**NATIONAL DIGITAL LEARNING COUNCIL (NDLC) MINUTES**

**10:00 - 15:00; Tuesday 18 March 2014**

**St David’s Catholic College (Cardiff)**

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| **In attendance:**  Janet Hayward (JH) [Chair]  Mark Jones (MJ)  Hannah Mathias (HM)  Sue Burnett (SB)  Huw Evans (HE)  Tom Crick (TC)  Lindsay Harvey (LH) [Welsh Government]  Jenny Gambling (JG) [Welsh Government]  Aled Williams (AW) [Barry Island Primary School] - presentation | **Apologies:**  Geraint James (GJ)  Maldwyn Pryse (MP)  Catherine Grout (CG)  David Morgan (DM)  Chris Britten (CB)  Simon Pridham (SP)  Gareth Morgan (GM)  Pete Richardson (PR)  Robert Newsome (RN)  Brett Pugh (BP) |

1. **Welcome and introductions**
   1. JH welcomed everyone to St David’s Catholic College and thanked HM for agreeing to host the meeting.
   2. BP sent his apologies for not being in attendance.
   3. JH noted the low attendance at the meeting. LH confirmed that as five members of the Council (plus the Chair) were in attendance, the meeting was quorate.
2. **Preliminary update**

2.1 LH presented the Council with an interim report on the *Learner Attitudes to Hwb* research currently being undertaken by PWU. LH advised that a fuller interim report would be presented to the Council at the April meeting.

2.2 LH confirmed that he was pleased with the amount of people involved in the survey from primary and secondary schools but mentioned that there weren’t many involved from special schools.

2.3 LH feels that Welsh Government (WG) is able to provide a reasonable assumption on primary and secondary schools as there is a sufficient number of survey results to form an opinion for Wales.

2.4 LH informed the Council that he was happy to provide feedback to PWU based on advice from Council members.

2.5 HM stated that it was interesting to see how many people haven’t used platforms before.

2.6 TC noted that more data (i.e. a bigger sample) would be beneficial.

2.7 MJ added that statistics reflecting English/Welsh-medium school use of VLEs would be helpful. The Council also noted that it would be useful to have statistics on how many schools are using Moodle or Hwb+.

2.8 LH stated that most secondary schools are using Moodle. However, LH noted that the use schools make of Moodle varies widely with many schools using it for management purposes and that the use of learning platforms to develop systemic learning across all areas of school life is not universally available.

2.9 JH commented that Dave Stacey in Olchfa School uses Google Apps. JH stressed that the number of schools taking different routes is increasing and hopes that Hwb+ will bring about consistency between schools. JH also noted that some schools are still seeing Hwb as a “technology thing” not as a “learning thing”.

2.10 LH asked MJ to share his collaborative Wiki approach with the Council.

2.11 MJ highlighted its usefulness as everyone can add comments and discuss reports. MJ stated that it is user friendly and that documents are kept up to date seamlessly unlike Moodle where you have to constantly upload new versions of documents. MJ stated that some schools in Bridgend only use Moodle and that he would like to see everyone using a similar platform.

2.12 LH advised that the use of Hwb+ is not mandatory in schools.

2.13 LH noted that the Hwb Team is currently working on single sign on (SSO) and Office365 (O365) allows common system transfer to be validated. LH noted that it is hoped that this will facilitate the use of Hwb+ in FEIs.

2.14 TC stated that it is pivotal that Estyn become more involved in the digital learning agenda and emphasised the importance of monitoring the effective use of digital technology for learning in school visits.

2.15 LH advised the Council that the Hwb Team has provided an update to the DfES Schools Practitioner Panel.

2.16 JH expressed concern that secondary heads in the DfES Schools Practitioner Panel haven’t engaged with Hwb/Hwb+ and that school leaders have to see Hwb as a learning opportunity. JH is concerned about how to get the message across.

2.17 LH advised that Hwb+ has many strengths although it is important to note that it offers a different user experience than that offered by Moodle.

2.18 HM added that it is important that the range of assessment tools within Hwb+ is important to teachers.

2.19 JH suggested using the National Digital Learning Event (NDLE) in July 2014 as vehicle to get the message across (i.e. that of embedding technology seamlessly within learning).

2.20 JH stated that there will need to be the right people at the NDLE to reach out and share the message.

2.21 HM added that there is an advantage to rolling out Hwb/Hwb+ at this time as technology is more mainstream and most people are aware of all different kinds of technology (e.g. Twitter and Facebook). HM noted that it should be easier now to change people’s attitude to Hwb.

1. **Hwb+ presentation - Aled Rhys Williams, Barry Island Primary School**

3.1 AW provided a presentation to the Council in respect of his school’s implementation of Hwb+.

3.2 AW showed different web pages from the school Hwb+ site such as:

3.2.1 the message page;

3.2.2 a link to Wiki;

3.2.3 surveys;

3.2.4 calendar; and

3.2.5 a direct link to Hwb via the school’s main website.

3.3 AW stated that main pages were designed by the pupils.

3.4 AW added that the school initially worked with the Hwb Digital Leaders (DLs) to develop the site and have benefited significantly from their ongoing support.

3.5 HE asked if the school currently shares digital resources with other schools.

3.6 AW stated that the next stage of his school’s implementation of Hwb+ is to work with colleagues from other schools in order to share resources on particular subjects.

3.7 LH asked what challenges AW faced in implementing the Hwb+ platform in his school.

3.8 AW noted that creating time to create information for resources and getting parents involved can be difficult. AW added that the student digital leaders in his school are great at breaking barriers and teachers’ concerns. AW stated that the biggest challenge is not overwhelming people and getting people ready and confident.

3.9 JH added that it is has to be relevant and fit in with colleagues’ other responsibilities. JH suggested that every school needs to show leadership of Hwb+ and share its possibilities.

3.10 TC highlighted that AW’s school seems to be driven by solid pedagogy which is encouraging.

3.11 HM shared that it was encouraging to see AW’s school using a wide range of tools outside of Hwb+. HM added that embedding tools in Hwb+ is easy and enriches the learning experience.

3.12 MJ asked if the use of Hwb+ emphasises the “digital divide” (i.e. it disadvantages pupils who come from homes where suitable devices/connectivity is not available).

3.13 AW stated that some pupils don’t have access at home to the platform but that the school encourages pupils to go home and create ideas. AW added that Monday lunchtimes and after-school time is reserved specifically for pupils to access Hwb+ so there is no discrimination.

3.14 MJ asked if the school provides devices to all pupils.

3.15 AW stated that the school offers a carousel system with 8 devices that are used within small groups of pupils.

3.16 MJ asked if that creates animosity between pupils who can’t afford devices.

3.17 AW noted that he makes himself available over weekends to users who can e-mail work to upload on to Hwb+ ready for school on Monday.

3.18 LH asked if the school have any inappropriate postings in respect of pupils using Hwb+ collaborative tools such as the Wiki and blog tools.

3.19 AW stated that pupils are self regulating and take Hwb+ seriously. The pupils remind each other that it is for learning only.

3.20 SB thanked AW for sharing his school’s experience with Hwb+ and added that the range of activities was impressive.

1. **Hwb/Digital Learning in Digital Wales Programme update – oral report from Lindsay Harvey to include:**

4.1 Early findings from ‘Evaluation of Learner Attitudes’ survey; and 4.2 an update on the work of the Hwb Digital Content Team.

**Content**

4.2 LH provided the Council with hard copy of an update from the Hwb Content Team.

4.3 LH informed the Council that Learning Possibilities (LP) and CDSM will provide a presentation at April’s meeting.

***ACTION***

*4.4 MJ asked LH for more screenshots of the secondary platform.*

**LiDW Grant**

4.5 LH confirmed that Anglesey will be a part of the LiDW Grant.

4.6 LH informed the Council that 100Mbps fibre will be installed in around 250 (NOR >300) primary schools around Wales as opposed to the original threshold 10Mbps threshold connectivity speed for all primary schools.

**Hwb+**

4.7 MJ asked LH for the actual bounce rates of people who leave Hwb to go somewhere other than Hwb+ after visiting Hwb.

4.8 HM asked LH who tends to attend training for Hwb+ from schools (e.g. leaders, teachers, technicians, etc.).

4.9 LH stated that it is entirely up to the school whether they send the head teacher, administrator or teachers and that a mixture has attended.

4.10 MJ asked LH who decides what schools go forward for training.

4.11 LH stated that rollout is arranged through the regional education consortia and, currently, WG DLs provide the training.

***ACTION***

*4.12 MJ shared concerns over Bridgend schools not being notified of training for secondary schools. CO to update the Council.*

4.13 MJ asked LH if there is any link between regional education consortia and the proposed awareness sessions on e-Safety.

4.14 LH informed MJ that it is running independently and consortia have been asked to observe the e-Safety advice that is currently available on the e-Safety Zone on Hwb.

4.15 LH informed the Council that WG is currently working with LP on course management functions within Hwb+.

**HwbMeets**

4.16 LH and JG attended the last HwbMeet in Cardiff on 6 March 2014. Both JG and LH shared their experience with the Council and emphasised its success.

4.17 LH noted that the keynote speaker organised for the event (Mark Anderson) withdrew and Gareth Dacey (Headteacher, Cwmclydach Primary School) stepped in.

4.18 TC asked whether it would be possible to provide a focus on computer science at a future HwbMeet event.

***ACTION***

*4.19 LH to look into specific focus on coding.*

**Tools**

4.20 MJ asked if content development would be simultaneous in both English and Welsh.

4.21 LH stated that the new content would be translated and released at the same time.

**NDLE**

4.22 LH informed the Council that the headteachers from “Educating Essex” and “Educating Yorkshire” had not, to date, committed to the event and, as such, advised that DfES would no longer be pursuing their attendance. This was agreed by the Council.

4.23 LH advised the Council that ongoing efforts were being made to secure senior Estyn representation at NDLE2014 and that he would update the Council at the next meeting.

4.24 LH confirmed that HM and PR will be delivering an overview of best practice Post-16 at the NDLE.

4.25 MJ emphasised the importance of attracting an appropriate audience at this year’s event.

4.26 SB highlighted the need to attract a new audience to this year’s event. SB noted that it was important to share the learning potential offered by Hwb.

4.27 LH asked the Council whether they thought it would be beneficial to concentrate on school/college leaders.

4.28 The Council considered a number of options regarding the most appropriate audience at the event.

4.29 LH noted that if WG is targeting college and school senior leaders that WG needs to be careful not preclude teachers and local authority/regional education consortia colleagues.

4.30 The Council suggested that senior leaders should be targeted with a limit of 10 people from regional education consortia and local authorities attending.

4.31 LH confirmed that the Minister will be in attendance and giving a speech.

***ACTION***

*4.32 HM to send JG list of FEI leaders.*

**Hwb stakeholder comms**

4.33 MJ asked LH if there is a Welsh version. LH confirmed there is a Welsh version and is available on Hwb.

4.34 MJ asked for more information regarding funding delegated to regional education consortia to support Hwb+ training.

4.35 LH advised that £750k would be distributed across the four regional education consortia between January 2014 and March 2016.

4.36 JH asked whether staff within consortia had been made aware of the Hwb stakeholder communication plan.

4.37 LH confirmed that this has been widely publicised; through Hwb and directly with regional education consortia ICT leads.

4.38 LH stated that there are three elements that local authorities (LAs) must have in place to receive the funding:

4.38.1 all schools are to receive Hwb+ training;

4.38.2 each school must have a nominated Digital Champion; and

4.38.3 regional education consortia must develop Hwb networks of professional practice.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting – 18 February 2014**

5.1 MJ noted that ‘Gyfun’ on page 1 is spelt incorrectly.

5.2 JH confirmed all actions have been cleared.

5.3 LH noted that there are ongoing difficulties with copyright/permissions in respect of BBC RES.

***ACTIONS***

*5.4 LH to feedback to JH on ERA+ licencing on understanding of schools in Wales.*

*5.5 CO to provide a general update on current engagement with BBC.*

1. **Discussion of Terms of Reference of the Council – Janet Hayward.**

6.1 JH stressed the importance of having an ESTYN representative at NDLC.

6.2 HM asked LH what will be happening to the NDLC panel post September 2014.

6.3 LH advised that there will be three different options going forward to the Minister and that the Council will have sight of the options in advance.

6.4 HM stated that if there will be a whole new council put in place that a hand over should be conducted.

6.5 JH suggested it would be beneficial to have new people attend.

6.6 LH stressed the importance of succession planning.

6.7 SB suggested there be rules in place for if one of the Council members is absent three consecutive times in a row that they be removed from the panel.

6.8 LH stated that some Council members’ attendance is less than 50% over all and asked the Council to consider whether alternative members should be sought going forward.

6.9 MJ suggested a possible letter to be sent out to Council members asking to withdraw from the Council if they are unable to commit the time. All agreed.

6.10 MJ asked where Council papers were published. LH stated that papers are freely available via the secretariat but are not currently published on the Hwb site.

6.11 JH noted the importance of ensuring ITT institutions have access to Hwb+.

6.12 LH confirmed that a similar issue exists with ITT as with supply teachers in that it is currently difficult to attach those not permanently affiliated to a school’s MIS to a Hwb+ account.

6.13 LH also stated that there are limitations with getting more people on the system as it will expand the current Hwb project scope.

6.14 TC stated that he met with the Deputy Minister to discuss digital skills.

6.15 LH stated that ESTYN completed two remits on primary and secondary ICT. The primary report is available and the secondary report is due for publication soon.

6.16 JH asked for an update on performance indicators associated with the Learning in Digital Wales Programme. LH confirmed that he would provide the Council with a copy of the scope of the evaluation of the wider LiDW Programme when publically available.

6.17 LH stated that he is still waiting for confirmation that the computing CPD contract to go ahead. LH advised that he would update the Council in due course.

6.18 SB asked LH about the life span of the LiDW programme. LH confirmed that aspects of the current LiDW Programme will (potentially) be in place until August 2018, with some requirements stretching to March 2020.

1. **Any other business**

7.1JH secured a meeting with the Minister as chair of the NDLC and asked the Council membersfor their advice on issues she should bring to the Minister’s attention. The following items were discussed:

7.1.1 future of the NDLC;

7.1.2 Minister’s commitment to Hwb and Hwb+;

7.1.3 “Block and lock” issues re. content filtering at LA level;

7.1.4 BYOD; and

7.1.5 computer science and its role in the curriculum.

7.2 All issues were agreed by the Council.

***ACTION***

7.3 The council discussed the need to agree travel to North Wales in July and provide colleagues with details of hotel to book/ flights etc. CR to look into this.

***ALL ACTIONS***

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| **REF** | **ACTION** |
| 4.4 | *MJ asked LH for more screenshots of the secondary platform.* |
| 4.12 | *MJ shared concerns over Bridgend schools not being notified of training for secondary schools. CO to update the Council.* |
| 4.19 | *LH to look into specific focus on coding.* |
| 4.32 | *HM to send JG list of FEI leaders.* |
| 5.4 | *LH to feedback to JH on ERA+ licencing on understanding of schools in Wales.* |
| 5.5 | *CO to provide a general update on current engagement with BBC.* |
| 7.3 | *The council discussed the need to agree travel to North Wales in July and provide colleagues with details of hotel to book/ flights etc. CR to look into this.* |