



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Cabinet meeting: 2 October 2023

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on 2 October 2023.

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# Present

- Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS (Chair)
- Rebecca Evans MS
- Vaughan Gething MS
- Lesley Griffiths MS
- Jane Hutt MS
- Julie James MS
- Jeremy Miles MS
- Eluned Morgan MS
  
- Hannah Blythyn MS
- Dawn Bowden MS
- Julie Morgan MS
- Lee Waters MS

# Apologies

- Mick Antoniw MS
- Lynne Neagle MS

# Officials

- Andrew Goodall, Permanent Secretary
- Des Clifford, Director Office of the First Minister
- Rebecca Dunn, Head of Cabinet Division
- Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications
- Rory Powell, Head of First Minister's Office
- Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser
- Madeleine Brindley, Special Adviser

- Alex Bevan, Special Adviser
- Daniel Butler, Special Adviser
- Ian Butler, Special Adviser
- Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser
- Sara Faye, Special Adviser
- Sam Hadley, Special Adviser
- David Hooson, Special Adviser
- Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser
- Owen John, Special Adviser
- Phillipa Marsden, Special Adviser
- Tom Woodward, Special Adviser
- Christopher W Morgan, Head of Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
- Damian Roche, Cabinet Secretariat
- Catrin Sully, Cabinet Office
- Kathryn Hallett, First Minister's Office
- Helena Bird, Permanent Secretary's Office
- Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services
- Tracey Burke, Director General Climate Change & Rural Affairs
- Jo-anne Daniels, Director General, Education Social Justice & Welsh Language
- Reg Kilpatrick, Director General, Covid Recovery and Local Government
- Tim Moss, Chief Operating Officer
- Judtih Paget, Director General Health and Social Services
- Andrew Slade, Director General, Economy, Treasury and Constitution
- Owain Lloyd, Director Education and Welsh Language (item 3)
- Martyn Gunter, FOCUS Principal Project Manager (item 3)
- Steffan Bryn, Special Adviser (item 3)

## Item 1: Minutes of the previous meeting

1.1 Cymeradwyodd y Cabinet gofnodion y 25 Medi / Cabinet approved the

minutes of 25 September.

## **Item 2: Senedd business**

2.1 Cabinet considered the Plenary Grid and noted that voting time was scheduled for 5pm on Tuesday and around 6:25pm on Wednesday.

## **Item 3: Reform of the School Year**

3.1 The Minister for Education and Welsh Language introduced the paper, which asked Cabinet to agree that there should be a consultation exercise on the structure of the school year.

3.2 The Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement committed the Government to explore reform of the school day and the school year. The aim of the policy was to consider the current structure of the school year alongside alternatives to ensure the provision of a calendar which could best help mitigate the impact on the disadvantaged, support learner progression and educational outcomes. The proposed changes would also support learner and staff well-being and align with contemporary patterns of family life and employment.

3.3 Cabinet welcomed the paper and agreed that the proposed changes would have a significant impact on learners from socially and economically disadvantaged families and would help address inequalities. They would also provide greater support to students with special educational and additional learning needs, who found the long summer holidays particularly disruptive.

3.4 Ministers discussed when the proposals should be implemented and agreed

that as the long summer holidays were becoming more challenging for families and disadvantaged learners it would be important to make the changes as quickly as possible. It was also agreed that this should be reflected in the consultation document.

3.5 Ministers agreed that the consultation should commence in November, with the final document being presented to Cabinet for agreement before publication. Furthermore, the consultation should highlight a two-phased approach, with the first changes expected to take place in 2025-2026.

3.6 Cabinet approved the paper.

Cabinet Secretariat  
October 2023

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