

ERW Joint Committee
Monday, 16th July, 2018
Y Llwyfan, College Road, Carmarthen
10.00 am - 1.40 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn [Chair] Ceredigion County Council

Councillor Jennifer Raynor	City and County of Swansea
Councillor David Simpson	Pembrokeshire County Council
Councillor Peter Rees	Neath and Port Talbot Council
Councillor Emlyn Dole	Carmarthenshire County Council
Mr Phil Roberts	Lead Chief Executive – ERW & City and County of Swansea
Mr Eifion Evans	Ceredigion County Council
Mr Ian Westley	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Ian Eynon	Pembrokeshire County Council (Deputy S151 Officer)
Mr Aled Evans	Neath and Port Talbot Council
Mr Gareth Morgans	Carmarthenshire County Council
Ms Betsan O'Connor	Managing Director - ERW
Mr Ian Budd	Powys County Council – Lead Director ERW
Mr Jonathan Haswell	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW - S151 Officer)
Ms Elin Prysor	Ceredigion County Council (ERW-Monitoring Officer)
Ms Jo Hendy	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW Head of Internal Audit)
Mr Chris Llewellyn	WLGA
Mr Steve Vincent	Welsh Government
Mr Jeremy Saunders	Wales Audit Office
Mr Jon Mather	Wales Audit Office
Mrs Janine Owen	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rob Stewart (Swansea County Council), Councillor Rosemarie Harris (Powys County Council), Councillor Rob Jones (Neath and Port Talbot Council), Ms Ruth Conway (Welsh Government), Mr Mark James (Carmarthenshire County Council) and Mr Steven Phillips (Neath and Port Talbot Council).

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no declarations of personal interests

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 21ST MARCH 2018

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2018 be signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2018.

5. LEAD CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE

The Joint Committee received an updated Assurance Report which included a table containing an action plan, progress and responsible officer details.

The report clearance procedure provided more clarity with regard to the formal report sign off process. This process was demonstrated within a flow chart appended to the report. Whilst this procedure had been agreed in principle a more formal process would be provided at the next Joint Committee meeting.

AGREED that the Lead Chief Executive Update report be received.

6. REQUESTED REPORTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:-

6.1 SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

The Joint Committee at its last meeting requested to be provided with an update on the support available to schools causing concern [minute 6 refers].

The Joint Committee received a report together with the ERW Schools Causing Concern 2017-18 and ERW Schools Causing Concern Protocol guidance document. The documents were designed for Challenge Advisers and provided information in relation to protocol and support that should be available to schools that cause concern.



The Managing Director explained that although regions provided support to schools causing concern, the statutory responsibility for each school remained with the respective Local Authority.

However, it was acknowledged that at present there were many schools that fell into the bracket of a 'school causing concern' and that early concerns regarding the performance of a school were not being identified and addressed early enough. In order to address this, a proposed schematic was attached to the report to highlight and clarify roles and responsibilities when identifying and escalating concerns.

Therefore it was hoped that the guidance document would intensify early identification of issues, mobilise support and reduce the number of schools that develop significant areas for improvement.

The following queries were raised during consideration of the report:-

- A concern was raised that the document had been written without due regard to Local Authorities. The Managing Director stated that the document had been updated and that the schematic had been developed to access support quickly and to bring about clarity on who was responsible for what.
- It was commented that there seemed to be a degree of duplication within the staffing levels and that it was not clear with regard to who was making the decisions.
- It was suggested that it would be best practice to share on a regional level in order to map out what other Authorities were accomplishing in this area.
- The Lead Director reported that by strengthening the approach and producing clear strategies, significant improvement had been made in this area. This included identifying and reaching schools early enough to reduce interventions, a more collaborative and collective endeavour, efficient governance and leadership.
- In response to a comment raised in relation to capturing activity within the ERW Business Plan, the Lead Chief Executive stated additional work would need to be carried out including identifying areas of best practice, identify where and how best to invoke resources. This work would be included within the Business Plan and circulated to the members of the Joint Committee in due course.

AGREED that the consideration of the report with the inclusion of the additional work identified on schools improvement, be deferred until the next meeting.



6.2 G.C.S.E RESULTS

The Joint Committee received a report which provided an overview of the national outcomes of G.C.S.E.

The Chair stated that in order to afford the Joint Committee with an opportunity to analyse results with previous years, it would be beneficial that a further report be received following the 2018 G.C.S.E results.

AGREED that:

6.2.1 to accept the report as presented;

6.2.2 a further report to be presented to the Joint Committee at the next meeting, to include changes in accountability measures, and an Executive Summary from WG, with results.

6.3 SCRUTINY PRESENTATION ON REVIEW AND REFORM

The Joint Committee at its last meeting requested to receive the presentation which was provided to the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group on 9th March 2018.

The Joint Committee considered the presentation which provided information on the progress made against the Joint Committee's review and reform recommendations.

The following queries were raised during consideration of the presentation:-

A comment was raised that there was a risk of overcomplicating the entire strategy, it was felt that leadership, teaching and learning were key factors and that it was important that clarity was pursued.

It was suggested that the ERW Governance Structure provided within Agenda Item 9.3 be built into the review and reform programme and used as the main driving force.

AGREED that

6.3.1 the report be received;

6.3.2 the Outline Report for Review and Reform of Governance Arrangements (item 9.3) be included within the ERW Review and Reform Programme.



6.4 CORRESPONDENCE TO SCRUTINY COUNCILLOR GROUP

The Joint Committee were requested to consider a draft letter from ERW which had been written in response to a letter (09/04/2018) that had been received by the Chair of the ERW Joint Committee from Councillor Darren Price, Chair of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group.

AGREED that the draft letter of response be approved with additional references to be made that:

- i) the Review and Reform Programme was still in progress; and**
- ii) that changes to the National Model were being monitored before final decisions could be taken in relation to any future ERW structures.**

6.5 REVIEWING THE CURRENT ERW ACCOMMODATION IN Y LLWYFAN, CARMARTHEN

The Joint Committee received a report on the review of the current ERW accommodation in Y Llwyfan, Carmarthen.

The Monitoring Officer advised that considerations relating to the Lease/Licences could be disregarded for purposes of decisions relating to ERW relocation.

The report provided an update on the current ERW accommodation arrangements which included details on the rationale for seeking future accommodation and the current Health and Safety issues.

The Joint Committee was requested to consider the current situation and form an opinion of the suitability of the current accommodation and the value for money in renewing the current lease in view of other options available. Furthermore, based on the evidence presented and the rationales for the move to a new premises, a prompt decision was sought in order that a schedule be put in place to ensure minimal impact to the day to day work of the establishment.

The following were raised during consideration of the report:-

In response to a query, the Managing Director stated that currently ERW employed 47 members of staff, 40 of which currently use the building.

It was commented that until confirmation of the National Model the Joint Committee were not in a position to consider alternative office space and that it would be prudent to seek an interim option.

In light of the above comment, the Committee discussed possible interim options which included the provision of agile working within each Local Authority.



A proposal was made that ERW staff must not utilise Welsh Government buildings in order to carry out their work in future, which was seconded.

With regard to the significant amount of money that was currently spent on conference and seminars, it was suggested that it would be advantageous if each of the 6 Local Authorities hold conferences in turn. Furthermore, the Managing Director reported that enquires had already been made to utilise facilities with schools.

AGREED

6.5.1 i) that the current situation regarding the current lease be noted;

ii) there was a need to renegotiate the current lease for a further period, pending progress of the ERW Review & Reform Programme and the National Model;

6.5.2 that the current situation regarding Health and Safety Report be noted;

6.5.3 to note the cost efficiencies and value for money of the proposed relocation;

6.5.4 to delegate to:

(a) the Lead Chief Executive, Managing Director and Lead Director of Education to consider the Health and Safety mitigation aspects;

(b) the Monitoring Officer to consider the legal position of the lease;

6.5.5 that Welsh Government buildings are not to be utilised by ERW staff in the event that alternative office accommodation is required in the future.

6.6 CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Joint Committee at its meeting held on 18th May, 2018 agreed to adopt the Code of Corporate Governance [minute 5.1 refers]. Following a change in regulations and advice from ERW's Head of Internal Audit, it had been necessary to update the Code accordingly.

The Joint Committee considered the draft Code of Corporate Governance and noted that the Code was only applicable to centrally employed ERW staff and that Local Authority employees would comply with their own local Codes of Corporate Governance.

AGREED that the updated Code of Corporate Governance be approved.



6.7 ERW BUSINESS PLAN

The Joint Committee considered the ERW Business Plan 2018-19. The Plan focused on four key objectives which cascaded from the Welsh Government National Mission:-

- Developing a high-quality education profession
- Ensuring that inspirational leaders work collaboratively to raise standards
- To support our schools to be strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being
- Ensure robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system

The ERW Business Plan also outlined how specific areas for improvement would be funded in line with the new Welsh Government Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant. An Education in Wales Outcomes framework included within the Plan demonstrated how the Welsh Government would hold all regions to account against key outcome measures.

The following queries were raised during consideration of the report:-

The Lead Director reported that upon completion of the Business Plan a self-evaluation took place which had identified areas for concern. These areas identified that there should have been a greater degree of consultation during the development of the Business Plan and the requirement to prepare a précis report for a different audience.

Comments were raised that the Plan lacked focus on key priorities and that more clarity was required with regard to the main accountabilities and the performance reporting lines.

In light of the comments made, it was suggested that improvements be made to the Plan along with a précis, in order to mitigate the risk of not being compliant, it was further suggested the Plan be e-mailed to each Joint Committee Member seeking agreement by 31st July 2018.

AGREED:

6.7.1 that the ERW Business Plan be received as the main strategic document for the financial year 2018-19;

6.7.2 to note that ERW had synchronised its work with the Welsh Government National Mission;



- 6.7.3 i) to instruct the Lead Director of Education and Managing Director to make improvements to the ERW Business Plan;
- ii) to formulate a précis of the Plan to the Executive Board;
- iii) to forward the Précis to all Members of the Joint Committee by e-mail, for agreement by 31st July 2018;

6.7.4 S151 Officers of all Local Authorities to be put on notice of the risk.

7. FINANCE & INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

7.1 ERW CONSORTIUM HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL ASSURANCE OPINION 2017-18

The Joint Committee received the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion on the effectiveness of ERW's governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in order to inform ERW's Annual Governance Statement.

The Joint Committee noted that section 4, Delivery of the Audit Plan had highlighted delays on reaching a consensus between the Local Authorities within ERW and had hindered the Review & Reform Programme from progressing. This in turn had also resulted in the update of the Legal Agreement being delayed. These matters should be considered as Significant Governance Issues within the Annual Governance Statement. In addition, section 4 within the report had also highlighted that the Regional Code for Corporate Governance had not been adopted and therefore, should be considered a Priority for Improvement in the Annual Governance Statement.

The general consensus of the Joint Committee was that it should be made a high priority that the necessary work required to strengthen the Annual Governance Statement be completed as soon as possible before the next Joint Committee meeting.

AGREED o:

- 7.1.1 to refer the matter to the three Lead Officers, (Managing Director, Lead Chief Executive & Director of Education) to formulate a mitigation plan by the next Joint Committee meeting;
- 7.1.2 The Monitoring Officer to update the Legal Agreement, limited to reflect the current position, to include previous Joint Committee delegation decisions, and update of the Executive Board and Managing Director delegations (as set out in Legal Agreement);
- 7.1.3 The ERW Legal Agreement to be added as a standing agenda item.



7.1a ERW CONSORTIUM INTERNAL DRAFT AUDIT REPORT 2017-18

The Joint Committee considered a report on the ERW Consortium Internal Audit for 2017-18 which provided assurance on the effectiveness of governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in place for the ERW Consortium.

Following a comment raised regarding the importance of continuous assurance, the Chair requested that for monitoring purposes this item be a standing item on the Joint Committee Agenda.

AGREED that:

- 7.1a) i) that the ERW Consortium Internal Audit Report 2017-18 be noted;**
- 7.1a) ii) that the ERW Consortium Internal Audit Report 2017-18 be a standing agenda item on the Joint Committee.**

7.1b ERW CONSORTIUM ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2017-18

The Joint Committee received the ERW Consortium Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2017-18 which included the findings from the annual review of Governance arrangements 2017-18 for the ERW Consortium.

It was noted that the Management actions planned had been identified, and were in the process of being agreed and finalised.

The draft AGS was not accepted in its present form.

The Chair expressed her disappointment that it was not possible for the Joint Committee to consider due to the Management actions being incomplete. The ERW S151 Officer advised that most of the actions required a decision of the Joint Committee. The Chair requested for the Management actions to be completed and deferred to the next Joint Committee meeting. The ERW S151 Officer advised that the ERW Consortium Annual Governance Statement must be approved before the ERW Statement of Accounts will be signed by the Wales Audit Office.

AGREED that

- 7.1b) i) the ERW Consortium Annual Governance Statement 2017-18 Management actions be completed by Lead Officers, an action plan identifying mitigating steps;**
- 7.1b) ii) circulated to the Joint Committee Members, for approval by 31/07/2018.**



7.2 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2017-18 & WAO ISA 260 REPORT

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Mr. Jeremy Saunders (Wales Audit Office) who had been invited to attend the Joint Committee to present the WAO Audit of Financial Statements and Opinion Report [ISA 260] for ERW's consideration alongside its review of the Statement of Accounts for 2017-18.

The S151 Officer advised that the Statement of Accounts had been prepared in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and largely mirrored the out-turn report to the Joint Committee in March 2018.

A query was raised with regard to the significant increase in Consultancy fees compared to the 2016-17 fees. The ERW S151 Officer offered to circulate the reason for the increase to the Joint Committee.

Mr Jeremy Saunders circulated the WAO Audit of Financial Statements and Opinion Report [ISA 260] (document 680A 2018-19) and explained the lateness of the report was due to timescales.

The WAO noted that an incomplete AGS could result in an unqualified report.

AGREED

7.2.1 to approve ERW's 2017-18 Statement of Accounts for signing by the ERW S151 Officer and Chair of the Joint Committee;

7.2.2 to receive the WAO Audit of Financial Statements and Opinion Report [ISA 260].

7.3 ERW WALES AUDIT OFFICE AUDIT PLAN FOR 2017-18

The Joint Committee received the ERW Wales Audit Office Audit Plan for 2017-18 which provided an update on the work to be undertaken by Wales Audit Office (WAO) in discharging its statutory duties.

The Joint Committee noted an error under the 'Recommendations/Key Decisions Required' section on the cover sheet of the report which should read 'to approve the Audit fee of £13,000' and not the £14,000 as stated.



AGREED that

- 7.3.1 the Wales Audit Office Audit Plan for 2017-18 be approved (document reference 453A 2018-19 (June 2018));**
- 7.3.2 the Audit fee of £13,000 be approved;**
- 7.3.3 the timetable as detailed within exhibit 4 be accepted;**
- 7.3.4 the respective responsibilities as detailed within Appendix 1 be accepted.**

7.4 ERW FINANCIAL UPDATE 2018-19

The Committee received the updated financial position for the year 2018-19 which provided specific detailed information in relation to:

- 2018-19 Central Team Budget
- Service Level Agreements
- 2018-19 Grant Allocations
- 2018-19 Grants – LAC PDG
- 2018-19 Grants – Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)
- 2018-19 ERW Business Plan Priorities
- ERW Review and Reform Programme
- Risks
- Reserves

With reference to Minute 5 of the last meeting where clarification was sought regarding Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's (NPTCBC) situation on payment of its contribution towards ERW's core costs for 2018/19, it was reported that NPTCBC would be reducing its contribution to ERW in future. The decision was made by Elected Members in the context of the Council's 2018/19 revenue budget determined on 21st February, 2018. Mr Steven Phillips Chief Executive, NPTCBC clarified their position in a letter appended to the report.

The Lead Chief Executive reported that a letter had been written to NPTCBC in consultation with the Chair of ERW which was appended to the report and that a response had been received from the CEO of NPTCBC. However, a further response was currently being prepared. It was acknowledged that payment would not be required until October 2018 and that there was still time to come to an agreement via informal mediation. The Chair requested that this matter be deferred and discussed further at the next Joint Committee meeting.

It was commented that, for consistency purposes, it would be beneficial to explore those Local Authority's that currently had a full complement of challenge advisors in order to ascertain how much was being spent in this area.



The Chair agreed that it would be beneficial to receive the number of Challenge Advisors employed and the cost within each Local Authority and requested that this information be considered at the next Joint Committee meeting.

The Joint Committee noted the letter appended within Annex 2 of the report which stated that results of the recent evaluation identified that significant work was required in order to strengthen the current arrangements. Whilst the letter acknowledged that the evaluation considered arrangements during 2015-16 and 2016-17 period, positive progress to strengthen arrangements had been made since then, albeit more work was required.

The ERW S151 Officer raised concerns regarding ERW's cash flow, given that Welsh Government had not processed any payments to the region for 2019-20 and informed the Joint Committee that he would have to write to all S151 Officers to inform them that no payments would be processed to Local Authorities or schools until Grant clearance had been received from Welsh Government.

Strong concern was expressed regarding the need for good quality leadership in teaching. It was felt that many quality teachers were being seconded in consortia, diminishing quality teachers. The Managing Director stated that in order to support the changes ahead, she was currently liaising with head teachers and that she would provide a report to a future Joint Committee meeting.

AGREED that

- 7.4.1 the updated Central Team budget for 2018-19 be approved;**
- 7.4.2 the action to be taken in the event of Neath Port Talbot County Council not paying their share of the £250k Local Authority Contribution for 2018-19 be deferred to the next Joint Committee meeting;**
- 7.4.3 i) the 2018-19 grant allocations and current issues in meeting four of the RCSIG terms and conditions is noted and;**
ii) that a formal letter from Welsh Government is sought to clarify the terms and conditions of the grant.
- 7.4.4 the 2018-19 grant allocation and current issues in meeting the LAC PDG terms and conditions be noted;**
- 7.4.5 the allocation of the RCSIG to the ERW Business Plan 2018-19 priorities be noted;**



- 7.4.6 the current issues in respect of (a) the meeting the RCSIG terms and conditions and (b) the formula for distribution of the former EIG, included within the RCSIG for 2018-19 as a transitional arrangement, to the six Local Authorities, be noted;**
- 7.4.7 clarification to be sought from Welsh Government as to the offer/arrangements in respect of the £250k Welsh Government funding for the Review and Reform Programme, and with regards its requirements regarding return of any monies already spent;**
- 7.4.8 the determination on how to replenish the ERW Reserves, either with a one-off contribution from the six Local Authorities or an increase in the existing £250k annual contribution be deferred to the next Joint Committee meeting;**
- 7.4.9 the decision to appoint a Finance & Business Improvement Manager on a 12 month fixed term contract be withdrawn.**

8. RISK REGISTER

The Joint Committee received the Corporate Risk Register for 2018-19 which contained strategic business risks (threats) which could be detrimental to the achievement of ERW's Vision and Aims as outlined within the ERW Business Plan.

Whilst the Joint Committee noted the new format, it was commented the register still required significant work. It was reported that a further review of the risk scores would be undertaken.

The Joint Committee noted that the new Register was incomplete and that Members are not owners.

It was reported that a further review of the risk scores would be undertaken.

AGREED that

- 8.1 the risk register be received;**
- 8.2 further work to be carried out to complete the risk register, including reviewing risk scores.**



9. ERW REVIEW AND REFORM REPORTS

9.1 HR PROPOSALS

The Joint Committee considered a report which included the ERW Configuration of roles and responsibilities and proposed the creation of 3 permanent posts in order to stabilise and strengthen the Central Team. The report also included the Job Descriptions for the following 3 proposed posts:-

- Head of Business Improvement
- Head of School Performance and Leadership
- Head of Support and Curriculum

It was noted that the lack of stability and permanent capacity in the ERW Central team had been a risk highlighted to the Joint Committee since November 2016.

In order to undertake a balanced and fair interview, the Chair emphasised that it was important to ensure that each Local Authority had a representation on the Appointment Committee.

A concern was raised that the cost accumulation of the 3 posts would equate to circa £250k and therefore it was felt that a business case should be developed.

It was reported that a meeting had been arranged with Directors on 20th July 2018 to consider the Job Descriptions in more detail.

Due to the nature of the role and the area they will serve, it was requested that the job descriptions for Head of School Performance and Leadership and Head of Support and curriculum be changed to reflect that. It was deemed necessary that the successful applicant be highly proficient in the use of the Welsh Language upon appointment.

In addition, as the Head of Business Improvement position would predominantly be a back office function, it was agreed that the 'ability to work through the medium of Welsh' should remain as *Desirable*.

AGREED that

9.1.1 the proposal to create the following 3 posts:

- Head of Business Improvement
- Head of School Performance and Leadership
- Head of Support and Curriculum

be approved subject to:



- i) the posts for Head of School Performance & Leadership and Head of Support and Curriculum be amended to state ‘the ability to work through the medium of Welsh is *Essential* and at a proficient level on appointment’;
- ii) the Job Descriptions and Job Specifications being considered further by Directors, Section 151 Officer and the HR Group (x6 one from each LA).

9.2 REVIEWING THE SLAs AND IN-KIND ARRANGEMENTS

The Joint Committee received a report which outlined the current position of the SLAs and in-kind arrangements and provided recommendations.

It was noted that overall, many of the services provided to ERW both under agreements and by SLAs from Local Authorities had been successful. However, it was deemed timely to undertake a review to ascertain value for money and the quality and scale of services as the organisation expanded.

The Managing Director reported that critical infrastructure matters had been identified as requiring urgent attention including HR, Finance, Audit, IT, Insurance, Accommodation, Health & Safety and GDPR. Due to the critical risk levels concerned, it was proposed that SLAs as laid out in the report be endorsed.

It was commented that Pembrokeshire County Council were providing the most services.

It was suggested that the SLA arrangements from 1st April 2019 be re-established.

Arising from the above and following a query raised in relation to who was responsible for insurance, the Chair requested a further report be presented to the next Joint Committee and stated that, until the next meeting, it would be practical to continue with the present arrangements.

AGREED that

- 9.2.1 a report providing information on insurance matters be brought to the next Joint Committee;
- 9.2.3 until then, the present SLAs and in-kind arrangements are to continue;
- 9.2.2 Expressions of interest for in-kind arrangements/statutory officers, and SLAs to be invited from all LAs from September 2018.



9.3 OUTLINE REMIT FOR REVIEW AND REFORM OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ERW

The Joint Committee received a report which aimed to clarify the scope of the work being undertaken in respect of the governance arrangements for ERW.

It was noted that following the recent ESTYN report and in light of the review of the National Model, it was felt that this was an opportune time to review the governance arrangements in order to ensure that ERW's governance remained effective and efficient.

The Report provided details of the following:-

- Principles of good governance
- The remit of regional consortia and Local Authorities
- Characteristics of the refined school improvement service in Mid and West Wales (Draft)
- Current challenges
- Key areas for review

In order to address some of the challenges, the key areas for review included a proposed governance structure which would ensure all stakeholders were clear on the remit of each board/group, strengthen the scrutiny of ERW and strengthen the quality assurance in Local Authorities. In addition, a draft Joint Committee membership was provided along with the terms of reference and delegated powers of the committee which detailed 12 specific responsibilities in order to promote joint working in the delivery of service.

The following were raised during consideration of the report:-

- Reference was made to the 12 responsibilities (Page 466) of the Joint Committee. An observation was raised that as a Joint Committee one of the responsibilities should include 'to monitor the position and direction of the national picture'.
- In response to a number of queries regarding further development work, the Chair stated it would be difficult to develop the Management Structure further until the confirmation of the National Model was received.

AGREED that:

9.3.1 the report on the Outline Remit for Review and Reform of Governance Arrangements for ERW be received as work in progress;

9.3.2 for the report to be fed in to the work of the ERW Review and Reform Programme (JC 21/9/17 decision 7.1-7.3);

9.3.3 the challenges be noted.



10. NON COMPLIANCE REPORT

The Joint Committee received a non-compliance report which highlighted that ERW were not compliant with the conditions of the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG).

The Managing Director reminded the Joint Committee that the Welsh Government (WG) have merged their many grants to Regional Consortia into one single Regional School Improvement Grant (RSIG). The funding was scheduled to be paid on a bi-monthly basis based on costs incurred as detailed in an agreed Payment Profile with Welsh Government.

The value of the grant to ERW was £40,971,102. In addition, the PDG grant to ERW, which was also referred to in the offer letter appended to the report, was valued at £24,233,150. It was noted in the grant offer letter that, "We reserve the right to withhold or recover any part of the Funding".

It was highlighted that other regions had received their 1st quarter allocation and were scheduled to receive the 2nd quarter allocation. ERW had not yet received its allocation which was causing schools concern as they were yet to receive their foundation and EIG funding.

In addition, the Managing Director highlighted that on interpretation of the conditions, currently ERW does not meet at least 6 of the conditions as laid out in the report.

The Managing Director emphasised that, should the Joint Committee not agree on a common funding formula for all schools at this meeting, schools would not receive funding this term.

The Chair stated that the Joint Committee were not in a position to agree until the ERW Business Plan had been approved (See item 6.7 above), following approval, this matter be brought back to the Joint Committee for decision. In the meantime, it was suggested to continue with the current common funding formula for all schools.

AGREED

10.1 i) that this matter be deferred to a future Joint Committee meeting following the endorsement of the ERW Business Plan (by Welsh Government), in the meantime;

ii) officers to continue with the current common funding formula for all schools;



10.2 to instruct the Manging Director to negotiate interim arrangements with Welsh Government whilst the development work is put in place in order to access grant for schools;

10.3 schools to be informed via individual LA S151 officers.

11. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no other items of business raised.

CHAIR

DATE

