



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Review Area 3
Trellech Village & the Surrounding
Areas

Consultation
Report

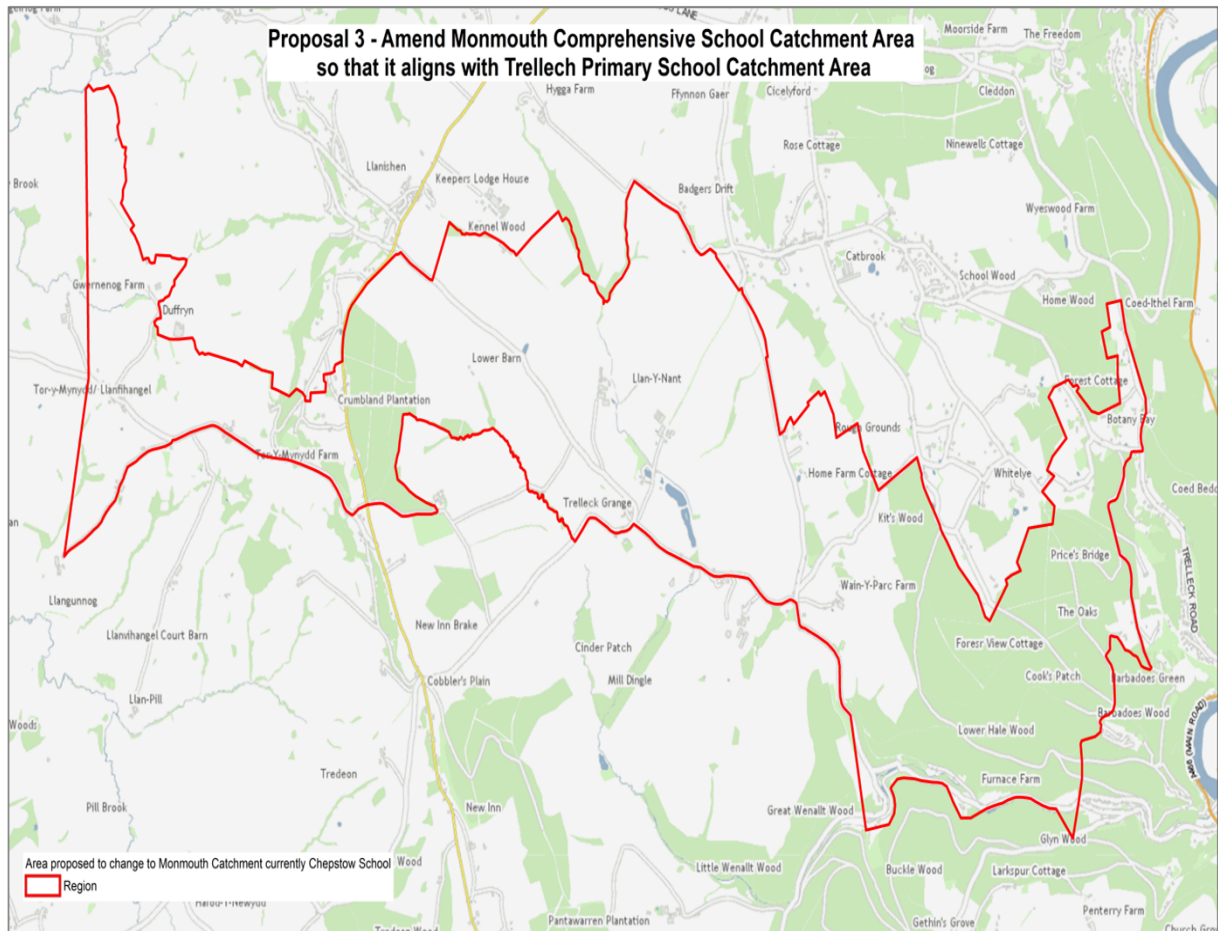
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1. The Proposal

The Council consulted on amending the secondary school catchment area for children and young people currently residing within the village of Trellech and the immediate surrounding areas.

The areas identified on the below map currently form part of the catchment area for Trellech Primary School, and Chepstow School.



Through this consultation, the Council sought the views of consultees and interested parties on whether the secondary school catchment boundary should be amended for the specified areas (area identified above), to form part of the catchment area for Monmouth Comprehensive School, thus aligning the entire catchment area for Trellech Primary to a single secondary school.

The below table identifies the number of children and young people residing within the affected area who would be affected by the proposals over the next 6 years should they proceed.

Current year group	Admission to Secondary	Numbers affected
Year 5	September 2020	2
Year 4	September 2021	0
Year 3	September 2022	1
Year 2	September 2023	1
Year 1	September 2024	1
Reception	September 2025	1
Total		6

2. Why did we consult on this proposal?

Transitional arrangements between Primary and Secondary School.

Trellech Primary School is the designated primary school for the affected area and is a feeder school for Monmouth Comprehensive School. The proposed changes would see complete alignment between the catchment area for Trellech Primary School and Monmouth Comprehensive school, lending support to the existing transitional arrangements, and enabling the cohorts of children to remain together when entering into that daunting transition between Primary to Secondary School.

Access to School places

The parents of children and young people currently residing within the affected area have the opportunity to express a preference for a school at which they wish for their child to attend. This preference does not need to be for the designated catchment school, however, children residing within the catchment area for a preferred school receive a priority in the event of oversubscription.

Those residing within the affected area are not afforded with the above priority for Monmouth Comprehensive school as they do not currently form part of the designated catchment area.

Trellech Primary School, being a feeder for Monmouth Comprehensive School, sees almost all of the children and young people residing within its catchment area wishing to transition to Monmouth Comprehensive School. However, some children and young people from Trellech Primary have been unsuccessful in securing places at Monmouth Comprehensive School during times of oversubscription. This is due to the affected area being outside of the catchment area for Monmouth Comprehensive School.

The above results in some children and young people not being able to transition to Monmouth Comprehensive school with their peer groups.

The proposals outlined would help in addressing this matter.

Provision of Home to School Transport

A further consideration of the proposed change is the current provision for home to school transport that currently serves the affected area. The council's current policy provides free home to school transport to the nearest or catchment school if residing 2 miles or more from the home address.

The affected area sees the availability of free home to school transport being available to Chepstow School as the nearest / catchment school for the affected area. As a result, should children and young people residing within the affected area secure places alongside their peers at Monmouth Comprehensive, they would not receive an entitlement to free home to school transport.

The proposals outlined would address this matter.

3. Results of this Consultation

The Council have received a number of formal responses to this proposal, submitted either via the online survey or via email / letter. The table below offers a broad profile of the consultees responding to the consultation, together with a view on whether they are in support of or against the proposals.

Respondent category	Total number in support of proposals	Total number not in support of proposals
Parent / Carer	16	5
School Governor	1	
Staff Member		
Pupil		
Other	1	1
Total	18	6
Percentage	75%	25%

4. Public Consultation session

The Council facilitated a public consultation session at Trellech Primary School on 12th February 2019. There were 5 consultees present at the session who, following a very useful debate, seemed to offer their overwhelming support for the proposals to both the catchment proposals and the priority being afforded to those attending a feeder school.

During the session, the following comments / concerns / questions relating to the proposals:

Consultee Question / comment	LA Summary Response
If the proposals go through will it be in place for September 2020?	Yes, the consultation is being undertaken in line with the review of the council's school admissions policy for implementation in September 2020.
What is the policy going to be for feeder schools as it is still low in the over-subscription? How is it going to work?	The Council is proposing to introduce a feeder school policy into its oversubscription criteria used to determine the allocation of school places in the event of oversubscription. At present, after applying the catchment criteria, any remaining applications are determined on a distance criteria. It is proposed to prioritise those attending a feeder school prior to applying the distance criteria.
It is wrong that people from OOC are given places when they don't pay their council tax to Monmouthshire?	School places are currently allocated in line with the council's agreed admissions policy. The School Admissions Code Wales (July 2013) does not allow for school places to be prioritised on the basis of the County / Country in which you reside. The Council proposes to afford priority to children and young people residing within the affected areas through amending the catchment area and introducing a feeder school criteria.
What is going to happen about transport for those out of catchment but in a feeder school?	Those children and young people attending residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school but obtaining places on the basis of attending a feeder school will not be entitled to free home to school transport. The only exception to this would be in cases where the preferred school is determined to be the nearest school that also meets the relevant distance criteria.
What are the projections for 2020?	The projections for September 2020 offer confidence that Monmouth Comprehensive School has sufficient capacity to support the proposed changes and children and young

	people transition from primary to secondary school.
Have you stopped Gloucester and Hereford children being offered places?	No, children and young people that reside outside of the catchment area (including those in England) continue to have the opportunity to apply for places at Monmouth Comprehensive School. However, those residing within the affected area / attending a feeder school will receive priority over those who are not, should these proposals proceed. This may reduce the number of places being offered to children and young people who are residing outside of the catchment area (including England).
Have Gloucester and Hereford addresses ever been in catchment?	The catchment area for Monmouth Comprehensive school has never extended beyond the Monmouthshire County border.
Will feeder go above distance?	Yes, if the proposal to introduce a feeder school policy is agreed, those attending a feeder school will receive priority for placement over those measured on a distance criterion.
Why haven't previous proposals gone ahead?	The Council entered into a consultation in 2015, which proposed some changes to the affected area associated with this consultation. The response from those residing within the affected areas was not sufficient to be able to determine whether there was support to implement the proposals. Instead, it was agreed to enter into a more extensive consultation at a later date.
Are you going to be consulting with pupils and older pupils who have been through this process already?	The Council will be engaging with a selection of children and young people who are likely to be affected by the proposals. Children and young people who have previously been affected by the status quo are welcome to respond to the consultation.
If there is not much feedback as in previous consultations, will things stay the same?	The Council's Cabinet will determine the outcome of this consultation. It is likely that Cabinet members would like to see evidence of sufficient support for the proposal prior to taking any decision to implement the changes
Have you already received more feedback than in previous consultations?	The Council is currently consulting on reviewing catchment areas in 4 different areas, the Trellech area being one of these. The consultation will remain open until 1 st March 2019, but there has so far been a positive response to the overall consultation
If you need more feedback we can drum up more support	The Council would appreciate any assistance in advertising the consultation to enable all affected parties to have their say.

<p>What support is there for counselling children through this period of not knowing what is going to happen?</p>	<p>The Council is fully aware that transition between Primary and Secondary school can be a very daunting and stressful period for children and young people, particularly where there is a doubt around whether they are able to transition with their peers. The Council proposes to make a decision on these proposal by 15th April 2019. Any children and young people that require support for their wellbeing should discuss with their current Headteacher in the first instance.</p>
<p>I don't understand why part of our farm is in catchment and part isn't?</p>	<p>Catchment areas in Monmouthshire have been in place for many years and it is often difficult to understand their rationale in some circumstances. The ongoing catchment review seeks to address identified anomalies. However, these particular proposals would align the Trellech primary and Monmouth secondary catchment areas, which would address this individual issue.</p>
<p>Is there somewhere on the website that we can check our catchment?</p>	<p>Yes, parents are able to check their primary and secondary school catchments by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>If we don't move before the closing date but move after the offer date, what happens?</p>	<p>The Council understands that moving house can be a very distressing time, and sometimes cannot take place in line with the required dates for applying for school places. The current policy allows for parents who inform us that they are in the process of moving to submit appropriate evidence of their move no later than 6 weeks before the offer date.</p>
<p>How would numbers have looked this year had feeder criteria been applied to his year's cohort?</p>	<p>For September 2018, Monmouth Comprehensive School was oversubscribed but not with in catchment applicants. There were a number of children successful in obtaining places on a distance criteria, whilst others were unsuccessful on a distance criteria. Applying the proposed policy around feeder schools would have resulted in all children who attended a feeder school obtaining places at Monmouth Comprehensive School.</p>
<p>Do Herefordshire and Gloucestershire know about the consultation?</p>	<p>Yes, the consultation documentation has been sent to both local authorities. In addition, parents of children currently on roll at a Monmouthshire school but living outside of the county would have been informed.</p>

All interested parties in attendance at the consultation session were advised of the need to put their individual views forward by responding to this consultation either via email or via the online survey.

5. Consultation with Children and Young People

During the consultation, the Council engaged with the children and young people in years 5 and 6 at Trellech Primary School. When referring to the pupils affected by these proposals over the next 5 years, 83% attend Trellech Primary School.

The purpose of this consultation was to find out which secondary school they would like to go to and the reasons why. The results of this consultation are detailed below:

Preferred School	Number of year 6 pupils	Number of year 5 pupils	Total	%
Monmouth	17	26	43	91.5
Chepstow	3	0	3	6.4
Other	0	1	1	2.1
Total	20	27	47	

A summary of the reasons children and you people tell us they wish to attend Monmouth Comprehensive School are:

- Existing sibling / family links
- Friendship / peer groups
- Its an excellent School
- Distance from home
- Offers excellent facilities
- Familiar with some teachers / staff at Monmouth

A summary of the reasons children and you people tell us they wish to attend Chepstow School are:

- Existing sibling / family links
- It's a good school

6. What has the consultation told us?

The Council has studied the formal responses received in relation to this proposal and has extracted the key themes for consideration in determining how the proposal moves forward.

The themes coming through from those in favour of the proposals are:

Theme	Comment summary
1. Peer and friendship groups	Children who are attending their catchment Primary School (Trellech) will be able to transition to secondary school with their peers. If children attend a feeder school for a particular secondary school, then they should have the opportunity to stay with their classmates
2. Wellbeing	Few children will be split from their friends during what is already a stressful time with moving to a new and bigger school. Historically some children have been unable to attend Monmouth with their peers which has had a negative impact on their mental health.
3. Transitional links	It is very important that children are able to transition from Primary to secondary school together as a cohort. It is likely to have beneficial effects on children's ability to quickly settle in to secondary school with less impact on their wellbeing and performance. It will also make cluster working between primary schools and the secondary school easier.
4. Cluster arrangements	Aligning primary and secondary catchment areas makes perfect sense. Trellech Primary School is a feeder for Monmouth so its catchment areas should align
5. Transport	The proposal will mean that our children will receive free home to school transport to attend a school where peers attend.

The theme of concern coming through from those not in favour of the proposals are:

Theme	Comment Summary	LA response
1. Capacity concerns	Monmouth Comprehensive School does not have enough capacity	Monmouth Comprehensive School is regularly oversubscribed, however, it is not oversubscribed with children residing within the catchment area for the school. Our most recent 5 year forecasts provide us with confidence that the capacity of Monmouth Comprehensive School is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed changes as children from the affected area transition between primary and secondary school
2. Policy concerns	People are getting their children into primary schools outside of the catchment in the hope they will feed into MCS.	The current admissions policy for Monmouth Comprehensive School does not afford any priority to children and young people who resident outside of catchment but attend a feeder school. This is a proposed amendment to the admissions policy for September 2020.
3. Safety	Not safe routes	In the event that there are no safe walking routes identified, free home to school transport is available.
4. Impact on Chepstow School	Concerns that the proposal will result in even less children being able to attend Chepstow School	<p>The affected area currently forms part of the catchment area for Chepstow School. The number of children choosing to transition to Chepstow School from the affected area are minimal, so we do not foresee a significant impact on Chepstow School.</p> <p>Furthermore, Chepstow School remains to have sufficient capacity to accommodate any requests from parents who wish for their child to attend the school. Free home to school transport will also continue in the event that Chepstow School is identified to be the nearest suitable school</p>
5. Distance / travel times	A concern that the proposed new secondary school is further away	The Council acknowledges that for some parts of the affected area, the distance to Monmouth Comprehensive School is further than Chepstow School.

		Parents who wish for their child to attend a closer school (i.e. Chepstow) will be able to do so and will receive home to school transport in a situation whereby its identified as being the nearest suitable school
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7. Home to School Transport

The Council currently provide free home to school transport to the catchment or nearest suitable school.

The impact of these proposals proceeding to implementation would be that free home to school transport would either be provided to Monmouth Comprehensive School as the catchment school, or the nearest suitable school as determined by the Council.

8. General overview on consensus

The consultation process undertaken by the Council has without question been a useful exercise, providing a full and open opportunity to test and critic the proposed changes to school catchment areas.

Through analysis of the feedback received from the formal consultation responses, feedback from the public consultation sessions, as well as the voice of the children and young people affected by this proposal, the Council is able to draw a conclusion of clear support for the following proposal:

To amend the Secondary School catchment boundary for Monmouth Comprehensive School so that it aligns with Trellech Primary School

The consultation process has draw some concerns towards the proposals, however, the council feels that it is able to mitigate the concerns raised. Should proposals proceed to be implemented, families who wish for their child to attend Chepstow School can continue to do so.