



Partneriaeth Joint Committee

Friday, 6 October 2023

Virtual Meeting - 10.05am - 10.51 am

CHAIR: Councillor Robert Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
(voting member)

Voting Members	
Councillor Glynog Davies	Cabinet Member for Education & Welsh Language, (Carmarthenshire County Council)
Councillor Guy Woodham	Cabinet Member for Education & Welsh Language, (Pembrokeshire County Council)
Chief Executives	
Mr Martin Nicholls	Swansea Council (Lead Chief Executive)
Directors of Education	
Mr Gareth Morgans	Carmarthenshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Mr Steven Richards-Downes	Pembrokeshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Ms. Helen Morgan-Rees	Swansea City and County Council (Lead Director)
Officers	
Mr Ian Altman	Partneriaeth Lead Officer
Ms. Linda Rees Jones	Monitoring Officer (Carmarthenshire County Council)
Mr Matthew Holder	Partneriaeth Head of Internal Audit (Pembrokeshire County Council)
Mrs Sarah Edwards	Deputy S151 Officer (Pembrokeshire County Council)
Mrs Andrea Davies	Estyn
Mrs. Ruth Lee	Partneriaeth Business Manager
Mrs. Kelly Evans	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services, note taker)
Mrs. Siwan Rees	Carmarthenshire County Council (Translation)
Mr. Martin Runeckles	Carmarthenshire County Council (Webcasting)
Observers	
Cllr Lyndon Jones	Scrutiny Chair of Councillor Group

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Darren Price (Leader, Carmarthenshire County Council), Wendy Walters, Chief Executive of Carmarthenshire County Council, Cllr Rob Stewart, Leader of Swansea Council and Cllr David Simpson, Leader of Pembrokeshire County Council.

In view of the fact that the Chair and deputies had tendered apologies, Councillor Robert Smith was voted in to chair today's meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests made at the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PARTNERIAETH MEETING HELD ON THE 23 JUNE 2023

Resolved that the minutes of the Partneriaeth Joint Committee held on the 23 June 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (IF ANY)

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. OPTION RE NOMINATION OF VOTING MEMBERS OF PARTNERIAETH JOINT COMMITTEE

The Joint Committee received a report to amend the choice of voting member on Partneriaeth's Joint Committee. This would provide flexibility for the three local authorities and give them the option of nominating their Cabinet member with the education portfolio as their voting member instead of their Leader.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the revised wording to the Terms of Reference (as appended to report) be approved.

6. LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE PARTNERIAETH SCRUTINY COUNCILLOR GROUP

The Joint Committee received a letter from the Chair of Scrutiny Councillor Group, reflecting on the views following the last meeting of the Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group, held on the 19th June 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the letter be received.

7. PARTNERIAETH FINANCIAL REPORT 2023-24

The Joint Committee received an update on the financial position of Partneriaeth as of August 2023.

It was noted that the report provided specific detailed information in relation to:

- Service Level Agreements

- LA contributions
- Budget Monitoring – August 2023
- Grant Income for 2023-24
- Risks and Opportunities

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:-

7.1 the financial report as at August 2023 be noted

7.2 the projected outturn for 2023-24 be noted

**8. PARTNERIAETH HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL ASSURANCE
OPINION 2022-23**

The Joint Committee were provided with the annual assurance opinion on the effectiveness of Partneriaeth's Governance, Internal Control, Risk Management and Financial Management Arrangements for 2022-23.

The Head of Internal Audit informed the committee that Partneriaeth has a moderate framework.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the :-

8.1 report be noted;

8.2 Annual Assurance Opinion for 2022-23 be noted

9. PARTNERIAETH ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022-23

The Joint Committee considered the findings from the annual review of governance arrangements for Partneriaeth for 2022-23.

The Internal Audit review gave a moderate assurance rating on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in place. Areas requiring further improvement have been included within the priorities for improvement of the Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 Action Plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Partneriaeth Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 be received.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

The Joint Committee received Partneriaeth's Internal Audit Work Programme 2023-24 for approval.

The Work Programme has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. It has been developed in consultation with the Lead Chief Executive, the Lead Director of Education, the S151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Lead Officer for Partneriaeth.

The Joint Committee were informed that Internal Audit fieldwork would begin in February 2024 and on conclusion, a report would be issued to officers for consideration. Once feedback has been provided to Internal Audit, the report will be presented to the Joint Committee during the Summer term.

In response to a query regarding the broadness of the scope, the Joint Committee were advised that a sample approach across organisations, would be the preferred option, as this provided coverage to deliver.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the 2023-24 Internal Audit Work Programme be approved.

11. PARTNERIAETH PERFORMANCE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024 BUSINESS PLAN CYCLE

The Joint Committee received a report providing information of provision and performance of the financial year 2023-24 business plan.

The business plan is monitored quarterly and it was noted that nearly all actions were on track for full delivery by March 2024.

The Joint Committee were informed of areas of support for schools Partneriaeth offers, in line with business plan expectations. Areas for development and resources are regularly discussed as part of the Director Strategy Group.

The Joint Committee thought that this was an interesting and key piece of work moving forward.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the :-

11.1 update be noted

11.2 the report be received

12. PARTNERIAETH STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION SURVEY (NET PROMOTER SURVEY)

The Joint Committee received a report with a response to the Partneriaeth stakeholder perception survey (Net Promoter Survey) from summer term 2023.

The Joint Committee expressed disappointment at the low take up of the survey from Headteachers. In response, the committee were advised this was due to a number of reasons, including the Action Short of Strike. This impacted negatively on the completion rate and it was decided to extend the survey to discreet groups.

The Joint Committee were informed that a Net Promoter Survey would be conducted annually at the end of the business planning cycle during March. The survey results will be shared with all staff in Partneriaeth and an action plan co-constructed and those who indicated that they were happy to provide further feedback would be contacted within a working month of survey completion.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the :-

12.1 update be noted

12.2 the report be accepted

12.3 the annual survey at end of business plan cycle be agreed

13. PARTNERIAETH RISK REGISTER

The Joint Committee received the overall risk profile of the region. It was indicated that the following risks were of medium probability and High impact:

- Timeliness of Welsh Government Funding
- Lack of Clarity regarding functions of Partneriaeth

There has been a reduction in Risk 2 due to the inspections across the local authorities.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:-

13.1. The risk profile be noted;

13.2. The risk report be accepted

14. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT OF SECTION 100B (4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There were no items of urgent business.

CHAIR

DATE