



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Welsh Government Board meeting: 28 January 2022

Agenda and minutes from the Board meeting held on 28
January 2022.

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Contents

Agenda

Present

Welcome

PfG delivery

School day and year

People Survey results

Finance update

Any other business

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Agenda

1. Welcome / Current issues

Paper ref

Oral

Notes

See minutes.

2. Programme for Government

Paper ref

Paper(21)56 & 57

Notes

Published.

Papers not published as it contains information relating to the formulation or development of government policy.

3. School day and year reform

Paper ref

Paper(21)58 & 59

Notes

See minutes.

4. People Survey results

Paper ref

Paper(21)60 & 61

Notes

Papers not published as it contains information relating to the formulation or development of government policy.

5. Finance update

Paper ref

Paper(21)62

Notes

Paper not published as it contains information relating to internal performance management.

6. Any other business

Paper ref

Oral

Notes

See minutes.

Papers to note

Minutes of previous meeting

Paper ref

Papers to note(21)63

Notes

Published.

Workforce dashboards

Paper ref

Papers to note(21)64

Notes

Paper not published as it contains information relating to internal performance management.

Draft Shadow Board minutes

Paper ref

Papers to note(21)65

Notes

Paper not published as it contains information relating to internal performance management.

Present

- Andrew Goodall
- Meena Upadhyaya
- Gareth Lynn
- Ellen Donovan
- Andrew Slade
- Tracey Burke
- Des Clifford
- Reg Kilpatrick
- Judith Paget
- David Richards
- Andrew Jeffreys
- Peter Kennedy
- Natalie Pearson
- Gawain Evans
- Helen Lentle

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- Bekah Cioffi
- Zakhyia Begum

In attendance

- Catrin Sully
- Owain Lloyd
- Angharad Reakes
- Amy Jones

Secretariat

- Charmain Watts

1. Welcome

1.1 The Permanent Secretary welcomed all and welcomed the Shadow Board co-chairs Bekah Cioffi and Zakhyia Begum. Zakhyia introduced herself in her first attendance at Board and informed members of her background. Members of the Board also welcomed Zakhyia.

1.2 The Permanent Secretary asked Board members if they are content with the minutes from the last meeting. Any comments and or updates should be fed back to the secretariat before they are published next week.

1.3 Judith Paget provided an update on latest developments of Covid-19, which focused on Covid-19 numbers in Wales, position in hospitals, intensive care and the vaccination and booster programmes.

1.4 Reg Kilpatrick provided an update on the latest plans for recovery and explained that the First Minister will shortly announce the next steps around regulations and alert levels. He further explained that work was on going to transition the organisation into an endemic state and put the operational focus back to business as usual.

Action 1

Further discussion to be held at a future Board on the transition plan.

1.5 The non-executive directors asked:

- How is the Welsh Government helping to reach out to those countries who have a low access to vaccinations? Judith Paget advised the Welsh Government is linked into a UK-wide response to the global vaccine market.
- How Welsh Government will ensure to continue to follow the good processes that have been introduced during the pandemic? The Permanent Secretary advised that the organisation has worked differently during the pandemic and detailed work on lessons learnt will continue to be taken forward.

2. Programme for Government delivery (PfG)

2.1 Catrin Sully presented a paper, which provided an update on the progress made on the Programme for Government. Catrin explained that the Cabinet met in January to discuss the update and explained how the information in future reports would be used to provide assurance to Cabinet.

2.2 Catrin advised that the Programme for Government Cabinet SubCommittee, which provides strategic oversight on the delivery of the Programme for Government, met in January and had received a positive response.

2.3 The Board noted the non-executive directors feedback which focused on resourcing within the organisation, prioritisation of work, welcomed the changes to BIRT but emphasised the importance of consistent information being recorded.

Action 2

The Permanent Secretary recommended a further discussion at a future meeting around the PfG commitments that refer to resources.

Action 3

Discussion focused on the reform of council tax and the Permanent Secretary suggested that non-executive directors meet with Reg Kilpatrick to discuss the plan.

2.4 Bekah Cioffi provided feedback from discussions held at the Shadow Board meeting which focused on the use of appropriate language and the importance of the social model of disability.

3. Exploring reform of the school day and year

School year

3.1 Owain Lloyd provided an update on the work to explore reform of the school day and year and explained that the First Minister has asked non executive directors to engage with a number of top Programme for Government commitments including the reform of the school day and year.

3.2 Owain advised that detailed research, evidence gathering, focus group work and a literature review is being taken forward. He further advised that the period between now and the formal consultation will be used to undertake stakeholder engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including employers, specific industries such as the tourism sector and also children and young people.

3.3 Owain provided the Board with an overview of potential models. He highlighted that it was not the intention to change the statutory number of teacher days (terms and conditions), rather to explore a different annual distribution.

School day

3.4 Owain explained that this policy development will look to create space in and around the school day, through additional sessions providing wideranging activities, experiences and opportunities. Focusing primarily on wellbeing and re-engagement, it intends to create a better environment for learning.

3.5 Owain advised that up to 14 schools will take part in a national trial, providing additional hours for learners during a 10-week Programme this academic year. These schools have volunteered to take part, supporting disadvantaged learners, improving access to social and cultural capital and helping to address the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on learning.

3.6 The non-executive directors thanked Owain for his update and highlighted the importance of:

- listening to learners and parents
- a consistent approach to the schools participating in the national trial as well as having schools with a range of social backgrounds
- working in partnership to ensure the models are aligned to examination boards.

Action 4

The Permanent Secretary proposed that the Non-Executive Directors engage through mechanisms already in place within this area of work and return to Board in 6/9 months time.

3.7 Bekah Cioffi provided feedback from discussions held at Shadow Board which focused on:

- school year options suggested a longer winter holiday, coinciding with Christmas, and wondered whether other holidays could be aligned with major religious festivals.
- important to consider that young people experience bouts of winter illnesses impacting performance, life changing summer exams across peak hay fever periods, that neuro-diverse individuals may require a lot of support in this change process, and that children of school-age may require operations in the holidays so need a long enough period off to avoid missing school.

3.8 Owain thanked Bekah for the feedback and felt that a further review of the questions raised will need to be considered and fed back to the team.

4. People Survey results

4.1 Natalie Pearson and Angharad Reakes provided the Board with an overview of the People Survey Results carried out in October 2021.

4.2 Angharad presented slides which focused on:

- Response rate
- Any decrease in performance from previous year

- Our Employee Engagement score
- Comparable core and local Welsh Government question scores
- Improvements in positive scores
- Comparison to the Civil Service
- Benchmark performance

4.3 Natalie highlighted to the Board the importance of the findings around Employee Engagement. The Engagement index measures staff attachment to work, pride for the organisation and motivation to do their best to deliver objectives.

4.4 The Board discussed the importance of lessons learned from the results and the pandemic. The board acknowledged building capability is very important to the organisation.

4.5 The non-executive directors thanked Natalie and Angharad for their update and agreed that understanding what work is needed for areas of improvement is important.

4.6 Bekah Cioffi provided feedback and highlighted 3 themes where corporate action could be considered to address the staff survey results:

- Work environment
- Performance management
- Learning and development

5. Finance update

5.1 Gawain Evans provided an update to the Board on the current Finance and status.

5.2 Gawain reported on the Welsh Government's 2021-22 forecast outturn and

reserves position as at 30 November 2021 (month 8) which focused on:

- Revenue forecast
- Capital forecast
- Position of current reserves

5.3 Bekah Cioffi provided feedback on the views of the Shadow Board, which focused on the funding split between directorates.

6. Any other business

6.1 The Permanent Secretary thanked members and in particular Bekah Cioffi for her feedback from the Shadow Board.

6.2 The Permanent Secretary advised Board that he is due to meet the Shadow Board Co-Chairs to discuss their AOB points.

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