

Meeting
12/12/08

Agenda Item
8

Reference No
HEFCW/08/88

1 Issue

- 1.1 Council is asked to note a high-level Action Plan for HEFCW which has been put together following the outcomes of the 2007 Stakeholder Survey.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

HEFCW committed in its 2007-08 Corporate Plan to commission a survey of the views of its stakeholders and partners.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:

Note the high-level Stakeholder Survey Action Plan.

4 Timing

- 4.1 The Action Plan will be presented to Council in December and most actions will be taken forward by the end of the 2008/09 academic year, with the remainder by the end of 2009.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

contact Emma Raczka (Tel 029 2068 2225; email:
emma.raczka@hefcw.ac.uk.)

7 Background

- 7.1 The Stakeholder Survey was carried out in 2007 and the outcomes were first reported to Council in April 2008. Council members had an opportunity to comment on the outcomes of the Survey in the May 2008 Workshop. At the meeting, we reported that a plan of action would be agreed and taken forward in 2008-09.
- 7.2 In June 2008 we published the survey on our website, with an introduction from the Chairman.
- 7.3 Priorities for future action were discussed at two staff meetings, and the actions and desired outcomes in the attached Action Plan take account of these discussions.

8 Stakeholder Survey Action Plan

- 8.1 **Annex A** is the high-level action plan to be taken forward during 2008-09 and beyond.
- 8.2 The Action Plan has been divided into three sections: defining and understanding our role; improving communications; and interaction with HEIs. It was clear from the outcomes of the Stakeholder Survey and from subsequent discussions that these were the broad headings under which any actions could be grouped, while appreciating that they might also overlap.
- 8.3 The Action Plan has been put together with an emphasis on outcomes – what did HEIs and partners expect from us, and where did we need to see an improvement? Progress against most of these outcomes would then be measured through the next Stakeholder Survey. The ‘broad actions’ column notes, overall, what HEFCW staff need to do to achieve the desired outcome and the ‘detailed actions’ column gives more practical information about how these can be achieved.
- 8.4 The plan does not yet contain many specific timescales. Members of staff who are leading on each section will carry out their actions through their own work plans which will include more details and timescales.

The Council is invited to note the high-level Stakeholder Survey Action Plan.

9 Financial implications

There are no direct immediate financial implications. Costs for redeveloping the website have already been taken into account. There could be some development or one-off costs involved in taking forward some of the communications actions, such as designing the newsletter or acquiring photographic materials. Resource implications include the time of the Chief Executive, Directors and Communications Manager in leading on developments within the Action Plan and possible workshop or training implications for all staff.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 The Action Plan has a number of publicity and communications implications. The section on 'improving communications' details a number of ways in which communications and information from HEFCW can be improved. The success, or otherwise, of the actions in the Plan will be judged through the next Stakeholder Survey. Improvements will be good for the organisation and its ability to publicise HE in Wales, and, as a result of the actions, interaction between HEFCW and HEIs should improve.
- 10.2 We will publish the plan on our website once it is approved to show how we are responding to the concerns expressed through the Stakeholder Survey.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

Development of the website and of other materials will take account of the need to offer materials in alternative formats and will be written in language that is clear and which is not offensive. The website and many of the other written materials we will produce will be available in both English and Welsh. We will consider how best to use stories that are positive about equality and about the Welsh language in newsletters and in press releases. We will screen the Action Plan (initial stages of equality impact assessment) after the Council meeting.

12 Risk Assessment

If HEFCW does not take forward the Action Plan, there is a risk that we will see a reduction in our effectiveness in fulfilling our mission, communicating information to HEIs and other partners and obtaining clear information from HEIs.

- 13 There is a risk that awaiting the outcomes of the Welsh Assembly Government's review of higher education will delay the actions in section 1 (defining and understanding our role). We risk being less effective communicators and less effective in interacting with HEIs if we don't ensure all staff are on board with helping us to achieve the desired outcomes.