

Disclosable

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
23/10/09	27	HEFCW/09/101

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper draws to Council's attention the report published on 7 October by the Assembly's Enterprise and Learning Committee on the Economic Contribution of HE in Wales.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The report and its recommendations are likely to have implications for HEFCW's strategic aim of benefiting the economy and society (by delivering more productive relationships between higher education institutions and ... the private sector) and for the operation of its Third Mission Fund. The paper also brings Council up to date with developments following the earlier submissions of evidence to the Committee, and the Chief Executive subsequent appearances before it.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to note the report's publication.

4 Council members' interests

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

5 Further information

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6 Background

- 6.1 This report represents two years of investigation and analysis by the National Assembly for Wales' Enterprise and Learning Committee. HEFCW was invited to submit written evidence on two occasions, and the Chief Executive twice appeared before the Committee to be questioned on those submissions (5 December 2007 and 10 July 2008). The submissions were shared with Council for information under the Chief Executive's Report on 7 December 2007, and again on 4 July 2008. HEW similarly presented twice, and all the sector's institutions appeared before the Committee at least once.
- 6.2 In January 2009 the Committee published an interim report expressly to feed into Phase Two of the Review of Higher Education under Professor Merfyn Jones' task and finish group. This final report was always intended by the Committee to be published after the Jones group had reached its conclusions so that it could be influenced by those deliberations. At the report's launch on 7 October (at University of Wales, Newport) the Committee Chair made clear that he now expected the Committee's report to feature in discussions following the launch of the Minister's Manifesto for Change and associated Action Plan (probably due early in the New Year). He also expressed the wish that the Committee would return to this matter in the not too distant future to see how its recommendations had fared. A copy of the press release which accompanied the launch is attached as **Annex A**.
- 6.3 While officers have not had time to analyse the report fully, initial reactions suggest it is broadly in line with the thrust of our evidence and is unlikely to cause us any difficulties; indeed, it will make a helpful contribution to deliberations on the value and role of higher education in delivering the Assembly Government's policies and objectives. A copy of the Summary of Recommendations is attached at **Annex B**. We would just draw members' attention to two particular recommendations: number 7, which commends HEFCW's GO Wales programme, and number 10, which urges the introduction of an innovation vouchers scheme (which DE&T colleagues assured us and the Committee they had been running successfully for the past decade). Beyond that, none of the recommendations are problematic.
- 6.4 Copies of the report are being made available to the Council's Research, Innovation and Engagement Committee at its 20 October meeting, although full discussion of its analysis and recommendations is not likely to take place until its next meeting on 26 January 2010 (hopefully in the wider context set by the Minister's Manifesto for Change and Action Plan. It, and the Assembly Government's response, will also contribute to our deliberations on the future of Third Mission activity, on which we are about to go to consultation. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations will come to Council at the March Council meeting.
- 6.5 Separately, copies of the report can be downloaded from the National Assembly's website under: <http://www.assemblywales.org/index.htm>

7 Financial implications

7.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this paper.

8 Communications implications

8.1 The report and its launch have already attracted some press attention and it is likely that there will be more such coverage. This is a matter for the National Assembly, although we have prepared a brief statement welcoming the report should HEFCW's views be sought.

9 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

9.1 This paper has no implications for age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or the Welsh language.

10 Risk Assessment

10.1 Risks associated with the matters addressed in this paper are as follows:

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
HEFCW fails to show due attention to a report by an Assembly Committee, and the response from the Assembly Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers will bring the report to the attention of the DCELLS internal board developing the Manifesto for Change and Action Plan;• Officers will engage with DCELLS colleagues over the Assembly Government's response;• Officers will draw on the report in further deliberations over Third Mission policy