

## LOCAL MEMBER'S COMMENTS CABINET REPORT 11 FEBRUARY, FELINWENDA

I would like to thank the Modernising Education team for their comprehensive work on this issue.

I have carefully considered the findings of the consultation and the recommendation to the Cabinet, namely the transfer of the entire Felinwenda catchment area to Ysgol Bontnewydd.

However, I disagree with the recommendation. In my opinion, Option 1, which is to transfer the whole of the Felinwenda catchment area to Ysgol Llandwrog, would be the most sensible choice. Although understanding that a consultation is not a referendum, it is fair to note that Option 1 was the option preferred by the majority of respondents.

In addition Option 1 would:

- Contribute to protecting and strengthening Ysgol Llandwrog, without any disadvantage to Ysgol Bontnewydd.
- A strong connection has existed over the last few years between Ysgol Felinwenda and Ysgol Llandwrog.
- Ensure continuity in the connection with the natural progression between Cylch Meithrin Dinas and Llanwnda and Ysgol Llandwrog.
- Bring together two similar catchments. Ysgol Felinwenda's current catchment area is a rural one which resembles the feel and nature of Ysgol Llandwrog.
- Contributes best to the sustainability of the local community.

I am therefore of the opinion that there are worthy reasons for choosing Option 1 that should not be ignored.

I note that Option 1 anticipates higher travel costs than Option 2. I do not understand why Option 1's travel costs include taxi provision due to narrow lanes, but Option 2's travel costs do not include this cost.

I think it is important to consider that the true travel costs will not be known until those arrangements are in place, and they will likely vary from year to year as the location of learners changes.

Whatever the true travel costs will be, considering everything as a whole, any additional travel costs with Option 1 will be insignificant. The difference would be £23,000 per year according to Cyngor Gwynedd. A relatively insignificant amount when considering education costs in general, and a small amount if we want to prioritise sustainable rural communities in Gwynedd.

I hope that the relatively small possible difference in travel costs has not influenced the decision to favour Option 2 too much.

I also note the comments of Cylch Meithrin Dinas a Llanwnda which favoured Option 1, as the Cylch are concerned that Option 2 would not ensure the viability of the Cylch as a Cylch Meithrin already existed on the site of Ysgol Bontnewydd.

Any negative impact on Cylch Meithrin Dinas a Llanwnda would harm the community and the provision of Welsh language education locally.

Option 1 would be the option that would best protect Cylch Meithrin Dinas and Llanwnda, and also Canolfan Bro Llanwnda which is next door.

Therefore, for the above reasons I ask the Cabinet to reconsider the recommendation and choose option 1, which is to transfer the entire Felinwnda catchment area to Ysgol Llandwrog.

Huw Rowlands

30 January 2024