

WEA South Wales

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Saturday, 11th July 2009 at Coopers Yard, Cardiff.

Present: Huw Williams (Chair), Richard Fattorini (Vice Chair), Jeremy Gass (Vice Chair), Alan Hadden, Adrian Williams, David MacManus, Andrea Sharman, Hywel Thomas, Elaine Gwynne, Jenni Jones-Annetts, Jeff Greenidge, Jessica Cromie, Mark Heydon, Olwen Leavold, Glyndwr John Summers, Staff Representatives: June Jeremy, David Ashman.

Staff in attendance: Maggi Dawson, Mark Baines, Lynne Hayes, Audrey Tullett (Clerk to Council).

Welcome and Introductions: The Chair welcomed Members and staff to the last Council meeting of the academic year. He welcomed Mark Heydon as a new Member of Council and introduced Audrey Tullett, the new Clerk.

	Action
<p>1. Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Dorothy McCormack, Hazel Maguire, John Henderson, Betty Knight, Karen Baclawski, and Bernard McCormack</p>	
<p>2. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2009</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2009 were accepted as a correct record (proposed by</p>	

	Action
<p>JJA, seconded by DMcM).</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>A question was put relating to the potential integration with WEA North. MD confirmed that she would address the issue at Item 8 of the agenda (Integration of North and South Wales WEAs)</p> <p>A further question was raised regarding the possible co-option of CLRs to Council. This question was to be discussed at Item 10 of the agenda (AGM 2010).</p> <p>5. Report from Finance Manager</p> <p>MB presented 3 items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Financial Memorandum between the Welsh Assembly Government, Further Education Institutions and Higher Education Institutions providing further education in Wales (copies of which had been despatched with the agenda) b. Details of WEA financial position at end of June c. Budget forecasts. <p>a. Financial Memorandum: MB outlined the purpose of the Memorandum which was basically an agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government setting out terms and conditions for the management of the Institution's funds. He drew Members' attention specifically to Paragraph 66 'Compliance with this Memorandum', which indicated three additional responsibilities and requirements.</p> <p>MB answered Members' questions on the</p>	

	Action
<p>document.</p> <p>b. Details of WEA Financial Position end of June: MB distributed a document giving details of actual versus committed expenditure to the end of June, in order to bring Members up-to-date.</p> <p>c. Budget Forecasts: MB circulated copies of the document approved by Finance Committee for sending to DCELLS. There was an overall operating surplus for the current year of £16,000, with a predicted operating surplus for next year of £22,000. During discussion the following main issues were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of / drop in lottery and European funding would increase dependence on DCELLS. There was a need to seek other grant aid or income generation. • A reduction in tutor costs had saved £400,000; the volume of delivery had been reduced in the interests of maintaining solvency. However, the consequent fall in student numbers was a concern. <p>The Chair of the Finance Committee expressed satisfaction with the budget situation. The next meeting of the Finance Committee would include Regional Educational Managers (as devolved budget-holders).</p> <p>MB was complimented on the clarity of presentation of the budget document.</p> <p>HW thanked and congratulated MB on the budget situation; MB would convey these sentiments to the Finance Team.</p>	<p>MB</p>

	Action
<p>Presentation by Lynne Hayes, Regional Educational Manager, Valleys Team</p> <p>HW introduced Lynne Hayes, Regional Education Manager for the Valleys, who thanked the Council for inviting her to give presentations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Update on work in Valleys Region b) Workplace Learning Plan <p>a) <u>Valleys Region update and ESDGC update</u></p> <p>LH listed staff at the Valleys Region and outlined the geographical area represented (Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda, Cynon Taff), which included some of the most deprived wards in Wales.</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch activity – Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibitions Social events • Initiatives for 2009 – Community First areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESOL Basic Skills Study Circles Financial Literacy • ESDGC (Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship) <p>LH had been the strategic lead figure for ESDGC, which had subsequently been taken over by Felicity Furlong. It was hoped that through ESDGC political and philosophical themes within the WEA could be revived. The Trans-National Project was being used to embed ESDGC in curriculum areas and add it to the moderation process, thus involving tutors. A full report on progress would be brought to the</p>	<p>FF</p>

	Action
<p data-bbox="332 237 834 275">December meeting of Council.</p> <p data-bbox="293 338 792 375"><u>b) Workplace Learning Team</u></p> <p data-bbox="284 390 1003 470">Lynne Hayes has strategic responsibility for workplace learning.</p> <p data-bbox="284 485 1146 816">LH listed staff on the Workplace Learning Team. She reported that it had been an outstanding success, earning £47,000 for the WEA; the aim next year was for £90,000. She outlined Workplace Learning courses and links with Trade Unions, Hospitals, Wales Union Learning Fund Projects, Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Government Departments and others.</p> <p data-bbox="284 831 1146 1083">The Team had been awarded the TUC Quality Award for Workplace Learning. A South Wales WEA Workplace Branch was being set up with a start date of 17th July. Attempts were being made to increase union affiliations to WEA in the coming year.</p> <p data-bbox="284 1098 1146 1304">Questions and discussion followed. The progress made in Workplace Learning was seen as extremely encouraging and having the potential to increase the voluntary movement. Two issues were raised:</p> <ol data-bbox="370 1318 1146 1791" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="370 1318 1146 1570">1. The need to address major inequalities and educational disadvantage; the proportion of WEA learners in workplace learning with low qualifications was not high. Workplace learners were frequently nurses, teachers and civil servants (qualified people). <li data-bbox="370 1585 1146 1791">2. Whilst the new activity of workplace learning (training for skills) was very welcome, it was important not to lose sight of WEA origins and core values in philosophy and politics. <p data-bbox="284 1806 1094 1923">LH pointed out that CEUs were being spent on deprived communities under 'Communities First' initiatives.</p>	

	Action
<p>HW thanked LH for her comprehensive presentation, which gave a clear picture of the activity taking place in Workplace Learning and the Valleys.</p> <p>6.1 Estyn Report</p> <p>MD introduced this additional agenda item. She circulated the Estyn document 'Listening to the community', which included (at page 9) the Estyn inspection report on WEA South Wales 2008. Estyn recognised the WEA as an example of good practice. MD thanked staff for their hard work in achieving this praise from Estyn; thanks would be conveyed to Branches also. A report would go into Hysbysu.</p> <p>7. Meeting with First Minister, Rhodri Morgan (verbal update).</p> <p>HW gave the background to the meeting with RM; at WEA's centenary AGM in 2007 the first Minister had issued a challenge to WEA to 'think itself into the 21st century'. A working group had been formed and two years of hard work had gone into producing the document 'The Role of the WEA in the 21st Century', which had been sent to RM and the meeting had taken place on 15th June 2009. Members and staff had given a good account of the 21st century WEA, with MD speaking particularly well; WEA was now firmly on RM's radar. It remained to ensure that the gravitas of the WEA's role in the modern educational arena was kept uppermost in the minds of RM and his fellow Ministers. A written response from RM had been promised within a month.</p> <p>MD reported on the wider impact of the meeting with RM. Contact had been made with Leighton Andrews, Deputy Minister for Regeneration and Social Justice</p>	<p>MD</p>

	Action
<p>who was very supportive; a meeting with his staff had been proposed, to discuss WEA's work with specific communities. Support for WEA was also forthcoming from across the party-political spectrum.</p> <p>HW summed up that the visit had been well worthwhile. Members congratulated those responsible for producing a first class document.</p> <p>8. Integration of North and South Wales WEAs</p> <p>HW reported that WEA South had met with colleagues from the North twice and a further meeting was planned for 29th / 30th July.</p> <p>MD presented an update paper on the current situation. DCELLS had agreed to fund £30,000 towards the cost of a feasibility study, which was now in progress, and it was hoped that a document would be produced by the end of November. The study was being led by the General Secretary of WEA England and Scotland, who had experience of merging English and Scottish district WEAs.</p> <p>MD flagged up concerns that legal fees in dissolving the two organisations and creating one new one could prove prohibitive; it might be more cost-effective for one organisation to take over the other. Options for a new constitution for an all-Wales WEA were being explored. Questions and general discussion ensued, in the course of which the following main points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document presented to Rhodri Morgan had been sent to Coleg Harlech/WEA N and a response was awaited. • The issues concerning the cost of merging the two organisations hinged on their separate constitutions and on charity status. The issues were as yet unresolved; it was of paramount importance to avoid loss of funds. • A representative from DCELLS had been present at meetings with Coleg Harlech/WEA North and 	

	Action
<p>had given an indication of additional funds available which hinged on production of a Business Case; it was thought that DCELLS funding would not cover all costs. A contribution would be required from both associations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern was expressed that an outcome where Coleg Harlech/ WEA North (having greater financial assets) took over WEA South could result in the submerging of the ethos and culture of WEA South. • Staff fears regarding potential redundancies were expressed. <p>HW stated that issues were ongoing and there was a lengthy process ahead. Members confirmed their confidence in MD and the Working Group to handle further negotiations and to keep Council informed of progress.</p> <p>9. Draft Strategic Plan (Outcomes from meeting of 17th June)</p> <p>HW reported a good attendance at the meeting despite traffic difficulties; the mood had been harmonious and hard-working.</p> <p>MD thanked the Council Members who had attended the meeting and presented a paper laying out the five key strategic aims and summarising the results of discussion of the aims. The next round of meetings would be with Strategic Aims Groups, dealing with specific targets, time plan and budget.</p> <p>JIG thanked SMT for their forethought in organising the format of the meeting which had worked very well and produced excellent discussion and results.</p> <p>10. AGM 2010</p> <p>HW introduced the item, stating that it was necessary to establish venue, date and keynote speakers.</p>	

	Action
<p><u>Venue</u> MD invited suggestions for the venue, which were as follows Western Valleys, near Pontypool (Gwent), LLanhilleth, and Blaenavon.</p> <p><u>Date</u> The date was agreed as Saturday 16th January.</p> <p><u>Keynote speakers</u> Suggestions were: <u>Victoria Winckler</u> of the Bevan Foundation (which WEA South has just joined). Victoria has written about the future of the Valleys. <u>Professor Marjorie Mayo</u> of Goldsmiths College with whom WEA South already has links. Professor Mayo has expertise in Community Empowerment and Active Citizenship. In view of the fact that the WEA AGM was likely to be a more public event than previously, it was agreed to have two speakers, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The following was proposed by AH, seconded by RF, and agreed:</p> <p>AGM to be held on Saturday 16th January at LLanhilleth and the two speakers named above to be invited to speak.</p> <p><u>Co-option of CLR's to Council</u> It was agreed that co-option should be placed on the agenda of the first Council meeting post AGM.</p> <p>11. Chairs' Reports from Committees The following reports were presented to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners Support 23rd June • Health and Safety 14th May • Voluntary Movement 24th June • Finance 6th July 	

	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit 8th July <p><u>Learners Support 23rd June</u> HW reported being nearly at the point of re-achieving the Basic Skills Quality Mark.</p> <p>Creche funding for the next academic year was problematic. JIG expressed concern that WEA was in danger of losing some Branches through lack of crèche provision. HW referred back to the minutes of the February meeting of Council regarding the involvement of Genesis (a Euro-funded project) in childcare provision. MD reported that Genesis had been rethinking their role. There had been a meeting with Jane Hutt and John Griffiths; Jane Hutt had set up a Childcare Strategy Group, looking at childcare across Wales. It was hoped that this would extend to consideration of childcare in adult education provision. WEA had a contact name; the matter would be pursued.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety 14th May</u> RF reported. Station Terrace had been subjected to a successful Fire Risk Assessment. The Swansea office had agreed to carry out works to compensate for the noise coming from downstairs. All staff had been emailed and posters put up re Swine Flu.</p> <p><u>Voluntary Movement Committee 24th June</u> JIG presented his report and invited questions. In answer to a question on progress regarding securing funding for the student from Goldsmiths College, MD reported that it was a very lengthy process and was currently with the relevant Research Council.</p> <p><u>Finance Committee 6th July</u> Information had already been covered in the Financial Report at Item 5 of the agenda.</p>	

	Action
<p><u>Audit Committee 8th July</u></p> <p>JIG reported. There had been 100% attendance at the meeting. Representatives of the new Internal Auditors had given a presentation on a 5-year strategy for WEA. They had stayed for the remainder of the meeting which had been lively, with lots of questions, and had focused mainly on the Risk Register and Control document.</p> <p>12. Minutes from Committees</p> <p>The following minutes were presented to Council;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners Support 26th February and 28th April 2009 • Health and Safety 4th March 2009 • Voluntary Movement Group (notes) 16th April 2009 • Curriculum 16th March 2009. <p>It was proposed by AH and seconded by RF that the minutes be accepted. Minutes were accepted by Council.</p> <p>13. Any Other Business</p> <p>J J-A reported that 15 of 20 attendees at a course at Ferryside had been persuaded by Chris Franks and Kim Videll to join the WEA. Chris Franks and staff were to be congratulated.</p> <p>14. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The date and time of the next meeting of Council were confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24th October at 10.00am at the Swansea office. 	

	Action
<p>It was noted that a change of venue might be required due to work being carried out on the building.</p> <p>HW thanked Members and staff for their attendance and closed the meeting.</p>	