

DISCLOSABLE

Meeting
23/03/07

Agenda Item
25

Reference No
HEFCW/07/32

INTRODUCTION

- 1 This paper presents to Council a fourth quarter (end of year) report on its *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2006-07 to 2008-09*.

BACKGROUND

- 2 Council has agreed to receive quarterly progress reports against the Plan focussing on Year 1 activities (the Operational Plan), but also including progress updates against Year 2 and Year 3 actions as appropriate.

PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD 2006-07 TO 2008-09

- 3 Section 5 of the Plan identifies a number of specific actions for each year of the planning period, FYs 2006-07 to 2008-09. Deliverables identified for Year 1 describe the Council's Operational Plan for 2006-07 and incorporate the specific requirements included within the 2006-07 Remit Letter from the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 4 The table at **Annex A** provides an end of year report on the 46 actions identified for Year 1, the Operational Plan for 2006-07. The key points are:
 - 40 activities identified within the Operational Plan 2006-07 have already, or will be, completed to their original schedules. (GREEN)
 - 1 activity (the review of HEFCW's services against the core standards for 'customer service' and 'public engagement' set out in the Assembly's *Delivering the Connections*) yet to be taken forward because we are awaiting advice and guidance from the Assembly following the conclusion of its consultation on core standards for customer service and public service. (AMBER)
 - 5 activities have been delayed (RED):
 - Agree SIS and Fee Plans by October 2006: All but one SIS plan has now been agreed, and nearly all Fee plans have been approved. A report will be submitted to Council once the process is completed.
 - Report on institutions' latest estates strategies and condition surveys by October 2006: delayed to March 2007 due to a number of late submissions.
 - Develop an Environmental Management System against Stage 2 of the Assembly's 'Green Dragon Environmental Standard' by October 2006: The Environmental Management System is now in place, except for measurement procedures which are currently being developed and which will be in place before 1 April 2007.

- Review of institutional race equality policies by December 2006: underway to revised timetable; draft reports received December 2006 but further work to be undertaken prior to submission of final reports.
 - Conduct a baseline external stakeholder survey by end 2006-07: A specification has been produced and consultants are being approached to bid to carry out the survey work, which now will probably take place during April / May.
- 5 Actions identified for Year 2 (2007-08) and Year 3 (2008-09) have been brought forward, as appropriate, to the version of the Plan, covering the Fys 2007-10 (HEFCW/07/x refers).

Council is invited to note the end of year report on progress against actions in the Operational Plan 2006-07 at Annex A

REPORTING AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 6 Progress against the Council's *Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan & Operational Plan*, and against its corporate risk register, is monitored and reported via:
- The annual monitoring meeting between the ELL Minister, Chair and Chief Executive (usually each October)
 - Annual 'Scrutiny visits' by the ELL Committee (at the Committee's discretion)
 - Quarterly monitoring meetings with Welsh Assembly Government officials from HEFCW's sponsoring division (arranged by the Assembly)
 - Quarterly progress and monitoring reviews by Management Board
 - Quarterly progress reports to Council (at its meetings in July, October, January and March)
 - Reviews of the corporate risk register by Management Board and at each meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee (normally held in March, June and October)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7 The Council's *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2006-09* is based on grant-in-aid allocations confirmed in the latest National Assembly for Wales' budgets. Details of the Assembly's approved final budget proposals for the financial year 2006-07 and indicative proposals for 2007-08 and 2008-09, and also of the Council's budget commitments for the academic year 2006/07, are set out at Annex B to the Plan.

PUBLICITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8 Following Assembly approval, the Plan was translated into Welsh and published on the HEFCW website.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9 If Council did not regularly review and monitor progress against its Corporate Strategy and Corporate & Operational Plans, it would have no assurance that it was on track to meet its high level targets and objectives. The monitoring arrangements set out at paragraph 6 above are intended to address this.

DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10 The Plan includes reference to the key *Making the Connections* themes of equality and social justice. It also includes various activities planned by the Council which relate to the themes of diversity and equal opportunities, including:
- Increasing new entrants to HE from Communities First areas, and general support for widening access
 - Introduction of collaborative disability support arrangements for the sector
 - Support for Welsh language provision in the HE sector
 - Review of institutions' race equality policies
 - Support for sector work on equal pay
 - Implementation of HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme and Welsh Language Mainstreaming Strategy
 - Review of HEFCW's Race Equality Scheme

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11 The Council is invited to note the end of year report on progress on the actions included within the Operational Plan 2006-07.

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