



Ysgol Uwchradd LLANIDLOES High School

GOFAL

Giving Opportunities For All to Learn



MINUTES

Llanidloes Schools' Federation Governing Body Meeting; Wednesday 26th April 2023, 6.30 pm at the primary school

PRESENT

Margot Jones, Daniel Owen, Elen Chenetier, Eloisa Isaac, Linda Broughall, Lorna Morris, Clare Bound, Christoph Schultz, Jamie Jones, Elin Schultz, Adrian Foulkes

IN ATTENDANCE

Catrin Taylor (secondary school deputy headteacher), Richard Williams (secondary school assistant headteacher), Sue Bound (business manager), Helen Rees (clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Heather Willis, Jordan Davies, Gareth Morgan, Karen Swann and Lisa Ashton.

The meeting was quorate, therefore business proceeded.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/BUSINESS INTERESTS

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

4. BUSINESS OF MEETING

To ensure quoracy for as many decisions as possible, it was agreed to consider first those matters requiring decisions before the next meeting of the governing body. It was agreed to hear a proposal regarding membership of the Staff Discipline and Dismissals committee under 'any other business'.

Jamie Jones, Catrin Taylor, Richard Williams and Elin Schultz left the meeting

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

Part of item.

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

*Jamie Jones, Catrin Taylor, Richard Williams and Elin Schultz re-joined the meeting
Eloisa Isaac and Elin Schultz left the meeting*

7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

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

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

Eloisa Isaac and Elin Schultz re-joined the meeting

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

Part of item.

The primary school headteacher told governors that a self-evaluation form, as previously circulated, had been trialled in place of the governor visit form included within the protocol and procedure for visits to school. The form had been completed collaboratively by both the governor and lead member of staff during the course of the visit. The different sections of the form were colour coded to mirror those in the school monitoring timetables, so it was clear where staff and governor input was required. Completion of the form would support the schools in providing the best possible experiences for learners and would evidence governor involvement.

The secondary school headteacher told governors that many comments had been received from staff following a request for feedback on the protocol and procedure for governor visits to school. Historically, monitoring had been used by some secondary schools to trigger the capability process, which explained staff sensitivity. The input from staff had been incorporated into the revised procedure. It was felt that it had been beneficial to scrutinise the procedure.

Governors agreed that the emphasis on governors not making judgements and reinforcing the fact that teachers could refuse permission for governors to visit lessons were helpful.

It was agreed to adopt the protocol and guidance for governor visits to school, including the self-evaluation form, for use by all governors.

The primary school headteacher proposed that the next meeting of the full governing body, as the last of the academic year, should be focussed on target setting for the following year and a review of the schools' self-evaluations and objectives. Governors agreed the proposal.

13. GOVERNING BODY SELF-EVALUATION

As only eight responses had been received to the individual governor self-evaluation questionnaire, it was agreed to re-circulate the questionnaire and invite the School Improvement Advisers to the next meeting of the governing body to lead the self-evaluation process.

8. BUDGET 2023-24 – PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governors were told that the probable outturn at the end of 2022-23 was an overspend of £100K but that this had been planned in order to make use of the £209K surplus carried forward from 2021-22. There was a forecast overspend of £102K in 2023-24 and £114K in 2024-25. As previously discussed, this was largely due to the increased cost of utilities which would not be centrally funded, leaving schools to make savings elsewhere. In the current year, the school had spent less on utilities than forecast, so the figures included were a worst-case prediction.

The school was underfunded for premises maintenance costs by approximately £78K per annum. The local authority had submitted a bid to Welsh Government for improvements to both school premises. The timescale for delivery of these improvements was thought to be four to five years, but could be sooner if prioritised.

Options had been costed to reduce future overspends. At a recent finance surgery, it had been indicated that the 2023-24 budget would be licenced due to the underspend carried forward resulting in a nett surplus at the end of the year.

Adrian Foulkes joined the meeting

The Staffing and Finance committee recommended approval of the 2023-24 budget to the governing body. Governors accepted the recommendation and approved the budget.

9. BUDGET 2023-24 – SECONDARY SCHOOL

Governors were told that the probable outturn at the end of 2022-23 was an overspend of £228K but that this had been planned to make use of the £426K surplus carried forward from 2021-22. There were forecast in-year deficits of £135K in 2023-24, £145K in 2024-25 and £159K in 2025-26. Again, these were due to the impact of the increase in the cost of utilities, without which the budget would be in a healthy position.

Finance officers had indicated that the 2023-24 budget would be licenced as there was a cumulative surplus at the end of the year.

The Staffing and Finance committee recommended approval of the 2023-24 budget to the governing body. Governors accepted the recommendation and approved the budget.

Jamie Jones left the meeting

3. MEMBERSHIP

It was agreed to ask Gareth Morgan whether there was any progress on the appointment of two new LA governors.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes and confidential minutes of the governing body meeting held on 15th March were confirmed and would be filed in the schools' file.

10. POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS

The Curriculum for Wales Summaries for both schools were unchanged from last year and agreed by governors.

Both schools had produced similar Educational Visits Policies, both containing Local Learning Area (LLA) Policies. The policies had been written with advice from EVOLVE officers (the online tool for planning and managing educational visits). The primary school headteacher told governors that the LLA policy empowered teachers to extend their classroom into the community by decreasing the workload involved as the risk assessment was quick and effective. Governors commented that the reduction in paper forms for parents to sign would be beneficial to the environment. Both policies were approved.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The issues of perimeter fencing and site access had been raised by the School Improvement Adviser during a recent Support Visit. David Thompson, LA Schools Estates Manager, had told the headteacher that work to the perimeter fencing would be carried out in the current financial year. The local authority would make a bid to Welsh Government for works including the installation of a biomass boiler and refurbishment of the gym and canteen. It was hoped that this would not affect any potential future 21st Century Schools investment.

Governors were told that the primary school would receive a visit from Terry Hampton, LA Health and Safety Adviser, on 18th May. The headteacher told governors that the meeting would cover compliance and understanding of legislation and offer support and advice. The headteacher would notify the governor with responsibility for Health and Safety.

12. SAFEGUARDING

There were no additional safeguarding matters identified.

14. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

Governors were reminded to inform the clerk of any training completed. LA governor training events were still online.

15. DOCUMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND/OR CLERK

The secondary school headteacher had received correspondence from Duncan Burwood representing the Zero Carbon Llanidloes group asking whether the group could work with the schools' Eco Committees. The group had identified solar panel, recycling and curriculum initiatives. Any governors who wanted to join meetings were asked to contact the headteacher. Governors agreed that increased community involvement would be beneficial.

Governors asked whether there had been any progress following the primary school's Eco Committee presentation on reducing the use of plastic milk bottles. Governors were told that the committee was disappointed to have received no further communication from LA officers, especially as many positive comments had been received during the event. Feedback would be requested once the new LA Principal Catering Manager was in post.

Correspondence regarding GCSE music provision, as previously shared with governors, was discussed. The headteacher told governors that two pupils had originally chosen music as a Year 10 option. Although three more pupils had subsequently chosen the subject, it was not financially viable to offer the course. Another school had been asked by Estyn to justify offering GCSE French for just three pupils; this had been on the grounds of the pupils concerned needing the subject for their chosen career path and the school having an in-year surplus. Governors considered many creative solutions, including amalgamating Year 10 and Year 11 classes, using a non-specialist teacher for Year 7 music classes and offering lessons outside the school day. It was agreed that if finance was not a consideration, then the course would be offered to accommodate the pupils concerned, to facilitate the continued development of the department and the Expressive Arts AoLE, and to encourage pupils in lower year groups to continue their study of music. The headteacher told governors that there was no concern for the music provision which would naturally expand over time. It was felt that the low number of pupils choosing the option for Year 10 was due to the pandemic when pupils had had little access to peripatetic teaching or live music. Pupils had found it challenging to engage with music lessons from home.

The primary headteacher told governors that 56 Year 6 pupils were currently working on a production of Joseph and that the standard of musical competence and confidence was impressively high.

It was agreed that the headteacher would continue to seek a financially responsible way of developing the musical skills of pupils moving into Year 10.

17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that part of item 6 and items 7 and 16 be minuted as confidential.

18. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

It was suggested that Learning Managers and AoLE Leaders could present review and progress reports to future meetings.

19. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Full governing body

Wednesday 5th July

Curriculum and strategic planning committee

Wednesday 10th May

Staffing and finance committee

Wednesday 21st June