

EDUCATION WORKFORCE COUNCIL
CYNGOR Y GWEITHLU ADDYSG

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

DATE: 5th July 2016

LOCATION: TŶ DYSGU, The Conference Centre, Treforest

Present:

Members:

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

Officers:

Hayden Llewellyn	Chief Executive
Elizabeth Brimble	Deputy Chief Executive (Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards)
Julia Evans	Deputy Chief Executive (Finance, HR and Corporate Services)
Karen Evans	Policy, Planning and Communications Manager
Amy Pope	Council Secretary [minutes]

1. Welcome and preliminaries

- 1.1 Angela Jardine, (*Chairperson*), welcomed members to the fifth meeting of the Education Workforce Council (EWC).
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from colleagues at TCI, GTCNI and GTCS.
- 1.3 Members were reminded that the calendar of meeting dates for 2017-19 was now available on the intranet. In addition, the current calendar had been amended to include a week in April 2017 to complete the members' review process; the Council Secretary would be in contact in the autumn term to arrange individual meetings.
- 1.4 The Chairperson reported that Whistleblowing training had been arranged for EWC's Whistleblowing contacts (Hugh Pattrick and Robert Townsend) and members of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee following its meeting in September.

1.5 The most recent Audit & Scrutiny Committee meeting had taken place on 27th June 2016; draft minutes of this meeting would be presented to Council at its next meeting in November.

1.6 Members were invited to note two further training sessions that would take place immediately following the next Council meeting on 22nd November. The Welsh Language Commissioner, Meri Huws, would discuss the Welsh Language Standards and the Director of School Standards and Workforce, Steve Davies, would present a session on the Welsh Government's vision for education in Wales.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Chairperson's correspondence and report

3.1 The Chairperson referred members to the letter dated 22nd May from Huw Lewis, previous Minister for Education and Skills, in response to her own letter of 10th March regarding the registration and regulation of practitioners in independent schools.

3.2 Members expressed confusion and doubt over the Minister's statement that he was 'assured that there are already sufficient levers in place to negate any safeguarding concerns'. Hayden Llewellyn (*Chief Executive*) informed Council that independent schools had access to the national child protection register; however, this safeguard did not address issues of conduct and competence. He added that some (but not all) independent schools required employees to be registered with EWC.

3.3 One member requested further information and suggested a survey of independent schools. The Chief Executive regretted that it was not within EWC's jurisdiction to hold or gather data on the private sector. The Chairperson added that EWC officers held regular meetings and enjoyed good relations with the Independent Schools Council.

3.4 Another member proposed that officers continue to pursue the registration and regulation of practitioners in the private sector. The Chairperson responded that it was an ongoing concern for the Council as it posed a risk to the education profession as a whole. However, the numbers of practitioners in independent schools was small, and it was the responsibility of Welsh Government to ensure the necessary checks were in place. Council agreed that officers should keep raising the issue in order to keep it high on Council's agenda.

- 3.5 The Chairperson informed members that the new Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams, attended EWC's 'Professionally Speaking' event on her first public engagement. Officers had since secured a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary on 22nd September that she would be attending with the Chief Executive. Subsequently, the Cabinet Secretary would be invited to attend a Council meeting in 2017.
- 3.6 The Chairperson reported that she and the Chief Executive had met with Llyr Gruffydd, Plaid Cymru's spokesperson for Education, Children, Skills and Lifelong Learning, on the 4th July. Mr Gruffydd had demonstrated a good awareness of EWC's work, and had asked lots of questions. Officers were working to secure meetings with other AMs following the recent restructures within the Welsh Government and National Assembly for Wales (NAfW).

4. Draft minutes of the Council meeting of 9th March 2016

- 4.1 The Chairperson took Council through the draft minutes of 9th March 2016 page by page. Members were content to approve the minutes as a correct record of that meeting.

Matters arising:

- 4.2 There were no matters arising to draw to members' attention that were not covered later in the agenda.

- 4.3 No queries were raised by members.

5. To receive notification of any issues which members wish to raise in respect of the 'for information' agenda items (17-21)

- 5.1 There were no issues notified.

6. Draft minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 5th May 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 No queries were raised by members.

7. Draft minutes of the Registration & Regulation Committee meeting of 5th May 2016

- 7.1 Jane Setchfield (Chair of Registration & Regulation Committee) presented these minutes. She 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 by members.

8. Report from the Chief Executive (EWC 16/16)

- 8.1 The Chief Executive presented the report updating Council on a range of matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda, inviting members' comments and queries.
- 8.2 The Chief Executive reported that activity at Welsh Government appeared to be slowing down for the summer. Officers were currently working on draft responses to three Welsh Government consultations and more were anticipated. Members would be invited to comment on the draft responses in due course.
- 8.3 The EWC's 'Professionally Speaking' event had received superb feedback from the Cabinet Secretary, Welsh Government officials and Council members. Officers were currently working on arrangements for the 2017 event. Members were invited to submit names to officers for potential future speakers.
- 8.4 With reference to paragraph 23, the Chief Executive reported that officers had attended and arranged a number of engagements within the FE sector. Since the registration of learning support workers (LSWs) in April, the Chairperson and senior officers were able to turn their focus to other registrant groups. In response to a member's query, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Chairperson and senior officers had offered to make presentations to all local authority headteacher groups over the past year, with most authorities accepting. Another member provided details of the ADEW lead for Youth Worker engagement; officers confirmed they would make use of this contact.
- 8.5 One member drew attention to paragraphs 14 and 15 on the NafW Inquiry into Supply Teaching. The Chief Executive confirmed that officers were scheduled to provide evidence to the 'taskforce' on 16th August, following the submission of documentation suggesting different models for the future of supply teaching. He confirmed that the written evidence would be circulated to members following its submission on 11th July.

- 8.6 With reference to paragraph 17, another member queried what cost implications the Welsh Language Standards would have on the EWC. Karen Evans (*Policy, Planning and Communications Manager*) explained that she was working with officers to explore the impact of the standards on each team, before submitting a response to the Welsh Language Commissioner on 29th July. The Chairperson added that, as the EWC already met a Welsh Language Duty for public bodies, it was in a strong position to meet the internal standards.
- 8.7 Finally, members discussed the Welsh Government's review of professional standards for school teachers. The Chief Executive informed Council that various working groups had been established and disbanded and officials were currently working with a consultant who had a background in curriculum. It was believed the consultant planned to meet with support staff representatives, however, EWC involvement had not been requested to date.

9. Draft Annual Report & Accounts, 2015-16 (EWC 17/16)

- 9.1 Julia Evans (*Deputy Chief Executive – Finance, HR & Corporate Services*) introduced this paper which included the combined draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2015-16, which had been presented to the Executive and Audit & Scrutiny Committee in May and June, respectively. Following one adjustment (see 9.3 below) the draft document was now presented to Council for approval.
- 9.2 Members were informed that the Annual Accounts had been approved by the internal auditors and were currently being audited by the Wales Audit Office (WAO), which had already confirmed the unqualified audit position. The Annual Accounts were due to be certified by the Auditor General on 12th July.
- 9.3 Members were advised of an audit correction to the final income figure transferred to reserves, this being £525,000 rather than £494,000. It was noted that the final result was a significant improvement on the budgeted figure of £34,000. This could be attributed to a number of factors including grant funding from Welsh Government for transition costs, fewer Fitness to Practise cases than estimated and a mismatch, unique to the first year of EWC operations, between receipt of income and a gradual increase in activity and, therefore, expenditure.
- 9.4 One member queried how officers intended to manage the publicly available information that the EWC had reported an increase in net income. Officers responded that they were aware of the implications of reporting the surplus, but were satisfied that the justification for it was very clear. The Chief Executive added that it was important for an independent body to have a reserve, and this was likely to be the only opportunity to build any, as an

increased volume of Fitness to Practise casework and other operational activity was inevitable. The reserve was small in comparison to other professional bodies and teaching councils. The Chairperson reminded members that the fee income was set by the Welsh Government (which was currently consulting on the future fee structure) and EWC would need to be clear in communicating this situation.

- 9.5 There were no further comments and members were content to note the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16.

10. Review of Risk Register (EWC 18/16)

- 10.1 Julia Evans introduced this paper which was presented to Council annually. Members were invited to review the overall risk profile, change in composition of risk across the various categories and confirm that the residual assessment of risk adequately presented the Council's appetite for risk.
- 10.2 She reported that one additional risk had been included in the register since it had last been presented to Council in April 2015; this was risk 2, which related to the Professional Learning Passport (PLP). Other than this, only minor changes had been made, and the main risk categories (reputational and financial) remained unchanged.
- 10.3 In light of the training session on risk appetite which preceded the Council meeting, one member queried whether there were plans for Council members to have collective ownership of the register in future. The Chief Executive informed members that he and Julia Evans planned to build risk appetite into the register before discussing it with senior officers; it would then be presented to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee for consideration. He proposed that the Risk Register be built into a Council planning session on the Operational Plan 2017-18; this would take place at the November Council meeting. Members were content with this proposal.
- 10.4 With reference to an earlier discussion (see 3.4 above), one member queried whether the register should include the risk posed by a lack of registration and regulation in the private education sector. The Chief Executive explained that officers currently limited the inclusion of contextual factors; Council could discuss the breadth of scope of the future Risk Register in November.
- 10.5 Members were content to approve the current Risk Register.

11. Council Review (EWC 19/16)

- 11.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper which provided an overview of members' responses following the annual review of Council and members' review process. Comments from the Council review were included in the paper, but comments made by members' during their individual meetings with the Chairperson were not.
- 11.2 He reported that the overall scores were encouraging and that members were largely content. One key issue was the nature of the Council papers; officers and the Chairperson had discussed this issue with members and articulated why they were often lengthy and numerous.
- 11.3 The Chief Executive thanked members for their suggestions for training, and requested a steer from Council on the format of future training delivery. Following discussion, members agreed with the Chairperson's suggestion that officers arrange complementary training sessions immediately preceding and following Council meetings. The Chief Executive confirmed that he and the Council Secretary would develop a training timetable in line with the calendar of meetings.
- 11.4 The Chairperson thanked members for engaging in the review process, stating that she valued the opportunity to meet with them on an individual basis. Members' feedback had enriched her perspective and given officers a clear steer for future work.

12. QTS, Registration & Induction progress report (EWC 20/16)

- 12.1 Liz Brimble (*Acting Deputy Chief Executive -Qualifications, Registration and Fitness to Practise*) presented this paper updating members on the Council's work in relation to Registration and administering the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and Induction.
- 12.2 It was reported that the total number of registrants at the end of June was 70,381. This included approximately 30,000 LSWs, which was significantly higher than the 25,000 expected by Welsh Government. Applications from LSWs continued to arrive on a weekly basis and officers were monitoring the situation. The Chairperson explained that officers had identified over 2000 LSWs who had registered as supply workers: this would be raised with the NAFW Inquiry into Supply Teaching taskforce (see 8.5).
- 12.3 In response to a member's query, Liz Brimble confirmed that the application process currently took 3-5 working days, but would be longer if the applicant made a Fitness to Practise declaration. The Chief Executive added that if required, applications could be 'fast-tracked' and processed on the day of receipt.

- 12.4 Members were informed that the Annual Statistics Digest 2016 (EWC 27/16) had been prepared and would be published on the EWC website that week, accompanied by tweets and a press release.
- 12.5 With reference to paragraph 17, it was reported that the Welsh Government consultation on the proposed registration fees for the new and existing registrant groups had been issued on 27th June. The consultation proposed three models and the preference of Welsh Government was to proportionately redistribute the £33 reimbursement across all registrant groups. Officers were working on a draft response which would be presented to members for discussion and signed off by the Executive Committee before its submission at the end of September. The Chairperson added that EWC would continue to make the case to Welsh Government to enable it to set its own fee.
- 12.6 With reference to paragraph 16, Council was informed that EWC had made an internal appointment to the post of Data Collection and Reporting Officer. The successful candidate had extensive experience in data research.
- 12.7 Liz Brimble reported that QTS results were expected from Initial Teacher Training providers by the end of the week and Induction results for the summer term were expected by mid-July. In response to a member's query, it was confirmed that a final cohort of approximately 30 had commenced the Teacher First programme.
- 12.8 There were no further comments and members were content to receive the report for information and note the Council's progress with regard to QTS, Registration and Induction.

13. Youth Workers and Work Based Learning Practitioners Registration progress report (EWC 21/16)

- 13.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper updating members on the Council's progress towards the registration of youth workers (YW) and work based learning (WBL) practitioners from April 2017.
- 13.2 It was reported that the Welsh Government had published the responses to its consultation on the registration of YW and WBL practitioners. The 47 responses from the youth work sector and 18 responses from work based learning sector were largely supportive of registration.
- 13.3 Officers had scheduled a meeting with each of the Welsh Government WBL contract holders in collaboration with National Training Federation Wales (NTFW) later that week for arrangements to register existing WBL practitioners for the first time in April 2017. The YW sector sessions were

being planned for 22nd September in Llandrindod Wells. A communications and marketing plan, referred to in paragraph 12 of the paper, was being developed.

- 13.4 No further matters were raised and members were content to note the contents of the progress report.

14. Professional Learning Passport and the Directory of Learning (EWC 22/16)

- 14.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper updating members on the Council's work in establishing a Professional Learning Passport (PLP) and developing a directory of learning on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- 14.2 With reference to paragraph 7, Council was informed of the change in procurement from Invitation to Tender through Sell2Wales to using the UK Government procurement framework set up by the Crown Commercial Services.
- 14.3 Liz Brimble invited members to note paragraph 10, reporting that the contract value for initial development in year 1 was £160,000 then subsequently £130,00 for year 2. These figures fell outside of the Chief Executive's agreed authorisation limit, but as they were covered by the Welsh Government grant funding, no authorisation was required.
- 14.4 It was reported that officers had finalised the project plan for the development of the enhanced PLP. Officers were awaiting final templates from Welsh Government, including the main template, but were hoping for sign off for NQT Induction templates later that day.
- 14.5 Officers had attended FE network meetings to discuss the PLP. Following a working group meeting, the general consensus from FE was that colleges wanted to continue using their own internal systems. Officers were trying to encourage the use of the new national system. Feedback from WBL providers was more positive.
- 14.6 Members expressed concern about the reluctance within the FE sector to take up the PLP. Liz Brimble explained that each of the 14 colleges in Wales had their own internal systems, some of which were very in-depth e.g. hosting performance management systems, enabling practitioners to book courses etc. Time and money had been invested and it was understandable some were reluctant to replace their existing systems. Officers may need to consider the possibility of transferring data. The Chief Executive explained that the PLP was not an employer-based system but was designed for the practitioner i.e. the individual practitioner should be able to take the information from one employer to the next.

- 14.7 In response to a member's suggestion that Welsh Government enforce the use of the national system, the Chief Executive explained that this was the view of Colleges Wales. It was reported that the Welsh Government had previously advised principals to use the PLP. In the meantime, it was necessary for EWC to be receptive to the practicalities of using the new system.
- 14.8 Council was informed that the online directory of learning was in the final stages of translation. It would be launched at the start of the autumn term, on 9th September at the British Science Festival at Swansea University. EWC officers would be doing a presentation demonstration at the Welsh Government stand. Presentation demonstrations to the Chair and Welsh Government officials had been well received, and were scheduled with the four consortia.
- 14.9 There were no further queries and members were content to note the progress report on the establishment of the PLP and Directory of Learning.

15. National Workforce Survey (EWC 23/16)

- 15.1 The Chief Executive introduced this paper which provided an update on the Council's work in undertaking a national workforce survey of all registrant groups on behalf of the Welsh Government. Members were invited to comment on the draft school teacher questionnaire at Annex A.
- 15.2 Some members drew attention to questions 13 to 15 and suggested that some of the listed options were negative and could be potentially offensive to respondents. It was proposed that the options be removed and replaced with comment boxes. Another member disagreed with this proposal and argued that, as teachers were already over-burdened with paperwork, the questionnaire needed to be simple and quick to complete and a list of options would encourage responses.
- 15.3 One member drew attention to questions 20-21 and suggested that the same questions should be asked about English qualifications. He stated that context rather than desire was the main driver in the use of Welsh language in schools.
- 15.4 Another member raised the issue of the increasing demand on teachers to educate non-English speakers, and suggested that a question be included to capture this.
- 15.5 The Chairperson thanked members for their comments and stated that the Council needed to be content that the questionnaire. She acknowledged the importance of providing practitioners with information about why the survey was being undertaken and what would happen with the data collected.

15.6 The Chief Executive stated that individual comments would be used to formulate the next draft of the questionnaire. Once EWC had received sign-off from Welsh Government officials, the online questionnaire would be tested on a pilot group of practitioners. Following this, all teacher registrants would receive via email a joint invitation from the Cabinet Secretary and the Chairperson to complete the survey.

15.7 Members were invited to direct any further comments via email to the Council Secretary.

16. Fitness to Practise progress report (EWC 24/16)

16.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper which included a general update on the Council's Fitness to Practise work. Members were invited to seek clarification on any points emerging from the report.

16.2 Members were informed that there were three Investigating Committee meetings scheduled in July and August. Referrals relating to FE and LSW practitioners were increasingly being made to the Fitness to Practise team. Furthermore, officers had noticed a significant increase in declarations from LSWs, adding to the Suitability casework.

16.3 Liz Brimble reported that panel members had completed their annual training session. The Chairperson added that officers had conveyed to panel members the importance of the role and the trust that Council members placed in them to avoid any reputational risk to the organisation. She reported that the session had involved self-reflection and best practice in regulation, and reassured Council that the training support to panel members was of high quality.

16.4 Council was informed that officers were currently interviewing candidates for new panel member roles. Recruitment activity in this area would continue to encourage applications from FE and LSW practitioners.

16.5 In response to a member's query, Liz Brimble reported that the new presenting officers from Kingsley Napley LLP were highly organised and efficient. They were proactive in terms of highlighting emerging case law and had received positive feedback from panel members.

16.6 There were no further queries and members were content to note the update report on the Council's Fitness to Practise work.

17-21. Information items

Members received in “for information” papers, reports on:

- Quarterly Review (1 January – 31 March 2016) **(EWC 25/16)**
- Funding of Induction, EPD & MEP progress report **(EWC 26/16)**
- Annual Statistics Digest 2016 **(EWC 27/16)**
- Annual Report – review of Audit & Scrutiny Committee’s year **(EWC 28/16)**
- EWC Responses to external consultations **(EWC 29/16)**

The Council then moved into private session.