

**Minutes of the Meeting of Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held Hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference on Thursday, 30 November 2023**

**PRESENT;** , Councillors Marc Davies, Gareth Lloyd and Ann Bowen Morgan, Ann Bowen Morgan

**Also in attendance:** Councillors Wyn Thomas (Cabinet Member) and Bryan Davies (Leader of the Council)

**Officers in attendance:** Mrs Elen James, Corporate Lead Officer Schools and Chief Education Officer, Mr Clive Williams , Corporate Lead Officer: Schools and Deputy Chief Education Officer, Mr Gwion Dafydd, Corporate Manager, Accountability and Progress, School Services, Mr Gareth Lanagan, School Support Advisor, Miss Lowri Evans, Corporate Manager, Early Help Porth Cynnal , Mrs Lisa Evans, Scrutiny and Standards Officer and Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic and Standards Officer

(10:00am- 11:10am)

**1 Apologies**

Councillor Euros Davies and Rhodri Davies apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

Councillor Elizabeth Evans apologised for her inability to attend the meeting as she was on other Council duties.

**2 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)**

**Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011**

None.

**3 GCSE and A Level Results 2023 (Update)**

The Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Councillor Wyn Thomas presented the report. It was reported that the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an overview of the results for Ceredigion at the 28 September 2023 meeting. Official data was now available from the Welsh Government and that what was presented in the report. National data was now also available as the Committee were keen to see the comparison.

Final data would be available in December so it was noted that it was the provisional data that was presented.

The set of results data that was published by the Welsh Government had reduced over the years. By now they only publish points scores.

The official GCSE data looks at the “first grade” rather than the “best grade”. For example, if a pupil gets a “C” in November and then resits and gets an “A” in the summer, it will be the “C” that was included. Locally, we provide schools with their “best grade” points scores to better show what qualifications pupils gain at the end of Year 11.

	“first grade”		“best grade”
	Ceredigion 2023	Wales 2023	Ceredigion 2023
Capped Points Score (Capped 9)	357	357	358
Language / Literature Points	40	40	41
Mathematics / Numeracy Points	38	37	38
Science Points	38	37	38
Challenge Certificate Points (BAC)	35	32	35

As for A Level data, the national data was available for A\*-B and A\*-C and that has been added to the table below for your information.

	Ceredigion 2023	Wales 2023
Grades A* - A	37.5%	34.2%
Grades A* - B	61.4%	59.1%
Grades A* - C	82.5%	80.5%
Grades A* - E	99.1%	99.5%

Following questions from the floor on the methodology of the concept of the collection of this data by the Welsh Government, it was AGREED to note the information presented.

#### 4 **Qualifications 14 -16**

The Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Councillor Wyn Thomas presented the report on Qualifications for 14-16 year olds. He stated that Qualifications Wales were looking at qualifications for pupils between 14 and 16 years old. ‘Qualified for the Future’ aims to ensure that learners in Wales take qualifications that inspire and prepare them for life, learning and work. To achieve this, Qualifications Wales were reimagining qualifications to support the new Curriculum for Wales. The aim of Qualified for the Future is to:

- command public confidence in Wales, the UK and globally
- secure an equitable, coherent and bilingual choice for schools and learners
- make the most of digital technology
- ensure that qualifications can be introduced in a managed and sustainable way

The organisation has applied a model of 'co-creation' and had held two consultations.

Currently, two consultations were held over the last year. This paper would consider the decisions of the Made-for-Wales GCSEs consultation. Between October 2022 and March a wide-ranging consultation was held on the proposals for Made-for-Wales GCSEs. Proposals for the 26 new qualifications were consulted upon, grouped around the six Areas of Learning and Experience. The School Support Adviser provided further detailed information upon this proposal by a power point presentation.

- What changes and When?
- Principles for Made-for-Wales
- Consultation
- Welsh, English and Languages
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Sciences and Technology
- Expressive Arts
- Humanities
- Health and Wellbeing
- The full range of 14-16 qualifications

In addition to the above, a consultation was held on the Full Wider Qualifications Offer, to include vocational and pre-vocational.. Whilst the above considers the more traditional subjects, the full offer considers all types of qualifications. These qualifications would sit alongside GCSEs. This would provide qualifications that support the breadth of Curriculum for Wales and prepare learners for work and life. The findings of this consultation would be published in January 2024.

It was AGREED to note the current position.

**5 Ceredigion Youth Council Meeting Minutes (20.10.23)**

It was AGREED to note the Ceredigion Youth Council Meeting Minutes.

**6 Update regarding Childcare provision in Lampeter**

The Year 1 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Progress Report presented to Scrutiny in July 2023 highlighted the insufficiency of childcare availability in Lampeter. There was a concern with regard to supporting the Welsh Government's (WG) commitment to rolling out the Flying Start childcare entitlement of 12.5 hours a week of funded childcare for 2 – 3 year olds in the town.

Following the agreement to extend funded childcare through the Flying Start programme to 2 year olds in Wales, Ceredigion undertook a large scoping exercise to identify the areas for expansion. Following submission of a business case to WG the following LSOAs were agreed as the expansion areas, which commenced in April 2023:

- Lampeter 1 & 2
- Tregaron
- New Quay
- Lledrod
- Llangeitho
- Borth
- Ceulanmaemawr

Lampeter was the only town without a Cylch Meithrin or sessional childcare provision for 2-4 year olds. Currently, many 3 year olds were starting school (mornings only) having not attended any form of childcare.

Although Lampeter LSOA 1 & 2 were approved for the expansion, the number of childcare places available did not meet the demand, therefore many children weren't able to access eligible childcare. Lampeter had 1 private day nursery registered for 36 children and 3 childminders offering 22 places. All providers were currently full and were unable to accept any additional children who were eligible for the 12.5 hours a week of funded Flying Start childcare.

*The primary objectives for expanding Flying Start were:*

- *to ensure children get the best possible start in life;*
- *to tackle poverty and deprivation; and*
- *to increase the provision of childcare services and of Welsh medium childcare places and settings.*

19 children were currently eligible for Flying Start childcare in the Lampeter 1 & 2 area. However, the Local Authority could only fund places for 10 children due to insufficient spaces being available. Initial conversations and investigations into expansion were held with the private Day Nursery. Following the decision by the Day Nursery not to expand its service due to premises issues, Flying Start officers had been working with Mudiad Meithrin to investigate the potential to establish a new Cylch Meithrin in Lampeter.

Finding a suitable venue to accommodate a Cylch Meithrin/Sessional childcare had been difficult due to requirements to adhere to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) /National Minimum standards (NMS) regulations. However, progress was now being made. Discussions are taking place to establish a Cylch in either the Scouts Hut in Lampeter or possibly within Ysgol Bro Pedr. The Cylch would aim to open in January as an unregistered setting to begin with, which means that children can only access the provision for less than two hours, with the intention to become registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) by April 2024.

It was reported that a meeting was due to be held on the 07 December with between Officers and Governors of Ysgol Bro Pedr to discuss and hopefully finalise the location of the Cylch Meithrin at the school.

It was AGREED to note the report for information and that further updates would be presented to the Committee as part as part of the Year 2 CSA Progress Report.

**7 Update from the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Workstream**

It was AGREED to note the report upon the workstream held at Cwrtnewydd. The Members that attended thanked Officers for viewing the facilities at Cwrtnewydd and the opportunity to observe the teaching and speak to the pupils. It had been a valued visit.

**8 To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes**

It was AGREED to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the previous meeting of the committee.

**Matters Arising**

None.

**9 To consider the draft Forward Work Programme**

It was AGREED to note the draft Forward Work Programme as presented subject to another meeting being arranged if needed prior to the May pre election period.

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 February 2024**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_