

EDUCATION WORKFORCE COUNCIL  
CYNGOR Y GWEITHLU ADDYSG

**MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE  
EDUCATION WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

**DATE: 09<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

**LOCATION: TŶ DYSGU, The Conference Centre, Treforest**

**Present:**

**Members:**

Angela Jardine (Chairperson)	Helen O'Sullivan
Robert Townsend	Kevin Pascoe
Isobel Davies	Hugh Patrick
Roberto De Benedictis	Berni Tyler
John Griffiths	Jo Gauden
James Harris	Paul Croke
Mark Isherwood	

**Apologies:**

Jane Setchfield

**Officers:**

Hayden Llewellyn	Chief Executive
Elizabeth Brimble	Deputy Chief Executive <i>(Qualifications, Registration and Fitness to Practise)</i>
Julia Evans	Deputy Chief Executive <i>(Finance, HR and Corporate Services)</i>
Karen Evans	Policy, Planning and Communications Manager
Beverley Price	Council Secretary (interim) [minutes]
Jessica Williams	Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive [minutes]

**1. Welcome and Preliminaries**

- 1.1 Angela Jardine, (*Chairperson*), welcomed members to the fourth meeting of the Education Workforce Council (EWC).
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from member Jane Setchfield and colleagues at TCI, GTCNI and GTCS.
- 1.3 The Chair reminded any members who had yet to do so, to complete their review forms and arrange their annual members' review meetings with the Council Secretary as soon as possible.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. Chairperson's Correspondence and Report**

3.1 The Chair informed members that the latest Early Years Partnership Board meeting had been postponed and re scheduled for a date in March, yet to be confirmed.

3.2 Members were asked to note the Chair's attendance at a conference for stakeholders on the New Deal. The Chair reported that discussions surrounding the EWC and its role in delivering the New Deal had been very positive. Discussions in terms of the EWC having the power to set its own registration fees were still ongoing.

3.3 The Chair also noted her attendance at the Estyn national stakeholder conference in February. Members were reminded that a consultation on how Estyn inspects had previously been given to members for comments and this consultation was discussed at the conference. It was noted that the implementation of the changes were on track to go ahead in September 2017.

3.4 Members were notified of the meeting between the Chairs and Chief Executives of the Councils of the four jurisdictions, which was held in February.

## **4. Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

4.1 The Chair took the members through the draft minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 Council meeting page by page. Members were content to approve the minutes as an accurate record of that meeting.

### Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

## **5. To receive notification of any issues which members wish to raise in respect of the 'Information' items (Agenda items 18-23)**

5.1 One member asked about the consequences of a school teacher practising without registration as was exemplified at point 4 of agenda item 19. Liz Brimble (*Deputy Chief Executive Qualifications, Registration and Fitness to Practise*) set out the Council and Welsh Government's arrangements for resolving such matters.

5.2 The Chief Executive drew members' attention to agenda item 23, the EWC's annual event – 'Professionally Speaking'. He reported that the event was fully booked within 3 weeks and encouraged members to secure their attendance as soon as possible.

Officers were hoping to live stream the event to ensure the event would be accessible to all practitioners regardless of location. He updated members that the rapporteur scheduled had had to pull out due other work commitments but officers were confident that a replacement would be secured as soon as possible. One member noted the professional work that had been completed by officers and recorded thanks for the successes achieved so far.

**6. Draft minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

- 6.1 The Chief Executive presented these minutes. He reported that there were no matters arising to draw to members' attention that were not covered later on the agenda.
- 6.2 The Chair noted that one member, who had sent his apologies for the meeting, had forwarded questions and observations to be discussed with the Committee. The Chief Executive informed members that this approach was welcomed if members could not attend but still wanted to contribute to the meeting.
- 6.2 No queries were raised and members were content to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

**7. Draft minutes of the Registration and Regulation Committee meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive presented these minutes in the absence of the Committee Chair. He reported that there were no matters arising to draw to members' attention that were not covered later on the agenda.
- 7.2 No queries were raised and members were content to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

**8. Draft minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

- 8.1 Roberto De Benedictis (Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee) presented these minutes. He reported that there were no matters arising to draw to members' attention that were not covered later on the agenda.
- 8.2 No queries were raised and members were content to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

**9. Report from the Chief Executive**

**EWC 01/15**

- 9.1 The Chief Executive informed members that the planned Welsh Government consultation on the transfer of additional functions to the EWC was expected to take place following the Assembly election. Members were invited to note the active work being done on the three additional functions. Work on the accreditation of ITT was the most developed function to date.
- 9.2 The Chief Executive explained that following advice from the Council to the Welsh Government, the Annual Workforce survey would now be issued in October rather than February.
- 9.3 The Chief Executive updated members on work with the FE sector, making specific reference to registration and regulation. He noted an upcoming collaboration event with Colegau Cymru in April which would focus on the incorporation of the PLP into the FE sector. Members were also informed of a new section called 'FE in Focus' to be featured on the website by the end of the month.
- 9.4 The Chief Executive noted that he and the Chair had met with two education spokespersons in the run up to the election in May. Both had made positive remarks in terms of an expanded role for the EWC.
- 9.5 One member commented that Council consisted of members from all practitioner groups and so welcomed any opportunity available to further engagement with all such groups.

**10. Strategic Plan 2016-19 and Operational Plan 2016-17**

**EWC 02/16**

- 10.1 Karen Evans (*Policy, Planning and Communications Manager*) presented the plans for Council's approval following recommendation from the Executive Committee.
- 10.2 She noted that the EWC was still in its infancy as a body and the plans had been designed to incorporate members' feedback following the previous Council meeting.
- 10.3 Julia Evans (*Deputy Chief Executive Finance, HR and Corporate Services*) explained to members that the operational and strategic budgets were based on a series of assumptions in line with Welsh Government funding.
- 10.4 One member asked for clarification on the operational objective of modernising working practices and asked what this would involve. The Chief Executive answered that officers were seeking to automate a number of paper based HR processes which would save time and money in the future.
- 10.5 One member queried staggering the dates of the objective outcomes to reflect when they would come to fruition. The Chief Executive said that officers had looked carefully

at this following a member's previous comment on this matter. However, they felt that the plans accurately reflected the true position.

- 10.6 One member suggested altering the wording of the plans to contain the word 'output' rather than 'outcome' to reflect them as processes rather than impacts on both proposed plans. The Chief Executive took note of the comments to incorporate into the final plans.
- 10.7 Following their comments, members were content to approve the plans.

## **11. Proposed Revisions to Fitness to Practise Procedures and Rules EWC 03/16**

- 11.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper and reminded members that the disciplinary regulations and rules underpinned the work of the Fitness to Practise team.
- 11.2 Following the registration of the new practitioner groups, some minor amendments to the documents were required.
- 11.3 The amendments had previously been presented to the Registration and Regulation Committee who had recommended them for Council.
- 11.4 Members were happy to approve the revisions to the documents.

## **12. EWC Reserves Strategy EWC 04/16**

- 12.1 Julia Evans presented this paper and invited members to note the purpose of the strategy was to ensure good financial governance and such strategies were common within other organisations.
- 12.2 Members were asked to agree the general reserve and the three designated reserves.
- 12.3 The proposed general reserve was estimated at £450,000 in accordance with the 2015-16 budget, and would be held to provide working capital for the organisation.
- 12.4 The first designated reserve proposed was for the Fitness to Practise area of work. The proposed figure was £250,000 and Julia Evans explained that this would protect the Council against any excess cases and act as insurance against the risk of a detrimental High Court ruling. She noted that this reserve was particularly difficult to budget as the area of work was purely demand led.
- 12.5 The proposed figure for the Database Reserve was £150,000 and Julia Evans explained that this was to plan for the eventual need to replace the Register database in the future.

- 12.6 Members were asked to consider a reserve of £200,000 for medium term accommodation purposes. The Council was expecting to need to move premises in around 3 years' time and would need additional space to accommodate further staff members and an in-house Fitness to Practise suite. One member asked if sharing an accommodation premise with another body would be more financially accessible. The Chief Executive noted that such a proposal would be operationally problematic and it was unlikely a suitable partner could be found.
- 12.7 Members were informed of a long term plan to eventually purchase premises to gain independence and more financial control. One member queried if the medium term accommodation reserve would be better avoided to achieve the long term target of purchasing premises sooner. The Chief Executive replied that change of accommodation was a high priority in order to accommodate the extra functions and responsibilities of the Council and so would need to be addressed considerably sooner than when Council would be in a financially viable position to purchase premises.
- 12.8 Julia Evans reassured members that the Reserves Strategy had been considered by the Wales Audit Office for scrutiny and no areas of concern were highlighted.
- 12.9 Members were content to receive the initial proposal.

**13. Draft EWC Communications Strategy and Equality Objectives EWC 05/16**

- 13.1 Karen Evans presented this paper and informed members that both documents were being recommended to Council following the Executive Committee's discussions. Members were invited to go through the strategy and objectives individually.
- 13.2 Communications Strategy - Karen Evans noted that many of the key focuses centred on building awareness of the EWC. The plan was designed to acknowledge the resources available to the organisation.
- 13.3 One member queried the Council's social media output and asked if the communications team had considered other avenues such as Facebook. Karen Evans replied that this had previously been discussed but it was decided that this source would not be appropriate for a regulatory body as it could potentially be open to negative and unfounded criticism which officers would not have sufficient resource to manage and respond to accurately. Other members concurred with this view.
- 13.4 Equality Objectives – One member drew attention to the objectives surrounding disability and commended officers for opening discussions on this area. Karen Evans advised members that a website feature would soon be available with further in-depth information.
- 13.5 Members were content to agree the Communication Strategy and Equality Objectives.

**14. Draft EWC Research Strategy** **EWC 06/16**

- 14.1 Karen Evans introduced this paper and presented the strategy to members for comments and approval following discussions by the Executive Committee. She explained that other teaching councils already had a research strategy in place and said that the EWC was now in a position to be able to adopt the process.
- 14.2 Members were informed that a small budget and staff resource had been allocated for this area as it was in a very early stage of development.
- 14.3 One member noted a good opportunity to incorporate the strategy with FE regional working partnerships. The Chief Executive thanked the member for the suggestion and noted that he would discuss further with FE principals.
- 14.4 Members were content to receive the initial version of the strategy.

**15. Welsh Government Consultations on the Proposed Registration of WBL practitioners and Youth Workers with the EWC** **EWC 07/16**

- 15.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper and reminded members that these consultations had previously been passed to them for comment.
- 15.2 The Chief Executive noted that discussions with NTfW and their Quality Managers Group had indicated that more information and clarification was needed about quality assurance staff to encourage their voluntary registration. He informed Council that he would incorporate this comment into the consultation response before finalising.
- 15.3 Members were content to take the consultations forward.

**16. Support Staff, Youth Workers and Work Based Learners Registration Progress Report** **EWC 08/16**

- 16.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper, outlining the timetable and work to date in preparing to register learning support workers from April 2016. She noted that everything was on schedule as planned.
- 16.2 It was explained that following the receipt of data from employers, the Council was anticipating the registration of around 28,000 learning support workers following receipt of fees in April.
- 16.3 Liz Brimble reported that the registration team had been busy receiving queries from practitioners in terms of their registration fee, eligibility and payment.

- 16.4 Members were notified that it was expected that approximately half of the Local Authorities would be reimbursing their school registrants. Liz Brimble explained that this was for information only as the Council had no remit in this area.
- 16.5 Communications activity remained proactive and Liz Brimble noted that once the registration of Learning Support Workers had been completed, officers would begin more extensive engagement with Work Based Learners and Youth Workers ahead of the 2017 statutory requirement. One member noted attendance at a recent EWC presentation and commented on the proficient and comprehensive quality of information delivered by officers.
- 16.6 The Chair recorded thanks to Liz Brimble and registration officers for their continued work in this area.

**17. Professional Learning Passport and the Directory of Learning EWC 09/16**

- 17.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper and updated members on the usage of the initial version of the Passport. Members were informed that approximately 2,500 practitioners were using the passport inclusive of NQTs who had been accessing their Induction profiles through the PLP. It was noted that it had not been heavily marketed as this would follow the launch of the enhanced version in September 2016 but an estimated 800 practitioners had used the profile to create learning activities.
- 17.2 Members were told that the invitation to tender for the technical development of the enhanced version had now closed and a total of 9 tenders had been received.
- 17.3 In terms of awareness and implementation, engagement work with lead officials in the FE sector was ongoing. One member queried if colleges already had systems in place serving the PLP's function. Liz Brimble answered that research had indicated the picture was fragmented; some colleges were using something similar, others having basic foundations while others had nothing in place.
- 17.4 The Chief Executive referred to an earlier Colegau Cymru Board meeting and referenced Welsh Government FE official Andrew Clarke who had stated that the national system of the PLP, delivered by the EWC would be most beneficial for colleges to secure a universal approach and be more cost effective.
- 17.5 The Chief Executive then referred members to the Directory of Learning project at paragraph 18. The Council had been asked to undertake the project on behalf of Welsh Government to be available by the end of June and had been granted £25,000 to complete the work. The Chief Executive noted the positive impact that the project could have for the future of the EWC and the continued professional development of practitioners.

**18-23 Information Items:**

- EWC Responses to External Consultations EWC 10/16
- QTS, Registration & Induction Progress Report EWC 11/16
- Funding of Induction, EPD & MEP Progress Report EWC 12/16
- Fitness to Practise Progress Report EWC 13/16
- Quarterly Review (1 October – 31 December 2015) EWC 14/16
- Annual event – ‘Professionally Speaking’ EWC 15/16

**No other business was raised and the Council then moved into private session.**