

Minutes of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Date: 28 November 2001

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Committee Room 3, National Assembly Building

Attendance:

Members

Cynog Dafis, Chair	Plaid Cymru	Mid and West Wales
Jane Davidson, Assembly Minister	Labour	Pontypridd
Lorraine Barrett	Labour	Cardiff South and Penarth
Mick Bates	Liberal Democrat	Montgomeryshire
Janice Gregory	Labour	Ogmore
Pauline Jarman	Plaid Cymru	South Wales Central
Gareth Jones	Plaid Cymru	Conwy
Huw Lewis	Labour	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
Jonathan Morgan	Conservative	South Wales Central
Alun Pugh	Labour	Clwyd West

Committee Secretariat

Chris Reading	Clerk
Holly Pembridge	Deputy Clerk

Officials

Richard Davies	Director, National Assembly Training and Education Department
Elizabeth Taylor	Head, Schools Management Division
Derek Adams	Head, Higher Education Division
Keith Davies	Head, Standards and Performance Division
Paul Brown	Lifelong Learning Division
Mei Lin Ng	Pupil Support Division
Tony Widdrington	Office of the Counsel General
Catrin Huws	Office of the Counsel General

Apologies

None

Substitutions

None

Declarations of Interest

Cynog Dafis Registered Teacher; wife is Registered Teacher

Jane Davidson Registered Teacher; husband is FE college lecturer and member of NATFHE Executive

Huw Lewis Registered Teacher

Mick Bates Qualified Teacher, Member of GTC, wife is Head Teacher, School Inspector, member of ACCAC and Estyn committees

Lorraine Barrett School Governor

Pauline Jarman Member of Court of Governors, University of Cardiff; and Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Alun Pugh Alun Pugh's wife is FE college lecturer

Private Session

Item One: Policy Review – Higher Education – Consideration of the draft Committee Report.

The Committee resolved, in accordance with Standing Order 8.21(vi) to consider the key recommendations of the draft report in a private session.

Public Session

Item Two: Education Bill

Paper: ELL 18-01(p.1)

1. The Committee was invited to consider aspects of the Education Bill which were relevant to Wales. The Minister introduced the Bill to the Committee and pointed out some key issues:

- The Minister said that on 5 September 2001, she had set out a comprehensive programme for education in Wales in The Learning Country paving document.
- The Minister and her officials had sought to ensure that policies set out in The Learning Country were taken forward where appropriate in the Bill.
- The Minister stated that this was the first time that the education agendas in England and Wales would be taken in different directions using the same primary legislation.
- The Bill contained a total of 211 clauses, 32 of which were specific to Wales.
- The Bill was dedicated to raising standards and encouraging innovation in schools. It outlined the partnership between teachers, schools and LEAs.
- The Bill recognised separate National Curricula for Wales and England for the first time.
- Apart from the clauses relating to teachers' pay and conditions where responsibility is not devolved to the Assembly, the application in Wales of all England/Wales and Wales only clauses in the Bill are matters for the Assembly.
- With regard to post-16 reforms, these were already underway under the provisions of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.
- Members would be provided with copies of the explanatory memorandum on the Bill shortly.

1. The Minister outlined significant clauses for Wales:

- **(23) Federation of governing bodies**—enabling schools to work together under one governing body structure.
- **(44-48) Admission arrangements** – the introduction of statutory admissions forums bringing together admission authorities in local authority (LA) areas.
- **(45) Admission numbers** – the removal of standard numbers.
- **(50) Attendance targets** – schools to set targets for authorised absence levels.
- **(93-114) National Curriculum in Wales** – the Assembly would be more able to amend provision in the National Curriculum in Wales. There would be a new foundation stage. The Bill would allow greater flexibility in curriculum provision for 14-16 year olds.

- **(135) Wales: provision of higher education** – Powers would remain for the Welsh Assembly Government for HE courses to be pursued within a FE environment. The Assembly would have the power to regulate numbers on courses.
- **(144) The General Teaching Councils for England and Wales** – Conditions could be attached in relation to disciplinary proceedings.
- **(172) Training and education provided in the workplace for 14 to 16 year olds** – Estyn's inspection areas would be extended.
- **(185-9) Special educational needs: Wales** – Proposed provision of new SEN regional centres and the establishment of a separate SEN tribunal for Wales.
- **(191) Partnership agreements and statements (Wales only provision)** – There would be partnership agreements between LEAs and individual schools.
- **(192) Transition of pupils from primary to secondary school (Wales only provision)**– Primary and secondary schools would be required to facilitate the transition of pupils.

1. The Minister said she would welcome the Committee's comments. The Chair invited members to question the Minister on issues relevant to the Education Bill. The Bill would be in the Committee in the House of Commons probably until the end of February 2002. This offered an opportunity to explore issues and obtain clarification.

2.4 There was some discussion concerning **Clause 10 (Powers of governing bodies to form or invest in companies to provide services etc)**. The Minister was asked if this was an England/Wales provision and if she intended to promote this. The Minister said that she had no intention of promoting the clause at present.

2.5 The Chair queried whether only LEAs (as outlined in **section 11**) could exercise the powers conferred by **section 10**, as this might permit schools to become competitive businesses and accumulate funding. Paul Brown referred to the regulation making powers in **clause 11** which meant that the Assembly could decide the conditions under which the power could be exercised by schools in Wales. The Minister said that the power in **clause 12** was for the Secretary of State to form companies and was an England-only clause. There had been no support in Wales for this power.

2.6 Members congratulated the Minister for putting a Welsh stamp on the Bill. It was felt that it would be useful if the Wales-only clauses could be set out in a different format for ease of reference.

2.7 Reference was made to **sub-clause 2-4** and the fact that the Welsh Assembly Government could change the direction of education in Wales, with the exception of issues/measures relating to **sections 115-125**. The Minister was asked whether Wales could change its schools funding formulae. The Minister emphasised that there were two relevant formulae. The Welsh Assembly Government determined the annual, local government revenue settlement using factors agreed with local government in Wales. Then, there were the individual formulae which each authority used to distribute resources to its schools. The framework for these distribution formulae were contained in regulations under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

2.8 The Chair stated that **sub clause 2.1a)** was all encompassing. The Minister added that exercise of powers under the clause would have to have her agreement, as Minister. Innovative arrangements under the clause would be time limited to four years.

2.9 The issue arose of whether the Bill could influence funding for education and training in Wales. The

Minister pointed out that there was a variation in LA formulae for distributing resources to schools and there were concerns that some authorities had not reviewed their formulae for sometime, with the result that they did not properly take account of schools' need for funding. The Minister said she had asked the Audit Commission to look into this. The Minister undertook to provide a report to Committee on the factors which authorities could take into account formulae and the relevant legislative framework.

2.10 The issue was raised of whether the Bill would facilitate more freedom in education in Wales: greater authority for head teachers and more diversity of provision to meet parental wishes (e.g. faith and specialist schools). The Minister said that the majority of responses to The Learning Country consultation had indicated the desire to strengthen the comprehensive education system in Wales, providing local schools for local children.

2.11 There was some concern that local children in some constituencies did not have the opportunity to attend their local schools. The Minister was asked how she intended to use the enabling powers to increase diversity. The Minister responded that 90 per cent of children were educated in their local schools. Diversity included out of schools activities and better and innovative uses of ICT. A major priority was to make schools more community focused. The extension of the powers of governing bodies would facilitate this.

2.12 One member felt that the views of the Welsh Local Government Association had been too heavily relied upon in bringing forward proposals. The same member urged the Minister to use the enabling powers in a radical manner. Another member felt that the Minister had consulted widely. It was felt that there had been some excellent ideas initiated in England and there was some concern that this would result in a two-tier UK education system that would result in Wales falling behind England. The Minister said that there was no evidence to support this idea. She expressed her strong support for the concept of a comprehensive education system. Pupils in Wales in primary and secondary education would be offered a safe, stable environment, which could not possibly be viewed as two-tier. Post-secondary education, pupils could then choose from a range of opportunities. The Minister commented that there had been little support for specialist schools or significant growth in the number of faith schools.

2.13 There was a reference to **Clause (144) (The General Teaching Councils for England and Wales)**. It was felt that the Bill did not answer the needs of teachers, who were adversely affected by legislation. The Minister said that teachers who did not immediately qualify for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), there was a back-up system. The Minister suggested that members write to her with specific examples of this. The Secretary of State did have powers, which the Minister herself shared, in looking at what qualified. The procedure was the same in England and Wales to ensure portability of teachers between the two countries.

2.14 Some members asked whether LEAs would be responsible for determining whether schools might become part of a federation, since small, rural schools might wish to pursue that route as an alternative to closure. The Minister responded that it would be for the school itself to decide whether it wished to federate its governing body with other governing bodies.

2.15 There was some concern that expectations might be unnecessarily raised if the critical mass for regional SEN provision could not be obtained. The Minister said that regional SEN provision was a policy proposed in The Learning Country. There was a need to improve low-incidence, high-needs level provision. The Minister felt that Wales should be looking at regional centres as a measure. A good example of SEN provision was one at school that she had recently visited: Ysgol Bryn Duffryn, Denbighshire. Once the legislative framework was in place, issues could be identified.

2.16 It was strongly felt that there should be regulatory impact assessments (including financial and bureaucratic burdens impacts) to accompany the legislation. Paul Brown stated that the regulatory impact assessment was covered in the explanatory memorandum to the Bill which members should receive shortly. Further assessment would be provided to members in the context of considering the regulations which the Assembly would need to put in place to implement the Bill provisions once they were enacted.

2.17 The issue arose of whether **Clause (137) (Health and Fitness)**, would encourage the procurement and promotion of food from schools' localities. The Minister stated that there were already regulations in place governing nutritional standards for school meals. The regulations did not extend to the issue of the procurement of local food. The Minister added that schools' food procurement was done on a best-value basis.

2.18 The question arose of whether everything contained in the Bill applied equally to both foundation and community schools. The Minister and Richard Davies explained that both categories of were 'maintained' and the provisions were applicable to all maintained schools.

2.19 One member commented on the lack of gender-neutral language throughout the Bill.

2.20 There was a query whether **sub clause 195 (512ZB) 4a (Provision of school lunches and milk)**, would impose additional costs on local authorities. The Minister said that the maximum cost expenditure quoted in the regulatory impact assessment would be £1.2m for England and Wales from 2004 and that the maximum cost for children in nursery settings outside the maintained sector would be £1.1m. Additional burdens on local authorities would be taken into account in the local government revenue settlement for the year in question.

2.21 Members welcomed **clauses 101-106**. However, it was felt that there might be confusion concerning **clauses 127-129**, in teachers salaries' and conditions of service, in not having a Wales-specific section on this issue. The Minister agreed that it was difficult to find Wales-only clauses and they would be easier to distinguish once members had received the explanatory memorandum that accompanied the Bill.

2.22 The Minister was asked in relation to **Clause (192) Transition from primary to secondary school**, whether she had the powers to establish/determine catchment areas that fed secondary schools. The Minister responded that it was important to remember that the vast majority of pupils went to their local schools. **Clause 192** did not enable her to determine catchment areas but it included provisions which required governing bodies to jointly draw up plans to facilitate the transition of pupils from primary to secondary school. This would include defining which schools would be regarded as feeder schools for the purposes of the requirement to plan but it would not set a catchment area.

2.23 The Chair commented that if political parties had different views on the Bill, they could try and influence their respective MPs. The Chair asked when the process would be completed. Officials told the Chair that the enactment of the Bill was expected in summer 2002.

2.24 The Minister told the Committee that she would keep it informed of developments concerning the Bill, in her monthly reports. Mr Don Touhig MP, the Parliamentary Under- Secretary of State for Wales, who would be handling the Parliamentary process, was happy to talk to the Committee and had hoped to attend this meeting but due to prior engagements, was unable to attend. The Minister indicated that Mr Touhig would come to Committee, subject to diary commitments, to update members regarding the progress of the

Bill in January or February 2002.

Action Points

- Members would be provided with copies of the explanatory memorandum for the Bill shortly.
- The Bill team would provide members with a guide in terms of England and Wales and Wales-only clauses.
- The Minister undertook to provide a report to Committee on the factors local authorities can include in their distribution formulae for funding schools and the relevant legislative framework.
- The Minister undertook for officials to provide an explanatory note regarding the proposed Special Educational Needs (SEN) tribunal for Wales and specific costings. *(Subsequently, members have been provided with a copy of the explanatory memorandum which contains this information).*

Item Three: Monitoring of Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs) – Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwn ac Asesu Cymru (ACCAC)

Paper: ELL 18-01(p.2)

3.1 The Committee considered ACCAC's Corporate Plan for the period 2002/03 – 2004/05. The following representatives of ACCAC were present: Brian Connolly (Chairman), John Valentine Williams (Chief Executive), Huw Davies (Assistant Chief Executive – Commissioning and Central Services) and Averil Petley (Corporate Support Officer). Brian Connolly spoke from a slide presentation, copy of which can be viewed at Annex A.

3.2 Brian Connolly said that the Corporate Plan had been updated as recently as 21 November. This had enabled the Authority to submit a draft Corporate Plan which was as up-to-date as possible, including taking full account of The Learning Country and the proposed budgets for future years.

3.3 ACCAC were involved in a joint review of the Curriculum 2000 reforms including the 'AS'-Level qualification. The Authority's representatives were asked if there would be any findings published before the end of the year. John V. Williams said that the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England were leading the review, with full participation by ACCAC and the CCEA in Northern Ireland. He was the ACCAC representative. The conclusions had not yet been finalised but he assured the Committee that the review had received a strong input from Wales.

3.4 There was some interest concerning the range of issues that the review had covered. John V. Williams said that one of the key issues had been to address the successive assessment burden on pupils from GSCE, 'AS'-Level to 'A'-Level. The teaching profession had universally accepted the underlying principles of the Curriculum 2000 reforms.

3.5 There was a query whether there were differential pass rates in England in mathematics assessments at 'AS'-Level. John V. Williams confirmed that this was the case in England and Wales but not in Northern Ireland.

3.6 There was a reference to Curriculum 2000 and the fact that there had been some complaints regarding Key Skills and the qualification's lack of acknowledgement of the themes of sustainable development and equal opportunities. ACCAC were asked to comment on their co-operative relationship with other bodies such as the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC), the Welsh Language Board and other training agencies. John V. Williams stated that the level ACCAC's collaboration with other bodies was appropriate. There had been complaints regarding Key Skills and the lack of opportunities for testing through the medium of Welsh. One of the difficulties had been that the Key Skills qualification had been developed from scratch, whereas vocational GCSEs were an adaptation of something already in existence. There were two important issues to be considered: equality of opportunity between English and Welsh and setting tests of acceptable standards. After January 2002, opportunities to sit key skills tests at all levels would be available to the same extent in both languages.

3.7 Members were interested to know what ACCAC's involvement in the Welsh Baccalaureate had been. Brian Connolly outlined two areas of involvement. The first was on the Steering Group, which guided the developers of the Welsh Baccalaureate: the WJEC. ACCAC was a member of that group and had contributed accordingly. The second area of involvement was in ACCAC's role as the regulatory authority to whom the qualification would have to be submitted for accreditation at an appropriate time. Safeguards were in place to ensure that ACCAC's role as the regulatory authority was not in any way compromised.

3.8 Members asked what work had been done in relation to the curriculum of the Welsh Baccalaureate. John V. Williams explained that the Welsh Baccalaureate was a qualification – which the WJEC would develop. It was a qualification based in large measure on existing qualifications. As regards the development of some elements of the core, their subject officers had offered professional advice – within parameters that ensured that their independence as a regulatory authority was safeguarded.

3.9 Members noted the projected value of the sale of ACCAC's commissioned materials and asked what impact this would have on ACCAC's budget. John V. Williams indicated that the sales figures did not affect the level of grant-in-aid from the Assembly. Huw Davies explained that ACCAC commissioned agencies to produce, publish, market and sell the materials which were commissioned. These contracts included royalty clauses which generated modest income for the Authority and prevented the agencies from making excessive profits from public subsidy. Income to ACCAC from these royalties amounted to approximately £340,000. Huw Davies believed that the £764,000 sales figure was a measure of success of the materials which it had commissioned.

3.10 ACCAC was asked by members to outline its relationship with the Welsh Books Council. Huw Davies said that ACCAC, through its commissioning role, made it a requirement that materials were also made available through the Welsh Books Council. Some agencies also marketed the materials through initiatives, which ACCAC sometimes supported. John V. Williams added that ACCAC had enjoyed a long, successful relationship with the Welsh Books Council. Together, they jointly published a catalogue of all materials. The two organisations had also co-operated in a project through which the Books Council used an additional van to tour schools to promote the materials. This had been funded by ACCAC initially but was now funded directly from the Assembly to the Council.

3.11 The Committee raised issues to do with gender and stereotyping. Members were interested to know if the gap in attainment and performance between boys and girls had impacted on ACCAC's thinking/strategy. The Basic Skills Strategy had highlighted that teenage boys were a hard-to-reach group. It was felt that there might be a need to produce more attractive reading material for teenage boys. One member also asked whether any thought had been given by ACCAC to developing differential methods of assessing

the performance of boys and girls. There was some evidence that course work was more suited to boys and examinations appeared to suit girls better. Brian Connolly said that issues of gender and stereotyping were constantly at the forefront of the Authority's thinking. This was not just a Welsh issue; it was an international issue. John V. Williams said that in all ACCAC's material, there had been strict safeguards in place to ensure gender proofing and to ensure that issues surrounding disability, ethnicity and equality were properly addressed. ACCAC were working with the Basic Skills Agency on the Basic Skills Strategy. While he understood the point about the possibility of differential methods of assessment for boys and girls, it was equally important to ensure that the process of examination should be rigorous and fair. Assessment methodologies, which drew out the best from learners, needed to be used. Brian Connolly warned that a differential assessment process ran the risk of being presented negatively – as a 'dumbing down' of the system.

3.12 Members asked about the nature of the relationship between the QCA and ACCAC. They asked whether ACCAC foresaw a change in this relationship in the context of the Education Bill and the possibility that policies in the two countries moved further and further apart. John V. Williams explained that ACCAC's relationship with the QCA was based on reality. Pre-1994 examinations were regulated in England on an England/Wales basis by SEAC. Although, the organisations had worked together closely, ACCAC had become more independent. Work surrounding curriculum and tests for 5-14 year olds was basically independent of the QCA. Nevertheless, discussions were still held with the QCA and similar bodies in Scotland and Northern Ireland to ensure standards and rigour: qualifications had to be transportable across the countries. It should be borne in mind that not every aspect of the Authorities' work was driven from England: ACCAC had led the way on entry level qualifications. Similarly, ACCAC's work on SEN arrangements was trail-blazing.

3.13 Members asked whether ACCAC had saved money, in light of the Minister's decision to cease statutory testing at the end of Key Stage One. Huw Davies said that the cost of developing the statutory tests was £500,000. Now that the tests were optional, they were less costly (about £300,000) because materials did not need to be pre-tested in the same way.

3.14 The Chair commented that the Bill allowed a single national curriculum for Wales, which could be entirely different from its equivalent in England. He wondered whether this factor might change the way in which the Authority operated, particularly in the way in which it engaged with the likes of QCA. John V. Williams said that it depended in part on how the provisions in the Bill would eventually be enacted by the Assembly. There were already significant differences in the curricula for Wales and England. There was still considerable scope for working together – not just with colleagues from other parts of the UK but internationally since they were all engaged in a common agenda: raising standards.

3.15 One member asked whether the planned expenditure figure shown against 'Statutory Tasks and Tests' (in table 2 on page 16 of the Plan) was likely to remain at that level in view of the abolition of statutory testing at Key stage One. Huw Davies indicated that, in all probability, some adjustment would need to be made between this line and the planned expenditure on 'Improving Teacher Assessment' for the current year.

3.16 ACCAC was asked whether the Corporate Plan reflected the possible implications of the Bill. Brian Connolly said that ACCAC had endeavoured to update the Plan to the last minute before appearing before the Committee. The Learning Country had been taken into account but timing constraints had prevented any further adjustment. Any such adjustments would be reflected in the Authority's Operational Plan. In addition, the Corporate Plan would be updated next year for the three-years 2003-04 to 2005-06, and the

Committee would have an opportunity to scrutinise that document in the usual way.

3.17 One member asked if the abolition of statutory testing at Key Stage One had affected staffing levels in ACCAC. Huw Davies said that this was not the case – its staff was still engaged in the development of materials on an optional basis, although the situation was being reviewed.

Item Four: Substance Misuse Education

Paper: ELL 18-01(p.3)

4.1 The Committee considered the content of the new draft circular: "Substance Misuse: Children and Young People. It was intended that this new draft circular would replace the 1995 circular. Elaine Jones, an independent consultant had been contracted to Drugscope to produce the new circular and was present to answer members' questions.

4.2 The Minister introduced the item. She explained that substance misuse had destroyed many lives. The 1995 schools' circular in use at present, did not address issues outside of schools. Therefore, there was a need to update the circular and provide concise and comprehensive information. The Minister then asked Elaine Jones to update the Committee on issues surrounding the new draft circular.

4.3 Elaine Jones explained that there had been a process of active consultation for the new draft circular. She outlined her approach to the consultation and the circular. She declared that she had worked for twenty-four years in the public health sector and was also a qualified teacher.

4.4 She explained that one of the reasons for revising the circular was that professionals needed the 1995 circular to be updated. Paper ELL 18-01(p.3) listed questions that Elaine Jones wished respondents to consider.

4.5 Elaine Jones outlined the draft guidance. It contained a section on drawing up a substance misuse policy: managing incidence of substance misuse and how to teach children and young people about the dangers of substance misuse. Elaine Jones said that the approach to section out the document had been preferred.

4.6 Elaine Jones told the Committee what she felt to be other important key issues:

- The experience of children and young people receiving substance misuse education should be the same across Wales. Also, people who work with children and young people should have (access to) the same advice.
- The new draft circular document should be accessible and readable. The 1995 document was not particularly readable and had been aimed exclusively at schools.
- Scotland and Northern Ireland were also preparing similar documents but Wales had taken the lead in also addressing all forms of substance misuse.

4.7 Elaine Jones told the Committee that its comments would be welcomed and noted.

4.8 Members welcomed the new draft circular. It was felt that producing the circular in loose-leaf binders would be appropriate as the document could be added to if and when it was updated. Subsequently, this avoided the need for countless republishing.

4.9 There was concern that some schools had indicated a resistance to acknowledge that there might be a substance misuse problem within the school. One school had refused to let certain agencies in to its premises. Members were interested to know how prevalent this problem was in schools. Elaine Jones explained that the experience of head teachers had indicated that there was still a strong stigma attached to the problem of substance misuse in schools and youth clubs etc. It was hoped that the new draft circular would help schools feel more comfortable about admitting that there was a substance misuse problem in the school. The document would give strength to schools etc to deal with the problem effectively and appropriately.

4.10 Reference was made to chapter three, part 14/15 of the document regarding action plans for dealing with incidents. It was felt that families/parents needed to be involved as quickly as possible. One member asked if parents had an automatic right to be present during police questioning after an apparent incident had occurred. Elaine Jones pointed out that chapter three had been researched in Scotland, nevertheless, she would take further legal advice on this matter. The Police had been involved in the steering group.

4.11 It was felt that the Salvation Army would be an appropriate consultee because of its experience.

4.12 The issue arose of whether the draft circular would be bilingual. Elaine Jones said the material would be bilingual.

4.13 It was strongly felt that the use of validate cards and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) should be used to encourage the cessation of abuse, in order to extend the message into all areas of young peoples' lives. Elaine Jones told the Committee that a youth consultation had taken place the previous week. Young people had been fundamental to the consultation process and they had raised the same issues as the steering group had. It had been felt that it was important to distinguish between the school and non-school setting. The steering group had made a suggestion to include a reference to the safe use of substances in the new circular.

4.14 It was suggested that the correlation between smoking and social class was a major factor for health and equality in Wales and should be reflected in the circular. Elaine Jones agreed and said that there were several issues related to smoking. She was working alongside the Health Promotion Division and was waiting for the most recent statistics to be produced in order to include them in the new circular.

4.15 It was strongly felt that all teachers should have input into designing substance misuse policy for their school. They should also understand their role and know what to do in event of substance misuse. Teachers dealt with this issue on a daily basis and it was felt that this issue should be incorporated in the framework for professional development of teachers. Members emphasised the importance of including education on substance misuse as part of teachers continuing professional development. Elaine Jones agreed but explained that there could not be a blue print policy; the steering group had debated around this issue. The draft circular proposed that there should be one lead person in an organisation but for all staff to be informed of what to do, should a substance misuse incident arise.

4.16 It was felt important that teachers knew whom to contact when situations arose. Also, some members felt that it might be inappropriate to include guidance on the safe use of substances. There could be some

criticism that the circular was instructing young people and children on how to misuse substances.

4.17 The Minister indicated that she was grateful for the Committee's comments. The new draft circular had crystallised key issues and had shown the way the issue of substance misuse should be discussed with young people. There was a difference between the voluntary sector and schools: it was impossible to operate using rigid guidelines within the voluntary sector. The draft circular would fit into the Extending Entitlement and the Canllaw Online agendas.

4.18 The Chair confirmed that the Committee's comments would be fed back into the consultative process.

Action Point – Hard copy of the draft circulated to members. (This has subsequently been arranged).

Item Five: Minutes of 14 November

Paper: ELL 17-01(mins)

5.1 The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting. The following issues were raised:

- Val Lloyd's constituency was Swansea East and not Swansea West. (Janice Gregory). *The minutes were subsequently amended.*
- Pauline Jarman had not been present at the private session of the meeting. (Jonathan Morgan). *The minutes were subsequently amended.*

Chair's Closing Remarks

- The Chair indicated that there was scope for an additional meeting next term on 10 January 2002. The Minister asked if dates could be taken up for additional meetings on the request of members. The Clerk said that the Business Committee had already specified the dates. Members indicated general agreement to take up this optional additional meeting. The Committee Clerk undertook to formalise this matter via e-mail.

Committee Secretariat November 2001