

**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION AND LEISURE**

**JOINT - TEACHING AND
SUPPORT STAFF ASSOCIATIONS JCC**

Record of Decisions/Action taken at the Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th February 2006

PRESENT:

David Hopkins	-	Director
Bleddyn Hopkins	-	Head of Planning and Strategy
Sian Phillips	-	Manager, Personnel & Admin
Trish Reardon	-	Principal Personnel Officer
Bruce Barrowman	-	GMB
Colin Vickers	-	NASUWT
June Havard	-	NUT
Jeff Poole	-	UCATT
Richard Parsons	-	ATL
Pam Baldwin	-	Unison
Marlene Kirkham	-	NAHT

AGENDA ITEM NO.		ACTION BY	DATE																		
1	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that the Director had been delayed, but would attend as soon as possible.</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">John Hogan</td> <td style="width: 10%;">-</td> <td style="width: 60%;">Change Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gwenllian Jenkins</td> <td>-</td> <td>UCAC</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adrian Jones</td> <td>-</td> <td>TGWU</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ali Stevens</td> <td>-</td> <td>SHA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leigh Woodland</td> <td>-</td> <td>Unison</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kevin McAnulty</td> <td>-</td> <td>NAHT</td> </tr> </table>	John Hogan	-	Change Manager	Gwenllian Jenkins	-	UCAC	Adrian Jones	-	TGWU	Ali Stevens	-	SHA	Leigh Woodland	-	Unison	Kevin McAnulty	-	NAHT		
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2	<p>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 5TH OCTOBER 2005</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as being a true and accurate record.</p>																				
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>3.7 Holidays 2006/2007:</p> <p>Richard Parsons asked whether the Authority were able to comment on recent documentation which had been distributed by SCEW which had suggested proposed term dates up to 2010.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that he understood the Director would be discussing this issue at the next ADEW Executive meeting and, as the Director was due to arrive shortly, it would probably be best to discuss this matter further in his presence.</p>																				
	<p>6. Secondary Reorganisation:</p> <p>The minutes had indicated that Bleddyn Hopkins was going to ask the views of staff to enquire whether they were happy for all unions to be present at the consultation meetings.</p>																				

	<p>Pam Baldwin questioned whether this had been actioned.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that unions had been given the go ahead to attend and this had been communicated to the unions a few days ahead of this meeting.</p>		
	<p>7-16 Draft Policies:</p> <p>Sian Phillips provided the meeting with an update of the outstanding issues.</p> <p>7. Any Other Business</p> <p>7.4 Headteacher Appointments</p> <p>Sian Phillips advised that a draft document had been submitted to Bob Howells for comment. Comments were expected back by 17th February 2006.</p>		
4.	<p>ARGOED PRIMARY SCHOOL</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins reminded those present that last Autumn Cabinet agreed to proceed to formally consult with a view to closing Argoed Primary School from 31st August 2007, with the intention of pupils moving to Markham Primary School.</p> <p>There had been a meeting on 30th January 2006 with various parties from Argoed Primary School and on 2nd February 2006 with various interested parties from Markham Primary School.</p> <p>It was hoped that a Cabinet report would be considered around March/April 2006, and if agreed to proceed then a public notice between April and June 2006, with a decision from WAG early next academic year.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins confirmed that Argoed Primary was the Authority's smallest primary school, currently with 40 pupils with an additional maximum number of 10 in the Nursery phase.</p> <p>Colin Vickers enquired whether there would be any different arrangements in place for the staff should the school close.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that the usual arrangements would apply, but indicated that there were very few staff in the school to reconsider for relocation.</p>		
5.	<p>ST ILAN COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins confirmed that St Ilan Comprehensive was the Authority's smallest secondary school and at a Cabinet meeting on 17th January 2006 it had been agreed to proceed to public notice, which would expire towards the end of March 2006. Any objections would be submitted to WAG for it to make a formal decision with regard to a proposed closure from the 31st August 2007.</p>		

	<p>There followed a discussion regarding the issues regarding pupil numbers of the other schools within the Caerphilly basin and the implications for pupil movement pending a decision from WAG.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that if the decision was for St Ilan Comprehensive to remain open, it would need to cut approximately £¼ million from its base budget in order to balance its books.</p>		
	<p>This would mean that the cuts required would prevent, in the Directorate's view, the school from delivering the National Curriculum and, as a consequence, the school would wither on the vine.</p> <p>June Havard asked where pupils from St Ilan Comprehensive would go should the school be closed and was advised that it would be likely that most of the pupils could be distributed between Bedwas Comprehensive, St Cenydd and St Martin's Comprehensive, but that this would depend on standard admission numbers, currently subject to WAG review.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised those present that St Ilan was currently the only school in the Authority with dispensation given not to balance its budget.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin asked what had happened to the suggestion of establishing a 6th form centre of excellence.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that there had been opposition to this proposal from other schools within the Authority. He also mentioned that consideration had been given to a plan which would have required buildings in other schools to be demolished so their standard numbers would fall, which would consequently force pupils into St Ilan Comprehensive.</p> <p>Colin Vickers asked whether this was ever a serious proposal.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that reference had been made to this option in a Cabinet report.</p>		
	<p>June Havard stated that issues had not been helped by parental choice.</p> <p>Richard Parsons asked whether there had been any suggestion of the school opting for foundation status.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins advised that he was not aware that the school had enquired about this route since it was refused by the Minister in 2004.</p> <p>David Hopkins arrived.</p>		
6.	DRAFT NO SMOKING POLICY		
	<p>Section 3.3(2) of the policy:</p> <p>Pam Baldwin expressed concerns that school have different policies.</p>		

	<p>Sian Phillips reminded those present that, whilst schools have a have certain policies to deal with management issues, they did not have to automatically adopt those recommended by the LEA. However, should they wish to negotiate and adopt separate policies, then they would need to enter into discussions with the relevant staff representatives and this was covered in Education Personnel's SLA with schools.</p> <p>Section 5.6.1:</p> <p>After some discussion it was agreed that the recommended implementation date should be 1st January 2007.</p> <p>Section 7.1:</p> <p>Pam Baldwin asked for more guidance for managers on what was deemed to be reasonable, she did not like the fact that it was at managers' discretion.</p> <p>Sian Phillips explained that each case should be judged on its own merits, so it was entirely appropriate for the manager to determine what was reasonable.</p> <p>This was accepted.</p> <p>Section 3.2(1)</p> <p>Colin Vickers raised an issue regarding staff from Newbridge Comprehensive School parking their cars in the car park in the adjacent rugby ground, which, whilst owned by the Authority, was apparently subject to a long-term lease to Newbridge Rugby Club.</p>		
	<p>Bleddyn Hopkins confirmed that it would not be acceptable for someone to smoke in their car on the school site, but acceptable if it was not Council land and recognised that the issue of whether premises are subject to a long term lease needed to be clarified.</p> <p>David Hopkins reminded those present, however, that these issues would need to be referred to Central Personnel, as part of their review process, as they reflected part of the Corporate Document.</p> <p>It was agreed, however, as an interim measure, that the policy, when appropriately amended following today's discussions, could be accompanied by the frequently asked questions document that had been developed by Corporate Personnel.</p> <p>Section 6:</p> <p>Colin Vickers also asked who would be responsible for policing the policy.</p> <p>Sian Phillips advised that it was for the Headteacher as with all other personnel policies developed for the management of staff.</p>		

<p>7.</p>	<p>REMODELLING UPDATE</p> <p>Trish Reardon started to address this issue when Pam Baldwin stated that she totally disagreed with the arrangements currently in place in Inclusion Services. She fundamentally disagreed that the issue should be dealt with as staffing review, when many of the issues related to the remodelling agenda, which should have already been completed.</p> <p>David Hopkins reminded those present that the exercise was all about modernising systems and structures and that the Authority had adopted the same principles in schools and in its support service areas.</p> <p>Trish Reardon reminded those present that agreement had been reached at one of the WAMG meetings with regard to the process that would be used in this exercise.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin requested that she be advised of the exact date of this meeting. She went on to say that the situation is worse than in any other LEA that she was aware of and that Caerphilly LEA had no right to do away with the post of a NNEB.</p>		
	<p>Trish Reardon advised that schools were at various stages in the process, consultation exercises were ongoing and it would be expected that responses would be submitted by staff. Management would then consider these responses, which was exactly the same process as that which was ongoing in schools.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin stated that she was not disputing the process that was being followed, but she stated that, in her opinion, the consultation exercise was appalling.</p> <p>This comment was supported by the other representatives present.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin stated that she was unable to provide representation within the timescales of the consultation meetings that had been called.</p> <p>June Havard supported Pam Baldwin in this view.</p> <p>June Havard went on to say that she had always had a very good relationship with Caerphilly LEA in the past and always good support, however, she was very disappointed with the way that Inclusion Services had managed this exercise.</p> <p>David Hopkins stated that he recognised that workload issues affected everyone.</p> <p>Bleddyn Hopkins asked Pam Baldwin for clarification, with reference to her comments that it was a 'staffing review'.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin confirmed that the changes should not be lumped together under the umbrella of Workforce Remodelling.</p> <p>David Hopkins stated that all Central Services were being reviewed, not just Inclusion Services.</p>		

	<p>Colin Vickers stated that he had received no consultation with regard to the Music Service for example. He advised that he had referred the matter to Gareth Hardacre to investigate, but has not heard anything.</p> <p>David Hopkins stated that he had only contacted Gareth Hardacre because Colin Vickers had raised the issue at the Corporate JCC. He had only had preliminary discussions with Gareth Hardacre, but would be discussing it in more detail later.</p>		
	<p>Pam Baldwin stated that she did not know that a review had been undertaken in the Music Service, but acknowledged she had received no complaints.</p> <p>Trish Reardon advised that the remodelling exercise within Inclusion Services had been delayed because both Jill Lawrence and Jackie Elias had been new to their posts and needed to know more about service issues before being in a position to undertake the review.</p> <p>Pam Baldwin stated that it should have been implemented by September 2005 and felt that it was too punitive lumping everything in together. She advised that in September last year, Bev Lane advised that there would be no NNEB's, only teaching assistants Level 1 and Level 2 would exist and these would be determined based on the disability of the child.</p> <p>David Hopkins stated that some of these groups of staff should have been the subject of a review long before and in relation to the issues being tackled with regard to flexi and annual leave, he felt that the proposal put forward by Inclusion Services were entirely reasonable, as they were all linked to service delivery.</p> <p>Colin Vickers advised that he felt that it was correct to undertake reviews, but disagreed with the radical nature of this exercise. He felt that the changes identified should be introduced over a period of time.</p> <p>June Havard recognised that staff should be available in term time, but felt that this should be phased in. She said she was aware that it was difficult to recruit and retain staff in these areas and the proposed operational changes to flexi and annual leave might have a detrimental effect. She agreed with the other representatives that changes should be phased in, she also felt that it was important to clarify the appropriate chain of communication, as she had recently experienced difficulties in obtaining a response to a query she had raised.</p>		
	<p>Richard Parsons commented that from his experience consultation had been undertaken in a variety of ways in different schools and that there was inconsistency from both Headteachers and governing bodies in relation to the consultation process.</p> <p>David Hopkins said that the advice that had been given by the LEA was consistent. However, he acknowledged that there maybe inconsistencies in interpretation. He suggested, however, that this would be a national problem.</p>		

	All present agreed.		
	<p>David Hopkins assured those present that the issues raised would be looked into, but in dealing with the matter reasonably, the Authority would expect a reasonable response from the staff associations. He reminded those present that the nature of the exercise meant that some employees would lose out and therefore there would always be a problem in these areas.</p> <p>June Havard stated that she wished to compliment Caerphilly LEA on its achievement following LGR and stated that she enjoyed being involved in the negotiation process up until now. However, this recent situation in Inclusion Services had changed her view.</p>		
8.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>1. Term Dates:</p> <p>The issue raised by Richard Parsons at the beginning of the meeting in David Hopkins' absence was revisited in his presence.</p> <p>David Hopkins advised that he was travelling to Wrexham immediately following the conclusion of this meeting for a meeting with ADEW the following day. He advised those present that attempts had been made to obtain agreement for all Wales term dates for a number of years. He advised that anything that was agreed at the meeting in relation to term dates would be circulated.</p> <p>Colin Vickers left the meeting at 3.45 p.m.</p> <p>2. Pensions:</p> <p>Pam Baldwin (for information) advised those present that she visited Parliament on 14th February 2006 in relation to the pensions issue for members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. It appears that a ballot for strike action is likely, with proposed action taking place towards the end of March 2006.</p> <p>Meeting ended 3.50 p.m.</p>	David Hopkins	