



Minutes of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Committee held at Ty Dysgu, Nantgarw on Tuesday, 30th September, 2014 at 9.00am

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee

Councillor H.David, Bridgend County Borough Council
Councillor J.Magill, Cardiff City Council
Councillor C. Elmore, Vale of Glamorgan Council Borough Council
Councillor (Mrs) E. Hanagan, Rhondda-Cynon-Taf County Borough Council
Councillor H. Jones, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Officers in Attendance

Mr.R.Evans, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Mr.M.Pennell, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Mr C. Bradshaw, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Ms.J.Hill, Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council
Mr P. Orders, Cardiff City Council
Mr N. Batchelar, Cardiff City Council
Mr R. Hopkins, Central South Consortium

Also in Attendance

Ms.H.Woodhouse, Managing Director, Central South Consortium
Mr J. Saunders, Wales Audit Office
Ms A. Satterly, Central South Wales Challenge Strategy Group
Ms A. Beer, Senior Programme Manager, Central South Consortium
Mr S. Jones, Head Teacher, Cardiff High School

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G. Chapman and Ms Lorraine Buck, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

16. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members had no personal interests to declare in matters pertaining to the agenda.

17. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Special Meeting held on the 5th June 2014 and those of the Central South Consortium Joint Committee held on the 5th June 2014 be approved as an accurate record.

19. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Committee agreed that the agenda would be considered out of sequence and as detailed in the minutes set out hereunder

20. PROGRESS ON THE CENTRAL SOUTH WALES CHALLENGE

PowerPoint slides were circulated at the meeting outlining information under the following headings:

- Developing a Self-Improving School System (SISS)
 - Key purpose of the challenge
 - Consortium Led and now School Led
 - Six areas of work
- SIG Activity – September 2014
- School Improvement Hubs and Specialist Centres
- Peer Review

Mr S. Jones, Headteacher, Cardiff High School, Ms A. Satterly, Central South Wales Challenge Strategy Group and Ms A. Beer, Senior Programme Manager, CSC provided an in depth update on progress to date with the Central South Wales Challenge.

A discussion ensued whereby many questions/comments were raised in respect of the presentation and Members of the Joint Committee were united in their feelings of encouragement at the developments that have been made in respect of the Central South Wales Challenge and the positive impact it has had already in terms of exam results. Questions were posed in respect of how those schools that had not yet engaged with the Central South Challenge could be approached and whether the initiative was in fact consistent with the National Model.

Mr K. Napariella, Head of Local Authority Intervention & Support & Consortium, Welsh Government, commented that Central South Wales Challenge is a demonstration of tangible outcomes which can be evidenced in the excellent teaching that has already been recognised by Estyn in thematic review. Further information measuring the outcomes that have been achieved was provided.

The Chair thanked everyone for their informative presentation and it was **RESOLVED** to note the progress made in respect of the Central South Wales Challenge.

21. THE REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT – SEPTEMBER 2014

Members were provided with a Power Point presentation delivered by Mr R. Hopkins, Central South Consortium. He outlined the initial view of performance for 2014 under the following headings:-

- Key Features of Performance – Foundation Phase, KS2, KS3
- Foundation Phase Indicator
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
 - Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics
 - Level 1 Threshold
- Closing the Gap
- Key Considerations
- Core Consortium Function Adjusted – Revisions to the Framework for Challenge and Support
- The Review, Challenge and Support Meeting
- National School Improvement and Categorisation System
- Revisions to the Framework for Challenge and Support

A discussion ensued regarding the impact of leadership and teaching and the role that governors have in presenting a view of strengths and areas for improvement from school's self-evaluation. Members were informed that a review would shortly be undertaken to ensure governor support services are consistent across all local authorities with training for governors being offered this term.

Concern was raised in respect of the gap between the performance of boys and girls especially at foundation phase and what measures are in place to address the issue. Due regard was also given to the categorisation system.

RESOLVED to note the situation.

22. PREPARING FOR ESTYN

Ms H. Woodhouse provided Members with papers regarding the Auditor General VFM Study on Educational Consortia in Wales together with a draft timetable for the Estyn and Wales Audit Office visit to the Central South Consortium at the end of November 2014. Ms Woodhouse outlined the background to the study being carried out by

the Auditor General in order to examine issues of governance and financial management across the four regional education consortia.

Discussion centred on the draft timetable which is subject to review and change. Following consideration of the report Members **RESOLVED** to note the dates of the forthcoming visit of the Wales Audit Office and Estyn.

23. REPORT OF THE WALES AUDIT OFFICE

Mr J. Saunders, Wales Audit Office, presented to Members of the Joint Committee his report in respect of the Audit of Financial Statements for the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee.

There was one key issue arising from the audit relating to the distribution of Welsh Government Education Grants which did require further review and members of the Joint Committee were informed of the outcome of the matter. However, there were no other issues or concerns to report therefore it was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report.

REPORTS OF THE TREASURER

24. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Mr M. Pennell, Group Accountant, presented his report to the Joint Committee in respect of the Central South Consortium statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2014.

It was reported that there is no change to the Statements of Accounts (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) following the external audit process and the required correction to the distribution of Welsh Government grants has been completed.

The Group Accountant confirmed that a further report would be presented to the subsequent meeting of the Joint Committee to consider the options for the use of the balance

In conclusion the Group Accountant referred to the Letter of Representation set out at Appendix 2 which reflects the accuracy of the audit of the financial statements of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.

Following consideration of the report and discussion concerning the general reserves it was **RESOLVED** to:-

1. Approve the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2013/14 (Appendix 1) and associated Letter of Representation of the Joint Committee (Appendix 2); and

2. Note the audited final out-turn position for the Joint Committee for the 2013/14 financial year and the level of General Reserves Balances held.

25. 2014/15 BUDGET

The Group Accountant presented his report to seek final approval of the 2014/15 revenue budgets for the Central South Consortium and to provide Members with the projected outturns for 2014/15 for the Central South Consortium.

In accordance with Minute No. 10 (Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee 5th June 2014) Members resolved to note and approve the budget for 2014/15 in order for their respective Councils to approve it as appropriate and that this is confirmed at this the subsequent meeting.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to note the projected outturn for the service 2014/15.

26. LEGAL AGREEMENT

Ms H. Woodhouse, Managing Director, CSC, updated members of the Joint Committee with progress on the Legal Agreement. It was reported that all the local authorities have commented (with Cardiff City Council providing their comments this day). It was anticipated that the agreement would be put forward at all the local authority respective Cabinet meetings in October 2014. Ms Woodhouse added that the report would include the provision that should the agreement require any minor amendments that this would be done via delegated authority.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the progress of the legal agreement

27. REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms Hannah Woodhouse, Managing Director, CSC, presented her report in respect of the draft Accountability Framework.

The report highlighted the background to the framework which set out the governance and reporting arrangements for the Consortium together with a diagram illustrating the roles and responsibilities and “accountability architecture”. Suggestions were made in respect of what could be included in the draft framework and how reporting on performance issues could be done more frequently than suggested.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the draft framework with a view to a more up to date version being presented to the next Joint Committee.

28. PROGRESS AGAINST THE PLAN

Handouts were provided to members of the Joint Committee which outlined progress of the Central South Consortium to date.

Ms Woodhouse reported positive results at the start of this year in respect of improvements made against every priority within the business plan. Key to the success is the current staffing levels and leadership support which is viewed as being more stable and consistent. The key headings within the report were outlined to the members of the Joint Committee such as items planned for next period and issues to be raised such as the development of a pledge for employers and community support to be launched in December 2014. Also discussed were the risks being managed (from the Risk Register).

RESOLVED to note the progress of the Central South Consortium Programme.

29. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority currently holding that information). Transparency in the accountability for expenditure of public funds within the public sector is outweighed by the fact that the release of the information will prejudice the interests of the Joint Committee, consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information by virtue of which the meeting is likely not to be open to the public during its consideration.

30. FUNCTIONS & FUNDING OF CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM

Ms H. Woodhouse presented her report to members of the Joint Education Service in respect of functions and funding of the Central South Consortium and highlighted the key headings within the report which would set out the likely changes to the operational roles of the Consortium. An update was also provided to members in terms of progress with the development and specification of the Consortium's new functions in the 2015-16 financial year.

Following discussion the next steps were considered and it was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report.

**C. ELMORE
CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 11.30a.m

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next appropriate meeting of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee