Appendix 14: Thematic table summarising the key issues represented in the feedback from the public consultation via online surveys, public events or received correspondence.

Positive attributes of the proposed changes

Aspects raised
1. Post-16 centres provide an opportunity to meet new people
2. The chance to enjoy the use of new facilities
3. An opportunity to benefit from new teaching and learning techniques
4. New centres would provide more subject choice
5. Travel not seen as a significant problem
6. Access to specialist teachers
7. Bigger and better opportunities

Issues of concern, possible developments and wider policy areas

Transport and travel: This was the most widely commented theme across all the consultation feedback.

Aspects and issues raised

1. Time
    a. Proposals would increase the length of the school day
    b. Additional travel = wasted time when students could be engaged in more productive activity
    c. Train and bus times not co-ordinated to link with start of school day
    d. Increase travel could lead to stress, fatigue and mental exhaustion
    e. Some respondents indicated very early starts for pupils leaving home around 07.00 and this would have a detrimental effect on the pupils

2. Costs
    a. Potential increased costs for LA
    b. If not the LA then cost falls on parents and students
    c. Figures from £5 to £30 per week quoted in face to face events
    d. Disproportionate impact on the poorest families especially those in valley communities
    e. Evidence that Cardiff & Vale College will provide a free transport pass for a one-off £50 administration fee with potential impact on recruitment into sixth forms and Bridgend College

3. Distance
    a. In some proposals this would be significant for students who live in the upper reaches of the valleys
    b. Travel between YGG Llangynwyd and YGG Llanhari also noted as significant in time and distance
    c. Some routes for Option 1 Outcome D considered too long
    d. A detailed analysis of transport options for Outcomes D, E and F has been presented in the submission from CCYD (Appendix 13, Book 1, Item C)
    e. In respect of Option 1, Outcome A it was suggested that instead of being able to walk to school Bryntirion students would be faced with

	transport issues; the presence of the A48 was raised as a concern for some travel routes
f.	Whilst appreciating from a Maesteg perspective that everything is "down the valley" the suggestion in Outcome E of students going "up the valley" for a sixth-form provision is considered to entail unacceptable travel distances
g.	It was suggested that some students would have a longer commute than many adults in the area

4. Public transport

a. Frequency of trains and buses generally regarded as poor
b. Existence or not of direct routes between schools
c. Timing of public services to link with start/finish of school day – not always a good fit
d. It was noted that a bus already exists to take students from Pyle directly to Porthcawl Comprehensive taking Cynffig pupils out of their local catchment

5. Environmental

a. Additional buses would lead to increased congestion in some parts of the borough

6. Geography

a. It was suggested that CCYD was a natural location for a post-16 centre when considering travel between that school, Cynffig and Maesteg – should be seen as a natural valley gateways post-16 hub

7. Staff travel

a. Timetabling and building in travel time
b. Proper reimbursement of any travel costs
c. It was felt that staff travel to Maesteg would create issues for voluntary merged sixth forms
d. There were a number of references to the poor experience of working on split site schools prior to the opening of CCYD

8. Impacts

a. Increased travel requirements would appear to have greater impact on economically disadvantaged communities
b. Should the LA not continue to support post-16 transport then, given the costs indicated above, this could significantly disadvantage many families in the borough
c. This disadvantage is seen, through some of the outcomes, as being disproportionately affecting the poorer families across the borough
d. It has been suggested that students will leave secondary school after GCSE rather than face the prospects of travel to an alternative sixth-form centre with a consequential limiting of their life chances
e. Another suggestion was that journey times of up to 30 minutes will cause stress and fatigue in students and this will result in lower grades
f. YGG Llangynwyd acknowledges that the travel time of around 30 minutes between that school and YGG Llanhari for sixth-form collaboration does put a strain on students and inter-school arrangements
g. It was also noted that there is an expectation that YGGL students will undertake this travel and respondents indicated there should be

similar expectations of students across other proposed sixth-form settings

9. Other factors
    a. The outcomes of the Learner Travel Review:
        • The general opinion is that there could potentially be a serious impact on progression and retention in education 16-18 if the post-16 discretionary transport budget was no longer supported by the LA
    b. Many of the outcomes in the post-16 consultation reference mergers of sixth forms among schools that serve the poorest communities across the borough
    c. A loss of transport subsidy for post-16 education could therefore have a disproportionately greater negative impact on students and families in these communities
    d. It has been suggested that faced with additional transport costs fewer young people will stay on in education post-16 and there could well be an increase in the % of young people "not in education, employment or training" (NEETs) in Bridgend

Pastoral care and relationships

Aspects and issues raised

1. Pastoral care in sixth forms
    a. Many respondents indicated that retaining students into a local sixth form was more advantageous because:
        • Staff know them better
        • They have developed good relationships with their staff
        • Staff know which buttons to push
        • Staff have a better understanding of their potential
        • The school provides a supportive and nurturing environment
        • There is personal commitment from the staff that is valued by pupils and parents
    b. By implication or stated overtly, respondents from schools indicated that the college could not match the pastoral care provided in sixth form settings
    c. There was also a comment on 'open door' approaches which meant students could drop in to see staff at any convenient time for extra support

2. Pastoral care in the college
    a. Respondents from the college pointed out that they have dedicated teams of full time pastoral staff which contrasts with schools where pastoral support is an adjunct to a teacher's full-time teaching commitment
    b. College staff stated that the high quality of pastoral support was endorsed by Estyn - "learner attendance is exceptional; care, support and guidance is excellent; outstanding progress in developing their social skills and confidence"

3. School to school transition

a. One respondent described the issues faced when he moved between sixth forms: • Transition to a strange environment   • Loss of friends, support and relationships   • As a result he returned to his original sixth form   b. A parent respondent was concerned on how well incoming students would be accepted in a merged sixth-form setting   c. There were a number of references to a proportion of students being unwilling to move to a new sixth form at 16 and thereby potentially dropping out of full time education which in turn would limit their education and thereby their life chances and would also impact on the local community
4. Relationships   a. With teachers – respondents wrote about the trust developed between pupils and teachers sometimes described as an unbreakable bond   b. Many respondents made reference to the importance of familiarity with staff and the points raised in 1a. above   c. From one respondent: "my daughter puts teacher first, then subject and finally buildings when it comes to option choices"   d. The importance of friends and maintaining friendship groups was highlighted in a number of student responses

School culture and the role of sixth-form students in the life of the school

Aspects and issues raised
1. In relation to community   a. A number of respondents stressed the importance of the aspirational impact that having a local sixth form has on local communities especially in the more disadvantaged areas of Bridgend   b. The role models that sixth-form students can provide to younger pupils was seen as a key element in raising aspirations among the latter group and encouraging them to stay on into the sixth form and eventually move on to higher studies   c. Aspirational role models like this might only be found in the school with a sixth form and without it some students may never experience that aspiration within their local community   d. Within the school community sixth-form students are increasingly being used as buddies, peer mentors, youth leaders and personal support for younger pupils   e. This is frequently linked to the Community Challenge in the Skills Challenge Certificate of the Welsh Baccalaureate where engagement between Year 12 students in particular and younger pupils is formalised   f. The loss of links between sixth-form students and older people in the community was mentioned
2. In relation to culture   a. The contribution that sixth-form students make to the artistic, musical and sporting life of a school (eg Sports Day and teams) was seen as a significant benefit to all pupils

b. It was also pointed out that sixth-form students played a leading part in Eisteddfods and a range of charity activities
c. There was reference to the use of sixth-form students in anti-bullying work
3. In relation to roles
a. There were a number of references to the roles of sixth-form prefects and the Head Boy and Head Girl
b. The idea was put forward that these roles provided a source of both inspiration and aspiration for younger pupils
c. The extension of this was the reference to ex-sixth-form alumni from HE and FE who return to school as further aspirational role models

Standards

Aspects and issues raised
1. School performance
a. A number of respondents had looked at comparative performance data for schools where mergers were proposed and question the wisdom of closing sixth forms which had better outcomes than those remaining open
b. This point was developed further by respondents suggesting that a drop in standards post-merger could affect students access to good jobs and university
c. Respondents also noted that individual schools had distinctive approaches to teaching and learning with which students were familiar; it was suggested that if this was disrupted and students had to adapt to new approaches this might limit their progress
d. One respondent noted that sixth-form colleges in the UK perform extremely well, have a broad curriculum offer at a lower cost/student than most sixth forms
e. The Welsh Government strategy on "Bridging the Gap" was frequently mentioned and its attempt to close the gap in standards between those pupils entitled to free school meals and those not entitled – see further comment in section on "social disadvantage"

Impact on schools which might lose a sixth form

Aspects and issues raised
1. Parental preference – respondents indicated ways in which this might have a negative effect for 11-16 schools
a. Mix of 11-16 and 11-18 school not okay
b. 11-16 schools less popular
c. 11-16 a backward step
d. 11-16 seen as a lower grade school
e. An 11-16 school may see a downward shift in recruitment into Year 7
f. Some referred to the existence of successful 11-16 schools in Swansea, Caerphilly and Cardiff

2. Staffing

a. Becoming an 11-16 school may make it more difficult for the school to recruit and retain staff
    b. An 11-16 school may lose ambitious staff
    c. Concern that quality of teaching may be weaker in 11-16 school as expert staff move on to get A level teaching elsewhere
    d. Potential redundancies

3. Impact on budget
a. Some concern was expressed that there will be a negative impact on an 11-16 school should school sixth forms merge
4. Pupils
a. It was suggested that the loss of sixth-form students also represents an opportunity for Year 11 pupils to step up, take on responsibilities and become role models to younger pupils

Community impact and social disadvantage

Aspects and issues raised
1. Community impact

a. It was suggested that sixth forms help protect the economic status of local communities
    b. Loss of sixth form could impact on local business and economy
    c. The impact of additional travel on communities that were already disadvantaged, remote and isolated runs contrary to the Welsh Government ambition for 'A more equal Wales'
    d. Progression into sixth form is more likely to continue if education is local
    e. It was suggested that if pupils had to transfer to another school this might inhibit them from doing A levels
    f. In a similar vein it was suggested that 'uprooting children' might cause them to drop out
    g. In relation to the effect of retaining sixth forms in disadvantaged communities one respondent suggested "education breeds confidence; confidence breeds hope; hope breeds peace"

2. Social disadvantage

a. There were a number of references to a potential negative impact on poorer or disadvantaged communities if they were to lose the sixth form from their catchment school
    b. The presence of sixth forms in schools serving areas of social deprivation is seen as vital to raising aspirations within the community
    c. The proposals as presented in the consultation would appear to favour or be least disruptive to schools in socially advantaged areas and therefore there is a significant inequality/discrimination/social inclusion issue especially for valley communities
    d. It was noted by a number of respondents that the national average for free school meals was 18.3% and across BCBC as whole 18.8% whereas in the valley communities it was 27% and the latter were more likely to be impacted by the proposed changes
    e. The removal of sixth forms from schools serving areas of significant social disadvantage could compromise the Welsh Government's

ambition through "Bridging the Gap" to narrow the gap in standards of achievement between pupils entitled to free school meals and those that are not entitled

Other options/possible developments

Aspects and issues raised

1. Improved collaboration
    a. Suggestion that schools might work more closely in triads
    b. It was suggested that there could be room for improvements in collaboration by developing common curricula, timetables and lesson times

2. Technology   a. There were suggestions to improve the use of technology across schools as one facet of improved collaboration

3. Develop a sixth-form centre at CCYD – a number of suggestions were put forward that could increase the overall capacity of CCYD and allow it to retain a sixth form.
    a. There was a ghost outline on original planning consent showing position of potential extension to CCYD and by increasing the school's overall capacity it could retain its sixth form as well as cope with larger intakes in the lower years
    b. Removal of the IFS Hub and use space for additional classrooms (up to seven?) and relocate the hub to the old Brynmenyn Primary School
    c. Ynysawdre Old People's home to be converted into a sixth-form centre for CCYD;

Other areas mentioned in less detail

Aspects and issues raised

1. Curriculum
    a. Many respondents noted the greater choice of subjects available through sixth-form mergers
    b. Whatever outcome emerged most respondents support the need to maintain a breadth of subject choice

2. Data
    a. A number of respondents queried the demographic projections used in the consultation paper – were they based on actual pupil transfers or the planned admission level figures across a secondary catchment (the answer is the actual historical transfer rates from each primary to its secondary catchment school)
    b. The impact of existing plans for new housing had been factored in but respondents wanted to know if future planning from 2021 had been taken into account (answer was – not yet because the new local development plan has not yet been finalised)

3. Environment   a. Increased pollution from the additional travel journeys generated through sixth-form mergers
4. Health and Wellbeing

a. Change of school at 16 may impact on mental health and wellbeing due to stress of new place/people
b. Pupils need continuity and consistency in order to build and maintain confidence
c. Stress of assimilation into a different school sixth form and possible effect on pupil confidence
d. It was suggested that the needs of disabled students would be less well met if sixth form was removed
e. The successful progression to post-16 of pupils with ASD might be hampered if the sixth-form provision was no longer available in their home school
5. Change
a. Concern was expressed over Change Management and the turbulence caused by the loss of a sixth form – implicitly a potential risk to standards

Wider connected issues raised

Aspects and issues raised
1. Local Development Plan
a. A number of respondents raised the issue of new housing developments that might potentially appear in the new LDP from 2021 and the impact this might have for secondary school catchments
b. The question that followed was whether it was wise to make decisions on demographic data projections that might soon be out of date
2. School catchments
a. There were a number of suggestions made with reference to a review of secondary catchment areas and linking this to revised housing plans when released in the new LDP from 2021
3. Welsh-medium strategy
a. Comments linked this to the potential new housing developments which may emerge through the new LDP
b. The question raised is what is the long term view of the LA and how much expansion of Welsh-medium primary education might be linked to the new developments because in turn this will have a knock-on effect to English-medium schools and the potential future size of sixth forms
c. A further aspect raised was concerned with the future location of BCBC's one Welsh-medium secondary school; the suggestion was that with a more central location more parents may choose a Welsh-medium pathway for the education of their children thus potentially enhancing future sixth-form provision
4. Capital investment
a. The question was asked as to whether the 21st Century Capital funds could be invested in existing schools to improve, upgrade and expand facilities, including for the sixth form, rather than just be spent on new schools
5. Staffing
a. A concern was raised in relation to Option 2 as to whether college staff would be qualified to the same level as school teaching staff