

(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)



**ERW Joint Committee
Tuesday, 30th March, 2021
Virtual Meeting
2.00 - 2.45 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Emlyn Dole [Chair], Carmarthenshire County Council

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn	Ceredigion County Council
Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Powys County Council
Councillor Jen Raynor (substituting for Cllr Rob Stewart)	Swansea Council
Councillor Guy Woodham (substituting for Cllr David Simpson)	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Richard Brown	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Phil Roberts	Swansea City Council
Dr Caroline Turner	Powys County Council
Mrs Wendy Walters	Carmarthenshire County Council
Councillor Robert Smith	Swansea Council
Mr Jonathan Haswell	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW – S151 Officer)
Ms Elin Prysor	Ceredigion County Council (ERW - Monitoring Officer)
Mr Gareth Morgans	Carmarthenshire County Council (Lead Director)
Mr Stephen Richards-Downes	Pembrokeshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Ms Helen Morgan-Rees	Swansea Council
Mr Greg Morgan	ERW Chief Officer
Mr Ian Altman	ERW Chief Officer
Mr Ceri Davies	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW - HR)
Ms Helen Lewis	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW - HR)
Ms Ruth Lee	ERW Business Support Manager
Ms Natalie Chambers	ERW Principal Accountant



(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

Mr Alex Ingram	Welsh Government
Ms Karen Newby-Jones	ESTYN
Mrs Llinos Jenkins	Carmarthenshire County Council
Mrs Michelle Evans Thomas	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Mrs Jessica Laimann	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Ms Emma Bryer	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Ms Siwan Rees	Carmarthenshire County Council (Translation)
Mr Jonney Corner	Carmarthenshire County Council (Technical Support)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Simpson (Pembrokeshire County Council), Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea Council), Eifion Evans (Ceredigion County Council) and Mark Campion (Estyn). Cllr Jen Raynor (Swansea Council) and Cllr Guy Woodham (Pembrokeshire County Council) attended the meeting as deputies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
E. ap Gwynn	7 – Ceredigion Letter	Author of letter

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ERW Joint Committee meeting held on 9 February 2021 be signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute Item 7

The meeting was advised that both Carmarthenshire County Council and Swansea Council had temporarily rescinded their notice to leave the Consortium to facilitate an extension of the new implementation date to 31 August 2021.

5. ERW BUDGET 2021-22 (APRIL - AUGUST)

The Joint Committee received an update on the draft budget for April to August 2021, relating to the following areas:

- Outline draft budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;
- Outline Local Authority Contributions for 1 April to 31 August 2021;



(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

- Outline Grant Allocations required from Local Authorities to ERW for 1 April to 31 August 2021;
- Outline of risks for 1 April to 31 August 2021.

The Joint Committee was advised that no increase of Local Authority Contributions had been added to account for the withdrawal of Ceredigion County Council in line with the approach following the withdrawal of NPT, where the shortfall had been covered by unused funding carried forward.

With regard to grant funding, the meeting was advised that PDG and RCSIG funding would be disaggregated to each Constituent Authority and not paid to ERW directly as done in previous years. In order to fund ERW and allow for the delivery of the Business Plan until 31 August 2021, each Local Authority would need to transfer a proportion of received grant funding to ERW as detailed in the report. The same applied to the PDG LAC, subject to the funding being approved by Welsh Government.

Risks continued to be identified around dependency on grants, the future ERW footprint and diminishing reserves.

In response to a query, the meeting was advised that risks relating to potential staffing changes/redundancies had been estimated but these would not affect the draft budget for April to August 2021.

RESOLVED to

- 5.1. Note the assumptions and estimates made in compiling the outline budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.2. Note the risks associated with the uncertainty over ERW from 1 September 2021 onwards;**
- 5.3. Approve the outline budgets for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.4. Approve the Local Authority Contributions for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.5. Approve the use of reserves and unused funding carried forward to support the outline core Central Team budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.6. Approve the transfer of RCSIG, including EIG, and PDG funding from each Local Authority to ERW as outlined in the report;**
- 5.7. Approve the transfer of PDG LAC funding from each Local Authority to ERW as outlined in the report;**
- 5.8. Authorise the ERW S151 Officer to make amendments to the outline budget as assumptions and estimates are confirmed.**

6. NEATH PORT TALBOT LETTER - PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

The Joint Committee considered a letter from the Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPT). The Joint Committee was advised that the letter



(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

requested to continue current service provisions to NPT schools until 31st March 2022 or until the date of the dissolution of the existing consortium, if earlier.

The meeting was advised that the Variation to the Legal Agreement had not yet been signed and reminders had been sent to the Constituent Authorities. Work on the preparation of a separate legal agreement between NPT and the remaining Constituent Authorities could only commence once this had been completed.

RESOLVED to

- 6.1. Extend the current arrangements to provide Neath Port Talbot schools with access to agreed services until 31st March 2022 (or on the dissolution of the existing consortium, if earlier) on the current terms and subject to a formal contractual agreement;**
- 6.2. Establish clear lines of communication with the consortium over the next period, in particular in regard to their financial liability attached to the dissolution of the current arrangements.**

7. CEREDIGION LETTER - PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

[NOTE: Councillor E. ap Gwynn had earlier declared interests in this item and was not present during consideration thereof.]

The Joint Committee considered a letter from Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of Ceredigion County Council, regarding the provision of services to Ceredigion County Council schools. The meeting was advised that Ceredigion County Council would leave the ERW Consortium on 31st March 2021 and had requested that the provision of specific programmes and services be extended until 31st August 2021.

The Chair thanked Cllr ap Gwynn for her contributions to the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED to

- 7.1. Agree to provide Ceredigion County Council school with programmes and services as specified in the report until 31st August 2021;**
- 7.2. To develop a formal contractual agreement to agree the terms and conditions of the temporary service provision to Ceredigion County Council.**

8. Y LLWYFAN LEASE

The Joint Committee considered a report on the lease agreement of the office space at Y Llwyfan. It was advised that notice would need to be given before 30th April 2021 to terminate the current lease agreement and vacate the offices by 31st October 2021.

The meeting was advised that, from 1st September 2021 the new partnership would require a base with a limited amount of office space, a registered postal address and storage space to carry out its activities. A quote had been received



(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

from the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD) to lease reduced office space at Y Llwyfan from 1st September 2021, but availability could only be guaranteed if the existing lease was carried forward rather than terminated by 31st October 2021. This would require that the current lease be continued and taken over by the new partnership from 1st September 2021.

The meeting was advised that the current lease was held by Powys County Council on behalf of ERW. As Powys County Council would leave the partnership by 31st August 2021, the lease would need to be transferred to another Local Authority.

RESOLVED that the Leaders of the Constituent Authorities further discuss the lease arrangements before the notice deadline on 30th April 2021.

9. LEGAL AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS APRIL - AUGUST 2021

The Joint Committee considered a report on the provision of Legal and Monitoring service arrangements from 1st April to 31st August 2021.

A proposal was received to appoint Swansea Council as Lead Authority responsible for Legal and Monitoring Officer Services for the period specified.

The Chair thanked Elin Prysor for her support as Monitoring Officer to the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED to appoint Swansea Council as the Lead Authority responsible for Legal and Monitoring Officer Services from 1st April to 31st August 2021.

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

The meeting was advised that Carmarthenshire County Council, Powys County Council and Swansea Council had all temporarily rescinded their notice to leave the Consortium. The existing partnership would continue from 1st April to 31st August 2021 with Carmarthenshire County Council, Powys County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Swansea Council, to facilitate implementation of a new partnership model from 1st September 2021.

CHAIR

DATE

