CAMPAIGNERS are hoping that yesterday's (Tuesday) youth court will not be the last court ever to be held in Lampeter.

Politicians, local councillors, magistrates and solicitors have all voiced their disappointment at the decision to lose no more cases at the court and possibly close it for ever in April.

At Lampeter Magistrates Court on Friday, 8 December, presiding magistrate Llloyd Lloyd took the opportunity to announce publicly that the justices were “saddened” by the decision to close Lampeter.

“This is the last scheduled adult court to be held in Lampeter,” he told the court.

“Lampeter has had a court here for many years and this is the best courthouse in Dyfed but unfortunately for various reasons it has been decided this building is no longer suitable to hold a court.

“My colleagues and I are saddened by this decision.”

Solicitors Kevin Williams and Cliff Williams both took the opportunity to support Mr Lloyd’s comments and called for the court to be kept open.

“This is a sad day for justice and a sad day for Lampeter,” said Kevin Williams.

“There has been a court here in Lampeter since the middle ages.

“The wisdom of ages has been that justice has been local and we ignore that at our peril.”

Cliff Williams added: “I have written to Rhodri Morgan and urged him to reverse the decision of the Dyfed Powys Magistrates Court Committee to take this court out of use.

Mr Williams said saving money was the only reason behind the closure and this decision was symptomatic of what was happening in rural areas generally.

“It will now be an hour by car, or two and a half hours by bus, to the nearest court from Lampeter,” he said.

“Cardigan court is the next on the hit list leading ultimately to only one court in Ceredigion at Aberystwyth.”

He added that he was disappointed to hear the justices felt the same and hoped they would fully support the campaign to keep the court in Lampeter.

Also on Friday, the campaign to save the court in Lampeter received the backing of Ceredigion Assembly Member Elin Jones.

Lampeter Town Council have launched a petition to save the court from being closed in April and Miss Jones was happy to sign it.

Miss Jones was in Lampeter on Friday afternoon and the town council contacted her in a bid to give the petition extra weight.

Miss Jones signed the petition in front of the town hall, and gave the town council’s campaign to fight for the court her full backing.

She said: “It is vital in rural areas that there are facilities such as courts in local areas.

“Overcentralising services like courts does no good in rural Wales.”

The town council’s attempts to keep the court have also been backed by Ceredigion MP Simon Thomas.

It is hoped that Mr Thomas will also sign the petition as he is involved in trying to save the court.

Lampeter Mayor Selwyn Walters is pleased that the campaign has the support of local politicians.

“We are obviously delighted that our Assembly Member and MP are working so hard on our behalf,” he said.

“In the time between now and the closure we will try and put our case in as many avenues as possible.”

“We want them to know the injustice they are doing to west Wales.”

AM Elin Jones is seen signing a petition to help keep the court open at Lampeter. Also pictured are Cllr Hazel Davies, Cllr Vincent Evans, town clerk Idris Williams, Cllr Robert Phillips, mayor Cllr Selwyn Walters, and Cllr Ivor Williams