
GwE JOINT COMMITTEE

22.11.2017

Present:

Councillors: Gareth Thomas – Chair (Gwynedd Council), Phil Wynn – Vice Chair (Wrexham County Borough Council), Meirion Jones (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Huw-Hilditch Roberts (Denbighshire County Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council).

Co-opted Members with no vote: Rita Price (Wrexham Diocese), Jonathan Morgan (Special Schools representative)

Officers with no note: Karen Evans (Denbighshire County Council), Claire Homard (Flintshire County Council), Ian Roberts (Wrexham County Borough Council), Garem Jackson (Gwynedd Council)

Also present: Arwyn Thomas (GwE Managing Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Host Authority Legal Service - Gwynedd Council), Susan Owen Jones (GwE Business Manager), Dr Gwynne Jones (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Dr Alwyn Jones (GwE Assistant Director), Hefin Owen (Host Authority Finance Manager), Ruth Thackray (Senior Lead Curriculum for Wales), Gareth Williams (Advisory Board Chair)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Garffild Lewis, Diane Chisholm (Primary Schools representative), Mair Herbert (Secondary Schools representative), Alison Fisher (Governors representative), Dr Lowri Brown (Conwy County Borough Council), Dafydd L. Edwards (Host Authority Head of Finance - Gwynedd Council), Steve Vincent (Welsh Government), Rhys Howard Hughes (GwE Assistant Director), Delyth Molyneux (Isle of Anglesey County Council).

2. CONDOLENCES

Condolences were extended to Dr Lowri Brown following the death of her mother recently.

3. CHAIR NOTICES

- (a) Congratulations were extended to Garem Jackson on his appointment as Head of Education for Gwynedd Council and to Arwyn Williams, Headteacher of Ysgol Uwchradd Brynrefail, on his appointment as Head of Education for Isle of Anglesey County Council.
- (b) A warm welcome was extended to Gareth Williams, Advisory Board Chair, who will be attending meetings in the future.
- (c) It was noted that Diane Chisholm will be resigning from the Joint Committee. The Chair thanked her for her dedication and her contribution as Primary Schools representative.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declaration of personal interest was received from any members present.

5. URGENT MATTERS

(a) Secondary Teachers Regional Conference

Following media comments on the cost of inviting guest speakers to the GwE Secondary Teachers Regional Conference in July, GwE Managing Director was given an opportunity to respond to a number of questions from Councillors on the Joint Committee, and to put the issue into context. At the request of members, it was noted that any conference arrangements in the future be put to the Joint Committee in order to discuss cost and ensure

value for money.

(b) Re-structure of New Curriculum in Wales

The Curriculum for Wales Senior Lead gave an update on the work undertaken by GwE to develop the new curriculum in Wales.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2017 as a true and accurate record.

7. ESTYN FEEDBACK

GwE Managing Director thanked all GwE partners for their dedication and contribution to the success of the inspection, and it was noted that the team takes great pride in the report. There was reference to the main messages in each of the recommendations as well as those elements that require attention, namely, the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 4, which are already addressed in business plans.

During the subsequent discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- Thanks were given to the Managing Director and to GwE staff for achieving an excellent result in a short period of time.
- The strength of the collaboration between GwE partners was praised, and the importance of maintaining this at this high level was emphasised.
- It was noted there has been a significant change in culture. Now, there is a culture of acknowledging each other's contributions, and the time is right for further development.

8. LEVEL 1 BUSINESS PLAN: QUARTER 2 MONITORING REPORT

The Managing Director presented the quarter 2 monitoring report for the Level 1 Business Plan. Challenges and improvements required in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 4 were highlighted.

IS WAS DECIDED TO: accept the report.

9. GwE 2017-28 BUDGET - QUARTER 2 REVIEW

The Host Authority Finance Manager presented a report. It was noted there are no significant changes in the Quarter 2 Review.

IT WAS DECIDED TO: accept the report.

10. GwE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY 2017-20: SECONDARY, PRIMARY AND CURRICULUM FOR WALES

GwE Assistant Director presented a report on GwE Improvement Strategies, which are aligned with the Welsh Government document 'Education in Wales: Our national mission', setting a direction for the next three years. Attention was drawn to the secondary strategy and the impact of action to improve the region's inspections profile.

During the subsequent discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- The problem of recruiting headteachers to the profession needs to be addressed.
- It was asked whether it is possible to integrate leaders' skills for the primary and the secondary when planning for the new curriculum.

IT WAS DECIDED TO: accept the report.

11. DEVELOPING THE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT WELSH IN EDUCATION

The Welsh Sub-group presented a report on the 'Developing the Workforce to Support Welsh in Education' plan.

It was reported that Welsh Government is about to launch the plan, with the aim of there being a million Welsh speakers by 2050. It was noted that the region has received a grant allocation of £557,051 in order to develop the workforce to support Welsh in education. The Welsh Sub-group has already been established, which includes representation from each local authority in the region, and intends to function as a Project Board for the work.

The following points were highlighted:

- Flintshire County Council interim Head of Education noted that efficient teams already exist, which are responsible for workforce development programmes. It was expressed that organisations such as Yr Urdd play a key role in breaking down barriers and changing attitudes towards the Welsh language in English-speaking areas, making the language more accessible and inclusive. It is important that the plan does not focus on education alone, and that it is extended beyond Welsh-medium schools.
- It was asked whether the plan will belong to schools or to the Council. It was noted that it would be difficult to influence school plans.

IT WAS DECIDED TO: accept and approve the project brief.

The meeting started at 10:30am and concluded at 12:15pm.

CHAIRMAN