



Minutes of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Committee held at Ty Dysgu, Nantgarw on Thursday, 26 March 2015 at 10 a.m.

PRESENT:

In the Chair:

Councillor C.Elmore (Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council)

Members of the Committee

Councillor H.David (Bridgend County Borough Council)

Councillor H. Jones (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)

Councillor (Mrs) E. Hanagan (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Council Officers in Attendance

Ms.D.McMillan – Corporate Director, Children (Bridgend County Borough Council)

Mr.P.Orders – Chief Executive (Cardiff City Council)

Mr.N.Batchelar - Director of Education & Lifelong Learning (Cardiff City Council)

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Director of Education & Lifelong Learning (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Mr.M.Pennell – Group Accountant (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Ms.J.Hill – Director of Learning & Skills (Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council)

Also in Attendance

Ms.H.Woodhouse - Managing Director (Central South Consortium)

Mr R. Hopkins – Head of School Improvement (Central South Consortium)

Mr.R.Smith (NfER) – as an Observer

42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.McGill (Cardiff City Council) and Mr G. Chapman (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)

43 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

44 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Committee held on 16 December 2014.

45 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GROUP (S.I.G.) WORKING

The Committee received a presentation entitled “Central South Challenge Update” from Ms. Angela Satterly (CSW Challenge Co-ordinator) and Mr. Jeremy Phillips (Challenging Adviser & Head Teacher at Litchard Primary School) on SIG working throughout the Consortium area and Members were provided with a summary document outlining the current position.

The Committee was informed of the progress made in engaging schools to become involved in SIG activities. 98% of primary schools were now engaged in SIG working which represented an increase of 10 schools since the last review in January 2015. 94% of secondary schools were also now engaged which represented an increase of 4 secondary schools since January 2015. 39 out of the 41 SIGs had submitted their Spring term progress reports and have had finances realised to them.

The SIG Convenor support and development programme had been adjusted to meet the rapidly changing needs and a drive for deeper SIG working in the region. Following consultation with schools, the support and development of SIGs was now:

- Delivered in separate sector groups
- Delivered in smaller Primary groups in order to deepen collaborative learning, provide a clear focus on impact and offer peer support in strengthening SIG working
- Delivered using a range of tools for all sectors in order to evaluate SIG working and identify the different stages of maturity of each SIG in order to maximise impact.

The support and development programme included:

- Practical Workshops
- Using a “Spirologram” or “Onion diagram” as a self evaluation tool to ascertain the stage of development of each SIG
- Using “Networkograms” to articulate the various aspect of SIG working, how they link together and the roles and responsibilities within the SIG.

- Opportunities to share effective SIG working and the use of developmental tools
- Schools not engaged are followed up and reasons explored and SIGS adjusted accordingly
- Contributing to excellent case studies to share across the region.

The CSW Challenge Co-ordinator explained how challenges were being addressed owing to different levels of school development, a variation in standards of impact reports, improvement planning, support and accountability. The Co-ordinator also explained how information about SIGs was collated at present.

Mr. Phillips, Challenging Advisor, then gave his views on his experience as a Lead SIG Convener, as to how SIGs evolve, develop and operate. In his opinion, the sharing of good practice amongst schools was good and having 'expert' advice was extremely helpful in driving forward the collaborative process.

The Chairman thanked both Ms. Satterly and Mr. Jones for their informative presentation.

A question was raised with regard to the schools that were not engaging in SIG working and how this was being dealt with. The Committee was informed that schools not engaged were contacted at an individual level to explore the reasons as to why they choose not to engage. There were varied reasons given for not engaging and Members asked to be informed, following the meeting, of the schools concerned and the individual reasons for not engaging. Members required this private information in order to understand the complete picture across the Consortium region.

46 CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN

The Managing Director presented the Central South Consortium Draft Business Plan for the Committee's consideration.

Following a discussion on the contents of the document, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Business Plan as submitted subject to any necessary administrative changes being made and references being included in relation to expected targets for school inspection outcomes and the categorisation of schools.

47 CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM GRANTS 2014/15

The Committee was provided with a report outlining the grants to be received by the Consortium for which notification had been received.

The Managing Director highlighted the fact that within the last month, Welsh Government had provided the Consortium with a number of new

grants amounting to £500k and this had to be allocated by the end of the currently financial year. The Managing Director outlined her views on this current situation and explained how the additional grant monies would be utilised so as not to be lost.

A discussion ensued and it was **RESOLVED** –

- (1) To approve the distribution of grants as detailed in Section 4 of the report.
- (2) To receive an overview report on the impact of grant funding to date to include 'Schools Challenge Cymru' funding within the region together with details of the governance and monitoring arrangements that are in place to ensure allocated grant monies are being utilised appropriately.

48 2015/16 BUDGET SETTING APPROVAL PROCESS

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer which sought final approval of the 2015/16 Revenue Budget for the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Committee and **RESOLVED** to note the revised contribution levels for each Local Authority following the publication of the 'Final Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlement 2015-16' by the Welsh Government.

49 2014/15 FORECAST

The Committee considered the report of the Treasurer which provided a summary of the projected outturn for 2014/15 for the Central South Consortium.

An explanation of the Variances was also provided in the report and it was noted that the 'late' grant monies recently made available to the Consortium by Welsh Government, £500k, as reported by the Managing Director earlier in the meeting, were not included in the report before Members.

It was also noted that redundancy costs totalling £1.3m had been incurred as result of the 2014/15 re-organisation of the Consortium which were not included within the report. There was a £100k annual contribution towards these costs built into the 2014/15 and 2015/16 budget. Options for funding the balance, which could include releasing the General Reserves would be considered as part of the closing process for 2014/15 and recommendations would be made to the Joint Committee in this regard.

It was pointed out that the Consortium was currently reviewing its resource requirements for 2015/16 as a result of the reduction in the grants received from Welsh Government and changes in the way services were provided. It was likely, therefore, that further

redundancy costs would be incurred although the value of these was not yet know. Sufficient resources would need to be set aside to make any additional repayments.

Following consideration of the report, it was **RESOLVED** –

- (1) To note the projected outturn for the Central South Consortium for 2014/15.
- (2) That a report on the options available for funding the redundancy costs be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee for consideration.

50 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Risk Register - March 2015.

The Register highlighted the major risks to service delivery, budget and impact and mitigating impact and the Managing Director welcomed Members comments thereon.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** –

- (1) To agree the contents of the risk register subject to the inclusion of two additional risks with regard to lack of strong governance and leadership at schools.
- (2) That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee on the impact of the two additional risks referred to in (1) above.

51 CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM RESPONSE TO ESTYN PUBLICATION – ‘GOOD PRACTICE IN MATHEMATICS AT KEY STAGE 3’

The Committee was provided with a report addressing the recommendations for the Consortium as identified in the recent Estyn publication ‘Good Practice in Mathematics at Key Stage 3’ and following consideration thereof, it was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

52 LEGAL AGREEMENT UPDATE

The Managing Director reported orally that she understood that Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councils had now signed the legal agreement. It was also reported by the Director for Learning & Skills at the Vale of Glamorgan Council that her Authority was signing off the agreement today.

The Managing Director also reported that she understood that Cardiff City Council had not signed to date as the matter was subject to “Call-In” by Scrutiny.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the information.

53 **PROGRESS AGAINST THE PLAN**

The Managing Director provided oral updates in respect of the following matters:

- Current Restructuring Proposals
- Planned internal alterations to Ty Dysgu to provide more Conference Suites/Meeting Rooms for hire
- Budget Forum – increased consultation re: allocation of grants
- New framework for Challenging Advisers working within Schools
- Creating closer links between Schools and Businesses

and following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to note the information.

**C.ELMORE
CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 12.10 p.m.