

## Children and Young People Committee

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Meeting Venue:  
**Committee Room 3 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:  
**18 January 2012**

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Meeting time:  
**09:30**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

Claire Morris  
Committee Clerk  
029 2089 8148 / 029 2089 8032  
[CYPCommittee@wales.gov.uk](mailto:CYPCommittee@wales.gov.uk)

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### Agenda

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#### **1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions (09:30)**

#### **2. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (09:30 – 10:15) (Pages 1 – 21)** Sector Skills Councils

Sioned Williams – Care and Development  
Gareth Williams – ConstructionSkills  
Bill Peaper – Semta  
Tony Leahy – Semta

**(Break 10:15 – 10:30)**

#### **3. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (10:30 – 11:30) (Pages 22 – 34)** Ceredigion County Council

Eifion Evans, Director of Education and Community Service  
Arwyn Thomas, Assistant Director of Education and Community Service

#### **4. Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public for the remainder of the meeting (11:30)**

Members to consider the motion under Standing order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

**5. Legislative Consent Motion on the Welfare Reform Bill (11:30 – 11:40)**

**6. Adoption Inquiry: Methods of working (11:40 – 12:00)**

**7. Papers to note**

**Additional information on EU level action against child sex trafficking (identified in meeting on 1 December 2011) (Pages 35 – 36)**

**Additional information from Governors Wales' (identified in meeting on 7 December 2011) (Pages 37 – 38)**

**Additional information from Colleges Wales (identified in meeting on 7 December 2011) (Pages 39 – 43)**

**Information from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (Pages 44 – 51)**

## **Children and Young People Committee**

CYP(4)-02-12

### **Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009**

As part of the evidence gathering for this inquiry, the Sector Skill Councils in Wales were contacted for their views and the responses received are below:

## **Children and Young People Committee**

### **Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009**

#### Introduction

The Care Council for Wales (Care Council) undertakes the role of the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the Children Young People and Adult Social Care and Early Years and Child Care in Wales. Skills for Care and Development (SfC&D) is an alliance of six organizations whose footprint covers early years, children and young people's services, and those working in social work and social care for children and adults in the UK.

The Care Council is the social care workforce regulator in Wales and is responsible for the registration of elements of the social care workforce, including the regulation of social work training.

The other major responsibility of the Care Council is the development of the social care and early years and childcare workforce in Wales.

#### Background

The resident population of Wales is projected to increase by 11% from 2006 to 2031, typically 13,200 people per year. The number of persons aged 15-24 is estimated to decrease by 4% by 2031 whereas an increase of 79% is forecast for the 75 and over age group. Those aged 85 and over are projected to increase by 47.4% from 60,000 in 2004 to 88,000 in 2018.

Numbers of staff working in social care is currently around 70,000<sup>1</sup> and a further 18,000<sup>2</sup> in early years and child care. The National Strategic Skills Audit for Wales 2011<sup>3</sup> noted in June 2011 that health and social care was the fastest growing sector in Wales and the sector likely to have the highest replacement demands of any sector in Wales between now and 2017, projected to be in the region of 75,000.

Specifically on social care in general the Commission noted:

*'There are powerful forces driving demand in this area, including an*

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<sup>1</sup> Sector Skills Agreement Feb 2011 (Skills for Care and Development)

<sup>2</sup> Mapping the Early Years and Childcare workforce 2010(Care Council for Wales )

<sup>3</sup> Skills for Jobs: The National Strategic Skills Audit for Wales 2011 - Volume 1: Key Findings (UKCES)

*ageing population, growing consumer expectations of care services and an increased incidence of long-term health conditions. This a large occupational area with significant projected expansion and replacement demands. The lead-time for addressing this need is potentially short but criticality is high in terms of contribution to employment and supporting societal well-being*<sup>4</sup>.

The same report also looks at the Early Years and Childcare the sector, and notes that this is also amongst the fastest growing workforce in Wales, and this reinforces the SSC's own findings regarding its own part of that sector.

Our sector then is one where there is clearly a well recorded and defined need for workers for the future across all skills and qualification levels (required qualifications range from level QCF diploma to degree level).

### **1. The effect that the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had on young people aged 14-19 years**

There were around 26,850 learners undertaking courses specific to our sector over the course for the academic year 2009-10. Of these learners 450 were undertaking the required or recommended management courses in colleges and 1,110 in work based learning across both health and social care and childcare.

The Care Council for Wales does not have access to the numbers of schools delivering the GCSE, AS/A level qualifications in Social Care and Health, but there are likely to be substantial numbers. These qualifications however are knowledge based and not accepted as a qualification to work within the care sector.

The Measure has at its heart an aspiration to broaden choice for young people in Wales extending career choice and pathways.

There are age restrictions in place for those working in social care, for the safety of both young people and service users, however as we have seen from the information above, the sector is growing and will continue to do so. Both social care and Early Years and Childcare are sectors with strong employment possibilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid pp27

Within our sector however there is some concern that learning at 14 -16 regarding our sector when delivered may be delivered by individuals with little knowledge of the sector. The Council's Further Education College and Learning Supply Strategic group has suggested some standards about who should be allowed to deliver qualifications, the qualifications themselves and the knowledge and experience of teaching staff in our areas and sectors. Their sign up to codes of practice or the values base of social care/ Early Years and Childcare would be crucial to ensure understanding of the sector and the possibilities it offers.

There is here an opportunity to provide the sector with learners who have a clear idea what is expected of them, and direct those who have the talent to work with vulnerable people into the work at an earlier stage in their career development.

**2. Whether the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16**

We do not consider, given the nature of our sector that Skills for Care and Development is best placed at present to comment on this. This is because the fact that undertaking training in our sector requires the learner to be over 16 regardless of how the training is undertaken. We are however aware that the Social Care sector is often a port of call for those who have left compulsory education with few qualifications, and this often leads to a career and qualifications in care developed over several years. This however is not usually a planned process. To make it more so would be valuable for both CYP and for service users of the future.

### 3. Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*

The information available for our sector is as below; we will be able to compare this information with 2011 figures when available to discover whether there is more uptake of these qualifications for our sectors

	<b>Health and Social Care</b>		<b>Children's Learning and Development</b>	<b>Care, and</b>
Learners in Schools 2010	GCSE 2110	A level 320	GCSE 2330	A Level 450
Numbers of learners in our sector in Further Education 2010 <sup>5</sup>	8140		5755	
Apprenticeships in learning 2010 (Work Based Learning)	3450 4290 technical certificates <sup>6</sup> 7355 NVQs		2560 2560 technical certificates 3600 NVQs	
Number of courses on offer 2010	42		66	

### 4. What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*

There are still practical problems to address in terms of making Social Care (and to a lesser extent Child care in Early Years) a course of study or learning which is addressed at an early stage in learners progression. There need for creative solutions to providing practical experience that is suitable at age 14 perhaps, and provide challenging and inspiring pathways to learning which can show the sector to be one which can provide both learning and career opportunities.

To this end the sector and the Council generally speaking needs to create better links with 14-19 learning networks and with schools and teaching staff themselves. The Council, through its Regional Partnerships has recruited a core of **Care Ambassadors** who are actively targeting schools in the regions and also through the 14 -19 networks some of those young people who are NEET . They provide first hand information on working in the sector, why they have chosen to do so, and provide an honest picture of what is needed to create a career in social care.

Another practical issue which the Council is aware of is that of Welsh language provision. Both parts of our footprint are notable for the fact that there will be those receiving services who need to access those services through the medium of Welsh. This concept of 'language need' is one which is gaining currency within social care

<sup>5</sup> Last figures available from DfES LLWR Academic year 2009-10 as of October 2011

<sup>6</sup> Some technical certificates were used as part of 14-19 work based learning programmes

as our ageing population leads to instances where the second language is lost or is the case of young children receiving child care, has not yet been acquired.

We would wish that young people who have gained a Welsh medium education should always be able to continue into further education in Welsh in order that those skills they have gained can be successfully transferred to the workplace.



## Response from ConstructionSkills Wales to the Children and Young People Committee: Consultation on the Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

### **Introduction**

ConstructionSkills welcomes the invitation to provide evidence to the Children and Young People Committee on the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales Measure 2009). ConstructionSkills is pleased to see that there is a continued focus on the skills agenda in Wales. This is a vital area of the economy and knowledge base of Wales which needs to be addressed and ConstructionSkills feels that it is well placed, as are all the Sector Skills Councils, to contribute effectively and decisively to the policy and scrutiny process.

### **About ConstructionSkills Wales**

ConstructionSkills Wales is the Welsh arm of the Sector Skills Council and Industry Training Board for the construction industry. We are working to ensure that construction employers have the right skills, in right place, at the right time by investing funds and providing a wide range of industry-led skills and training solutions.

As a Sector Skills Council, we have developed excellent links with employers and training providers from across Wales and we have put our employers at the heart of the work we do. Our regional structures are coordinated and led by employers and businesses in the sector and are overseen by the Wales Employer Executive Committee. This means that ConstructionSkills Wales is best placed to deliver the right skills for economic recovery in the construction sector.

ConstructionSkills has created three regional construction fora for Wales. These are based in North Wales, South East and South West Wales and bring together employers from the built environment sector, colleagues from ConstructionSkills Wales and Assembly Members from the corresponding areas. These are key for employers to be able to voice their opinions on the sector in their area.

ConstructionSkills is also involved in the Welsh Built Environment Forum, an employer-led partnership designed to enable different parts of the built environment sector to work together more effectively and influence decisions and policies which affect the future of the industry. The Forum represents those who plan, design, build, refurbish and maintain the built environment, along with those who support them with training, funding and development opportunities.

As a representative of various construction industry bodies and groups, ConstructionSkills feel that the following issues should be addressed by the Committee

### **Employer engagement and meeting skills needs**

- ConstructionSkills feel that there must be more collaboration with business leaders and industry experts in the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure. Collaboration between education providers and the business sector is vital in creating effective and workable solutions to the skills deficit in Wales. A strong dialogue with employers in order to ensure that students have skills that employers really need on a local, regional and national level is critical.
- A report released in October, which was commissioned by ConstructionSkills and funded by Welsh Government's Sector Priorities Fund Pilot (SPFP), *Skills Provision for the Construction Sector in Wales – Research to inform Transformational Change*, highlighted the industry's view that there needs to be a more tailored and demand-led approach to training provision. This indicates the need for greater engagement with employers in sectors such as the construction when implementing the Learning and Skills Measure.
- ConstructionSkills, as the 'voice of the construction industry, is ideally placed to collaborate on a local and national level to address the skills gap.
- Through the Construction Skills Network (CSN), we are able to collect and produce comprehensive information on the future training and skills requirements of the industry, across the UK and Wales, and provide a consensus view of the current and future skills training needs.
- ConstructionSkills' regional construction fora provide a vital link with businesses in the industry in order to help inform how local curricula can meet skills needs in the industry. ConstructionSkills would urge local authorities and the Welsh Government to engage further with Sector Skills Councils, including ConstructionSkills.
- In keeping with this need for cooperation across sectors, there needs to be a folding in of the provision of apprenticeships and Work Based Learning environments, as business and industry bodies see these as vital in delivering the skills agenda.

### **Local curricula**

- Sector Skills Councils such as ConstructionSkills would welcome a more collaborative and constructive role in the creation of local curricula, as a Skills Council would bring vital expertise to the discussions surrounding vocational education within particular learning domains.

- Although there is a clear role which Local Education Authorities can and should play in the creation of the new local curricula, ConstructionSkills feels that if there is to be engagement between education providers and the local community to establish local curricula, there is a need for a stronger involvement of local businesses and bodies such as the Welsh Built Environment Forum (the professional organisation representing the construction industry), regional construction fora, and various Sector Skills Councils, alongside the local education authorities.
- ConstructionSkills also feels that there is a need for a national body of some description to be involved, to ensure that the provision of 'local curricula' is fair across Wales. To ensure that there is equality of standards across the whole of Wales, Sector Skills Councils and national bodies such as the Welsh Built Environment Forum could play an important role in advising and consulting on national approaches. This would allow the Local Education Authorities to work with a national body or bodies, which would ensure that every 14 – 19 learner was offered the same or similar opportunities.

### **Qualifications review**

- ConstructionSkills urges the Committee to consider the implications of the recently announced Welsh Government review of qualifications in Wales. There is a need for clarity on the scope of this review, including whether it will look at vocational qualifications, and the effect that any changes to the qualifications system will have on measures introduced under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

### **Funding**

- Funding needs to be more accurately identified, maximised and then ring-fenced. It should be emphasised that ConstructionSkills and SSCs in general are tasked with endorsing sector-specific qualifications, and it is these courses and awards which should be eligible for Welsh Government funding, not only LEA provided courses.

### **The role of Sector Skills Councils**

- Sector Skills Councils are best-placed, best-sourced and best-suited to contribute, monitor and manage the process of delivering on the Welsh skills agenda, through the re-organisations and increased provision of work based learning, apprenticeships and sector specific qualifications.

- ConstructionSkills would propose that Sector Skills Councils be given a statutory role equal to that of local education authorities, in contributing to the development of the local curricula.

## Evidence from Semta

Semta is the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies, and works with employers to improve business performance through skills investment. Semta brings together employers, training providers and stakeholders to identify and understand skills needs and develop action plans to tackle gaps and shortages. Semta's aim is to improve the productivity and competitiveness of its sectors by ensuring companies have the right people with the right skills at the right time.

### Response

1. The effect that the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had on young people aged 14-19 years (Engineering and Manufacture)

The Welsh Baccalaureate Principal Learning Option Pilot offered through the Flintshire network has proved to be a great success. The initial cohort of 15 learners completed in August 2011 with 100% successful outcomes. This allowed numerous progression routes to be accessed per learner. The alternatives accessed included direct entry into A Level provision used for future University access (3 learners), Edexcel Diploma in Engineering used for future University access (5 learners), Apprenticeship Access with immediate employment or via the Pathway to Apprenticeship Programme (6 learners), and finally level 2 or level 3 access following a different vocational route (1 learner)

Due to the applied learning methodology where the provision for delivery is of a shared type between 4 high schools and an FEI hub the network partners inclusive of Semta have seen a distinct improvement in both academic and vocational skills gained by the particular learner making them ready for the World of Work supporting needs identified by Industry,

Semta have earmarked the system as a possible Junior Apprenticeship Programme for future recognition for 14 to 16 years olds due to the WBQ element at Intermediate Level being more focussed and related to Engineering issues.

Learners can gain a 5 GCSE equivalent outcome following the Principal Learning qualification delivered as part of the overall programme by attending the FEI for one day per week timetabled as part of an options menu in school.

Semta are now aware of 5 additional regions who have begun the framework in 2011– Sir Gar, Wrexham, Gwent, Cardiff and Vale and Neath.

2. Whether the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16.

It is always Semtas' intention to support all learners wishing to follow a vocational pathway via Engineering or Manufacture. GCSEs are still recognised as the pre-requisites for initial entry into the sector but the WBQPL also provides an alternative and recognised entry into a Level 2 Apprenticeship pathway as a minimum. Semta work with FEIs and other Training providers, to influence the content of programmes of study, which will allow progression from Level 1 to Level 2 Engineering Schemes for learners not having the academic and vocational ability when leaving school or as an adult wishing to re-train.

3. Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

As referred to in Question 1 and 2 the WBQPL allows distinct applied learning for the Engineering Sector as it supports the preparation of the learner for Industry. However because the content also includes core GCSEs and the overarching WBQ it allows learners to change their thinking to follow a different mode of provision and employment route

As stated it allows:-

Progression to Level 2 Programmes of a Competence Nature in Engineering - Employed or Unemployed  
Progression to Level 3 Programmes of a Competence Nature in Engineering - Employed or Unemployed  
Progression into General Education A Level Provision to follow a career in Engineering Related Subject Areas

Progression into General Education A Level Provision to follow a career in Non Engineering Related Subject Areas

Progression into General Education to follow a career in non Engineering Related Subject

- 4 What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Having nurtured additional interest in Engineering and Manufacturing Industries with school based learners via the WBQPL framework it was imperative that a progression route was available for learners to step to even though the number of available apprenticeships were in decline due to the economic climate.

Semta working with Welsh government introduced the Pathway to Apprenticeship Scheme in Engineering run in parallel with distinct Apprenticeship Programmes. The Engineering PtA Programme is deemed to be the most successful by stakeholders including WG and Industry due to the high level of positive progression into employment as well as the skills developed by the learner making them suitable for industry. This provision is being expanded to include other specific vocational pathways from 2012 e.g. Aerospace Sector in Wales.

Semta have managed to influence the content of the PtA programme to support regional workforce and economic needs while still maintaining a National Standard of Content overall. Industry is very complementary of the overall outcomes and is actively involved in improving content.

- 5 Is the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure helping to improve parity of esteem between academic and vocational courses?

Yes but there is still a need to continue with the policies to improve further and more importantly advertise and market the changes to all stakeholders inclusive of WG, Schools, Learners, FEIs, PTPs, Careers Wales and Industry.

6. One of the key aims of the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy is to ensure that: 95% of young people by the age of 25 will be ready for high skilled employment or higher education by 2015. Is the implementation of the Measure to date having an impact on improving the level of vocational skills of young people?

Semta have recognised this Key Aim and feel a Key Action needed is to provide a Progression Elevator for all, linked to Apprenticeship standards asked for by Industry and hopefully leading to employment opportunities. Learners can now progress from Level 1 to Level 4 Apprenticeship Frameworks and with the introduction of the Higher Apprenticeship Programmes from 2012 can now continue to Level 5 and Level 6 Industry Recognised Frameworks of Study.

This progression elevator in effect allows access for any learner with any level of academic/vocational ability wishing to follow an Engineering Career but also allowing only necessary levels of training to be attended /completed to support the need for Highly Skilled individuals fit for purpose within the specific sector of engineering.

## Evidence from Summit Skills

Summit Skills:

The effect that the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had on young people aged 14-19 years;

I can only report on the Construction and Built Environment Principal line of learning of which SummitSkills are part of the SSC consortium. We felt that in Wales there was a missed opportunity as the literacy and numeracy key elements to support the programme were written by employers to make sure the candidates they would eventually recruit as apprentices post-16 had the mathematical and literacy skills to benefit their businesses but Welsh Government chose not to adopt these as fundamental elements.

On a positive front it definitely initiated conversations around vocational education in the school curriculum and conversations with parents which would never have happened without this Measure. May I add that we really did try hard with Welsh- medium schools to take this curriculum offer on board, but the numbers were sadly very low. The reason for this needs to be investigated by Welsh Government.

Whether the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16;

I genuinely have no evidence to prove this either way. However the EMA, tax credits and the desire to attend university have been factors that vocational education has had to compete against. Our aspiration for the Measure was that future generations would have had a “real” introduction to the BSE sector and breadth of the services sector in terms of progression, footprint and opportunities. They could then have all the information to make informed career decisions for themselves. Alas, as a sector we still suffer from an oversupply of under-skilled individuals being put into the job market from the stand alone technical certificate sales.

Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009;

What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009;

I have no evidence to prove this either way, the uptake of the Construction and BE Principal line of learning would give you an idea of the level of impact the Measure has had for our sector.

Practically, we need to improve the level of understanding of those that take part in the delivery and who should be involved in the delivery of the programmes to the 14 to 19 cohort. The majority of applications lacked suitable employer engagement and links to FEI to facilitate progression. On a



positive note one school that was emerging from special measures used the programme to invigorate the new curriculum it was able to offer.

Is the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure helping to improve parity of esteem between academic and vocational courses?

I have no evidence to prove this but we are trying to improve this level of understanding with the Pathways to Apprenticeship programme which has been very successful for our sector. There is still a lot of work to do with the schools but this needs concerted efforts from several agencies. An SSC cannot do this in isolation. Normally schools were using the PLQ for less academic students rather than offering it to the whole age group and therefore this is unlikely to change perceptions.

One of the key aims of the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy is to ensure that: 95% of young people by the age of 25 will be ready for high skilled employment or higher education by 2015. Is the implementation of the Measure to date having an impact on improving the level of vocational skills of young people?

I have no direct evidence to respond to this but if we are not increasing the number of participating schools in our Principal Lines of Learning then there will be a knock on effect further up the line, we have made an impact post 16 with the PtA but if you want to increase the number of individuals ready for high skills employment then the younger you start the greater rate of return you will have. With the level of coverage we currently have this 95% target will not be met.

**Children and Young People Committee**

**Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009**

**Background:**

SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Active Leisure Learning and Well-being is an employer-led organisation and a member of the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils. SkillsActive is recognised and licensed by Government and is charged with leading the skills and productivity drive within the Sport, Fitness, Playwork, The Outdoors and Caravan industries – known as the Active Leisure Learning and Well-being Sector.

SkillsActive has developed a longstanding positive working relationship with Play Wales. Play Wales is the national organisation for children's play working strategically with ministers, government officials, national organisations, local authorities, educational institutions, voluntary and community sectors to influence and inform decisions that will have an impact on children and young people's play.

Historically, SkillsActive has worked closely with Play Wales on a range of strategic initiatives. As an example, Play Wales hosted the National Training Centre for Playwork Education and Training which provided a coherent route for playwork education development and training including strategic coordination, viability and sustainability, networking, information dissemination, communication and quality assurance. Play Wales has also worked with SkillsActive when developing the new Play and Playwork Education and Skills Strategy 2011-2016. This is underpinned by a Welsh Implementation Plan which compliments the Welsh Governments Skills That Work for Wales strategy, the Children and Families Measure 2010 and the new Child Poverty Strategy 2011 all of which link to the drive for Wales to be a place which values children and young people and the need for a professionally qualified playwork workforce.

SkillsActive also has a close working relationship with the Care Council for Wales. Care Council for Wales is the social care workforce regulator in Wales and responsible for promoting and securing high standards across the social services and social care workforce. The Council also delivers the Sector Skills Council remit in Wales for those working in early years and childcare and in social work and social care with children and adults.

SkillsActive, Play Wales and the Care Council for Wales have recently developed and agreed a memorandum of understanding that will foster positive and co-operative working arrangements between the three organisations to the benefit of the Playwork workforce and ultimately children and young people in Wales.

Both SkillsActive and Play Wales welcome the opportunity to respond to the committee's request for evidence to their inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009. Access to wide ranging learning provision for all 14-19 learners is important and enabling learners to fulfill their potential and become fully engaged in their local communities. We believe that a curriculum which meets the needs of all 14-19 year old learners is crucial for a healthy, productive society in Wales.

#### **1. The effect that the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had on young people aged 14-19 years**

The Measure is leading to a broader choice of academic and vocational provision, particularly at 14-19. However, there is an important opportunity to be grasped. Focusing upon career pathways, it could be argued that Playwork does not feature strongly in comparison with other sector career pathways. Therefore, playwork needs to be promoted more widely as a viable career option, particularly at 14-19. There is a real opportunity to develop playwork as an option for young people rather than the current situation where most playworkers 'stumble' into the job. Early years qualifications have been available in schools for decades as have programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme which often draw young people into the youth work sector. Playwork could have similar opportunities within schools and colleges to establish itself as a real career opportunity, as well as being beneficial to a wider range of careers involving children and young people. In addition, there is a view that undertaking playwork programmes is of enormous benefit to

young people who in the future will become parents and members of communities. To ensure that the Measure is successful, it is important to ensure that there is a wider range of choice and provision for young people.

**2. Whether the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16**

Both SkillsActive and Play Wales believe that there are probably other stakeholders who are better placed to comment on this. However, there are a range of factors that often affect the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education. As an example, within the current economic climate many young people may choose to stay on in education and training after the end of compulsory education at age 16. In Wales youth unemployment is high and it is likely that this is a contributing factor.

**3. Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009***

It would seem that the Measure has led to a wider choice of academic and vocational courses. There also seems to be an improvement in collaborative working and growing levels of trust and understanding.

With the introduction of the new Playwork Principles into Practice qualifications (P<sup>3</sup>) there has been significant take up across Wales. This is attributed to:

- overcoming learning barriers such as rurality, travel, previous negative experiences in formal education, and seasonal employment
- delivery locally through employers outside of the formal college context as well as within the FE sector
- being coherent with policy and legislative context of the Welsh Government; its radical approach to children's play including recognition of the importance playing

- outside, addressing the poverty agenda, providing adventure, risk and opportunity
- providing opportunities for gaining additional skills and qualifications needed to sustain employment, improve productivity and potentially increase earnings through career progression
- supporting delivery of skills provision that is more responsive and aligned to the needs of employers
- providing discrete bite sized learning

There is a view that the lessons learnt are transferable to the 14–19 agenda and that there is a learner demand for a wider profile of courses.

#### **4. What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009***

Collaboration is key. However, there are often challenges particularly around the availability of resources. To successfully introduce new learning and skills options for young people requires a solid infrastructure for qualification and training development and delivery; strategic coordination and sustainability; focussed networking, information dissemination, communication and quality assurance. Providing a foundation for inspiring teachers, employers, training providers and young people to take up new opportunities such as playwork both as a qualification and career option is a process which has started but there is still a way to travel. Support for joint working requires strong leadership and resources. Lessons learnt over the last few years show that where there is energy and commitment to deliver learning and skills (particularly through the medium of Welsh) great strides can be made.

## **Response received from LSIS**

(UK Qualifications and Skills)

*Young People, parents, communities and employers should be entitled to have access to appropriately qualified and supported (C&PD) practitioners irrespective of setting in which the service is delivered.*

*A key component of the LLUK/LSIS Qualification Strategy was the reform of the Teacher Qualification Framework in Wales (TQFW). Having consulted widely the vision is for a modular, credit based approach to Teacher/Tutor/Trainer education which would provide core and option units to support generalist/specialist career development, for initial teacher training and ongoing professional development. The recommendations cover Teachers in Further Education, Work-based Learning and Adult Community Learning. Because of the regulatory basis of this qualification framework our recommendations need support from DfES and were submitted in March 2008. The TQFW is an essential step in the development of fit-for-purpose qualifications, and is much needed to ensure that young people have access to 'high quality education and training related to employment'*

## **Response from Skills for Justice**

*Is there progress on establishing a Common Core for the CYP sector workforce. A lot of hard work went into the process but with no outcome. It would make sense to have a common core in place which would aid the development of a set of values and principles, consider approaches to induction etc*

*What is WG planning in terms of registration and regulation coherence in order to try and address:*

- some of the piecemeal or divergent developments in the children's sector around registration and regulation?*
- Different approaches to key definitions, e.g what it means to be in good standing*
- Communities of practice in which only some practitioners were registered and regulated, e.g. teaching*
- Piecemeal approach to the registration of emerging professionals*
- Communities of practice - e.g. early years – where practitioners were likely to be registered in at least two different places*

### ***Response from E-Skills UK***

e-skills UK has not been invited by many 14-19 networks to engage with their pathways programmes, so it is difficult to comment with huge confidence on the impact of the measure. But I have responded as best I can. Please see below:-

**Whether the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16;**

We do not hold any data on this I am afraid.

**Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009;**

There may be wider choice but without legislation or incentives for schools and colleges to actively prepare for delivery of vocational courses, cpd of teachers, curriculum planning, marketing and promotion, then pupils and parents will probably continue to opt for the 'traditional' choices that are the main means of schools attaining their targets.

**What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009?**

Please see above.

# Agenda Item 3

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE

Ceredigion would like to thank the National Assembly for Wales - Children and Young People Committee for the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee's inquiry into the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*. Committee Members have stated that a number of issues especially pertinent to rural areas such as choices, travel and transport, digital learning and the provision of Welsh medium education, have arisen in Committee discussions. We will focus mainly on these issues but will also set these issues in Ceredigion's context so that Members are aware of the background and local mandate that we are working within.

### CEREDIGION CHARACTERISTICS

- Ceredigion has the second lowest population density across Wales.
- The average weekly earnings in Ceredigion are the lowest across Wales while house prices are among the highest.
- Among the highest percentage of self employed workers in Wales.
- High dependence on the Public sector for jobs.
- Free school Meals in Ceredigion is 12.2%. This is the third lowest in Wales.
- Ceredigion has no special schools. Consequently all pupils receive educational provision within our seven secondary schools
- Surplus places in secondary schools are very high at 25%.
- Ceredigion has a political mandate to keep secondary education in the six market towns. The towns are well disbursed across the county. Distances between a town and its nearest neighbouring town in Ceredigion generally ranges between 12 miles and 16 miles. The transport infrastructure is of poor quality.
- Direct bus journeys between the major towns generally take half an hour. However, there are limited public transport links.
- Coleg Ceredigion Further Education has two sites located in two of the main towns, Aberystwyth and Cardigan. Coleg Ceredigion is the smallest Further Education College in Wales.
- Broadband links in general are poor. Tregaron and Lampeter were the worst locations for broadband speeds in Wales and were among the 20 worst locations for broadband speeds in the UK. Broadband links within schools themselves are good
- Introduction of a flexible and varied school infrastructure including 3-19 schools as part of making educational delivery affordable and sustainable in rural areas.
- Very low levels of NEETs. the percentage of pupils classified as NEET after finishing year 11 is the lowest in Wales.
- Second highest percentage of Year 11 pupils choosing to return to the 6th form.



## CEREDIGION 14-19 STRATEGY

The main strategies for establishing the Learning Measure in Ceredigion can be summarised as follows.

- Build on the strong outcomes achieved by the existing school structure in Ceredigion by establishing 3-19 schools and maintaining formal hub and spoke collaboration arrangements between schools. [Appendix](#)
- Focus on developing strong literacy and numeracy skills within a broad curriculum.
- Develop an ICT based learning culture, where every learner has access to, course content and learning environment from any part of the school or from home at any time of day.
- Build on the excellent pastoral care delivered through the school system and continue to develop the early intervention strategies that have improved pupil behaviour and engagement across all age ranges.

## BENEFITS FOR THE LEARNER

**The Measure has had a positive impact on learners.**

### Curricular Improvements

- Improved learner choice and increase the number Learning Paths open to them across wider fields.
- Increased average uptake of learning opportunities across all curriculum areas.
- Increased the flexibility within the curriculum and allowed learners to take advantage of personal learning provision.

### Wellbeing improvements

- Promoted Learner Support services such as school counselling and learning coaches.
- Ensured that each secondary school has a Hafan and Encil<sup>1</sup> facility to support learner emotional and behaviour needs within each institution.
- Ensured that there is impartial Career Advisory Service within each institution.
- Ensured that each learner has Statement of Entitlement from the 14-19 Learning Network.
- Encouraged pupils to express their option on the provision through the annual "Learner's Voice" questionnaire.
- Improved the Parity of Esteem between vocational courses and traditional courses in schools

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<sup>1</sup> Hafan and Encil is an inclusion facility. The Hafan facility is a nurture group and Encil is a seclusion facility.

## OUTCOMES ARISING FROM THE 14-19 MEASURE IN CEREDIGION

Implementing the 14-19 Measure in Ceredigion has led to a number of measurable benefits.

- There has been a effective focus on pupil welfare, for example through the counselling service. This has led to an improvement in behaviour and improved attendance rates.
  - The percentage of pupils in full time education at the end of year 11 has increased from 78% in 2006 to 86.2% in 2010.
  - Attendance rates in secondary schools have improved from 91.6% in 2007-08 to 92.5% the highest in Wales in 2010-11. Attendance is running at an unprecedented 94% so far in 2011-12
  - The number of days lost to fixed term exclusions lasting 6 days or more have fallen from 65 (2007-08) to 40 (2009 -2010). There have been no fixed term exclusions lasting 6 days or more during the first term of 2011-12. There were no permanent exclusions in 2010-11 or in the first term of 2011-12.
- We have seen a continuous improvement in the Level 2 and Level 3 threshold statistics over the past 4 years. We have also seen a significant improvement in the average wider point score since 2008.
  - Level 2 threshold results have improved from 61.6% in 2008 to 71.4% in 2011.
  - The average wider point score of 17 year old pupils have improved from 659 to 813 during the same period.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of courses offered to pupils including the number of courses offered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, especially at post-16 pupils.

## ISSUES ARISING WITH IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING MEASURE

The following table summarises the main issues affecting the full realisation of benefits from the Learning measure.

Some of the issues such as resistance to change and communication with neighbouring authorities are best managed at a local level.

Other issues such as the rural economy, attracting more investment and job opportunities through the private sector, employment, broadband availability and travel costs are issues that require national support. Of these, transport is the biggest single challenge in implementing the Learning Measure.

Issue	Method of managing
<p>High travel costs and long travel times in rural areas. (<u>Appendix 2</u>)</p>	<p>Stats Wales data shows that Ceredigion spends £465 per pupil per annum transporting pupils to school compared with £109 per pupil in Cardiff. This is the most significant constraint facing providers in Ceredigion. Transport costs are not recognised within post 16 funding and this is a significant extra burden on the Local Authority.</p> <p>Joint timetabling between partner schools has helped to reduce cost, however it is not a fully sustainable model. The next step is to implement formal Hub and Spoke models as described in <u>Appendix 1</u>.</p> <p>Joining 6th forms together inevitably increases the distances travelled by pupils to access education. This increases pupil travel times and also travel costs. This is the case whether 6th forms are actually merged together or whether they virtually join together as part of a collaborative entity.</p> <p>These travel costs are not recognised in the post 16 course funding mechanism. This is placing rural authorities at a significant disadvantage and prevents the development of a fully sustainable solution</p>
<p>Sustainability of providing 30 courses in small secondary schools.</p> <p>The Audit Office identified that at least 150 pupils are required to maintain a sustainable 6<sup>th</sup> form. The most recent analysis of costs and funding performed in Ceredigion taking account of the 14-19 Learning Measure suggests that the actual breakeven point is higher, and is approximately 200 pupils.</p>	<p>The 6<sup>th</sup> forms of all but 1 secondary schools in Ceredigion is smaller than 150 pupils.</p> <p>The funding pressure is greater since the Welsh Government ceased to recognise sparsity and rurality in the post-16 funding equation. As a result Ceredigion has to substantially subsidise post 16 provision by over £300k annually which is 8% of the budget.</p> <p>We are addressing this issue in Ceredigion by encouraging the development of collaborative 6<sup>th</sup> form partnerships that follow a Hub and Spoke model. Under this model the schools in the partnership undertake joint selection of options and joint timetabling.</p> <p>However, as noted above, implementing any collaboration between post 16 providers, or merging any post 16 providers inevitably leads to increasing travel costs.</p> <p>Resources that would otherwise be used to develop the curriculum and improve quality of courses have to be diverted and used instead to enable student access.</p>
<p>Limited employment opportunities in Ceredigion limits pathways into employment and results in a skills drain from Ceredigion.</p>	<p>This is an issue that cannot be fully managed locally. Stats Wales shows that in the past two years, the average gross weekly earnings in Ceredigion has been the <b>lowest in Wales</b>.</p>

	<p>Ceredigion achievement rates are among the highest in Wales. However, there are limited employment opportunities. and the lowest salaries in Wales means that opportunity for high achieving academic or vocational well qualified apprenticeships to stay within the county. Hence, there is an outflow of the most qualified individuals from Ceredigion and this exacerbates the issues of rural poverty.</p> <p>Mid Wales has had minimal economic investment from WG. Economic investment is urgently required in rural mid Wales to reverse the downward economic spiral.</p>
Limited number of providers with expertise in vocational subjects in rural areas	<p>There are a limited number of external providers in Ceredigion and these are generally one or two person enterprises. There are continuity and quality risks associated with some of these smaller providers. Coleg Ceredigion is the smallest Further Education College in Wales and has limited expertise in certain areas</p> <p>School partnerships are encouraged to commission either Coleg Ceredigion or Hyfforddiant Ceredigion training providers if expertise already exists, or to invest in staff training where school staff members have the required expertise.</p>
Broadband capacity is low in Ceredigion and ICT facilities are in need of updating.	<p>We have developed and are implementing an ICT strategy aimed at improving the quality of ICT equipment and the quality of ICT support by pooling school funds.</p> <p>The Broadband capacity permits each school to run one Video conferencing link at a time. Using this resource, a maximum of 6 courses of the 60 AS and A-level can be delivered by video conference.</p> <p>We are investigating the benefits of commissioning electronic course materials for certain modules. This will permit pupils to learn certain subjects remotely. Teachers will hold tutorials to address problems.</p>
Ensuring the quality of courses provided in collaboration.	<p>We have developed service level agreements for the schools to use. We have ensured that all the schools have completed these service level agreements. These service level agreements set out quality targets for the courses provided in collaboration. If the quality measures are not met, the funding will be reduced.</p>
Surplus places in a rural area Appendix 3	<p>The rate of surplus places in Ceredigion primary schools is 23% and the rate of surplus places in Ceredigion secondary schools is 25%. We have calculated that the minimum number of surplus places that is economical in Ceredigion primary schools is 14%. A similar situation exists in secondary schools.</p> <p>Reducing surplus places will only yield net savings when the savings arising from closing secondary schools is higher than the additional costs of providing additional transport.</p>

## **Conclusion**

Whilst the Measure has been broadly welcomed and has brought with it tangible benefits for pupils mainly in the form of:

- Wider choice leading to better outcomes;
- More pupil satisfaction that curriculum is meeting needs; as evidenced by better outcomes;
- Increased pupil enjoyment and engagement as evidenced by significantly improved attendance and behaviour.

Sustainability of progress will be difficult unless WG

- Broadens its definition of poverty especially in rural areas in education;
- accepts transport as a significant cost implication in delivery;
- allocates an appropriate weighting to the cost of Welsh medium delivery in a sparsely populated rural area.

Sustainability of progress will be difficult unless Ceredigion Local Authority and WG work together to:

- invest in the local economy to broaden and allow opportunities for pupils to use their wider and vocational skills locally;

The Local Authority needs to continue to deliver its programme of change.

## APPENDIX 1 – THE HUB AND SPOKE MODEL

### ACHIEVING THE LEARNING MEASURE – THE HUB AND SPOKE MODEL

Six out of the seven sixth forms in Ceredigion are small sixth forms with fewer than 150 pupils. It is not possible for all six of these sixth forms to each run 30 courses.

The key to providing pupils with 30 options is to minimise duplication of courses between neighbouring schools. The preferred solution to achieve this aim in Ceredigion is the hub and spoke model.

This hub and spoke solution for Ceredigion has been developed in close co-operation with Powys and Carmarthen County Councils. Both rural counties face similar challenges.

The hub and spoke model in Ceredigion can be summarised as follows:-

- Secondary schools will be partnered with one or two other schools.
- Partner schools will pool their post 16 budget.
- Schools within each partnership will jointly select option blocks. Between them, the schools will offer at least 30 course options..
- Travel costs and time wastage will be minimised by selecting one school within the partnership to be hub school. The hub school will provide a wider range of courses than the spoke schools.
- Pupils will have access to all subjects offered by the partnership.
- Time wastage due to travel will also be minimised by providing lessons in blocks of up to three hours in length.
- Travel costs will be met by the County Council and schools, not by the pupils in order to minimise NEETs.

## APPENDIX 2 - TRANSPORT ISSUES

The main transport issues related to the Learning Measure are as follows:-

- The funding for post 16 education does not recognise high travel costs in rural areas.
- Longer travel times in rural areas have an impact on educational delivery.

### TRAVEL COSTS

In rural areas, pupils are more widely dispersed. Secondary schools are smaller units and are located further apart. Transport costs are much higher in rural areas than in urban areas. The home to school transport cost in Powys and Ceredigion are £462 and £459 per pupil per annum. The home to school transport costs in Cardiff and Newport are £109 and £156 per pupil per annum. Furthermore there is more limited public transport in rural areas. This means that there is a greater need for Local Authorities to arrange transport for post 16 pupils in rural areas.

The Audit Office identified that at least 150 pupils were required to maintain a sustainable 6<sup>th</sup> form. In a sustainable sixth form unit, the funding received is equal to the expenditure incurred on delivering 6<sup>th</sup> form provision. The most recent analysis of costs and funding performed in Ceredigion taking account of the 14-19 Learning Measure suggests that the actual breakeven point is higher, and is approximately 200 pupils.

The 6<sup>th</sup> forms of most secondary schools in rural areas are smaller than 150 pupils. The size of 6<sup>th</sup> forms in Ceredigion in January 2011 is shown in the table below.

School	Number of pupils
Aberaeron	132
Aberteifi	100
Dyffryn Teifi	119
Llanbedr	122
Penglais	302
Penweddig	122
Tregaron	73

This means that the only way of creating sustainable units with more than 200 pupils is to join sixth forms together. Sixth forms can be physically joined together by merging two schools on a single site. The other option is to virtually join two schools together. Virtually joining two schools together involves treating the sixth forms of the two schools as a single entity; in this case the option blocks and the 6<sup>th</sup> form timetable must be jointly prepared and agreed.

In both the above cases, it will be necessary to increase pupil travel. Under the first option pupils will need to travel further distances to reach the new merged 6<sup>th</sup> form. Under the second option, pupils will need to travel between sites to attend some courses. Broadband capacities in Ceredigion limit the number of courses delivered by video conferencing to 3 out of the 30 courses.

One of the key priorities of the Welsh Government as noted in the 5 year plan is to improve “Post-16 staying on rates (including school, FE and training)”. Achieving this target in rural areas is dependent on local authorities paying for transport. It is likely that some young people would be deterred from attending school or college if they had to pay for their travel costs.

This means that implementing the Learning Measure is necessarily more expensive in rural areas than in more densely populated areas. The minimum additional cost is the additional travel costs required to transport to the single merged sixth form or to transport pupils from one site to another.

The actual travel costs will vary depending on a number of factors, including pupil numbers, travel distances, the population density and the number of pick up points and the availability of public transport routes. As an indication of travel cost, the additional travel costs arising from creating a single sixth form for three secondary school in mid Ceredigion was modelled to be a minimum of £200k per annum.

The County Council will need to demonstrate to stakeholders why we prefer to spend this £200k on transport costs to deliver the Learning Measure rather than on 5 teachers within the schools.

Over the next two years this additional travel costs will be funded using the RNDP. If the RNDP ceases then the Learning Measure can only be met if Ceredigion Council agrees to meet the travel costs itself. This will mean that some other Local Authority Services will need to be reduced in order to meet the additional travel costs.

## **TRAVEL TIME**

In addition to a financial cost, joining 6th forms places a travel time penalty on pupils. The rural transport infrastructure is generally poor when compared with elsewhere in Wales. A significant minority of pupils will be required to travel long distances to access education. This is the case whether 6th forms are actually merged together or whether the virtually join together as part of a collaborative entity.

- Students travel longer distances to attend the post 16 unit and as a result have less time for extra-curricular activities.
- High travel times may deter some pupils from returning to education post 16.
- In the case of collaboration between 6<sup>th</sup> forms:-



- Lessons must be provided in 3 hour blocks to minimise travel costs. Teaching methods will need to change.
- Students will travel partially during the school day. This will reduce teaching contact hours. Students will have less opportunity to learn during the school day.

The factors noted above are likely to have a negative impact on young people achievements. This will prevent us from being able to fully realise the full benefits of the Learning Measure.

We need to continue manage the change to a more collaborative post-16 structure carefully. There will be a learning curve before we identify how best to manage the impact of pupil travel times. During this learning curve, pupil achievements may not improve as quickly as was hoped.

We ask that RNDP funding continues to be specifically available to support transport post-16 transport.

We highlight that there will be a learning curve as rural local authorities identify how best to manage the impact of higher pupil travel times.

## APPENDIX 3 - THE LEARNING MEASURE AND SURPLUS PLACES

### ADDRESSING SURPLUS PLACES

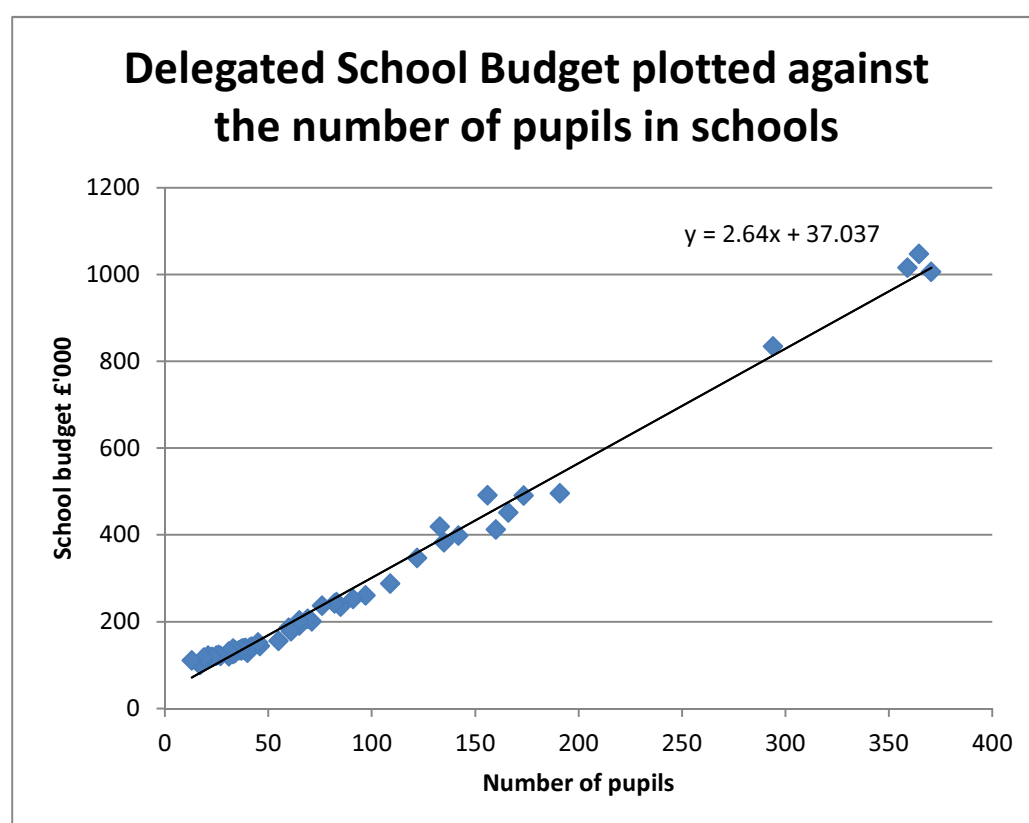
The past years have seen a fall in pupil numbers and as a result, the rate of surplus places in Ceredigion primary schools is 23% and the rate of surplus places in and Ceredigion secondary schools is 25%.

### PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The education department in Ceredigion County Council have estimated that the minimum number of primary school surplus places that can be economically achieved in Ceredigion is 14%. This is higher than the 10% target set by the Welsh Government.

The methodology is summarised as follows:-

- It is possible to calculate the savings achieved by closing a school as £37,000. The model suggests that this is the case irrespective of the capacity of the school or the number of pupils on roll.



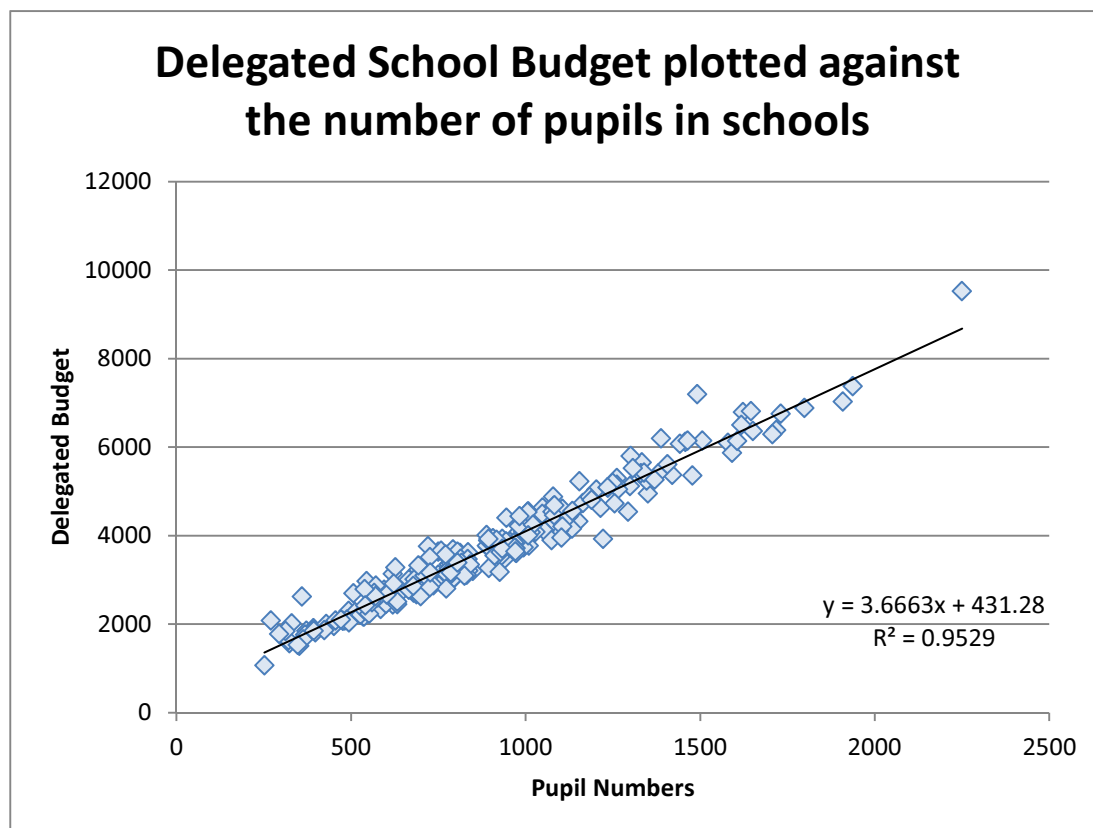
- The average cost of transport per pupil in Ceredigion is £465.
- We distributed schools into areas with their neighbouring schools and assessed whether school mergers or closures were likely to result in economic savings. we assumed that there is no restriction on capital. That is, any number of area primary schools or extensions can be built.

- In identifying future closures we came to the conclusion that 687 surplus places could be removed
- At this point, the rate of surplus places would fall from 23% to 14%.
- It is likely that trying to reduce the rate of surplus places further beyond 14% would result in more expensive education provision due to the impact of travel costs.

## SUPRLUS PLACES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Surplus places can only be removed by closing schools. In the case of secondary schools we developed a model to estimate the savings that could be achieved from school closures and compared this figure with the actual additional travel costs that would arise.

The financial model suggests that secondary schools have a fixed cost of £431k per annum. This means that even if a school had no pupils, it would cost £431k per annum to run. It also means that if we were to close a secondary school, we would expect to make revenue savings of £431k per annum less any additional travel costs.



Travel costs in a rural county such as Ceredigion can be very significant. On average Ceredigion spends £465 per pupil per annum transporting pupils to school compared with £109 per pupil in Cardiff. We have analysed the additional travel costs that Ceredigion would incur under various school closure options.

The additional travel costs arising from closing most Ceredigion secondary schools would be higher than £431k.

## Children and Young People Committee

### CYP(4)-02-12 Paper 3

#### Follow up action: EU initiatives addressing Child Trafficking.

At the Committee's meeting on 1 December Lynne Neagle AM asked for information on any initiatives in relation to tackling child trafficking on a pan-European basis.

#### Human Trafficking

Child trafficking is addressed as part of a wider policy aimed at preventing and combating human trafficking.

Details on work in this area can be found on the European Commission's web-pages [Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings](#) (in particular the section '[EU actions explained](#)').

In December 2011 the first **EU Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator** was appointed Myria Vassiliadou, aimed at providing an overall strategic and policy co-ordination for actions being taken in the EU addressing trafficking in human beings.

In April 2011 a new **Directive on preventing and combating trafficking and protecting victims** was adopted, which replaces the 2002 Framework Directive. The new Directive aims to further reduce discrepancies between national laws on prevention, victim protection and prosecution of traffickers. See web-link for more details.

The UK Government decided to 'opt-in' to this Directive (in July 2011) and the European Commission published decision in September 2011 confirming this<sup>1</sup>. This means the provisions of this Directive will apply within the UK.

In addition to these the EU published an Action Plan to tackle human trafficking in 2005, and in 2007 launched an **EU Anti-Trafficking Day**, which takes place on 18 October each year.

Finally, there are a number of **EU funding programmes** which prioritise actions against trafficking in human beings:

- [Daphne III](#) (2007-2013)
- [Prevention of and Fight against Crime](#) (2007-2013)

Organisations active in this field, including voluntary sector, public authorities, universities etc. would be eligible to participate in these programmes, and develop transnational projects with partner organisations from other EU countries.

#### Fight against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children

In addition to the above actions, the EU is also taking co-ordinated action to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children.

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<sup>1</sup> The UK does not participate in EU legislation developed within the area of freedom, justice and security. It can, however, decide to 'opt in' to provisions of EU legislation in this area if it chooses to do so.

In September 2011 a new Directive on sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography was adopted, which replaces (and updates) a 2004 Framework Decision in this area.

The new Directive covers prosecution of offenders, protection of victims and prevention of the crime, and includes measures to tackle grooming of victims on the internet.

The European Commission also supports other co-ordinated actions across the EU, including specialist police operations tackling child pornography and support for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in this area, e.g. through the Safer Internet Programme.

More information on this can be found on the dedicated pages of the [DG Home Affairs](#) web-site of the European Commission.

The lead European Commissioner within this area is [Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs](#).

### **Wales specific information**

In terms of child trafficking in Wales, the [All Wales Protocol on Child Trafficking](#) was launched in September 2011 by the All Wales Child Protection Procedures Review Group (AWCPPRG). The AWCPPRG is tasked with producing and keeping up to date the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The group has a mandate and representation from all of Wales' Local Safeguarding Children Boards and partner agencies. The group also produces other protocols, which are appropriate to an All Wales basis and is a platform for sharing good practice across Wales. The Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services, welcomed the publication of the protocol. Further information can be found [here](#).

In March 2009, the office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales published a report: [Bordering on Concern](#) which used research undertaken on their behalf by End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT). The report details evidence from across Wales of children and young people being trafficked into and within Wales for forced labour, sexual exploitation, cannabis production, begging and domestic servitude.

In May 2010, the National Assembly's Cross Party Group on Human Trafficking published a report: [Knowing No Boundaries](#) Knowing No Boundaries which highlighted the issue of human trafficking and includes information about child trafficking.

Further information and a list of research relevant to child trafficking in Wales can be found on the [website](#) of the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership.

## Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-02-12 Paper 4

### Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

**Additional information from Governors Wales' following oral evidence at the committee meeting on 7 December 2011**

- 1.1 Thank you for the opportunity to meet with the Children and Young People Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011. In response to your request for supplementary information in relation to 'how faith schools are meeting the requirements of collaboration and partnership working and on how many joint governing bodies have been established in Wales since the introduction of the measure', Governors Wales offers the following comments:
- 1.2 Whilst collaboration and partnership working is encouraged, further additional information appears to be limited in relation to the requirements of collaboration and partnership working, with regards to the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, other than information documented in our earlier submission<sup>1</sup>. There appears however, to be informal arrangements in place within schools in general. This comment is primarily based on responses from Local Authority Governor Support Officers. We are aware however, that federations have been set up. From responses received there is evidence which indicates that some secondary schools and representatives of governing bodies work together in 14-19 federation, as well as evidence of cross border collaboration with faith schools.
- 1.3 There also appears to be very limited information on the number of joint governing bodies that have been established since the Measure was introduced. Anecdotal evidence appears to suggest that there are examples of informal arrangements in existence, as opposed to formalised arrangements. Possible lack of awareness of the two current sets of regulations on collaboration<sup>2</sup> that currently exist could be a considering factor. The committee will be aware of school governing body federations and the pilots that have been taking place across Wales. The Welsh Government will be issuing best practice guidance based on the experience of the schools in the pilots in due course. This will undoubtedly be of assistance.
- 1.4 Furthermore, The Education (Wales) Measure 2011 will enable powers and duties to 'make collaboration commonplace in the education system'<sup>3</sup> as well as giving Local Authorities power to establish federation of schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Governors Wales' submission to the Children and Young People Committee – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=224&MID=472>

<sup>2</sup> [The Collaboration Between Maintained Schools \(Wales\) Regulations 2008](#)

[The Collaboration Arrangements \(Maintained Schools and Further Education Bodies \(Wales\) Regulations 2008](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Explanatory Memorandum to the proposed Education \(Wales\) Measure – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2011](#)

We are aware that the Welsh Government will be making regulations to strengthen the current collaboration regulations.

We recognise the important role collaboration and partnership has in delivering education functions, but most crucially in raising overall standards, with the resulting provision offering the range and depth of curriculum choices essential for a fair and comprehensive education service in Wales.

We also note that guidance will be produced by the Welsh Government on collaboration in due course and that Governors Wales is also working on a Governor Guide on collaboration, due out this term. This will assist in promoting key collaboration/partnership opportunities.



## Additional Information from Colleges Wales

### Introduction

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- 1 ColegauCymru gave oral evidence to the National Assembly for Wales' Committee for Children and Young People on 7 December 2011 as part of its inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure.
- 2 The Committee asked ColegauCymru to provide supplementary evidence on the following two areas:
  - i. ***Does your local 14-19 network prepare one prospectus for post-16 education? If yes, which network?***
  - ii. ***Is your college embracing digital teaching and new technology? If yes, please give one example.***
- 3 Responses to these two questions are set out below. The answers to the first question are listed by individual college. In respect to the second question, several colleges gave more than one example of digital teaching and new technology and in several cases identified similar approaches. To avoid overlap and duplication, examples of digital teaching and the use of new technology are not listed by college.

### Summary of responses

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- 4 **Area prospectus:** The arrangements in local 14-19 networks vary. Half of the ten colleges that have supplied information state that there is a comprehensive prospectus for post-16 education. The other half report that there is no single prospectus although some college provision is included in collaborative publications.
- 5 **New technologies:** There is wide use of digital teaching and new technology. The examples given show the extent to which colleges are embracing new approaches to teaching and learning.

### Does your local 14-19 network prepare one prospectus for post-16 education? If yes, which network?

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- College 1:** Our local networks do not currently publish one fully comprehensive prospectus of all available post-16 study options. Some joint prospectuses are published but these tend to be limited to details of agreed options available within local clustering arrangements such as joint consortia rather than providing full details of all available progression options.
- College 2:** All providers have their own websites and prospectus. The schools and college provide information on which courses are available and provide further information on each subject on their websites, except for one school which provides the information on paper on request. Work based learning providers give contact details and information about the type of provision on offer on their web sites with further details provided on request. This year for the first time the 14-19 Network is producing a leaflet summarising the options post 16, with details of providers and the

type of provision for each provider. This includes further contact information.

To summarise, rather than provide a common prospectus the approach is to provide a booklet/leaflet which covers all options in brief and then signposts to the appropriate source of further information. These are provided bilingually. This is seen as cost effective, about £2,200 per annum, and informs all students of their options. In particular students are able to access detailed information on each course via appropriate web-based systems.

- College 3:** There is no prospectus for the whole of the local authority area. Each local consortium, of which there are currently five, prepares their own. The college is included in some, although only those courses that are negotiated for us to deliver are mentioned and they are very limited.
- College 4:** All of our 14-19 networks provide a prospectus which details the options available through the collaborative pathways but these do not include all post-16 provision (so these are not entirely comprehensive). Some of these guides are distributed to all parents and some are on-line. This varies between networks. It is slightly more complex for us given that we span a number of local authorities.
- College 5:** Every school and the college produces a separate prospectus – but they all are in the same “house” style. They all include the same 3-4 pages of the “joint” courses offered for all pupils and students (mainly vocational courses offered by the college).
- College 6:** There is not a single prospectus but there are details of the college’s offer on options booklets in clusters in one part of the county.
- College 7:** The City and County Guarantee has been introduced this year. This is an electronic post 16 application process for all school leavers in the area covered by the City and County. All courses from all post 16 providers are on a system that can be accessed through the internet.
- College 8:** The local 14-19 network produces a prospectus of the ‘collaborative provision’ but refused to produce a full Area Prospectus which would have shown the curriculum available at all providers.
- College 9:** We have a separate prospectus for collaborative 16-19 provision.
- College 10:** Within the network, the county is split into 3 geographical clusters and one Welsh language cluster. At cluster level we agree cluster provision for 14-19. Also the Network Coordinator ensures the provision of the entire network is regularly updated on the Careers Wales South West Wales 16-19 Database which is used as the core prospectus for the network.

## Does your college embrace digital teaching and new technology? If yes, please give examples

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All ten colleges responding to this question have demonstrated a wide range of uses of digital teaching and new technologies.

### Moodle

The virtual learning environment (VLE) used by almost every college, Moodle, continues to be developed and is being used very actively to facilitate a particularly wide range of learning. Moodle is being used to support the full breadth of teaching and learning, including resources, support, electronic Individual Learning Plans (eILP) and e-portfolios for individual programme areas as well as cross-college learning opportunities e.g. for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC). Most colleges use Moodle for distance learning. Students who are unable to attend college due to sickness, for example, are able to access and submit work via Moodle. Moodle also enables teachers to link with learners remotely to share work, ideas, information and host discussions.

Examples:

- Landbased: A video has been produced on animal handling in association with the National Grid for Learning. This is on Moodle and students can access it at any time to help develop practical skills.
- Sport and Leisure: an analysis of games to improve individual performance and to deliver a module on performance analysis; a “teamus” sports management package, where administrators can post messages to students and which allows students to watch relevant video footage; an iRugby application is being developed where students can use iPods to analyse performance.

### Schools partnership

One college has led a county-wide "Moodle for Teachers" development where the college has trained staff in every school in the county on Moodle and established school based Moodle systems for each school. The systems are being used extensively with very positive feedback from staff and pupils.

### New developments

In addition, within individual colleges, a range of teaching departments are piloting a range of new technologies to benefit teaching and learning. Below are some examples:

- **Cloud computing**, wireless and mobile computing, Google Chromebooks, Microsoft Sky Drive - allowing students to collaborate and communicate with each other, and with tutors, in ways that were not previously possible. It also provides students with access to their course work, applications and learning resources regardless of their locations such as at home, from work or from their mobile phone.

- **Google Apps for Education:** to deliver browser based applications and collaboration tools to both staff and students
- **Vodcasting:** a Catering and Hospitality Department has piloted the use of vodcasting through the year. All learners have used smartphones to receive video pod-casts demonstrating the cooking techniques they are learning at college, allowing the learners to practice their techniques in the work place and between classes. Learners can also record their attempts at the technique and send this to the lecturer or to use for self/peer assessment.

Using technology for practical teaching and learning solutions is helping many learners who need more time to assimilate and practice their learning. It provides an accessible solution to learners who have poor concentration or difficulty in retaining details, as they can view the demonstrations on demand. All learners are able to access the technology and can lease or borrow iPods through a college scheme. This has been such a success that current Catering and Hospitality students are now making their own vodcasts for future learners.

- **Videoconferencing:** one campus includes digital learning through ILT and videoconferencing with local schools delivered in one campus for A level Law. Another uses videoconferencing to link students across campuses and bring together course reps for 'learner voice' based activity.
- **Multimedia including social media:** one college's Creative Arts students use a plethora of digital technologies as follows:
  - Light box gallery – images are uploaded onto photography Moodle site for critique
  - Media students upload videos/short films onto YouTube and Vimeo for comments and critiques
  - Staff utilise Screen Flow to video presentations and powerpoints to upload onto Moodle for learners to catch up any work missed and also for assessment evidence of students presentations
  - Flickr – upload images for comments and blogs
  - Creative Arts facebook – news events exhibitions, shows, videos and critiques
  - Staff use flash games as a teaching method
  - Interactive Media students are working on 3D software projection on buildings utilising latest technology and software
  - Art, Design and Media uploaded/sold their T-shirt design on website Zazzie
  - Self contained website for the college's higher education students to develop and build websites which are evaluated and peer assessed
  - New Sony 4D Cinema system not only shows films but is also used to train students on new technology and professional cinema systems.

- **Bringing it all together – ‘The Hub’:** ‘The Hub’ is development by one college whereby all of the platforms used by a learner such as the VLE, timetable info, actions and targets are brought together onto one web based page which accessible anywhere through the internet. This is supported by a multi-platform mobile phone app, so that information relating to college assignments, email, timetables etc is available in a digital one stop shop. The hub will also enable learners to create collaborative spaces where they can undertake project work or have areas devoted to subject topics. Websites like the ‘Khan Academy’ are used widely by staff to support learners within the VLE.

To support this development, the college has purchased 300 additional laptops and trolleys for use in the classroom and 50 iPads.

Part of the infrastructure being developed this year includes enhanced identity management where learners can be given access to various college e-facilities as they go from the application stage to full enrolment. This will mean that once a learner has applied they can be given better access to course information and assignments so they can better prepare for the commencement of their studies.

- **Learning through collaboration:** All the North Wales colleges (over 70,000 learners and 4,000 staff, across six counties) are partners in a JISC-funded PADDLE project: ‘Personal Actualisation and Development through Digital Literacy in Education’. The project’s aim is to create a digitally literate, skilled and confident workforce and student body across all the FE institutions in North Wales. It will tackle digital exclusion among staff and learners and enhance the skills of those who are already digitally literate. The project will seek to identify transformational leaders within each stakeholder group who will be responsible for spreading good practice within and between institutions within a common framework.

Benefits of the project: staff will develop the digital literacy skills needed to teach in a digital age and digital literacy skills will be embedded at organisational level and through the curriculum, leading to transformational leadership opportunities. The benefits of this project will also be to extend communities of practice for each stakeholder group.

# Agenda Item 7d

11 January 2012

Ms Claire Griffiths  
Deputy Clerk  
Children and Young People Committee  
Legislation Office  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1AN

## **Inquiry into the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure (2009)**

Thank you for your invitation to submit evidence to the Committee as to how the implementation of the Measure to date has had an effect on young people.

As agreed with you, I attach written evidence addressing the questions raised for HEFCW and Higher Education Wales in your e-mail correspondence of 20 December 2011.

The direct impact of the Measure will be felt in the school and post-16 education sectors, with impacts for higher education being less direct. Given the date of implementation of the Measure (from 2009/10, with full implementation from 2011/12) we would agree with some other respondents that it is too early to measure the effects of the Measure, particularly at higher education level. However, the paper attached to this letter summarises some of the evidence we have available, both data and qualitative – including anecdotal - information from institutional sources.

Should you require any further detail or discussion, please do not hesitate to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Phil Gummett', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Philip Gummett

## **Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009**

### **Background**

1. The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) was established by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. We administer funds from the Welsh Government for education and research in higher education (HE) institutions in Wales, and certain HE courses at further education colleges. Responsibilities for initial teacher training (ITT), including the accreditation of ITT providers, are covered under the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (Wales) Regulations 2004 and the Education Act 2005.
2. We wish to develop and sustain internationally excellent HE in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy, in Wales and more widely. We strategically use resources from the Welsh Government and others to
  - \* secure higher education learning and research of the highest quality;
  - \* make the most of the contribution of higher education to the culture, society and economy of Wales;
  - \* ensure high quality, accredited teacher training across Wales,in order to enhance social justice and support a buoyant economy – the twin objectives of *For our Future, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education Strategy and Plan for Wales*.
3. A key strategic theme of our Corporate Strategy 2010-11 – 2012-13<sup>1</sup> relates to widening access, to: 'Ensure equity, opportunity and success in higher education'. It is this theme which is most pertinent to the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure. Our performance indicator for this theme seeks a rise in the number of students from Communities First areas studying HE at institutions in Wales.

### **Questions**

**Q1** *What changes do the higher education institutions (HEIs) in Wales expect to see as a result of the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009? For example, changes to the numbers and qualifications of applicants to higher education courses.*

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<sup>1</sup> [www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/corporate\\_documents/corporate\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/publications/corporate_documents/corporate_strategy.aspx)



4. HE institutions welcome the increase in the number of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education. Whilst this may not be due directly to the Measure, it is clear that the Measure has not worked against the improvement in staying on rates. However, it might be considered that more survey data and analysis, particularly on the views of learners to measure more accurately its effect on staying on rates, would be useful to the evaluation. Appropriate data may be obtained through the on-line surveys of young people already available on the Committee's web pages.
5. While there has been an improvement in male participation the gap in staying on rates between males and females is still of concern and this inevitably has a consequence for balanced gender representation in HE.
6. Higher education data on entry qualification trends over the last three years, 2007/08 to 2009/10 indicate that an increasing number of students enter higher education with vocational qualifications (see below). This increase pre-dated the implementation of the Measure, however, it is clear that the number of vocational entrants to HEIs from FEIs in Wales has increased, as has the proportion of students that have a vocational qualification as their highest qualification on entry.

Undergraduate enrolments on HE courses at Welsh HEIs by highest qualification on entry and previous institution

Previous institution	Highest qualification on entry	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	% increase 2007/08 to 2009/10
Welsh FEIs <sup>1</sup>	A levels	3,901	4,471	4,936	27%
	Vocational Qualifications	1,933	2,726	3,836	98%
	Other <sup>3</sup>	3,598	3,841	4,289	19%
Total <sup>2</sup>	A levels	45,499	46,612	48,311	6%
	Vocational Qualifications	5,907	6,999	9,095	54%
	Other <sup>3</sup>	26,997	26,129	25,461	-6%

Source: HESA student record (*data for 2010/11 is not comparable due to changes to the higher qualifications on entry field*)

<sup>1</sup> Previous institution 'Welsh FEIs' includes students from named Welsh FEIs plus Welsh domiciled students coded as being from an unspecified UK FEI.

<sup>2</sup> Previous institution 'Total' includes all UK FEIs and HEIs, UK schools and other providers.

<sup>3</sup> Highest qualification on entry 'Other' includes unknown and no qualifications.

**Q2 How will the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure help to progress the Welsh Government's priority to address social injustice and to widen access to higher education?**



7. Institutional views endorse Estyn's main findings – that a great deal of progress has been made in widening the choice for learning and in the provision of the learning core for 14-19 learners. We are informed that this has been assisted by the publication of options menus by each 14-19 learning network. The curriculum at key stage 4 and post 16 is now more relevant to a broader range of learners, although differences of application have been noted between different local authority areas in Wales.

8. HEFCW's Corporate Strategy measure for widening access:

*A 10% rise in the proportion of all Welsh domiciled students studying higher education courses at higher education institutions and further education institutions in Wales who are domiciled in the Welsh Communities First Areas from 15.6% to 17.2% in 2012/13*

is on target, with 16.2% enrolled in 2009/10 and sector forecasts indicating that this target will be achieved. This measure is entirely focussed on students who are domiciled in Wales and these improving figures could indicate a broader range of applicants to higher education from within Wales. However, we are told by HEIs that there seems to be a relative under provision of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) in Communities First areas compared to more affluent areas of Wales and that the learning core is delivered in less successful ways. It would be useful to see published data on the availability of the WBQ throughout Wales to establish whether or not this is the case.

9. In addition, institutions draw attention to the need to address the growing trend of year 13 leavers who are not engaged in education, employment or training. We need to know more about this cohort to identify whether they have failed to progress to HE or employment because of lack of qualifications, lack of opportunity, or perhaps because they are taking a 'gap year'. Reforming the higher education admissions system to a post-qualifications (ie post-results) process (see link below) could help to address this issue<sup>2</sup>.

**Q3 Has the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure had any effect to date on progression routes into higher education?**

10. As noted from the data above, progression to higher education from Welsh FEIs has been increasing, although data to measure the impact of the Measure after 2009 is not yet available. We need more information about progression, including the potential impact of other factors, particularly structural change in provision arising from the Transformation agenda. Detailed information about the current position regarding progression to higher education institutions, particularly on a regional

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<sup>2</sup> [www.ucas.com/reviews/admissionsprocessreview/](http://www.ucas.com/reviews/admissionsprocessreview/)

basis, is the subject of an existing project, funded by the Welsh Government (Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales) and managed by Colleges Wales/Colegau Cymru. The CQFW Progression Project is working within the three HEFCW regions to collate qualitative and quantitative data on regional progression. It will report in February 2012 and the outcomes will form part of a HEFCW report on part-time employer-focussed provision and opportunities for progression from further education to be submitted to the Minister for Education and Skills in March 2012.

**Q4 How will the wider choice of academic and vocational courses for young people age 14 and 16, as a result of the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measures, affect the admissions policies of Welsh higher education institutions? and**

**Q5 Has progress been made towards parity of esteem between vocational and academic courses in respect of admissions policies into higher education courses?**

11. It is difficult to measure progress in terms of broader choice of academic and vocational courses and parity of esteem against higher education admissions policies. For most higher education institutions, such policies already include vocational qualifications and mechanisms for considering applicants with non-traditional qualifications. The Measure will not have impacted significantly on the policies themselves, although the use of contextual data (eg on the background of an applicant) to supplement the applications process has been increasing more recently within higher education. Parity of esteem is a cultural, as well as an educational issue. Some applicants may be being steered towards more academic or more vocational pathways for particular reasons, unrelated to their ability to benefit from higher education. This may reflect the aspirations of teachers and parents as much as higher education admissions policies.
12. However, it is also the case that some vocational courses may not be the best preparation for study within higher education. We are aware from institutions that some BTEC courses can be poor preparation for certain HE programmes, although the reasons for this are unclear and this area would need further research. It could be a combination of a tendency of schools to direct less academically able students into the more vocational BTEC pathway; that BTEC courses tend to be weaker on core science; and the reliance on assignments as the sole method of assessment in the BTEC system. It has been suggested that some HE institutions would welcome a mixed economy of academic and vocational courses which have greater coherence in terms of complementary skills, eg the use of smaller BTEC or OCN awards in combination with A1/A2 qualifications, particularly if there is an A level prerequisite for progression to HE.
13. The implementation of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, now accepted as an entry qualification for higher education institutions in Wales and beyond, has broadened progression routes into higher education, with some institutions currently accepting the WBQ in lieu of a third A level. We understand that the Measure has

been very useful for the development of the WBQ with many schools using coaches when developing students' vocational skills and work experience portfolios.

14. The view has been expressed that, in a context of managed numbers in higher education, and increased demand, it may be more difficult to avoid a risk averse approach to new types and patterns of qualifications.

**Q6 Are there clear vocational progression routes for students who wish to enter higher education for some or all HE courses?**

15. Leaving aside the argument that a great deal of 'traditional' higher education provision is vocational (eg medicine, law, engineering, etc), we cover here the development since 2000 of Foundation Degree provision. Foundation Degrees were first introduced as a new type of provision in 2000 to provide graduates who are needed within the labour market to address shortages in particular skills. Foundation Degrees also aim to contribute to widening access and lifelong learning by encouraging participation by learners who may not previously have considered studying for a higher level qualification. Such qualifications provide a direct vocational progression route for students who wish to enter higher education with more vocational entry qualifications and/or those already in work who wish to progress into part-time higher education. They are located at level 5 of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) qualification benchmark for Foundation Degrees<sup>3</sup> specifies that Foundation Degrees will normally link to at least one programme leading to a bachelors degree with honours. This provides a progression route beyond the Foundation Degree. A range of new Foundation degrees is currently being developed, through specific funding provided by the European Social Fund, by HEFCW 'One Wales' funding and through the Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute (UHOVI). This builds on the small amount of existing Foundation degree provision in HE and FE institutions in Wales.
16. HEFCW's work with the sector in the development of regional strategies for the three defined regions of South East Wales, South West Wales, and North and Mid Wales is assisting collaborative working between HE and FE institutions to improve provision regionally, especially for learners who, for whatever reason, are geographically constrained, and for employers who are seeking higher education support, of whatever kind, locally. The CQFW progression project, noted in paragraph 10 above will provide further information about progression opportunities and gaps.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Foundation-Degree-qualification-benchmark-May-2010.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Foundation-Degree-qualification-benchmark-May-2010.aspx)

**Q7 Is there professional independent advice available to 14 and 16 year olds (and their parents) on progression into higher education courses, especially for young people intending to choose vocational courses?**

17. The recent review of Careers Services in Wales<sup>4</sup> noted variation in the quality and degree of careers planning support for young people, arguing for a need to coordinate more effectively the diverse professional groups engaging in such activity. Higher Education Careers Services primarily provide support to students and graduates and are less involved in providing advice for young people entering higher education. Whilst individual institutions do provide such support, it is less likely to be regarded as independent, although it is likely to include advice for applicants with vocational qualifications.
18. The key HE source of advice for applicants to higher education is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), which provides the admissions system for full-time entrants. This system is currently under review and the introduction of a post-qualifications admissions system is under consideration (see footnote 2). HEFCW is a joint funder, with the other UK HE funding bodies, of the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) programme, which has worked with institutions across the UK to improve admissions services, which can be expected to strengthen the understanding of vocational qualifications.
19. The UK higher education funding bodies jointly fund the Unistats website<sup>5</sup> which provides information about higher education provision, including the results of the National Student Survey, a survey of student satisfaction conducted annually across the UK. This enables potential applicants to compare institutions. HEFCW is also working with the other UK HE funding bodies and institutions to develop the Key Information Set or KIS. This is a set of standard information about each higher education institution, including information about employability, which will be available from September 2012.<sup>6</sup>
20. In addition, HEFCW-funded regional Reaching Wider partnerships, which include representatives from a range of bodies with an interest in widening access to higher education, including Careers Wales, coordinate regional work to improve access to higher education. This includes providing information to young people on opportunities in higher education.

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[new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/researchandevaluation/evaluation/futureambitions/?skip=1&lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/researchandevaluation/evaluation/futureambitions/?skip=1&lang=en)

<sup>5</sup> [unistats.direct.gov.uk/](http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/)

<sup>6</sup> [www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/infohe/kis.htm](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/infohe/kis.htm)

