

CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM JOINT EDUCATION SERVICE.

Minutes of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service. meeting held on Thursday, 27 May 2021 at 2.00 pm.

County Borough Councillors - Central South Consortium Joint Education Service. Members in attendance:-

Councillor J. Rosser (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)
Councillor C. Smith (Bridgend County Borough Council)
Councillor L. Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan)
Councillor L. Mytton (Merthyr Tydfil Council)

Council Officers in attendance:-

Mr P Order (Chief Executive Cardiff Council)
Mr L. Harvey (Director of Education, Bridgend Council)
Ms S Davies (Head of Finance, Education & Financial Reporting, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Others in attendance:-

Ms C Seery (Managing Director , Central South Consortium)
Ms L. Blatchford (Deputy Managing Director, Central South Consortium)
Ms N Gould (Central South Consortium)
Mr I Pritchard Headteacher Ysgol Gyfyn Bro Edern

1 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair Welcomed Officers and Members to the meeting. Apologies were received from County Borough Councillor S Merry.

2 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct , there was no declarations of interest made pertaining to the agenda.

3 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the 18th March 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee.

4 To Elect a Chair

Members RESOLVED to elect County Borough Councillor J Rosser as Chair of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Services Joint Committee for the 2021 / 2022 Municipal Year.
(2 year cycle as part of the Governance arrangements 2021 - 2023)

5 Appointment of a Vice Chair

RESOLVED to appoint County Borough Councillor L Burnett as Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2021/ 2022.

(2 year cycle as part of the Governance arrangements 2021 - 2023)

6 Appointment of LEAD ROLES - CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND LEAD DIRECTOR

Members of the Central South Joint Education Service Joint Committee
RESLOVED to appoint:

- The Lead Chief Executive role to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council; and
- The Lead Director role to Bridgend County Borough Council.

(2 year cycle as part of the Governance arrangements 2021 - 2023)

7 Calendar of Meetings for the 2021- 2022 Municipal Year

RESOLVED to circulate the dates for the Calendar of Meetings of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee for the 2021 – 2022 Municipal Year to allow Members to check their availability for future meetings.

8 School Improvement Presentation: Curriculum for Wales

Members of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee received a presentation from the Mr Iwan Pritchard Headteacher of Ysgol Gyfun Cymraeg Bro Edern in respect of the cluster work throughout Welsh schools in the area to develop a forward plan to ensure that school transition to the new Curriculum for Wales. Members of the Joint Committee found the information of great interest and all agreed that this type of collaborative working would be beneficial to all local authorities for their future planning.

The Chair thanked Mr Pritchard for his time and the Committee wished him well for the future.

9 Communications Strategy

The Deputy Managing Director provided Members of the Central South Joint Committee with the updated Communication Strategy.

Members were reminded that the whole education system continues to adapt to challenging times and education professionals in all settings and in all contexts are having to respond to policy changes and wide scale reform whilst continuing to meet new requirements and demands placed upon them as a result of the pandemic.

The Deputy Managing Director continued and explained the role of the Consortium is to meet key challenges. The Communication Strategy 2021 – 2024 provides a framework and direction to all media, online, internal, marketing publication and public relations communication activity undertaken by the Central South Consortium.

Members considered the core aims of the strategy and acknowledged that to realise this vision, the Consortium must be able to communicate with and influence a wide range of stakeholders in a cohesive and co-ordinated way.

After consideration of the report Members **RESOLVED** to note the report

10 **Monitoring and Reporting of the work of the Central South Consortium.**

The Deputy Managing Director Central South Consortium provided Members of the Joint Committee with the opportunity to review and scrutinise the Monitoring and Reporting report for the CSC.

Members were reminded that the traditional data will not be available for inclusion in reports to Members and so further discussion will be required on the content of future reports. Members acknowledged that reporting will need to align to the Draft School Improvement Accountability and Evaluation Guidance Document.

Members discussed the report in great detail and **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve the development of an annual forward planner for reporting to stakeholders;
- Approve for CSC to work with governance groups to review the purpose and content of each of the reports to stakeholders to ensure the reports meet the needs of the various governance groups.

11 **2020- 2021 Year End Position / Annual Governance Statement**

The Head of Finance – Education and Financial Reporting explained to Members of the Joint Committee that this is an annual report that comes before the committee each year.

The Officer continued to explain that there are 3 recommendations to the report:

1. Approve the earmarked reserve request set out at 3.2.
2. Note the draft Statement of Accounts for the Central South Consortium for the year-ending 31st March 2021 (Appendix 1) and the draft outturn position for the year (Section 4 – Table 1).
3. Approve the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement (as incorporated within the draft 2020/21 Statement of Accounts

The Head of Finance – Education and Financial Reporting highlighted firstly the carry forward of earmarked reserve for which Members approval is requested to carry forward £200k into the new financial year to support re-modelling of the service in the medium term.

In addition there remains a balance of £6k on the earmarked reserve to support the delivery of a sensory project. It is also requested to carry this forward into the next financial year, 21/22 to fund the continuation of the project.

The Officer continued and explained that the second recommendation is to note the draft unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 which are at Appendix 1 and produced in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and also with the Accounts and Audit Wales regulations. The statutory accounts will now be subject to external audit as reported in the Audit Plan that was presented to Members in March. Following audit, the final version of the Statement of Accounts, amended for any audit recommendations, will come back to Joint Committee for approval.

The Head of Finance drew Members attention to the outturn position showing a small surplus of £9k providing Members with assurance of the stability of the financial position and robust financial management in the consortium.

The Head of Finance then referred Members to The Annual Governance Statement which is incorporated into the Statement of Accounts. and is drafted in line with the requirements of CIPFA's document "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government".

The Head of Finance referred Members to an evidence based review of governance arrangements, the conclusions of which are that the governance arrangements in Central South Consortium remain effective. The Head of Finance then detailed that whilst the arrangements remain effective, there are areas where improvements are required. These have been agreed by management and referred Members to section 7. Progress on the required improvements will be reported to Joint Committee during the course of the year.

Members were reminded that at the last Joint Committee, the previous Annual Governance Statement progress was reported. There were 4 proposals for improvement, 3 of the recommendations were completed and 1 was in progress, partly implemented.

Members thanked the Officer for the detailed report and **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve the earmarked reserve request set out at 3.2.
- Note the draft Statement of Accounts for the Central South Consortium for year- ending 31st March 2021 (Appendix 1) and the draft outturn position for the year (Section4 – Table 1); and
- Approve the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement (as incorporated within the draft 2020/21 Statement of Accounts)

12 **CSC Grants Report (2020/2021 Variation)**

The Deputy Managing Director Central South Consortium provided Members with an update on the grants to be received by the Consortium in 2020/21, for which notifications have been received , and methods of allocation for each.

After consider of the report Members **RESOLVED** to :

- Approve the distribution of the grants as detailed in section 5 of the report (and Annex A)
- Accept the extension granted by Welsh Government (WG) for both the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG) and Pupil Development Grant (PDG) that allows funding to be used by the 31st August 2021.

13 **CSC Grants Report (2021/22)**

Members of The Joint Committee were presented with an update on the grants to be received by the Consortium in 2021/2022, for which notifications have been received and the methods of allocation.

Members considered the information contained in the report and **REOLVED** to approve the distribution of the grant as detailed in section 5 of the report.

14 **Freedom of Information Report**

Member of the Joint Committee **RESOLVED** to note the Freedom of Information Requests received and responded to by Central South Consortium during

2020/20.

This meeting closed at 15:10

**CLLR J ROSSER
CHAIR.**