgol Baladeulyn is located in an area that is considered to be a Welsh language stronghold, and that local schools are an important part of the linguistic infrastructure that maintains Welsh communities, was expressed. It was also noted that rural schools act as community and linguistic anchors that contribute to the sustainability and resilience of local communities, and it was argued that closing the school could be contrary to the objectives of the Council and the Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh speakers and strengthen the use of the Welsh language in local communities. Some objectors specifically referred to the Cymraeg 2050 national target of reaching a million Welsh speakers, expressing the view that closing a school in a Welsh area would undermine progress towards that aim. Reference was also made to the views that emphasised the importance of supporting Welsh schools in rural areas to protect cultural heritage and ensure local access to education.	As above (see response 3.1) Additionally, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment notes the following: During the statutory objection period, a strong opinion was expressed by some objectors that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn goes against the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 aim because Ysgol Baladeulyn services an area that is one of the strongholds of the Welsh language, and losing the school would lead to a gradual decline in the use of Welsh. The integral role rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn have in sustaining and promoting local culture and the Welsh language in rural communities was emphasised. Concern was expressed that losing the school could lead to reduced opportunities to use the Welsh language naturally within the community, with reference to the school's activities where local residents and families can interact. It is noted that any discussions relating to reorganisation need to note the Welsh Government's effort to reach the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council acknowledges, should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected. The Council acknowledges that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to a possible negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, especially in terms of its use as a community language outside of the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection from school or during the school's activities. In order to mitigate any negative impacts, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of the Talaerau Federation (the Federation of Ysgol Talysarn

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	and Ysgol Brynaerau) could consider approaches to promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Nantlle community in the school's community activities. In addition, should the proposal be implemented, the Authority would need to consider options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held at the school. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn. In terms of education provision, Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn are Category 3, Welsh-medium primary schools. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn is implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school. It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision, nor linguistic opportunities for learners, primarily because: • The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a broader group of their peers. On the above basis, from implementing the proposal, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for Baladeulyn catchment area learners to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	classroom, and the vitality level of Welsh and informal use of the language would be stronger. The full impact assessments are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

3.3 The impact of the proposal on the future of the Welsh language in the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the impact that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could have on the future of the Welsh language in the local community. Objectors expressed the view that the school plays a key part in transferring the Welsh language and local culture to future generations, and losing the provision could undermine that process. Some objectors emphasised that Ysgol Baladeulyn directly contributes to the sustainability of the Welsh language in Dyffryn Nantlle and towards the strength of the local Welsh community, and reference was made to concerns regarding the potential harmful impact on the daily use of Welsh in the village, with some stating that closing the school would be a huge blow to the Welsh language and its sustainability, and would speed up a deterioration in the use of the language within the community.	As above (see response 3.1).

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Concerns were also expressed regarding the long-term implications to Welsh primary education and to the future of Welsh rural communities wider, with some referring to existing patterns of deterioration already in Welsh communities. In addition, reference was made to differences in the level of use of the Welsh language between the two schools, with some responders noting that the percentage of Welsh speakers at Ysgol Baladeulyn was higher than Ysgol Talysarn.	

Theme 4: The Impact of the Proposal on Transport and Travel Arrangements

4.1 Eligibility for free transport to the alternative school

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections raised concerns regarding transport arrangements to the alternative school and the potential impact on families should Ysgol Baladeulyn close. Uncertainty was expressed regarding the eligibility of out-of-catchment learners to receive transport support from the Council, with some objectors calling for clear information regarding the arrangements that would be relevant to those families and their right to free transport. The need to consider the long-term implications of any change to the transport arrangements before making a final decision on the proposal was also emphasised. Specific questions were raised regarding whether the Council's school transport provision would extend to three and four-year-old learners, as well as whether safety arrangements were underway for young children travelling to an alternative school. Concerns were also expressed about the additional costs that some families could face as a result of having to travel further distances, including fuel	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the statutory process, a Travel Arrangements Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal, and was revised following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation period. The impact assessment notes that, if the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn and providing education for the learners at Ysgol Talysarn were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be an impact on the children's travel arrangements. However, it is not expected that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school. It is noted that school transport to the school would be provided in accordance with the Cyngor Gwynedd's Transport Policy where appropriate, and it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
costs, and some objectors asked whether financial support would be provided to mitigate these additional costs.	catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor use any path to the school that is deemed unsafe. In accordance with Gwynedd Education's Transport Policy, Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from the school within their catchment area, the nearest school, or where learners travel to school along a route that the Council considers to be very dangerous. Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner qualifies for statutory transport. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. It is noted that, in accordance with the policy, learners who live outside the revised catchment area would not be eligible to receive free school transport to Ysgol Talysarn. However, the Council does consider individual applications in exceptional circumstances. The Policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents The assessment of the likely impact on travel arrangements is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

4.2 The impact of new travel arrangements of the well-being of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the impact that new travel arrangements could have on the well-being of learners should Ysgol Baladeulyn close. Objectors noted that some children would face longer trips to an alternative school, and the view that this could have a negative impact on their well-being, particularly in the case of young children, was expressed. Matters were also raised in relation to safety and active travel. Some objectors noted that many children can walk safely to Ysgol Baladeulyn currently, developing confidence and independence by doing so. Concern was expressed that closing the school would mean losing this opportunity for local children, as there was no safe footpath between Nantlle and Talysarn. Consequently, it was asked whether the Council would consider investing into a suitable footpath to connect the two villages.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the statutory process, an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travel Arrangements was undertaken in relation to the proposal and was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation period. The impact assessment notes that, should the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be an impact on learners' travel arrangements. However, it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor use routes to school that are considered unsafe. It is noted that school transport would be provided in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Transport Policy, where applicable. In accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, transport is provided where a walking route is deemed dangerous or unsuitable, regardless of distance. Walking routes are assessed in detail in accordance with the policy, taking into account factors such as the nature of the road, the volume and speed of traffic, and overall safety at relevant times of the day. The policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents In regard to requests for investment to a dedicated walking route linking the villages of Nantlle and Talysarn, any consideration of developing or funding such a route would fall outside the scope of this statutory proposal and would need to be assessed separately through the appropriate planning and funding procedures.

Theme 5: The Local Community and the Impact of the Proposal on its Future

5.1 The school as a community focal point

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A significant number of the objections emphasised the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn as a key focal point to the community life of the area. The school was described by many responders as an essential community asset that plays a central part in the local community. The view that the school is much more than an educational setting, acting as a meeting point for residents and a social centre that supports family life, the use of Welsh and local culture was expressed. Some objectors noted that rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn play a unique part in the life of rural villages and, once they are closed, that it is very difficult to restore or replace the community role achieved by them. There was consistent reference to the way that the school brings children, families and local residents together through a broad range of activities and events. Objectors stated that concerts, sports events, celebrations, fund-raising activities and social gatherings provide regular opportunities to strengthen social connections and foster a sense of community. Reference was also made to the role of the school as an educational and social centre that provides opportunities to families and local residents to come together and take part in community activities. Some objectors referred to direct experience of seeing how the school's activities help to unite the community and contribute to the vitality of local life. Concern was expressed by many objectors about the impact that closing the school could have on the future of the community. It was noted that losing the school would be a huge blow to the life of the village and a huge loss to local residents, not only to learners and their families. It was noted that losing the school and its associated activities would impact the area's social fabric by	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
reducing opportunities for people to come together and maintain community connections.	In addition, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.2 The school's contribution to the identity and well-being of the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections emphasised Ysgol Baladeulyn's contribution to the identity and well-being of the local community, and that it offers more than just education. It was noted that the school plays an important part when fostering a sense of belonging and in maintaining social connections within the village, and that it has been central to local community life for decades. Some objectors referred to the role of the school in strengthening connections between generations, which is limited in rural areas, with the school providing events that bring children, families and local residents together.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.3 The role of the school when supporting families in a rural area with limited services

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections drew attention to the role that Ysgol Baladeulyn plays in supporting families in a rural area where local services are limited, and already under pressure. It was expressed that the school provided stability and an important resource to families, and concern was expressed that closing the school would specifically disrupt the existing childcare arrangements of some families, and have an impact on their family life when losing a local service and one of the village's main resources. Concerns were also expressed about additional costs to families as a result of the proposal, including the possibility of having to purchase a new school uniform.	As above (see response 5.2). In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Well-being and Future Generations Act Impact Assessment and an Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd. As part of this assessment, the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on local community cohesion and on families facing socio-economic disadvantage was assessed. The assessments have been reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking into account the comments and matters

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	raised by consultees. In addition, the assessments were further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The Well-being and Future Generations Act Impact Assessment shows that, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, it is acknowledged that the local school would be located further away from homes within the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area, and from a deprivation standpoint, this would mean that one of the indicators, 'access to services' would move further away from residents of the area. However, should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that provision at Ysgol Talysarn would include access to a broader range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. Furthermore, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continuing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. Furthermore, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), and Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travel Arrangements was undertaken. As part of this assessment, the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the travel arrangements of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners was assessed. This

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	assessment has been revised and updated following the statutory consultation, considering the comments and matters raised by consultees. This option would have an impact on the travel arrangements of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn, as they would be educated at Ysgol Talysarn. School transport would need to be provided for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to Ysgol Talysarn, in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy. Additional transport costs are anticipated, with an estimated annual cost between £17,000 to £30,000. Some learners would travel further to school than they do at present. Nevertheless, no learners from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to the school, nor walk or cycle on dangerous routes to the school. Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment area school, or their nearest school (this does not include nursery learners). Learners receiving primary education (except for learners with additional learning needs or disabilities) are expected to walk up to 2 miles to meet any transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd. The policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents. It is noted that, in accordance with Gwynedd Education's Transport Policy, learners who live outside the revised catchment area would not be eligible to receive free school transport to Ysgol Talysarn. However, the Council does consider individual applications in exceptional circumstances. As noted in the Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd, the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: Financial help and support with education.

5.4 The impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the long-term impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of Nantlle community, stating that Ysgol Baladeulyn was an important part of the community and closing it would impact much more than just the educational provision. Objectors stated that the school contributes to the sustainability of the community, and closing the school would weaken the local community by undermining community cohesion, having a harmful and long-term impact on the future of the village, the wider community and future generations. The view that the proposal is a reflection of accepting the community's deterioration instead of investing in regenerating and maintaining it for the future was expressed, and the fact that some objectors did not perceive advantages to the Dyffryn Nantlle area deriving from the proposal. Some objectors argued that transferring learners to Ysgol Talysarn would not be able to replace the role that Ysgol Baladeulyn plays within the local community, and concern was expressed that children would lose the daily connection with their local community and that this could impact their sense of belonging.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, should a decision

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.5 The demography of the local area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections connected the proposal with wider demographic challenges facing rural communities such as Nantlle. The view that factors such as lack of housing for local people, and an increase in holiday homes had contributed to these challenges, was expressed. Some objectors noted that the community is already fragile due to the reliance on the tourism industry and demographic changes. Concern was expressed that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would contribute towards further decline in the community, including losing young families, and some argued that closing rural schools could lead to small, rural villages becoming more like tourism destinations.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory process, consideration was given to a range of factors, including the latest data on the number of learners that live in the catchment area and projections for the future. The information available to the Council showed that the number of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn are currently very low, and it is anticipated that they will remain low over the coming years. This reflects a broader demographic trend, including the depopulation that is impacting rural communities. Between 2011 and 2021, Gwynedd's population decreased by 3.7%, a reduction of 4,477 people. This reduction is not confined solely to rural communities only. During the same period, there was a 7.3% decrease in the number of children aged 0-15 years and a 14.7% decrease in the number of young people aged 16-24 years. Additionally, the Community Impact Assessment notes that some respondents during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period expressed concerns that closing the school, should the proposal be

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	implemented, could influence the decisions of young families whether or not to stay in the community or to move into it, given the importance of the school as a local asset. The Council notes this concern. However, taking into account current school enrolment patterns, including the fact that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, there is no clear evidence that the proposal, if implemented, would directly lead to families leaving the community or to a significant reduction in the number of families moving into it. Based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that a high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (75%), with 50% of primary-age children from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attending Ysgol Talysarn. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the proposed alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council does not anticipate that the proposal would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area.

5.6 The impact of the proposal on families and how attractive the local area is

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections drew attention to the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn when supporting local families and contributing to the attractiveness of the Nantlle area as a place to live. The view that the presence of a local school was an important factor as families made decisions regarding moving into the area, and that the school generated a significant community benefit by serving local families and helping to maintain the community, was expressed. Some objectors referred to their hope that their families' future generations would have the opportunity to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn and be part of the local community. Concern was also expressed that closing the school would make the area less attractive for young families and new families who are considering moving to Nantlle. Some objectors noted that this could lead to fewer families choosing to live in the area in the future, with broader implications for the local community.	The Council notes the comments. The revised Community Impact Assessment notes that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would have a significant impact on the sustainability of the community or on population patterns within the catchment area. A high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (75%), with 50% of primary-age children from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attending Ysgol Talysarn. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the proposed alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council does not anticipate that the proposal would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area.

Theme 6: Objections to the Proposal and Request to Reconsider

6.1 Objections to the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
All of the responses received under this sub-theme expressed an objection to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn. Many of the objectors clearly stated that they objected to the proposal, with some expressing a strong or full objection to the proposal.	The Council notes the objections.

6.2 A call to keep the school open, prevent or reconsider the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections included calls to Cyngor Gwynedd to refuse the proposal and keep Ysgol Baladeulyn open. Some of the responders also called on the Council to reconsider the decision, fully and carefully considering the potential long-term impacts of the proposal before making a final decision. Some objectors asked the Council to prevent or postpone the closure process to allow more time to find an answer or a sustainable plan for the future of the school. Others encouraged the Council to act carefully and proportionately when assessing the proposal, ensuring that all relevant impacts had been fully considered before coming to a decision.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal has been developed and considered in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), including holding a statutory consultation, publishing a Statutory Notice, providing an objection period and preparing an Objection Report. The Council is confident that the statutory process has been followed in full and that all relevant information presented throughout the process has been considered. This includes consideration of the educational, financial, community and linguistic impacts, as well as reasonable alternative options and the comments and objections received during the consultation and objection periods. Although some responders called for the process to be stopped, postponed or for the proposal to be reconsidered, the Council is of the opinion that the proposal has been assessed in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. Specifically, low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, learner projections which suggest that the vulnerable situation will continue in the medium and long term, as well as a broad age range within small classes that presents educational challenges. These factors have led to the consideration of whether a sustainable education provision can be maintained under the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by:

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	• Address the challenge that is low learner numbers in Ysgol Baladeulyn, as well as projections that remain low, and a high percentage of surplus places; • Providing classes with more suitable numbers and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with their peers, within an educational environment with a greater number of learners of the same age; • Reducing the cost per learner across all learners within the County.

Theme 7: Alternative Options

7.1 To ask to give full consideration to alternative options

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections called on the Council to investigate and assess each reasonable alternative option before proceeding with the proposal to close the school. Objectors expressed the view that all potential options had not been fully explored, encouraging the decision-makers to give full genuine consideration to each alternative option and identify the value of the school before deciding to close it. Many alternative options were suggested by objectors, including federalisation with other schools, joint leadership arrangements, sharing staff or resources, and developing partnerships or collaboration arrangements with nearby schools. Some argued that the federalisation model could provide savings to the Council whilst maintaining educational advantages to learners.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the review into Ysgol Baladeulyn's future, consideration was given to a range of alternative options before coming to a conclusion on the present proposal. An appraisal of these options was undertaken, and this work was outlined in the Consultation Document and Proposal Paper. The options that were assessed included, amongst others, doing nothing, federating Ysgol Baladeulyn with a nearby school, federating the school alongside establishing specialist education provision for learners with additional learning needs, establishing a multi-site school and developing other specialist educational uses for the school's site. Consideration was also given to the use of the school as a community centre and opportunities to co-locate other services, such as a language unit or centre, on the site. It was concluded that none of these options would offer a sustainable solution as there was no evidence that they would lead to an increase in the number

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
There was also a call to consider community enterprises as possible ways of supporting the future of the school. Some responders noted that the community was ready to work with the Council to explore sustainable solutions to keep the school open. Attention was drawn to alternative ways of making use of the school's existing assets, including expanding the community use of the school building, strengthening its role in the community and raising awareness of its value. Reference was also made to the possibility of Ysgol Baladeulyn contributing to the area's broader educational provision, as it could be a valuable resource for nearby schools or for learners who could benefit from a smaller educational environment. One responder also noted that the school building had practical characteristics in terms of adapting to climate change impacts, enabling teaching to continue during periods of very hot weather.	of learners or address the challenges relating to significant empty places, small classes, a wide age range and the school's financial sustainability. During the statutory consultation period, additional proposals and options were received by consultees. These were also given full consideration, and a further appraisal of the alternative options was undertaken alongside the options originally assessed. The details of the options considered, alongside the results of that appraisal, have been included in the Consultation Document and the relevant supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation Following this appraisal work, it was concluded that the alternative options considered did not provide a suitable nor sustainable response to the challenges facing the school. For example, it was not anticipated that options such as federating or a multi-site school in themselves would lead to a meaningful increase of learner numbers or address the underlying matters relating to the high level of surplus places, continuing projections of low learner numbers and the associated costs. Throughout the statutory process, the Council has followed the requirements set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government School Organisation Code. Consideration was given to the relevant information and evidence, including the impact assessments, the alternative options considered, and the comments and responses received during the statutory consultation and objection periods. As a result, it was concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is the option that would provide the most suitable response to the challenges noted, that is low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, continuing low learner projections, a catchment area pattern where the majority of learners choose to attend

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	other schools, and a cost per learner that is substantially higher than the county average.

7.2 A restoration plan for small schools

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections argued that Ysgol Baladeulyn would not have a sufficient opportunity to try to restore or increase their numbers before the proposal was introduced. Some responders suggested that the Council should implement a sustainability plan or a restoration plan over a two or three-year period to give the school time to respond to the challenges facing them and try to stabilise the number of learners. The view that such a period would allow the Council to assess the sustainability of the school over a longer period, instead of making a decision based on short-term circumstances, was expressed. Reference was also made to several steps that could be considered during such a restoration period, including engaging with local families and promoting the school. Some objectors suggested the possibility of establishing a specialist unit on the school's site during the period, whilst continuing to provide mainstream education, with the view that this could support the school's sustainability and the possibility of re-building numbers.	The Council notes the comments, however, the Council cannot commit to not considering the future of the school for such an extended period, as doing this would restrict its ability to fulfil its statutory duties. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), giving consideration to the relevant statutory factors, evidence collected, and the comments received throughout the statutory process. The school's number of learners has been decreasing over an extended period, leading to a critical situation with 6 Reception to Year 6 learners and 2 Nursery learners on the register by January 2026. It is noted that low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projected learner numbers that suggest a continuity of the vulnerable situation in the medium and long terms, as well as a broad age range within small classes which present educational challenges. These factors have led to the consideration of whether a sustainable education provision can be maintained under the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by:

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	• Addressing low learner numbers in Ysgol Baladeulyn, as well as projections that remain low, and a high percentage of surplus places; • Providing classes with more suitable numbers and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with their peers, within an educational environment with a greater number of learners of the same age; • Reducing the cost per learner across all learners within the County. As part of the review into Ysgol Baladeulyn's future, consideration was given to a range of alternative options before coming to a conclusion on the present proposal, including the option to establish specialist provision for learners with additional learning needs on Ysgol Baladeulyn's site. An appraisal of this option was undertaken prior to starting the statutory consultation, and this work was outlined in the Consultation Document and the Proposal Paper. This option proposed continuing main-stream provision in Ysgol Baladeulyn, but including a specific specialist area on the school's site for children with additional learning needs. This alternative option was appraised against several factors, including learner numbers and surplus places, class sizes and age range, leadership and staffing, financial resources, the community, the Welsh language and geographical factors. Consideration was also given to the likely impact on quality and standards of education, travel arrangements and the community. It was concluded that the option would not respond adequately to the main challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, and it was not anticipated that the option would increase the number of learners in Ysgol Baladeulyn.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Consequently, it was anticipated that low learner numbers, small classes and a broad age range would continue, alongside the associated financial challenges. On the basis of this appraisal, it was not concluded that this option provided enough basis to change the proposal, nor to postpone the final decision for the proposal. The Council is confident that this option has been given full consideration as a part of the statutory process that was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Theme 8: Challenges to the Statutory Process and the Basis of the Proposal

8.1 Criticism on the basis of the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections questioned the case for the proposal, arguing that it had not been sufficiently demonstrated that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn was the best solution. Concern was expressed that the financial savings expected from the proposal were likely to be significant in the long term, particularly when considering the costs of transporting learners to Ysgol Talysarn. Some objectors argued that the proposal put too much emphasis on financial considerations, including the cost per head and the existing numbers and learner projections, without putting sufficient attention to the wider impacts on the community. The view that education should not be solely treated as a financial matter or the value	The Council notes the comments. The review of Ysgol Baladeulyn's future is based on a combination of factors, including continued low learner numbers, a high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range and projections which show that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. The Council continues to be of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn is the most suitable proposal to address the challenges facing the school which are low numbers of learners, a very high proportion of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, projections of continued low numbers, a

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
of a school should not be assessed based on the number of learners or its costs, was expressed. Some responders noted that the benefits and future of children should be at the core of any decision, emphasising that learners have the right to education that reflect their community and local culture, as well as the right to attend their local school. Also, the view that more emphasis should be given on the school's contribution to the sustainability of the community, learner well-being and the Welsh language was expressed. In addition, there was a call to reconsider the policy of reorganising schools and closing small schools based only on financial considerations. Reference was also made to the attendance of young families in the community, with some objectors noting that there was a genuine possibility for the school numbers to increase in years to come.	catchment area pattern where the majority of learners choose other schools, and a cost per learner significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • Responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, together with projections that remain low, and the high percentage of empty places; • Offer classes of a more suitable size and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; • Reduce the cost per learner for all learners in the County. In addition, it should be noted that it was not financial considerations alone that led to the review of Ysgol Baladeulyn. The review was carried out due to the many challenges facing the school, including low learner numbers, a high level of empty places and challenges in terms of long-term sustainability. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to a wide range of factors, including the potential effects on the community, the Welsh language and well-being, as well as the financial implications.

8.2 The impact of the proposal on the alternative school and nearby schools

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objections noted that Ysgol Talysarn already operated close to its capacity, and a full assessment should be conducted, per year group, of the impact of transferring all the Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to the school should the proposal be implemented. Concern was expressed regarding the potential impact on the school's capacity, the need to change classroom arrangements, and the implications that this could have on staffing levels, educational resources, teaching space, learner well-being and the support provided to them. A concern was also raised regarding the potential impact on nearby schools in general, noting that they could be overloaded should the proposal be implemented.	The Council notes the comments. Ysgol Talysarn's capacity is 91 places for Reception to Year 6 learners and 13 Nursery places. In January 2026, there were 81 Reception to Year 6 learners and 17 Nursery pupils attending Ysgol Talysarn. Based on the January 2026 PLASC figures, it is anticipated that in September 2026 there will be 4 surplus places (and 3 surplus places in the Nursery) at Ysgol Talysarn. On the basis of this information, it is anticipated that there will be sufficient capacity for current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live in the Baladeulyn catchment area. It is acknowledged that, if all Ysgol Baladeulyn learners were to decide to transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, it is possible that the number of learners would exceed the capacity. Should this happen, the Local Authority would deal with admission applications in accordance with its School Admission Policy and would comply with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code. The Council is therefore satisfied that the school's capacity is sufficient to meet current demand and the demand anticipated in the future. Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, and learners transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, it would be a matter for the Governing Body of Ysgol Talysarn to determine class sizes and the allocation of the school's staffing resources. Current data from the Department of Education indicates that there is currently capacity in all primary schools in the Dyffryn Nantlle catchment area. The percentages of empty places in the neighbouring schools vary

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	between 9% and 44%, and therefore no school is currently overcrowded. It is noted that the review of Ysgol Baladeulyn's future is based on wider evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision, including continued low learner numbers, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and forecasts of numbers that remain low in the medium and long term.

8.3 The Council's implementation of the statutory process

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections expressed a concern regarding the way that the statutory process was undertaken and the steps taken before submitting the proposal. Some responders argued that there had been a lack of engagement and consultation with local residents, parents and community stakeholders during the process, and it was also expressed that some objectors were of the opinion that the decision to close the school had already been made before the formal consultation was commenced. The view that the Council had not done enough to address the main challenge facing the school was also expressed, namely the low number of learners, nor has it given a sufficient opportunity for the school to try to restore its numbers before starting the statutory process. Some objectors noted that the Council had decided to proceed with the proposal after a period of reduction in the number of learners instead of considering potential measures to support the school and try to increase the numbers.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the Council has followed the statutory process set out in the Standards and Organisation of Schools Act (Wales) 2013 and the Code of Organisation of Schools (011/2018). On 11 February 2025, the Cabinet of Cyngor Gwynedd decided to allow the Education Department to hold formal discussions with the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn and other relevant stakeholders regarding the future of the school, due to concerns regarding the number of pupils at the school. Subsequently, a School Review Panel was established to consider the school's situation and a range of possible options for its future. On 14 October 2025, the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council decided to support a recommendation to hold a statutory consultation on the proposal to

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A concern was also raised regarding the impact of the statutory process on the viability of the school. Some responders suggested that the uncertainty regarding the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn could influence the decisions of parents regarding registering their children at the school and the impact of the statutory process on the number of learners had not been fully considered. Reference was specifically made to the view that parents have been informed about the possibility of a proposal to close the school before making decisions regarding the education of their children, and this has reduced the confidence of some parents to choose the school, further contributing to the reduction in the number of learners.	close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The statutory consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026. Following the consultation, the responses and additional information submitted were considered, and a Consultation Report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Code. The report summarised the comments received, noted the Council's response to them and recorded the further consideration given to the proposal and the alternative options. That report was presented to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet decided to allow the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal. Following the publication of the statutory notice, a statutory objection period was held in order to give anyone the opportunity to submit an objection to the proposal. This objection report summarises the objections received during that period and notes the Council's response to them in order to assist the Cabinet in considering the matter. The decision to hold a statutory consultation, or the subsequent decision to publish a statutory notice, was not a final decision to implement the proposal. These were steps within the statutory process, and they enabled the Council to collect and consider comments, evidence, alternative options and objections before the Cabinet made a final decision. The Council is confident that the process was carried out impartially and that no final decision had been made in advance. Consideration was given to the relevant information, evidence and comments at each stage of the process.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	The Cabinet will make the final decision on whether or not to implement the proposal after considering the Objection Report and all relevant information before it. In addition, the Council recognises that stability and certainty are important factors for parents when making decisions about their children's education, and that periods of uncertainty can create worry for families. In this context, it is noted that the Council is reviewing the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn as the school is facing increasing challenges, including continued low learner numbers, a high percentage of empty places, catchment area patterns, and number projections in the medium and long term. The number of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn has been decreasing over an extended period, with a clear decline over the last five years. This continued reduction was a source of increasing concern in terms of numbers and the sustainability of the school, and the projections for the next few years show that this pattern is likely to continue.

8.4 Challenging the lawfulness of the proposal and the post use of the site

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections raised concerns about the lawfulness and transparency of the proposal, as well as the post use of the school site. Some objectors expressed the view that the proposal to close the school was connected with the possibility that the site could be sold and re-developed to holiday accommodation purposes. It was also questioned whether any use of this type would comply with the legislation requirements relating to Assets of Community Value and the Community to Propose, which safeguards community assets from being sold or re-purposed without due process, and whether the term 'Modernising Education' is used to justify such a business plan. Some responders noted that such a development could have a negative impact on the character of the area by increasing the provision of holiday accommodation instead of housing for local residents.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the school site is not currently for sale, and the proposal is not linked to any plan or commitment to sell the site or redevelop it for a specific purpose, including holiday accommodation. It is noted that the Council has followed the statutory process set out in the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), and the school was prioritised for a review because it was facing a number of challenges, including the number of learners at the school being seriously reduced which had led to a critical situation. The term "Modernising Education" is not used to justify any business plan relating to another use of the site. If a decision to close the school was made, the Authority's Post-use Policy would act as the framework for considering and developing options for the future of the site. This policy would guide further discussions regarding appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to try to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. Any decisions regarding the future of the site would be made through the relevant processes and governance of the Council, taking into account policies, legal requirements and the interests of the local community. No specific use of the site in the future is part of the current proposal and no decision has been made regarding the post-use of the building.

8.5 The adequacy of the consultation documents

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
The view that the consultation report did not place enough emphasis on what learners could lose should the proposal be implemented, was expressed, including the potential impact on the well-being of learners and vulnerable learners. Some responders also argued that the advantages of attending a small school or the advantages of keeping Ysgol Baladeulyn open had been highlighted or considered fairly enough within the documentation. Reference was also made to statements in the consultation report regarding providing fair experiences to every learner. Some objectors believed that the responses submitted by the Council were unclear and could be interpreted like they were suggesting shortcomings in the existing educational provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.	The Council notes the comments. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process and all the documentation drawn up as part of the process has complied with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Council is satisfied that the responses and views presented during the consultation and objection periods have been summarised and considered in accordance with the relevant statutory arrangements and requirements. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Consultation Report was drawn up following the statutory consultation period. That report summarised the responses and issues raised during the consultation and included the Council's response to those issues, in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The Consultation Report was submitted to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet for consideration, and after considering the content of that report and all other relevant information, the Cabinet decided to publish a statutory notice on the proposal and hold a statutory objection period. The current Objection Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains a summary of the objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the Council's response to the issues raised. This report will be considered by Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet alongside all other relevant information before making a final decision regarding the proposal.

8.6 The adequacy of the impact assessments

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections questioned whether the proposal's impact assessments had sufficiently considered all the potential implications of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn. The view that not enough emphasis had been placed on the potential emotional impact on the school staff, learners and families, nor the impact on the well-being of learners, was expressed. Reference was made to a concern that the full impact of the proposal on families living outside of the school's catchment area had been sufficiently assessed. Some objectors argued that more attention had to be given to the potential impact on rural communities, noting that schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn were a foundation that maintained the local community and closing it would weaken the community. The view that more emphasis needs to be given to the proposal's linguistic assessment was also expressed, including its broader impact on the Welsh language and its contribution to the Welsh Government's strategic aims.	The Council notes the comments. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process, together with all the documentation drawn up as part of the process, has complied with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Council is also satisfied that all the relevant impact assessments have been carried out, considered and updated before, during and following the consultation periods, in accordance with the statutory requirements and the relevant arrangements. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a package of impact assessments was published during the statutory consultation period, including assessments of the likely impact of the proposal on the community, learner travel arrangements, quality and standards of education, well-being law, equality, and the Welsh language. These assessments were prepared in order to assess the potential effects of the proposal, taking into account the evidence available at the time, together with any concerns raised by consultees. Where appropriate, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce any potential adverse impact. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, these assessments were reviewed and updated where necessary as a result of the comments and additional information received during the statutory objection period. The impact assessment package was submitted as an appendix to the Cabinet report, and following consideration of the content of the assessments, together with all other relevant information, including the information stated in the consultation report and the report to the Cabinet, the Cabinet decided to issue a statutory notice on the proposal to close

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December and approve moving on to the statutory objection period. Following the statutory objection period, the Community, Well-being, Equality and Linguistic impact assessments have received further attention and have been updated again, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). These assessments will be published and considered by the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet alongside the other relevant documentation, before a final decision is made regarding the proposal.

8.7 Direction of education policies and direction of Modernising Education in Gwynedd

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections expressed a concern regarding how the proposal aligned with the direction of education policies. It was noted that local schools were valuable resources to rural communities and the proposal, in the opinion of some objectors, did not reflect the Council's responsibility to safeguard the benefits of rural communities or the Welsh language. Concerns were also expressed regarding the impact of reorganisation policies and modernising education work on rural communities, with some responders questioning whether there has been too much reorganisation and whether too much emphasis has been given to new methods of providing education. Reference was also made to policies and previous decisions regarding closing schools, with some arguing that this approach should be reconsidered. In addition, the view that there was a need to consider alternative ways of maintaining small schools, was expressed, referring to the school funding	The Council notes the comments. The School Organisation Code (011/2018) introduces special arrangements in relation to rural schools by establishing a procedural presumption against their closure. This does not mean that a rural school will never close but rather that the case for its closure must be strong, and that all other practical options have been conscientiously considered. Ysgol Baladeulyn has been designated as a rural school for the purposes of the Code, and as a result it is required to follow an additional series of procedures and criteria when considering any proposal to close it. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. In particular, low numbers of learners are noted, a very high percentage of empty places, and number projections that suggest the continuation of the fragile situation in the

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
policy, with a call on the Welsh Government to reconsider the existing funding arrangements, given the financial pressures placed on Headteachers.	medium and long term, together with a wide age range within small classes that present educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term within the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by: • Responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, together with projections that remain low, and the high percentage of empty places; • Offer classes of a more suitable size and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; • Reduce the cost per learner for all learners in the County.

8.8 Challenge the admission policy that allows parents to choose their child's school

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objectors noted the view that the Council should look into the reasons behind the low number of learners more thoroughly and why some families choose to send their children to other schools instead of their local school. It was suggested that factors such as uncertainty regarding the future of the school, transport arrangements or other admission matters could have influenced the parents' decisions, and these reasons should be fully understood and consideration should be given to appropriate measures to address them before coming to a conclusion about the viability of the school.	The Council notes the comments. However, school admission arrangements are a matter regulated by legislation and national statutory codes. The Council, as an Admissions Authority, implements these arrangements in accordance with those statutory requirements, and therefore this proposal does not provide a basis to amend the Admissions Policy or the relevant admissions criteria. School admission arrangements are administered in accordance with the Council's School Admission Policy and the relevant national statutory framework. Under the policy, each school has a specific catchment area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objectors argued that the fact that learners attended schools outside of their catchment area should not be used as evidence in itself that the local school has no future. The view that the Council should look into the reasons for these choices in more detail was also expressed and to consider whether there is a need to review admission arrangements to encourage more learners to attend their catchment area school.	that it serves. School catchment areas are defined in order to be able to plan education provision, places and resources effectively across the County. These boundaries are not based on community boundaries, but on the official criteria which are the basis for allocating places and maintaining provision. Parents and carers have the right to express a choice about the school they wish their child to attend, subject to the schools' capacity and the admission criteria set out in the policy. These arrangements are applied consistently across the County. It is noted that parents make educational choices based on a variety of factors, including personal experience, care provisions, and family preferences. In addition, the proposal is not based solely on the fact that some learners attend schools outside the catchment area, but on a general consideration of the relevant factors that affect the sustainability and viability of the school in the long term, including continued low learner numbers, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and forecasts of numbers that remain low in the medium and long term.