

**Minutes of the meeting of the Ceredigion Schools Budget Forum held
remotely via Teams on Thursday, 5 December 2024**

PRESENT: Councillor Wyn Thomas (Chair), Cabinet Member for Schools, Lifelong Learning and Skills; Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation; Enid Brophy, Head Teacher: Ysgol Gynradd Gatholig Padarn Sant; Lee Burrows, Head Teacher: Ysgol Cenarth a Llechryd; Carol Davies, Head Teacher: Ysgol Dyffryn Cledlyn; Peter Leggett, Head Teacher: Ysgol Gynradd Rhydypennau and Dorian Pugh, Head Teacher: Ysgol Henry Richard.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Elen James, Chief Education Officer and Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning; Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement and Neris Morgans, Democratic Services Officer.

(4.20pm – 4.49pm)

1. Apologies

- i. Mair Hughes, Head Teacher: Ysgol Penglais and Catryn Lawrence, Head Teacher: Ysgol Penrhyncoch ac Ysgol Penllwyn apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.
- ii. Carys Fowles, Assistant Accountant apologies for her inability to attend the meeting.

2. Disclosure of personal interest

There were no disclosures of personal interests.

3. To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 May 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2024 as a correct record.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

In response to a question by Councillor Bryan Davies in relation to Re:fit Energy Scheme and companies contacting schools with various offers relating to installing Solar PVs and entering into long term contracts, the Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning explained that Officers had drafted a letter of advice to share with all Head Teachers next week regarding the matter. It was noted that school buildings were owned by the local authority and permissions needed to be applied for where necessary.

The Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement added that there was a corporate energy contract in place until September 2025 and therefore, any other arrangements could jeopardise this.

The Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning agreed to share the letter of advice with the Finance and Procurement Service before it was circulated to Head Teachers.

5. Overall Corporate Position & Schools Delegated Budget

The Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement provided a presentation to all present outlining the following:

- 24-25 Budget
- In-year position – Q2 24-25
- Latest MTFS- up to 24.10.24
- Pay Awards
- Employers National Insurance
- Inflation
- Key Budget Challenges
- Annual Savings/ Lost Spending Power
- Next Steps

It was **AGREED** to note the information.

6. Formula Funding

The Corporate Lead Officer: Finance and Procurement explained that it was important that Formula Funding was considered as a standing item on the forum's agenda. The main focus at present was to support schools through challenging budget times, and a review could possibly be considered in the more medium to long term. Members of the Forum were invited to consider and feedback any particular areas which they felt needed attention.

Councillor Bryan Davies stated there was a significant difference in the funding when PLASC figures were positive. He added that it was vital to be open to discussions with schools.

The Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning explained that the number of pupils was decreasing across the county and data suggested this would continue over the next few years.

It was **AGREED** to note the information.

7. Any Other Business

None.

8. Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting to be circulated in due course.

The Corporate Lead Officer: Lifelong Learning encouraged Head Teachers to contact Officers should they wish to consider a particular item in future meetings. It was noted that details on school budgets for 2025/26 would be circulated as soon as possible.

Councillor Bryan Davies reminded Head Teachers to get in contact should they wish to discuss an urgent matter, and not wait until the next meeting. He thanked all school staff for their work and dedication.

The Chair also extended his thanks to all school staff and Officers for their work. He wished all present a Merry Christmas.