

EDUCATION WORKFORCE COUNCIL
CYNGOR Y GWEITHLU ADDYSG

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

DATE: 22nd November 2016

LOCATION: Tŷ DYSGU, The Conference Centre, Treforest

Present:

Members:

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

Apologies:

James Harris	Helen O’Sullivan
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Officers:

Hayden Llewellyn	Chief Executive
Elizabeth Brimble	Deputy Chief Executive <i>(Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards)</i>
Julia Evans	Deputy Chief Executive <i>(Finance, HR and Corporate Services)</i>
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 sixth meeting of the Education Workforce Council (EWC).
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from James Harris and Helen O’Sullivan and colleagues at TCI, GTCNI and GTCS.
- 1.3 Members were reminded that officers were currently scheduling 1-2-1 meetings for the 2017 members’ review process; those who had not yet responded were asked to contact the Council Secretary to confirm their availability in April 2017.
- 1.4 The Chairperson reminded members that the Council meeting would be followed by a briefing session from Meri Huws (*Welsh Language Commissioner*) on the Welsh Language Standards and Steve Davies (*Director of Education, Welsh Government*) on Welsh Government developments in Education.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Chairperson's correspondence and report

3.1 The Chairperson informed members that the Cabinet Secretary had confirmed her attendance at Professionally Speaking 2017, and has also confirmed her attendance at the next Council meeting in March. Members were reminded that the date of the meeting had been moved to Wednesday 15th March 2017 to accommodate her.

4. Draft minutes of the Council meeting of 5th July 2016

4.1 The Chairperson took Council through the draft minutes of 5th July 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 (18-23)

5.1 The Chairperson invited members to note in particular the 12-month training plan at agenda item 22. Members were encouraged to contact officers at any time with training needs as and when they arise.

5.2 Members were invited to note agenda item 23 and the seven responses the Council had made to external consultations. It was reported that the high volume of consultations was ongoing and it was likely that the responses reported to Council in March should be similarly high in number.

5.3 There were no further issues notified.

6. Draft minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 27 September 2016

6.1 Hayden Llewellyn (*Chief Executive*) presented these minutes and the matters arising.

Minute 5: Welsh Government consultation on 'Draft Strategy: A Million Welsh Speakers by 2050'

It was reported that Liz Brimble (Deputy Chief Executive – Qualifications, Registration and Fitness to Practise) had attended a roundtable discussion on Welsh Government's new Welsh Language Strategy on 16 November 2016. The strategy would target English-medium schools and communities and teacher training.

Stakeholders had agreed that the success of the strategy depended on the school environment, and attention would need to be paid to Early Years. The Chairperson and Chief Executive were scheduled to give oral evidence to the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee on 30 November 2016.

6.3 Minute 10: Research Action Plan

Hayden Llewellyn updated members on the first Research Engagement Group meeting which took place on 14 November 2016. It was well-attended by academics and practitioners who agreed that future meetings would take place on a termly basis. In response to a member's query, it was confirmed that teaching councils in Scotland and Ireland provided research bursaries to practitioners. The Executive Committee would be invited to discuss proposals for EWC bursaries at its January meeting.

6.4 There were no further matters arising that were not covered later on the agenda and no queries were raised by members.

7. Draft minutes of the Registration & Regulation Committee meeting of 27 September 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. Draft minutes of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee meeting of 28 September 2016

8.1 John Griffiths (Acting Chair of Audit & Scrutiny Committee) presented these minutes, highlighting the reports from Wales Audit Office and Deloitte and informing members that the meeting had been followed by Whistleblowing training. 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 by members.

9. Report from the Chief Executive (EWC 30/16)

9.1 The Chief Executive presented the report updating Council on a range of matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda, inviting members' comments and queries.

9.2 The Chief Executive reported that he and Liz Brimble had presented oral evidence to the National Assembly for Wales' Children, Young People and Education Committee taskforce on future options for supply teaching in Wales. They had argued that any future arrangements should take into account support staff as well as teachers. The Committee's report would be published in December.

- 9.3 The Chief Executive reported on the Welsh Government review of professional standards for school teachers in Wales. Members were informed that it was an area of frustration for officers as EWC had no statutory responsibility for setting the standards which underpinned its fitness to practise hearings. There was no progress on the development of professional standards for other registrant groups.
- 9.4 In response to a members query, the Chief Executive explained that EWC was working with trade unions to campaign for any new Welsh Government initiative to cover all registrant groups, as all registrants paid fees and the new groups had had their aspirations raised. It was explained that, within the Welsh Government there was one senior civil servant in charge of schools (Steve Davies, Director of Education), and another in charge of HE and FE (Huw Morris, Director of Skills, Higher Education and Lifelong Learning). These two directorates did not always work closely together, although officers had stimulated some low-level collaborative working.
- 9.5 Another member queried whether the professional standards for school teachers were being trialled in schools. It was reported that each of the pioneer schools had been given standards to pilot, but no school had been asked to pilot the complete suite of standards.
- 9.6 It was noted that the Council had been invited to join the editorial board of the Welsh Journal of Education.
- 9.7 Members were informed that the Chair and officers were engaging proactively with Assembly members: meetings had been held with the Special Adviser in August, the Cabinet Secretary in September and opposition spokespersons in October. Members welcomed this dialogue.
- 9.8 With reference to paragraph 17, members were informed that officers were ensuring they were engaging with the new registrant groups as part of its communication strategy.

10. Six-month financial review (EWC 31/16)

- 10.1 Julia Evans (*Deputy Chief Executive – Finance, HR & Corporate Services*) introduced this paper which reviewed the Council's financial position for the six month period ending 30 September, and included a forecast outturn for the year and revised proposals for the accrual of specified reserves.
- 10.2 It was reported that the financial performance of EWC in the year to date was strong. With reference to the table at paragraph 5, members were informed that the income was much higher than anticipated. This was due to a number of factors, as set out in the papers, including a higher number of learning support staff fees and Welsh Government fee subsidy income than expected.
- 10.3 In relation to overheads, Julia Evans reported that EWC faced unexpected building costs, as the landlord had contacted tenants in September informing them of work to 'repair' the windows at Eastgate House. Tenants were expected to share the cost and it was anticipated the EWC would have to pay up to £80,000. Members were

informed that officers were taking advice from surveyors and attending informal tenants meetings. Tenants were concerned the landlord was looking to improve the building at their expense and planned to resist the charges as strongly as possible.

- 10.4 In response to a member's query, Julia Evans explained that EWC had renewed its lease at Eastgate House in 2016, with a break clause in 2019 which it intended to exercise before moving to larger premises which could accommodate a hearing suite for the Council's Fitness to Practise work. Council accepted that EWC was not currently in a position to purchase a property and noted that owning premises did not reduce the risk of building cost, for example repair work.
- 10.5 Members were referred to the table at paragraph 14 and informed that the forecast surplus for the year was just over £1 million (excluding the building costs referred to above). Council understood 2016-17 was a unique year for EWC, with a significant increase in registrants, and agreed the proposal to use the surplus to accelerate funding to the reserves for the database, Fitness to Practise and accommodation.
- 10.6 With reference to paragraph 11, one member queried the reasons for the 10-day Fitness to Practise hearing. Liz Brimble explained that the Fitness to Practise process had not changed, but the cases were becoming increasingly complex, with more witnesses and evidence to hear. Officers were regularly scheduling 3 or 4-day hearings.
- 10.7 There were no further questions and members were content to note the forecast outturn for 2016-17.

11. Quarterly Review (1 July-30 September 2016) (EWC 32/16)

- 11.1 Karen Evans introduced this paper which updated members on progress against the targets and performance indicators included in the Operational Plan, in the second quarter of the financial year. The progress report for the first quarter of the financial year was in the 'information papers' at EWC 39/16.
- 11.2 Council was content to note the progress of the EWC against its targets and performance indicators included in its Operational Plan.

12. QTS, Registration & Induction progress report (EWC 33/16)

- 12.1 Liz Brimble 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 21 November was 73,669. More than 30,000 of these were school learning support workers (LSWs) and 2,300 were FE learning support workers. Over 500 applications had been received since the start of the month (including 400 in the LSW category): between 45 and 55 applications were currently sent in each day. Officers did not yet know if this was the 'new normal' or if this was an unusually busy period.

- 12.3 With reference to paragraph 10, members were informed that the Welsh Government consultation on the fees had closed in September and the response had not yet been published. It was anticipated that the proposed fee level would be £45 for school teachers, FE and youth workers, and £15 for support staff. The legislation was due to be laid in December and debated in January 2017.
- 12.4 One member informed Council that LSWs were petitioning Welsh Government to pay their fees; to date, the petition around 6000 signatures. Council discussed reimbursement of fees amongst different employers. The Chief Executive reminded members that reimbursement of fees was outside of the Council's remit.
- 12.5 With reference to paragraph 12, Council was informed that a new Data Collection and Reporting officer had been appointed and was currently working on the National Workforce Survey (see EWC 36/16). Following completion of the survey, work would commence on developing a strategy for data collection and completeness for the new registrant groups. The first event would cover recruitment, retention and career progression in the new financial year. Officers planned to take a more formal approach to publishing data by inviting stakeholders to policy briefings, rather than simply sharing information via the EWC website and Twitter.
- 12.6 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 34/16)

- 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 Council was informed that the legislation had finally been laid on 15 November and would be debated in plenary session on 6 December 2016. Following this, officers would formally write to employers. Members were assured that the delay by Welsh Government in laying the legislation should not impact EWC's ability to meet the new registration requirement.
- 13.3 One member informed Council that the WBL employer landscape would change following a retendering exercise in 2018. Officers had enjoyed a good working relationship with CWVYS, which had helped EWC to communicate the registration changes to the voluntary youth work sector. Members thanked officers for their work in preparing to register YW and WBL, acknowledging that these sectors were complex.
- 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 Learning Exchange (EWC 35/16)

- 14.1 Liz Brimble presented this paper updating members on the Council's work in establishing a Professional Learning Passport (PLP) and developing a Learning Exchange on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- 14.2 It was reported that the PLP and Learning Exchange had been launched on 12 September 2016. In early October, all registrants had received correspondence to encourage them to log on to the EWC website and access the PLP: to date, 6,300 users had done so.
- 14.3 Members were informed that EWC was due to commence support sessions for the PLP. Officers had recently presented at Welsh Government national headteacher events where attendees had given positive feedback about the PLP, and had started taking bookings from schools for presentations and support sessions. With reference to paragraph 11, it was reported that there would be ongoing engagement with a number of groups through a series of scheduled meetings.
- 14.4 Liz Brimble reported that EWC had undertaken the work on the PLP on the understanding that Welsh Government would provide funding for three years. Officials had recently implied that they would only provide funding for the first year, which was contrary to what had been previously agreed. Officers were currently waiting to discuss future funding levels with Welsh Government officials.
- 14.5 It was reported that the Learning Exchange had been delivered on time, to budget and to specification and user numbers were encouraging.
- 14.6 In response to a member's query, Liz Brimble explained that any decision to evaluate the Learning Exchange would need to be taken by Welsh Government. The work had been undertaken on its behalf as a pilot, with a small budget and within limited timescales. The Chief Executive informed Council that other professional bodies had developed learning directories, adding that any similar project owned by EWC would probably be quality assured and have a significantly larger budget.
- 14.7 There were no further queries and members were content to note the progress report on the establishment of the PLP and Learning Exchange.

15. National Workforce Survey (EWC 36/16)

- 15.1 Liz Brimble introduced this paper which provided an update on the Council's work in undertaking a national workforce survey on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- 15.2 It was reported that the survey had been launched the previous month, and invitations to complete the survey had been issued to all registrants via email on 31 October. Electronic and postal reminders had been sent out, some unions had been encouraging their members to complete the survey, and officers had been encouraging practitioners to respond at every presentation they attended.
- 15.3 Members were informed that, to date, 1485 responses had been received and of these, less than 800 were LSWs. Council noted the response rate was low at 6% but was satisfied officers were working hard to promote the survey. The Chairperson

thanked the team and urged members to encourage others to complete the survey, adding that the results would be analysed at a strategic level and the anonymity of respondents was guaranteed.

- 15.4 Liz Brimble reported that the survey would close on 2nd December and a report prepared for the Welsh Government by the end of January 2017. The Cabinet Secretary had publicly committed to act on the results of the survey, and officers were seeking to brief her directly. Embargoed copies of the report were likely to be shared with unions.
- 15.5 Members were content to note the progress on the Council's work in undertaking the national workforce survey.

16. Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training (ITE) (EWC 37/16)

- 16.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper which updated members on Welsh Government proposals for the EWC to have a statutory responsibility for accrediting all programmes of ITE in Wales.
- 16.2 The Chief Executive reported that, following a short 7-week consultation period, the Welsh Government consultation proposing revised criteria for ITE and a new role for EWC to set up an accreditation board had closed earlier in November. The Council was encouraged by the proposals to expand the remit of EWC, but was disappointed to note the proposals did not include FE and other registrant groups.
- 16.3 Members were informed that officers were scheduled to meet with Welsh Government officials and Professor John Furlong on 23rd November and hoped to get an early indication of responses, although the consultation report would not be published until late 2016 or early 2017. With reference to paragraph 5, EWC would need to undertake a lot of work in the short term, but officers had studied best practice models at other regulatory bodies.
- 16.4 There were no further queries and members were content to note the update report on the accreditation of ITE.

17. Fitness to practise progress report (EWC 38/16)

- 17.1 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.
- 17.2 With reference to paragraph 3, members were informed that EWC had budgeted for 10 Investigating Committees in 2016-17 but it was likely that there would be 12 in total. It was anticipated that officers would conclude approximately 45 Fitness to Practise hearings by the end of the financial year, and over 12 were already anticipated for 2017-18.

- 17.3 With reference to paragraph 9, Liz Brimble reported there had been a significant increase in the number of registration applications referred to the Fitness to Practise team, with 16 Suitability hearings concluded or scheduled in 2016-17.
- 17.4 Members were informed that EWC currently had only 1 FE panel member and 1 LSW panel member. A recent recruitment exercise had generated 3 further applicants and the interviews would be held in December 2016.
- 17.5 There were no further queries and members were content to note the update report on the Council’s Fitness to Practise work.

18-23. Information items

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

- Quarterly Review (1 April – 30 June 2016) **(EWC 39/16)**
- Funding of Induction, EPD & MEP progress report **(EWC 40/16)**
- Progress report on equality objectives 2016-17 **(EWC 41/16)**
- Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16 **(EWC 42/16)**
- EWC 12-month training plan **(EWC 43/16)**
- EWC Responses to external consultations **(EWC 44/16)**

The Council then moved into private session.