



Ysgol Uwchradd LLANIDLOES High School

**GOFAL**

Giving Opportunities For All to Learn



## MINUTES

**Llanidloes Schools' Federation Governing Body Meeting; Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6.30 pm via Teams on Hwb**

## PRESENT

Margot Jones, Daniel Owen, Elen Chenetier, Lauren Morris, Clare Bound, Christoph Schultz, Dan Craig, Lorna Morris, Adrian Foulkes, Kelly Hawkins, Ruth Davies, Graham Taylor

## IN ATTENDANCE

Lisa Ashton (primary school deputy headteacher), Catrin Taylor (secondary school deputy headteacher), Richard Williams (secondary school assistant headteacher), Lisa Stead (primary school eco lead), Neil Statham (Llanidloes Futures Project, project manager), Chris Lord-Smith (Llanidloes Futures Project, project manager), Helen Rees (clerk)

***The meeting was quorate, therefore business proceeded.***

Lisa Stead told governors that the Llanidloes sustainable school steering group had been founded with the initial aim of the schools becoming carbon-neutral by 2030. National Lottery funding of £10K had been received to finance two project managers for a Llanidloes Futures Project to increase solar array uptake in the area and conduct a feasibility study on a transition to net zero carbon emissions.

Chris Lord-Smith and Neil Statham, the project managers, told governors that the Big Solar Co-op (BSC) had submitted an initial proposal for the installation of three linked solar arrays at the primary school site and were in the process of drawing up a proposal for six linked arrays at the high school site. BSC offered a choice of two options, one low risk with BSC installing, owning and managing the arrays and selling the schools solar energy for less than the cost of grid electricity. Any excess energy would be sold to the grid by BSC. The higher risk option would be for the schools to purchase the arrays outright from BSC and therefore have responsibility for all maintenance and insurance but benefit from selling excess energy to the grid. The project managers would ascertain from Scottish Power how much electricity they could accept which could potentially limit the size of the installation. The project managers recommended the first, low risk, option which would save the schools around 15% on their electricity costs.

Governors were told that, if they decided to proceed, the next step would be to sign an exclusivity agreement with BSC, valid for six months, and for BSC to draw up a final detailed proposal. Governors asked if the project managers had contacted David Thompson, the LA Schools Estates Manager and were told that he had not been consulted. Governors said that the governing body would not be able to sign an exclusivity agreement or authorise works on LA property.

Governors asked if installation would cause disruption and were told that the proposed arrays would take around two weeks to fit which would be planned for the school holidays to minimise health and safety risks. The earliest probable date would be in 2023.

Governors commented that the proposals set a good example to pupils in demonstrating that renewable energy was a viable option. Governors were told that it was intended that pupils should become involved in the project. The project managers were thanked for their presentation.

***Lisa Stead, Neil Statham and Chris Lord-Smith left the meeting.***

Governors agreed that the aim of becoming carbon neutral was an aspiration of the schools but that more information on the proposals for solar arrays was needed and the proposals should be scrutinised carefully. It was decided that the headteachers would contact David Thompson for advice and report back to the next meeting of the governing body.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Karen Swann, Linda Broughall and Claire Lewis.

#### **2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/BUSINESS INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest made relating to items on this agenda.

#### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

Governors were told that the local authority had replaced the LA governors Meirion Jones and Diane Jones-Poston with Graham Taylor and Claire Lewis. The chair welcomed the new governors to the governing body.

#### **4. BUSINESS OF MEETING**

It was agreed to discuss the Curriculum for Wales summary document under "Any Other Business".

#### **5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the governing body held on 27<sup>th</sup> April were confirmed and would be filed in the schools' file.

#### **6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT INCLUDED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

There were no such matters.

#### **7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

i) Draft minutes of the Curriculum and Strategic Planning meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May had been circulated to governors for their information.

The chair of the committee told governors that presentations had been received from every AoLE and the committee had a good understanding of the schools' development of their Curriculum for Wales. The re-establishment of effective monitoring had been discussed and all governors had been asked to attend the recent LA Effective Self Evaluation training. A few governors had attended the recent visit by Dr Lyn Sharratt and some

monitoring visits had been made to the primary school. The committee was working to devise a strategy and monitoring cycle in order to support the work of the schools. The individual areas of responsibility had been considered and a member of the committee was working on a visit guidance booklet for governors. It was planned that the committee should receive reports following all governor monitoring visits.

ii) Draft minutes of the Staffing and Finance meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June had been circulated to governors for their information.

The chair of the committee told governors that both schools' budgets were in a healthy position with large surpluses to carry forward.

The primary school budget was forecast to be in deficit by the end of 2024-25 but it was noted that it was impossible to accurately forecast several years ahead. The need to spend available funds on the current cohort had resulted in the decision to appoint an additional teacher for the forthcoming year.

***It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that this part of item 7 be minuted as confidential.***

## **8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT – PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The headteacher told governors that the report following the spring term Support Visit was very positive and highlighted many areas of strong progress. There had been a recent focus on marking and feedback through the medium of Welsh with the aim of providing purposeful comments to help pupils progress their learning rather than solely commenting on work already completed.

Progress on targets of the SDP had been very good or strong. Priority 1, to fully prepare for the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, had been a vast piece of work involving all stakeholders. Staff had received training in Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). A need for support with the understanding and delivery of Ethics had been identified and the LA had been asked for information to provide to parents about RSE. Following the introduction of the CfW, parents would no longer have the right to withdraw their children from RSE so the school would work to reassure parents that all RSE would be age appropriate. Governors commented that, although the federation aimed to develop common policies, there would probably always be a need for the schools to have individual RSE policies due to the age relevancy of topics. The headteacher told governors that, although guidance would be welcomed, what the government felt was age appropriate would not necessarily be what the school felt was age appropriate and that teaching would be carefully tailored.

Work on developing the federation had not progressed as well as envisaged, largely due to the constraints of the pandemic – for example, staff had been unable to visit other sites or meet face-to-face.

Progress on Priority 2, begin to implement the 2021 ALN Act, had been very good, although it was noted that implementation of the Act had been delayed for a year until September 2023.

All staff had worked hard to progress Priority 3, Covid-19 recovery. The Accelerated Learning Grants had been spent effectively and evaluated. The planned guided reading groups for Year 3 pupils had not yet been implemented but would be from September. Staff had successfully rebuilt pupils' confidence in their maths abilities throughout the school and, when asked to write their comments for their end-of-year reports, many pupils had singled out maths as their favourite subject.

Governors were told that there would be three priorities for the forthcoming year which were still being drafted but would be based on the CfW, progress towards the Cymraeg Campus gold award and implementation of the ALN Act, probably with a focus on reading. Governors commented that these were carefully considered, sensible

and realistic priorities and congratulated the headteacher and all staff on the impressive progress made in the current year.

Lesson observations had confirmed that strengths were the development of independent learners, the third teacher (using the environment to support learning), Meaningful Maths, using FPh principles in KS2 and stakeholder involvement in the CfW. Areas for development were outdoor learning in KS2, developing the CfW in the specialist centre, the establishment of English and Welsh guided reading groups and the consistency of non-negotiables in classrooms. The LA had been asked for advice on developing the CfW in the specialist centre.

During her recent visit, Dr Lyn Sharrat had supported and coached staff from the cluster schools as they visited lessons in the secondary school and conducted learning walks in the primary school. Some very positive comments had been shared with the primary school

The headteacher told governors that staff training was now more affordable as it was delivered over Teams. Staff often provided cover for each other to enable attendance and information was then disseminated.

***It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that this part of item 8 be minuted as confidential.***

Governors were told that a fire drill would be undertaken when pupils were in the canteen at lunch time.

Governors thanked the headteacher for her comprehensive report.

## **9. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT – SECONDARY SCHOOL**

End of KS3 assessment data had been returned to Welsh Government as required and would be ongoing until 2024.

The spring term support visit report, as circulated to governors, contained positive feedback and constructive support. Quality assurance processes were being re-established and there were clear priorities for the forthcoming year. Staff had worked extremely hard throughout the pandemic but skills development in literacy, numeracy and DCF would be an important focus so Priority 6 would become Priority 1. Priority 4, to improve teaching and assessment, would also be a key focus and the school had engaged with the LA secondary school improvement strategy. It was proposed that all the priorities should be kept for the forthcoming year.

The recent visit of Dr Lyn Sharratt had been a wonderful experience involving 30 professionals from across Wales and many members of staff from the cluster schools. Around 36 lessons at the secondary school had been visited and the headteacher thanked staff for their engagement. The headteacher asked governors to consider the monitoring process as modelled during this visit for their own monitoring visits. A monitoring schedule for the forthcoming year was being devised and governors were reminded that monitoring, except that required for performance management, was voluntary, although there was near universal engagement of staff.

The number of pupils on roll was forecast to rise to 710 in September. The LA had not yet responded to the business case submitted for additional off-site accommodation. The Ynys and Gofal centres had been relocated to provide extra classrooms and there was potential to hire a room at the Sports Centre for additional post-16 capacity.

The increase in middle leadership capacity had facilitated the development of the CfW and Priority 8, establishing effective federation with the primary school.

During the current year, a total of 21 pupils had received fixed-term exclusions and there had been two permanent exclusions. Governors were told that the permanent exclusions were a last resort as the school

aimed to promote inclusion, but not at all costs. The pupils concerned had had individual plans in place with support from outside agencies. The LA was responsible for providing places for these pupils at another mainstream school or PRU.

The headteacher highlighted the long and varied list of activities at item 16, stakeholder involvement, and thanked staff for their dedication in ensuring that a wide range of skills and experiences were offered to pupils.

Governors thanked the headteacher and staff for their work and asked whether the pandemic had delayed planning of the school's CfW. Governors were told that all the AoLE leads had wanted to roll out the CfW to Year 7 in September as they had all piloted and refined their AoLEs. Generally, the biggest impact had been found to be on skills development, with expectations and targets being different to those in previous years. Teaching and learning and the quality of provision had been maintained but there would be a focus on strategies to support progression.

Governors asked how pupils had coped with sitting external examinations and were told that it had been mixed. A very small group had experienced high levels of non-attendance for a wide range of reasons beyond the school's control and outside agencies had been involved in providing support. Standards in KS4 were now at pre-pandemic levels, largely due to all members of staff delivering additional lunchtime and after school sessions. Pupils had engaged well with these and displayed an impressive work ethic. Governors were reminded that all pupils on the grade boundaries last year had been given the benefit of the doubt, but that this would not be the case this year.

The headteacher invited governors to contact him with any questions, comments or requests for further information.

## **10. POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS**

Due to its sensitive nature, the headteacher had shared the secondary school Policy for Separate and Single-Sex Service Provision with the LA legal department and had received a recommendation to incorporate the commitments from the ECHR guidance into the Strategic Equality Plan. The headteacher would revise the Plan accordingly and bring to the next meeting of the governing body.

Governors agreed to adopt the Teachers' Pay Policy 2021-22.

Governors asked whether staff were confident in applying the procedure detailed in the primary school Positive Handling Policy and were told that it reflected the Team Teach method recognised by the LA and that staff had received training. The process to safely remove a pupil to a quiet safe area was only used when absolutely necessary to ensure the safety of the whole community. Individual pupils had measures in place to decrease the possibility of situations occurring necessitating intervention. All incidents were recorded and reported to the LA. Governors asked whether staff were protected if they were physically injured and were told that the process lessened the likelihood of this and that, once the pupil was in the hold, injury could not occur. Governors agreed to adopt the policy.

## **11. LINK GOVERNOR RESPONSIBILITIES 2022-23**

The primary school headteacher had reviewed the governor responsibilities and proposed a revised model, as circulated, from September. A team of governors had been allocated to each AoLE and, in order to make the workload manageable, it was suggested that each team could focus on just one year group or one of the four purposes within the AoLE. Governors agreed that the model would promote effective monitoring and would confirm the appointment of governors to each responsibility at their first meeting in the autumn term.

## **12. CAREERS WALES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH SCHOOLS 2022-23**

Governors were told that Careers Wales (CW) had declined their invitation to make a presentation at a governing body meeting. The secondary school had received a partnership agreement, as circulated, which formalised the commitments of CW to the school. This agreement was linked to the CfW and a new careers adviser had been assigned to the school. The deputy headteacher, who had responsibility for overseeing careers advice, had requested data from CW regarding pupils who had met with the previous careers adviser, but this had not been forthcoming. Individual support was automatically offered to pupils with ALN, but not necessarily to all other pupils. These other pupils would either be referred by the school or make a self-referral, although it was recognised that this could mean that disengaged or less ambitious pupils might not be offered advice. CW planned to offer more group events and an online service.

It was noted that careers education was a mandatory part of the CfW for all pupils from 3 - 16.

Governors asked whether CW committed to a certain amount of on-site time and were told that the adviser would attend for two full days per week. The school intended to monitor attendance and obtain a regular report of pupils receiving one-to-one sessions. CW stated that the adviser would be able to see a maximum of six pupils per day if no group work was scheduled.

Governors asked how referrals would be made and whether parents were aware of the arrangements and were told that it would be added to the next school newsletter and that parents could also refer their child to the adviser. Governors commented that it would be beneficial for the adviser to have knowledge of the local area in order to offer relevant and specific advice. It was noted that local companies and another careers adviser had also delivered talks on apprenticeship schemes.

## **13. TO CONFIRM LANGUAGE CATEGORIES OF SCHOOLS**

The LA had categorised the primary school as Level 1, English language, and the high school as T2, in transition from English language to bilingual. Governors confirmed these categories.

## **14. HEALTH AND SAFETY, INCLUDING COVID-19**

The headteacher of the primary school had not yet received a final solution from the LA regarding the issues with school transport. Schools Estates, Health and Safety and Transport departments were all involved and had visited both school sites. Officers from the Transport department had observed the bus lanes, both morning and afternoon, for two weeks and had noted that the back-up of buses was due to lack of space at the secondary school.

## **15. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT**

Governors were reminded to tell the clerk of any training completed.

## **16. DOCUMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND/OR CLERK**

There were no such items.

**17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT CONSIDERATION**

The primary school headteacher told governors that it was mandatory to publish a Curriculum for Wales summary document by September. A summary had been drawn up, as circulated, using a template supplied by the LA. Governors agreed to adopt the summary.

**18. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that part of items 7 and 8 be minuted as confidential.

**19. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The chair asked that governors notify the clerk of any such items.

**20. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To be confirmed for the autumn term.

*Governors commented that the recent return of visitors to school was very welcome, especially parents to the primary school sports days and the community to a high school concert. Thanks were expressed to Helen Powell for organising a successful concert and to Nic Davies for the high school prom. Positive feedback had been received following the recent tragic event involving a high school pupil and all staff were thanked for their work with pupils. The secondary school headteacher thanked governors for their work during the year and commented that the balance between support and challenge had been effective and resulted in improved provision.*