

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
12/03/10	18	HEFCW/10/25

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## **1 Issue**

This paper presents an action plan to address the matters raised in the report on the Citizen-centred Governance Review of HEFCW, published by the Welsh Assembly Government's Performance and Governance unit in December 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 Citizen centred Governance review of HEFCW to be completed in 2009.

## **3 Recommendation(s)**

- 3.1 The Council is invited to:
- i. Approve the action plan to address the matters raised in the Report on the Citizen-centred governance review of HEFCW attached at Annex A;

## **4 Timing for decisions**

- 4.1 Following Council's approval the actions identified in Annex A will be incorporated into the Corporate plan, For our Future action plan and annual operating plan as relevant.

## **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**

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## 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 and a copy of the final report was presented to Council for information and initial comments at the January 2010 meeting. The final report has subsequently been published on the Assembly Government website at . : <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improving-services/newsevents/publications/governreviews/?lang=en> and copies have been sent directly by the review team to all the stakeholders who participated in the review.
- 7.2 The report sets out the review findings in respect of each of the Seven Citizen-centred Governance Principles. It includes examples of good practice and innovation for each of the seven areas and also offers some suggestions in the form of reflections (rather than recommendations) for further consideration by the Council and officers. All of the reflections highlighted in the report have been included in the Action Plan to ensure that they are appropriately considered and addressed.

## 8 Proposals

- 8.1 The action plan is attached at Annex A. The report's findings have been categorised in the action plan into three themes namely matters that relate to:
- HEFCW's own operations
  - Working with DCELLS and the Welsh Assembly Government; and
  - Higher Education Policy
- 8.2 Overall HEFCW officers are pleased with the tenor of the report particularly the positive observations made about HEFCW's own operations. Some of the matters highlighted as areas for reflection with respect to HEFCW's own operations have been implemented and most of the other matters have been recognised as areas that need to be addressed as part of the organisation's ongoing effectiveness review.
- 8.3 The report includes reflections on several important policy areas. All of these reflections have been included in the attached Annex. However, as all of these areas will be addressed and fully worked through in the implementation of For our Future we have not included details of specific actions for each of these items.

**Members are invited to approve the proposed actions in the plan attached at Annex A;**

## 9 Financial implications

- 9.1 This paper has no direct financial implications.

## **10 Communications implications**

- 10.1 The full report has been published on the Assembly Government's website and has also been referred to in the February edition of the HEFCW newsletter. The action plan attached at Annex A will be published on the HEFCW website within the section for Council meeting papers.

## **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	Actions identified in response to the report's findings will be incorporated into the Council's Corporate Plan, annual operating plan or the For our Future action plan as relevant. Subsequent progress in implementing these actions can then be monitored as part of the monitoring of the Corporate and operating plan.