



Ysgol Uwchradd LLANIDLOES High School

**GOFAL**

Giving Opportunities For All to Learn



## MINUTES

**Llanidloes Schools' Federation Governing Body Meeting; Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 6.30 pm via Teams on Hwb**

## PRESENT

Margot Jones, Daniel Owen, Elen Chennetier, Lauren Morris, Clare Bound, Christoph Schultz, Linda Broughall, Jamie Jones, Dan Craig, Alun Moses, Harvey George, Lorna Morris, Adrian Foulkes, Kelly Hawkins, Karen Swann, Jess Taylor

## IN ATTENDANCE

Lisa Ashton (primary school deputy headteacher), Catrin Taylor (secondary school deputy headteacher), Jane Jerman (secondary school assistant headteacher), Sue Bound (federation business manager), Helen Rees (clerk)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Phyl Davies, Diane Jones-Poston and Ruth Davies.

*The meeting was quorate, therefore business proceeded.*

The chair expressed condolences to Elen Chennetier and her family for their recent loss and told governors that they had been grateful for the support of the governing body.

### 2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/BUSINESS INTERESTS

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

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

There were no vacancies on the governing body.

### 4. BUSINESS OF MEETING

It was agreed to discuss the Policy for Separate and Single-Sex Service Provision, secondary school staffing matters and a visit by Dr Lyn Sharratt under "Any Other Business".

### 5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the governing body held on 9<sup>th</sup> February were confirmed and would be filed in the schools' file.

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

The secondary school had submitted a business case for use of the Youth Centre to the Local Authority and were awaiting their response.

## 7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Draft minutes of the Staffing and Finance committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March had been circulated to governors for their information.

## 8. AoLE PRESENTATION; EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Dan Craig presented a review of preparations for the new Expressive Arts curriculum at the secondary school. Governors were told that the Expressive Arts (EA) Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) included the five disciplines of Art, Digital Media and Film, Dance, Drama and Music.



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The six AoLEs, Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Languages, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics and Numeracy, Humanities and Science and Technology, would all be given equal weight in the Curriculum for Wales and there was felt to be much scope for cross-curricular working. For example, pupils in Year 7 studying Celts and pre-Celts could explore the arts and crafts of those times and search for local artifacts with many opportunities for using external speakers and sources in the local community. Transition projects would be discussed with Year 6 staff.

It had been acknowledged that more privileged families could potentially benefit disproportionately from the new schemes of work, so care would be taken to ensure equality for all pupils and to design projects that would not advantage any group. Following the introduction of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence there had been a decline in pupil reading ages so, to try to avoid this, a literacy focus would be incorporated into each area of the EA curriculum.

A single assessment spreadsheet had been developed to be used from Year 7 to 9 based on the Progression Steps and What Matters statements. The assessment of every pupil on each progression step would be recorded in red, amber or green in order to facilitate tracking and clearly identify areas requiring additional work.

It was felt that EA and creativity would be increasingly important in the future as advances in technology and robotics meant that human input was required less, for example, developments in Artificial Intelligence meant that some robots were now self-coding.

There had been significant investment in the school infrastructure to support the development of the EA curriculum, for example in the development of the hall into a cross-phase performance venue.

Governors thanked Mr Craig for his presentation and evident enthusiasm for the AoLE.

### ***Adrian Foulkes joined the meeting***

Elen Chennetier presented a review of the development of the Expressive Arts curriculum at the primary school.



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Each member of staff - teachers, non-teaching staff and SLT - had been assigned to an AoLE team, together with representative pupils and governors. All staff had been released to develop their AoLE curriculum with other stakeholders joining the meetings. The vision for EA had been developed and the importance of local and national culture and heritage recognised. Many cross-curricular links to other AoLEs had been identified. The three statements of what matters within EA had been carefully evaluated: to be creative and curious, to respond, reflect and refine and to be innovative and bold. It was felt that pupils were currently very good at responding, being bold, curious and confident, but needed to develop the skills of reflecting and refining to order to become genuinely life-long learners.

It was noted that all five disciplines within the EA were given equal weight, so Art and Music would no longer be dominant. It had been proposed to initially teach EA in three-week blocks covering the five disciplines. Each class had chosen a traditional Welsh legend as their class name so the first block would be based on that legend.

Plans had been made to develop both indoor and outdoor performance areas with a dedicated resource centre to be established. Additional digital music and film equipment had been ordered. Connections with the local community and collaborations with the high school would be developed.

Governors commented that it was exciting to learn of the developments that would enhance the life skills of pupils.

### ***Jess Taylor joined the meeting***

## **9. BUDGET 2022-23; PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The headteacher told governors that the Local Authority had agreed additional funding for the specialist centre, to include one full-time Midday Supervisor, 1.5 hours of extra management time per week and cover for the specialist centre teacher's PPA time. The additional management time would be allocated to the ALNCo to help cover the additional work due to having a specialist centre attached to the school. The headteacher expressed thanks to the LA for listening and understanding the issues.

The budget for 2022-23 showed a greater than expected surplus of £145K carried forward due to grants being allocated late in the 2021-22 year. However, each of the three years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 showed an in-year overspend so this buffer would be used by 2023-24. It was noted that the predicted rises in utility bills of 50% for gas and 18% for electricity had further impacted the overspend. Governors were also told that it was difficult to accurately predict future pupil numbers but that the estimate was always conservative.

Governors were reminded that, in order to be licenced by the LA, school budgets must be balanced for the forthcoming three years. To achieve this, staffing reductions for 2023-24 and 2024-25 had been costed as shown on the budget sheet.

Governors commented that there had been a substantial overspend of the budget allocation for running costs of the premises. This had been repeatedly raised with the LA over a number of years as the school was not being adequately funded due to the poor condition of the buildings, which, although assessed by the LA as being in category C, were probably category D. Governors agreed that this issue should continue to be raised with the LA as funding intended for pupil provision should not have to be used for premises running costs and maintenance. It was decided that the chair of the Staffing and Finance committee would work on this with the business manager.

Governors agreed to accept the budget for 2022-23. The business manager was thanked for her work on the budget.

## **10. BUDGET 2022-23; SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Governors were told that the underspend of £316K as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 was due to the late notification of additional grant funding which could not then be spent effectively and efficiently before the end of the 2021-22 year. This amount would be carried forward into the 2022-23 budget. The 2022-23 budget had been carefully scrutinised and showed a cumulative surplus of £312K to be carried forward to 2023-24, with £230K carried forward to 2024-25 and £180K carried forward to 2025-26. The costs of building maintenance and utilities continued to be an issue so the headteacher proposed compiling a strategic plan to present to the LA.

It was noted that the Staffing and Finance committee had agreed staffing appointment proposals subject to the budget remaining in surplus at the end of three years.

Governors agreed to accept the budget for 2022-23 and the business manager was thanked for her work.

The chair informed governors that there had been a chair's action to sign an Authorised Signatory Form for the secondary school headteacher to increase the maximum single item purchase limit from £40K to £50K, due to receiving an invoice from WJEC for £42K. Governors agreed the action.

## **11. POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS**

Governors asked whether the Sex Education Policies would be reviewed in the light of the RSE document published in January and were told that new policies would be drafted for September 2022.

Governors agreed to adopt the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, Freedom of Information Policy, Redeployment for Teachers Policy, Redundancy Policies for teaching and non-teaching staff, Reemployment of Former Employee Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Sex and Relationships Policy (Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes), Sex Education Policy (Ysgol Uwchradd Llanidloes) and Supporting Working Parents Policy.

Governors considered the Governors' Allowances Policy which would enable governors to claim expenses incurred due to their role if they wished. It was felt that the policy would promote inclusivity and that governors should be able to claim expenses anonymously and without embarrassment if they wished. Governors agreed to adopt the policy.

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

The primary school headteacher told governors that the school bus lane was still being used to transfer pupils of another school from one bus to another. The pupils were not supervised and some were as young as four. Three near misses had been reported to the headteacher of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon, including one when a member of Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes staff had been close enough to pull a child out of the way of a reversing minibus. The headteacher had met with the headteacher and chair of the governing body of Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon who were in agreement that the situation could not continue. The Local Authority Health and Safety and School Transport departments had assured the schools that an alternative place for the transfer would be found. However, a solution had not yet been found. Governors asked whether Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon parents were aware of the situation and whether supervision on the bus could be a possible solution. Pupils were no longer transferred in the Gro car park as the bus company felt that this was more dangerous. It was agreed that the chair of governors would draft a letter to the Local Authority asking for urgent action to be taken. There

was also an issue of some high school pupils joining their buses at the primary school, meaning that buses were waiting for longer as the high school afternoon session finished later than the primary school.

COVID-19 control measures at the primary school had been somewhat relaxed with strict class bubbles and the one-way system for Foundation Phase pupils' drop off and pick up no longer in place. The headteacher commented that parents had been exceptional helpful and compliant with all the measures necessary during the pandemic. Governors were told that face coverings were now optional and not mandatory at the secondary school.

### **13. PREMISES CAPACITY; SECONDARY SCHOOL**

The headteacher thanked the link governor and associate pupil governors for their participation in the recent post-16 review. Governors commented that the review highlighted many positive aspects to be celebrated as well as identifying some areas for further analysis and action. It was agreed that it would be important to fully consider the views of students, especially in light of their experiences during the pandemic.

Information and support for next steps after sixth form and the identification of students other than those making Oxbridge applications who required additional early support, such as those who would be required to take the UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test) were felt to be an area for development. It was felt that there should be a focus on signposting routes other than university to students, including apprenticeships. Consideration would be given to building these points in to the pastoral care already received by students.

Governors noted that responses to the final question asking students for any further comments had not been included and felt that they would like to see the qualitative data. The headteacher told governors that nearly all the responses were in relation to accommodation issues and agreed to circulate them in full.

As premises capacity continued to be an issue, it was agreed that, if an expression of interest was received from the LA regarding the business proposal for the use of the youth centre, a separate meeting would be held to consider all input in depth and detail.

Governors were told that concerns about the Careers Wales service had been discussed at a recent meeting of secondary headteachers. A Careers Wales adviser had told a governor that they only worked with pupils in Years 7-9; however, teachers confirmed that they mainly met with children in Years 10-13. Although it was recognised that there wasn't capacity for an individual meeting with every pupil in every year group, some pupils were slipping through the net and teachers were having to provide informal careers advice. Some pupils had not met with a Careers Wales adviser at all before leaving school and it was also noted that the adviser had limited information and was not always able to provide relevant advice. Cuts to funding had resulted in a reduction of hours of the adviser at school from five days per week to two days per week. The headteacher had contacted Careers Wales to discuss improving the provision for pupils and request an additional adviser to come into school to address the issues. Governors were told that Unifrog had been available to pupils since before Easter. Governors were disappointed to learn that Careers Wales were not meeting the expectations of pupils or parents and commented that the service had previously been excellent. Identifying pupils who had not received relevant careers advice would be prioritised and Careers Wales would be invited to attend a future meeting of the governing body. Governors also agreed to receive a presentation on Unifrog. The headteacher would clarify details of the Careers Wales service to parents.

Governors commented that the review was comprehensive and that it would be important to use the analysis to inform future decisions and actions.

#### **14. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT**

No training had been undertaken since the last meeting of the governing body.

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

There were no such items.

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

The secondary school headteacher had drafted a Policy for Separate and Single-Sex Service Provision. It was agreed to defer discussion of this to the next meeting of the governing body.

The high school had received a £1K grant which the headteacher proposed be offered as a TLR3 for a suitable member of staff to develop cross-curricular Religion and Values Education (RVE) as a one-year fixed term project. Governors agreed the proposal.

The secondary school vacancies for specialist teachers of Maths and Welsh would be re-advertised. The Kickstart fixed term contract had been extended until May 2022. The Kickstart IT graduate was being trained to deliver IT lessons following another failed attempt to attract applicants for the specialist teaching vacancy.

The secondary school had received advice from HR that the current fixed term TLR appointments should be advertised internally before being made permanent. This had now been done.

The educational consultant Dr Lyn Sharratt would be visiting the federation on 15<sup>th</sup> June, accompanied by colleagues from across Wales and the local authority. Dr Sharratt was working on school improvement parameters through Welsh Government. All governors were invited to join the visit which would take the form of learning walks in both schools and would be an opportunity for the schools to showcase their work and get valuable feedback.

#### **17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

There were no such items.

#### **18. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

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

#### **19. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

***Full governing body***

*06.07.22*

***Curriculum and strategic planning committee***

*18.05.22*

***Staffing and finance committee***

*22.06.22*

Governors asked if face-to-face meetings were allowed and were told that the current local authority guidance was that this should only be for essential meetings. This would be reconsidered in September.

*The chair thanked the associate pupil governors for their contributions and wished them well for their future.*