

Meeting
08/05/09

Agenda Item
10

Reference No
HEFCW/09/37

1 Issue

The paper updates Council on the Assembly Government's planned governance review of HEFCW.

2 Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The Management statement between the Assembly and HEFCW provides for the Assembly to periodically conduct a review of the Council (previously referred to as the quinquennial review). The 2008-09 remit letter informed the Council of the CELLS Minister's request to Assembly officials for arrangements to be put in place for a quinquennial review.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. note the update on the Assembly Government's planned governance review of HEFCW;
 - ii. invite the Head of Governance, Leadership and Information to provide an oral update of the latest information available about the review.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 This paper does not require any decisions by Council at this stage.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No Council member has declared any further interests to those set out in the Register of members' interests which are of specific relevance to the matters covered in this paper.

6 Further information

Contact Bethan Owen, Head of Governance, Leadership and Information (Tel 029 2068 2215; E-mail: bethan.owen@hefcw.ac.uk)

7 Background

- 7.1 At its meeting on 13 March 2009 Council received details of the Assembly Government's intention to complete governance reviews of all executive Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies. It noted that the likely timescale for the governance review of HEFCW was May-June 2009 and that the review would be carried out by the Assembly's Governance in Wales team. Council agreed to include briefing sessions on the governance review on the agendas of its Members' Workshop on 7 May and today's Council meeting.

8 Update

- 8.1 A small team of HEFCW officers has been established to support preparation for the review, led by Bethan Owen. Peter McAllister (Head of Lifelong Learning Policy, DCELLS) has arranged an initial meeting on 28 April 2009 with Linda Whittaker of the Governance in Wales team, who will be leading the review of HEFCW, which also will be attended by Bethan Owen and by another member of the review team. The chief purpose of this meeting will be to discuss timescales and who the review team will want to speak to. At Linda Whittaker's request, we have prepared details of HEFCW's various partners and stakeholders, including our proposals for those who, in particular, we believe it would be most valuable for the governance review team to speak to for their opinion on how HEFCW operates. It should be noted, however, that the review team ultimately will decide which partners and stakeholders they will speak to. An oral update on the outcomes of the 28 April discussions will be given at the meeting.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 This paper has no financial implications.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 Communications implications will be addressed as part of the Council's consideration of the outcomes from the review.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

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

12 Risk Assessment

Risk	Action to address risk
Uncertainty about timescales gives rise to risk that the added value from this review for both the Assembly and the Council is not maximised due to a lack of time available before the review visit to tailor the terms of reference and work plan appropriately.	The initial briefing meeting on 28 April with members of the Governance in Wales team conducting the review of HEFCW should provide clarity about timescales.
The outcomes of the review has an adverse impact on the reputation and future standing of the Council due to insufficient priority and officer time given to managing the process.	Working group of HEFCW officers established to plan for the review (including the preparation and collation of relevant information); co-ordinate the review visit schedules; and manage the consideration of the outcomes and any proposed action plans.