

**Pwyllgor ar y Cyd/Joint Committee**  
**15eg Gorffennaf 2016/ 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016**  
**Y Llwyfan, Caerfyrddin / Carmarthen**  
**1.50 p.m. – 2.45 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Alun Thomas [Chair]

Councillor James Adams	Pembrokeshire County Council
Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn	Ceredigion County Council
Councillor Gareth Jones	Carmarthenshire County Council
Councillor Barry Thomas	Powys County Council
Mr Mark James	Lead Chief Executive – ERW
Mr Eifion Evans	Lead Director – ERW
Ms Betsan O'Connor	ERW – Managing Director
Ms Bronwen Morgan	Ceredigion County Council
Mr Jeremy Patterson	Powys County Council
Mr Ian Westley	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Aled Evans	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Mr Jonathan Haswell	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW S151 Officer)
Mr Matthew Holder	ERW
Mr Geraint Rees	Welsh Government
Ms Elin Pryor	Ceredigion County Council (ERW Monitoring Officer)
Mr Jeremy Saunders	Wales Audit Office
Ms Chris Sivers	City & County of Swansea

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Mrs Michelle Evans Thomas

Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic  
Services)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor E. Dole (Carmarthenshire), Mr Chris Llewelyn (WLGA) and Jo Hendy (ERW).

**2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Reference was made to the fact that the the Joint Committee's Constitution (Legal Agreement) requires the Chair and Vice-Chair to be appointed at the first meeting after 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2016 and in view of the fact that the elections were only a few months away, it was suggested that the Constitution be amended to require the Chair and Vice-Chair to be appointed in May of each relevant year.

**AGREED to amend the Constitution to require the appointments of the Chair and Vice-Chair to be made in May of each relevant year.**

**3. APPOINTMENT OF LEAD CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**AGREED that Mr Mark James be re-appointed Lead Chief Executive for the period 2016-2018.**

**4. APPOINTMENT OF LEAD DIRECTOR**

**AGREED that Mr Aled Evans be appointed Lead Director for the period 2016-2018.**

**5. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of personal interests

**6. MINUTES - 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016**

It was pointed out that there is no "e" at the end of Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn's surname.

The Monitoring Officer referred to minute 6 – Delegation Arrangements – and clarified that:



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delegation arrangements had been agreed in respect of the following matters:-

- EIG distribution formula
- Additional ad hoc WG grants, subject to the insertion of the additional words “smaller funding streams”

However, no agreement was reached in respect of the following issues:-

- SLA with partners within ERW LAs
- Making urgent decisions outside the cycle of JC meetings

as it had been intended that a further report would be submitted to the Joint Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 in respect of these matters.

**AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 be signed as a correct record, subject to the above-mentioned amendments.**

## **7. RISK REGISTER**

The Joint Committee was circulated with a copy of the Risk Register which highlighted the main risks in the Corporate, Financial and School Improvement areas with a view to helping ERW support its objectives, make effective use of resources and deliver outcomes as intended.

ERW had identified the process of taking action to mitigate risk and managing risks between the Local Authority and the region as a key area to strengthen and to build on the current position.

The Managing Director advised the Committee that the recent changes proposed by the WG would need to be included and as soon as the Estyn report is published the necessary amendments would be made.

The Lead Director informed the Committee that the Executive Board had agreed, at its meeting earlier that day, to write to the WG expressing concern about the Cap9/Level 2 issue and asking for an explanation. ERW had intended to use Cap 9 as the main indicator for the future, however, the WG had recently announced that they were going back to Level 2. There had been no engagement or discussion just an unilateral decision made by the WG.

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He also advised the Committee that there had been a review of the measures within the Welsh Bacc which completely undermined the value of numeracy and these measures would inevitably take us in the opposite direction to where Donaldson was trying to get us i.e. re-aligned with PISA, which would pose a risk to the education system in its entirety. It was agreed by the Executive Board to add this issue to the Risk Register and to write to the WG to ask for an extended dialogue on it.

Reference was made to the difficulties being encountered in recruiting school leaders and the Managing Director explained that it continued to be a challenge, however, they had a whole suite of strategies in place and were working with other regions to try and overcome this problem.

**AGREED that the report be received and accepted.**

**8. LETTER FROM SCRUTINY**

The Joint Committee was advised that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all six Local Authorities' Education Scrutiny Committees came together in Swansea on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2016 for their twice yearly joint seminar.

At the meeting the group reviewed ERW's Business Plan for 2016/19 and looked at school standards and categorisation across the region. They also shared scrutiny work plans and from these discussions a number of common issues emerged which were circulated to the Joint Committee for consideration, together with the following recommendations:-

- (1) That the Joint Committee provides written clarification about the capacity of challenge advisors across the region. In particular, are all Local Authorities working to full capacity in relation to their numbers of Challenge Advisors?
- (2) That the Joint Committee reviews how the results of categorisation are provided to parents. The group was concerned that the current presentation in the media caused unnecessary worries for parents when their schools had been placed in a lower category.

The Managing Director advised the Committee that she had drafted a response for approval.

**AGREED**

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- 8.1 that the report be received;**
- 8.2 that the draft letter of response be approved.**

**9. ERW FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2015-16**

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Mr Jeremy Saunders of the Wales Audit Office.

The Joint Committee received for consideration the ERW Statement of Accounts 2015-16 and the Wales Audit Office ISA260 report and audit opinion.

The Chair congratulated officers on an excellent report.

**AGREED**

- 9.1 that the ERW Statement of Accounts for 2015-16 be approved;**
- 9.2 that the Wales Audit Office ISA260 and audit opinion be received.;**
- 9.3 that the Annual Governance Statement 2015-16 be accepted.**

**10. LEAD DIRECTOR AND MANAGING DIRECTOR UPDATE**

**10.1 RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS AND HEADTEACHERS**

The Managing Director updated the Committee on the current position regarding the Communications SLA between ERW and Carmarthenshire County Council. They were looking at morale and retention and had the support of the teacher unions. They were currently looking at strategies, both nationally and locally, to try to encourage people to apply.

**AGREED to enter into collaboration with the other Local Authorities to accept the SLA.**

**10.2 REVIEW OF PROGRESS – DELIVERING SELF IMPROVING SCHOOL SYSTEM**

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The Managing Director updated the Committee on the review of progress on the delivery of the Self Improving School System (SISS). The region has worked very hard towards developing a SISS network and were currently looking at where resources are needed in schools. The review had produced some very helpful recommendations and early indications were that the region was making steps in the right direction towards a Self improving School System.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIR**

