
GwE Joint Committee

04.07.2018

Present:

Councillors: Gareth Thomas - Chair (Gwynedd Council), Phil Wynn - Vice-chair (Wrexham County Borough Council), Garffild Lewis (Conwy County Borough Council), Ian Roberts (Flintshire County Council) and Meirion Jones (Anglesey County Council).

Co-opted non-voting Members: Haf Williams (Primary Schools Representative), Peter Agnew (Secondary Schools Representative) and Alison Fisher (Governors' Representative).

Non-voting Officers: Karen Evans (Denbighshire County Council), Ian Roberts (Wrexham County Borough Council)

Officers present: Arwyn Thomas (GwE Managing Director), Iwan G. Evans (Host Authority Head of Legal Service - Gwynedd Council), Dafydd Edwards (Host Authority Head of Finance - Gwynedd Council), Bethan Eleri Roberts (GwE Performance Management Manager), Euros Davies (GwE) and Annes Sion (Host Authority Members' Support Officer - Gwynedd Council).

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts (Denbighshire County Council), Rosalind Williams (Church in Wales), Jonathan Morgan (Special Schools representative), Arwyn Williams (Anglesey Council), Dr Lowri Brown (Conwy County Borough Council), Claire Homard (Flintshire County Council), Garem Jackson (Gwynedd Council), Dr Gwynne Jones (Anglesey Council), Rhys Howard Hughes (GwE Assistant Director)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declaration of personal interest was received by any member present.

3. URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent matters.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 as correct.

5. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

DECISION

Commend the Annual Governance Statement.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, noting that The Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 place specific requirements on public bodies who are implementing partnership management arrangements via official joint committees. It was noted that the Joint Committee is required to accept and commend the Statement. It was stated that the Governance Statement is based on the one published last year and that there are not many

changes. Specifically, Principles were scrutinised, noting the main principles, which include being open, skills and creativity and effective relationships.

Details were given on when the Joint Committee met, as well as the User Group, which is an opportunity for schools to give feedback. It was noted that a report was generated following the Estyn visit, noting the progress made since the inspection in 2016. It was added that the report was presented to the joint committee in the November 2017 meeting. It was explained there are not many changes to the Statement commended last year, but that it needs to be adopted.

6. LEARNING INSPECTORATE: INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF ESTYN - PROFESSOR GRAHAM DONALDSON

The report was presented, noting there had been a discussion on accountability in the previous meeting, and it was added that this report is aligned to the accountability framework.

The phases noted in the report were outlined, noting that the first phase redirects Estyn to support schools and that there will be no inspections during 2019/20. It was explained that statutory category schools will still have a second visit. There will be new self-evaluation arrangements, and a framework will be created to assist schools. It was noted that the framework will be piloted during September. It was noted that the second phase will be to start inspections again from 2020 onwards. The self-evaluation will be considered in more detail. It was explained that the third phase will be inspections operating on the basis of self-evaluation.

The need for clarity was noted regarding phase 2 and the role of the consortia.

Comments arising from the discussion.

- The need for clarity in terms of everyone's role was noted.
- What is the timetable? - it was noted that changes are due to start during 2019/20.
- The need for a clear communication plan was noted, once there will be further clarification on the report.

DECISION Accept the report.

7. GwE PROFESSIONAL OFFER

The report was presented, noting that this is the second offer since November. It was added that the offer now includes 54 logic models focusing specifically on impact.

An example of the Logic Model was shown. It was noted that both GwE and national priorities are incorporated into the Logic Models. The Professional Offer was sent to schools in June.

It was stated that training is now available, and that schools can book a place for training online. To date, it was noted that feedback from schools is good, and that it had been released in time to feed into the SDP.

Comments arising from the discussion.

- It was asked whether it's difficult for teachers to attend training as a result of reduced budgets to release staff. It was noted that it can be difficult for teachers to attend training. However, schools working in clusters can support this.
- Financial cuts were discussed, and the need to discuss how schools are to make developments and transform their ways of working.
- It was added that releasing teachers from schools to attend professional training is a practical problem.

The Joint Committee thanked Euros Davies for his work.

DECISION Accept the report.

8. SCHOOLS AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

A report was presented, noting there had been an announcement about what makes a school a learning organisation. It was stated that Welsh Government has noted a vision for Schools as Learning Organisations (SLOs).

A template of the vision for SLOs was shown. It was noted that a group of schools will produce an animation of what are SLOs, noting that all schools are expected to be a SLO from October 2019. It was added that GwE will continue to work with specific schools, and that they will be able to share information within their area. The survey will be sent to schools before November 2018.

Comments arising from the discussion.

- It was discussed what GwE is doing with Universities so as to ensure the teachers of the future are equipped with the necessary skills for SLOs. It was noted there is a close partnership with Bangor University and Chester University, which is working on developing the teachers of the future.

DECISION Accept the report.

9. RISK REGISTER

A report was presented, noting that it is a live document which is reviewed frequently. It was noted that 11 of the risks have been updated, and that risks 2, 5 and 14 are new risks as a result of combining various other risks.

It was noted there is an additional risk, namely, to acquire timely information from Welsh Government.

Comments arising from the discussion.

- The need to revisit the steps was noted.

DECISION Commend the report.

10. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS - FINANCIAL REPORT

The report was presented, noting that these are March accounts and that the annexes are certified statements. It was noted that the statements will be returned in September, following further audit. The document was explained, and some figures emphasised.

The main problem noted was acquiring funding late in the financial year. Consequently, it is difficult to plan for the future and decide how to spend the money.

It was added that this is not expected to change any time soon, and that the situation is not unique to education. It was noted that it will be possible to use the budget in a different way in the current financial climate, but there is a need for more stability.

DECISION Accept the report.