



To:
Cllr. Emlyn Dole
Chair of the ERW Joint Committee

Please ask for: **Scrutiny**

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Date: 23 March 2021

Dear Councillor Dole

ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group – 1 March 2021

The Scrutiny Councillor Group would like to thank Gareth Morgans, Ian Altman and Greg Morgan for attending our meeting, for presenting the information we requested and answering our questions. I am writing to you to reflect on the views from that meeting.

We thank you for your letter, dated the 15 February, responding to the issues raised at our meeting on the 26 November. We felt that on this occasion your letter did not fully answer our questions because we were looking for some more clarity on a number of issues. We do recognise that it is a difficult time and that ERW are at a crossroads but we do need to understand how the new model will work for those who will be partners and those who are not. Can we therefore ask you to address the following points in your reply?

1. How will the new model deliver value for money for those who will be members of the partnership and for those who would commission work from it?
2. How will it add value for those councils that sign up? We still have concerns around the concept of Local Authorities (LA) commissioning activities. We asked why should LAs be part of a consortium when they can just 'buy in' the services they need and not have to commit to and pay for the costs of running a regional body.
3. Clarity on funding the new model is required. How will the commissioning aspect work financially in the new model? Also what will the likely financial burden be on those LAs who sign up compared to those who choose to commission services?
4. We were also still not clear where regional collaboration will go from here, especially how the evidence base has been interpreted because each LA in the region has come to a different conclusion about how it will progress and all based on that same evidence. Can we see the summary of what local authorities want from the new model, both those within the proposed partnership and those looking to commission

services? It would also be useful to see the areas that are proving to be problematic?

We wished to emphasise the need for the new model to commence with a stable and solid foundation but we feel for this to be the case, confidence needs to be built across LAs and Schools, while also obtaining good 'buy in'.

We would like to congratulate ERW staff on their achievements while working throughout this difficult period, not only working through the pandemic but through the uncertainty of the changing ERW model. We were particularly impressed with the work around remote and blended learning, which schools across the region will have benefitted from hugely.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Lyndon Jones
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