



PARTNERIAETH JOINT COMMITTEE

Friday, 2 February 2024

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 10:00am - 10:46am

CHAIR: Councillor Glynog Davies - Cabinet Member for Education & Welsh Language,
(Carmarthenshire County Council) (voting member)

Voting Members	
Councillor Robert Smith (Remote)	Cabinet Member for Education and Learning (Swansea County Council)
Councillor Guy Woodham (Remote)	Cabinet Member for Education & Welsh Language, (Pembrokeshire County Council)
Chief Executives	
Mrs. Wendy Walters (In Person)	Carmarthenshire County Council (Chief Executive)
Mr. Martin Nicholls (Remote)	Swansea Council (Lead Chief Executive)
Directors of Education	
Mr. Gareth Morgans (Remote)	Carmarthenshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Mr. Steven Richards-Downes (Remote)	Pembrokeshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Ms. Helen Morgan-Rees (Remote)	Swansea City and County Council (Lead Director)
Officers	
Mr. Ian Altman (Remote)	Partneriaeth Lead Officer
Mr Jonathan Haswell (Remote)	Partneriaeth S151 Officer (Director of Resources, Pembrokeshire County Council)
Ms. Linda Rees Jones (Remote)	Monitoring Officer (Carmarthenshire County Council)
Mrs. Ruth Lee (Remote)	Partneriaeth Business Manager
Mrs. Janine Owen (In Person)	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services, note taker)
Mrs. Siwan Rees (In Person)	Carmarthenshire County Council (Translation)
Mr. Martin Runeckles (In Person)	Carmarthenshire County Council (Webcasting)
Observers	
Cllr. Lyndon Jones (Remote)	Scrutiny Chair of Councillor Group



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from William Bramble (Chief Executive, Pembrokeshire County Council), Councillor David Simpson (Pembrokeshire County Council), Mrs Sarah Edwards, Deputy S151 Officer (Pembrokeshire County Council).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PARTNERIAETH MEETING HELD ON THE 6TH OCTOBER 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partneriaeth meeting held on 6th October, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (IF ANY)

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. LETTER FROM CHAIR OF 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 23rd October, 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the letter, as attached in this report, be received.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT OUTTURN 2022-23

The Joint Committee was provided with a financial outturn for 2022-23 which included:-

- Partneriaeth Budget 2022-23
- 2022-23 Service Level Agreements
- Local Authority Contributions
- Outturn 2022-23
- Grant Income for 2022-23
- Risks and Opportunities
- Reserves

It was reported that the budget was approved by the Joint Committee on 29th April 2022, with a revised budget for 2022-23 which was approved by the Joint Committee on 3rd February 2023.



In response to a query raised regarding opportunities and/or restrictions in utilising reserves should it be appropriate to do so in the future, the Partneriaeth S151 Officer confirmed that the reserves were classed as free reserves, not held for accounting purposes and therefore could be utilised as appropriate.

In reference to the £195k+ RCSIG funds received in 2022-23 which was not spent and would be returned to Welsh Government, it was asked if this was normal practice and what was the comparison with the previous years? The Partneriaeth S151 Officer stated that traditionally there had been underspends and the Welsh Government had allowed small underspends to be kept for future years, however, this year the Welsh Government had requested the underspend to be returned. The Partneriaeth Lead Officer added that this particular underspend was linked to one specific grant area and explained the reasons behind the underspend. The Lead Director of Swansea City and County Council stated that in principle the aim would be to avoid future underspends at every opportunity, therefore the Strategic Group would be carefully monitoring the budget in order to allocate any potential underspends to Local Authorities.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Financial Report Outturn 2022-23 be approved.

7. PARTNERIAETH FINANCIAL REPORT 2023-24 (DECEMBER 2023)

The Joint Committee received an update on the financial position of Partneriaeth at the end of December 2023 and the projected outturn for 2023-24.

Members noted the specific detailed information provided in relation to:

- Service Level Agreements
- LA Contributions
- Budget Monitoring – December 2023
- Grant Income for 2023-24
- Risks and Opportunities

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that :-

7.1 The financial report as at December 2023 and projected outturn for 2023-24 be noted;

7.2 The revised budget for 2023-24 and the grant income and allocation for 2023-24 be approved.



8. PARTNERIAETH DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2024-25

The Joint Committee received for consideration and endorsement 'in principle' of the Partneriaeth draft budget for 2024-25 with a view of the formal approval to be obtained at the Joint Committee meeting on 7 June 2024 following confirmation of funding from Welsh Government, and member Local Authorities had been received.

The Partneriaeth draft budget for 2024-25, included:

- Assumptions and estimates
- Local Authority contributions
- Service Level Agreements (SLA's)
- Draft Budget for 2024-25
- Working Balance and Reserves
- Risks and Opportunities

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that :-

- 8.1 The Draft Budget for 2024-25 be approved 'in principle', subject to change once confirmation of funding is received, with referral to the Joint Committee meeting on 7 June 2024 for formal approval;**
- 8.2 The Service Level Agreements for 2024-25 be approved;**
- 8.3 The contribution from reserve for 2024-25, in lieu of Local Authority contributions, be approved.**

9. LEAD OFFICER UPDATE

The Joint Committee received an update from the Lead Officer which provided the information sharing strategy and strategic planning group terms of reference to strengthen working between Partneriaeth and partner Local Authorities, as well as an update on Q3 Business Plan delivery.

It was reported that the information Sharing Strategy Terms of Reference had been developed by senior officers in Partneriaeth and Local Authorities. The Strategy provided a rationale for the effective sharing of information and intelligence in order to ensure effective delivery for schools across the region under the following headings:

- Sharing of documentation
- Planning the Professional Learning offer
- School-based intelligence



In reference to the statement regarding the change in financial streams on the Local Authorities as opposed to the Region, which was made at the end of December 2023, it was reported that an updated statement had been received on a National level from the Minister of Education & Welsh Language in January 2024. Current expectations for regions were going to change in education therefore it was mentioned that further discussions would be needed which could eventually change the funding presented to this Joint Committee in June.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

9.1 the Lead Officer update be noted

9.2 the following documents be accepted:

- **Information Sharing Strategy**
- **Strategic Planning Groups – Terms of Reference**
- **Business Plan Q3 Monitoring**

10. PARTNERIAETH RISK REGISTER

The Joint Committee received the overall risk profile of the region. The report outlined the overall risk profile of the region which had been updated to reflect recommendations from Audit 2022-23 and also to take into consideration that Welsh Government funding had been received by Partneriaeth, including all expected variation awards.

The Joint Committee noted that the heat map indicated the risk scoring as Medium Probability and High Impact due to:

- Lack of clarity regarding functions of Partneriaeth
- Partneriaeth found not to provide value for money

In addition, there was a second increased risk in the light of recommendations from Audit 2022-23.

RESOLVED that the report and risk profile be noted.

11. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair noted that there were no other items of business that should be considered as a matter of urgency.

CHAIR

DATE

