

Meeting
29/01/10

Agenda Item
6

Reference No
HEFCW/10/02

1 Issue

This paper presents the Welsh Assembly Government's Performance and Governance unit's report on the Citizen-centred Governance Review undertaken at HEFCW during the period June to August 2009.

2 Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The Management statement between the Assembly Government and HEFCW provides for the Assembly Government 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 Government 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 Report on the Citizen-centred governance review of HEFCW attached at Annex A; and to
 - ii. discuss at the meeting members' initial views and comments regarding the report's recommendations (to inform a paper to be presented to Council's next meeting in March of the proposed actions to be taken in response to the report's recommendations)

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 commission its Performance and Governance Unit to complete governance reviews of all executive Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies. The review of HEFCW was undertaken in the three month period between June and August 2009.

8 Update

- 8.1 The final report was received on 7 January 2010. A copy of the report (which is attached as Annex A) was sent to Council members and the HEFCW management board by e mail on 8 January. The report sets out the review findings in respect of each of the Seven Citizen-centred Governance Principles and includes examples of good practice and innovation for each of the seven areas as summarised in the Executive Summary on pages 4 and 5 of the attached report. The report also offers some suggestions in the form of reflections (rather than recommendations) for further consideration by the Council and officers. The reflections paragraphs are highlighted in each section of the attached report.
- 8.2 The HEFCW management board has not yet had an opportunity to collectively review and discuss the report but will do so before a further paper is prepared for the next Council meeting to analyse the report's findings and to present an initial draft of actions either already planned or proposed in response to these. We would however welcome at this meeting Council Members' initial views and comments about the report.
- 8.3 Whilst this is a final report it will not be officially published by the Assembly Government until the Welsh translation is available which we believe is in progress. Publication of these governance reports by the Assembly Government is normally low key with the publication of the report on their website but no press release or ministerial statement. Copies of the report will also be sent directly to all stakeholders who participated in the review.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1 This paper has no direct 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
Insufficient priority and officer time given to managing the actions identified in response to the report's findings	An action plan will be developed in response to the report's findings. These actions will be incorporated into the Council's operating plan.