**NATIONAL DIGITAL LEARNING COUNCIL**

**FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**FUTURE INN, CARDIFF BAY**

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| **IN ATTENDANCE** | | **WELSH GOVERNMENT** |
| Janet Hayward [Chair] (JH) | Gary Beauchamp (GB) | Ruth Meadows (RM) |
| Kay Morris (KM) | Catherine Kucia (CK) | Chris Owen (CO) |
| Alison Howells (AH) | Alyson Nicholson (AN) | Jane Peffers (JP) |
| Paul Watkins (PW) | Chris Britten (CB) | Ty Golding (TG) |
| Simon Billington (SBi) | **APOLOGIES** | Ben Wong (BW) |
| Simon Brown (SBr) | Gareth Dacey (GD) | Bill Bone (BB) |
| Hannah Mathias (HM) | Marian Jebb (MJe) | Chris Roderick (CR) |
| Dilwyn Owen (DO) | Mike Jones (MJo) |  |

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
   1. JH welcomed members to the meeting and brief introductions were provided for those not having attended before.
2. **Curriculum Reform – Ty Golding**
   1. TG provided a broad overview of the reform of education in Wales. The eight main priorities listed below are all interlinked.

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| Accountability | Curriculum Development | Professional learning | Assessment |
| Digital | Leadership | Welsh language | ALN |

* 1. It is essential that school leaders and teachers are able to contextualise the new curriculum, to make this appropriate and specific to their learners.
  2. The reform of the curriculum is nearing the end of the second strand of work, with the reports and recommendations produced by the six AoLEs being considered. From September 2017 and throughout 2018, the content of the new curriculum will start to be developed, tested and refined.
  3. The team will be liaising with various partners including:
* pioneer and partner schools;
* regional consortia;
* external experts;
* Higher Education Institutions;
* Estyn;
* Qualifications Wales;
* Welsh Government.
  1. A draft outline is due to be presented to the Curriculum and Assessment Group in December, and to wider experts from January.
  2. Ensuring that the six AOLEs adequately fit together and meet all established requirements is a significant priority.
  3. Discussion points for members:
* what does this mean for us as practitioners?
* what does this mean for our organisations?
* what impact if any does this have for the NDLC?
  1. Highlights of discussions included:
     1. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) schemes and the future of ‘digital’ – more must be done to make this a reality on a national scale;
     2. a new culture must be established and promoted to school leaders in order to encourage innovation and creativity. Estyn, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Steve Davies have all promoted this message in recent months;
     3. however, it was also highlighted that spoon-feeding schools could limit innovation, with some teachers only aiming to reach the required minimum standard;
     4. there is an important role for the pioneer schools and the Council to make sure that ‘digital’ is promoted in the same way as literacy and numeracy.
  2. JH stated that it has been five years since the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group, so it could be time to establish a new vision for the Council.
  3. It was agreed that this should be put to the Cabinet Secretary for Education, focussing on changing culture, vision and leadership, and specific areas of note including:
* limits on budgets hindering the refreshing of ICT equipment;
* infrastructure concerns (broadband speeds etc);
* web filtering;
* the potential for a digital action plan.
  1. The Digital Strategy for Further Education was discussed – this needs to align with the development of the new curriculum.
  2. The FE sector has successfully navigated BYOD and lessons can be learned from this before rolling this out through other key stages.

**Action: JH to prepare draft paper and upload to the collaboration site for members to update and comment.**

1. **Digital Competence Framework update – Jane Peffers**
   1. Refinements have now been made to all versions of the DCF online, based on feedback received.
   2. The Professional Learning Needs tool has been available on Hwb since before the end of the summer term. There have been very encouraging usage statistics across KS2 and KS3 since the start of September.
   3. The Digital Pioneers will be meeting w/c 25 September to consider ways of working across the other AOLEs.
   4. Resource sheets produced by the Digital Pioneer schools (as discussed at meeting on 17 May) have been well received to date – the schools are now looking to build on these using the various Hwb community features.
   5. Steve Davies posted a message highlighting the successes of the DCF [on its first birthday](https://curriculumforwales.gov.wales/2017/09/14/if-only-we-had-this-in-england/).
   6. CB questioned whether the Council still required oversight of the DCF, now that this is effectively Business As Usual/has been introduced and is now being embedded.
   7. JH stated that oversight of the DCF was part of the remit for this term of the Council, ensuring that this was embedded and managed effectively. The Council has a strategic overview of the various streams of digital learning, which currently includes the DCF - at least for this term.
   8. It was highlighted that there is already a Digital Pioneer Working Group, involving Tom Crick and other representatives including Estyn and Regional Education Consortia (RECs) as well as other Regional and Steering Groups.
   9. JH suggested that the paper circulated at the DCF-focussed Council meeting on 4 April be recirculated to members for information.
   10. Some members felt that the Council should be included in this development process. However, the level of input could not be agreed upon.
   11. It was agreed that the purpose and role of the Council should be reconsidered, including the process of members feeding into current developments. There is a considerable amount of experience and expertise on the Council which should be used as effectively as possible.
   12. However, it was noted that the role of the Council is to advise and make recommendations, rather than make decisions.

**Action: RM/JP to look at how the Council can feed into the various working/steering groups and establish a way forward for the Council, including the DCF.**

* 1. HM highlighted that there were no employers represented on the Council. CO stated that this was due to complications around commercial companies applying to be on the Council.
  2. It was suggested that a representative of the Federation of Small Businesses be invited to participate on the Council, as they would have the required expertise, but with no commercial conflicts.

1. **Closure of Learning Wales – Bill Bone**
   1. BB provided an overview of the existing Welsh Government websites:

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| gov.wales | provides access to policy and guidance |
| Hwb | classroom resources and tools |
| Learning Wales | Policy and guidance and classroom resources |

* 1. The Learning Wales website will be closed, and all documents migrated to one of the other two sites.
  2. As part of this process, over 1,300 pages on Learning Wales have been reviewed, with 62 per cent of these due to be archived. Further audits of materials on gov.wales and Hwb are currently taking place.
  3. All new curriculum content will be uploaded to Hwb and as a result, the Hwb will undergo a review in order to accommodate the additional content.
  4. It was stressed that mobile devices will also be a part of the testing process, to ensure that the site is fully device agnostic.
  5. In order to address current issues in locating documents on the existing sites, officials are exploring a federated search function, allowing users to search both the Hwb and gov.wales at the same time in order to find the document/s they are looking for.
  6. However, at this stage, it is unlikely that there will be integration with the EWC’s Professional Learning Passport.

**Action: BB and CO to discuss with HM. (Tie into other meeting?)**

1. **Learning in Digital Wales Programme – Chris Owen**

**Hwb+ Evaluation**

**National Digital Learning Event 2017**

* 1. Very positive feedback was received following the event on 21 June – particularly with regard to the marketplace sessions.

**Action: CO to provide statistics on responses at next meeting.**

**National Digital Learning Awards**

* 1. RM announced that the [Professional Teaching Awards were launched today](https://beta.gov.wales/professional-teaching-awards-cymru), including an award for “best use of Digital Learning”. The National Digital Learning Awards have officially been subsumed within these awards, but RM confirmed that it would still be possible for there to be a separate NDLC pupil award as in previous years, to be presented at the NDLE 2018.

**National Digital Learning Event 2018**

* 1. The NDLC agreed that the event will primarily focus on the marketplace sessions, which were found to be more beneficial to last year’s attendees, rather than on workshops.
  2. CO presented the Council with various options for next year’s event, with option 4 being preferred. This involved:
* one national event in the EAS region;
* opening with a keynote by the Cabinet Secretary for Education;
* marketplace focus;
* NDLC Pupil Award.
  1. It was highlighted that there should be more internal (Wales-focussed) expertise presented, rather than inviting speakers from other countries.
  2. It would also be beneficial for the winner of the Digital Learning Award at the Professional Teaching Awards to be invited to present/participate in the marketplace at the NDLE.

**Action: CO to finalise plans for NDLE 2018.**

**Safer Internet Day 2018**

* 1. The next Safer Internet Day will be held on 6 February 2018.
  2. A competition encouraging learners to explore how being online makes them feel [will be launched on 3 October](http://hwb.gov.wales/onlinesafety/news/article/742b8083-8f48-46b8-a66a-6c3fd77c75c8), with the winner being invited to attend the Ministerial event on Safer Internet Day itself, and possibly the NDLE 2018.
  3. The Online Safety Action Plan is currently being drafted and will be put out to consultation before the end of 2017.

1. **Investment in Broadband – Ben Wong**
   1. BW provided an update on progress made to date. Two local authorities have already been completed. The volume and charges associated with excess construction work is proving to be significantly lower than anticipated. A small number of schools are still proving very difficult to deliver fibre solutions. The Superfast Cymru Programme has proven to be significantly helpful to deliver to more rural areas, however there remains some hotspots which is making it difficult to provide more resilient and reliable solutions to these handful of schools.
   2. Initial feedback on the centralised web filtering pilot has also been good. It is expected that this will be made available via the PSBA service catalogue over the coming months.

**Digital Education Standards**

* 1. BW provided an update on the six main areas across the Digital Education Standards activity, as per the dashboard.

Guidance on Broadband and Network Infrastructure for Schools

* 1. The guidance around broadband and network infrastructure for schools was circulated to members prior to the meeting, with a request for comments.
  2. The messages around the guidance document are vital and should be promoted wherever possible – potentially by Estyn. Members provided feedback around the possibility of producing a short animation highlighting the benefits.
  3. To be promoted via Dysg and any other appropriate communications, to ensure that the message gets across. The guidance document is a precursor to the development of Technical Education Standards, which is expected to be a set of recommended technical settings and policies that schools and network providers (local authorities) should follow to support digital teaching and learning.
  4. The guidance document is a live document and will be regularly updated and amended to align with technology and educational changes.

**Action: Members to provide comments on guidance document.**

**Local Authority Operating Models**

* 1. In order to support future versions of the guidance document, and in the development of the Technical Education Standards, Welsh Government are working with SOCITM (local authority Heads of IT) to understand the different school ICT support and operating models existing across the country.

**Audit of school infrastructure**

* 1. Anecdotal evidence suggests local school network infrastructures are potential barriers in preventing the effective delivery of digital teaching and learning. Schools are also unaware of the prerequisite of understanding their network capacity, before purchasing large numbers of end user devices.
  2. BW is currently looking to conduct an independent analysis of local school network infrastructures for a sample of schools across Wales. The results of the analysis will inform Welsh Government of the potential scale of the problem (if indeed it exists), and what the common areas are that potentially need to be addressed.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**

* 1. It was noted that BYOD schemes were continuing to be explored, although a true BYOD school has yet to be discovered. Discovery meetings have been arranged with Cardiff and Vale College and Wrexham local authority.

**Channel Strategy**

* 1. A new channel strategy, covering future digital education services is to be developed.
  2. AN provided an update on the Digital FE strategy currently in development. The strategy is due to be completed in March 2018, in time for FE providers to introduce this in September 2018.
  3. GB highlighted the disparity regarding the questions included in the Digital Competence Framework Tool. Three are phrased positively and one negatively, when these should be the same.

**Action: Secretariat to pass GB’s e-mail address to JP.**

1. **Any Other Business**
   1. HM met with Digital Communities Wales who are undertaking a ‘[Digital Heroes](https://digitalcommunities.gov.wales/resources/heroes/)’ scheme to train digital learning students to help others within the community.
   2. There was discussion regarding Skype access in schools. This can provide both local authorities and schools with useful tools but some local authorities have very tight controls and long winded processes in order for schools to be provided with access.
   3. Schedule of future meetings

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| 7 November | Welsh Government Offices, Merthyr Tydfil |
| 19 January | Welsh Government Officers, Penllegaer, Swansea |
| 6 March | Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth |
| 27 April | Venue TBC |
| ## June | To be linked to NDLE |

**Action: Secretariat to look into booking overnight accommodation for March meeting in Aberystwyth.**