



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

MEETING

Workforce Partnership Council meeting: 16 November 2020

Minutes of the Workforce Partnership Council meeting held
(via Teams) on 16 November 2020.

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1. Introduction and opening remarks

1.1 The Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government welcomed WPC members to the meeting and confirmed apologies would be noted in the minutes.

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1.2 The Deputy Minister updated the meeting on the ‘Know Your Workforce Rights’ campaign. Partners were asked to share information about the campaign with their constituents.

2. Update on the social care forum

2.1 Andrea Street, the deputy director for improvement in the Welsh government’s social services and integration directorate introduced the paper on the social care forum.

2.2 Kelly Andrews and Helen Whyley from the union side both welcomed the establishment of the forum. Both expressed concern that infection control funding was not being back dated. Helen Whyley referred to the importance of the health and social care workforce strategy and questioned the relationship between this and the forum. A more detailed paper on the Social Care Forum was requested for the next meeting.

2.3 In response Andrea Street agreed on the importance of connecting the forum with wider developments. She agreed to provide a more detailed paper to a future meeting.

Action

Welsh government to provide a more detailed paper on the social care forum to a future meeting.

3. Update on the establishment of corporate joint committees (CJCs)

3.1 The Deputy Minister welcomed input from the trade unions and local government on this matter.

3.2 Claire Germaine, the Welsh government’s deputy director for local government transformation and partnerships introduced CJCs and the recent

public consultation paper.

3.3 Speaking for the unions, Dominic MacAskill said they broadly welcomed CJsCs. However, he would like more detail about how trade unions could engage with them and suggested including an observer status for the trade unions on the CJsCs. Claire Germaine said she would consider the issue of trade union engagement.

4. WPC report – ‘The Future of Work: The Impact of Innovative Technology on the Workforce’

4.1 Shavanah Taj introduced the paper on behalf of the joint executive committee (JEC).

4.2 Speaking on behalf of the unions, Margaret Phelan said that she had had experience of a recent Welsh Government engagement exercise about the higher education sector that did not including the trade unions. She asked if the Deputy Minister could write to remind colleagues across the Welsh Government that unions should always be included in consultations which affected the workforce. In response the Deputy Minister said she was happy to feedback to colleagues

4.3 The report and its recommendations were agreed and approved for publication.

Action

Deputy Minister to communicate with colleagues across Welsh Government to highlight the importance of including trade unions when holding engagement exercises on matters which affect the workforce.

Action

Publish the WPC report on ‘The Impact of Innovative Technology on the

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Workforce' and take forward its recommendations (recommendations will be included in the WPC work programme for 2021).

5. WPC Paper - One Welsh Public Service: 'Recommendations from the Workforce Mobility Expert Reference Group'

5.1 The Deputy Minister thanked members of the expert reference group for their work on this paper.

5.2 Richard Tompkins introduced the paper on behalf of the JEC.

5.3 On behalf of the trade unions, Bethan Thomas welcomed the report and recommendations. She emphasised the importance of partners committing to the strategic aim of One Welsh Public Service. Helen Whyley expressed disappointment that it had not been possible to take action that had 'more bite'.

5.4 Richard Tompkins said that the JEC would reflect on the comments raised in its next meeting.

5.5 All of the recommendations were approved for action.

Action

Take forward all 3 recommendations from the Workforce Mobility Expert Reference Group (recommendations will be included in the WPC work programme for 2021).

6. Work Programme update

6.1 Reg Kilpatrick introduced this paper on behalf of the JEC. He reflected on the ambition, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the work achieved in the current work programme. He stated that the WPC was now more agile than in the past, evolving the work programme in response to changing circumstances.

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He asked partners to provide suggestions of priorities for the 2021 work programme.

6.2 The Deputy Minister said she would look forward to hearing these ideas.

Action

All partners to provide priorities for the next year's work programme through their representatives on the JEC for discussion at its meeting on 21 January 2021.

7. Proposal for a social partnership training programme

7.1 Jo Salway, the Welsh government's director of social partnership and fair work said that her department were pleased to fund and deliver a social partnership training programme through a training provider. It would build on the previous programme delivered by the WPC and the recent paper to the JEC on the subject.

7.2 Darren Williams welcomed this on behalf of the trade unions. He asked when the training would start; whether it would prioritise certain sectors and would it be delivered jointly with social partners?

7.3 In answer, Jo Salway said the programme would start in the New Year and would be delivered in social partnership. The Deputy Minister said that partners will be kept informed.

Action

Welsh government to provide information to partners on the commencement of the social partnership training programme.

8. A just transition to a green economy

8.1 The Deputy Minister said she had enjoyed speaking at a recent Wales TUC session as part of Wales climate week where the link was made with social justice. She hoped that that partners could work together on these matters.

8.2 Shavanah Taj, highlighted that the JEC had agreed support this work and it was being included in the WPC's work programme for 2021. She also referred to a TUC report on this subject.

8.3 The Deputy Minister welcomed this.

8.4 Speaking on behalf of the unions, Dominic MacAskill said that it was important that public bodies considered the provision of facilities time for green reps, especially to receive training.

8.5 Speaking on behalf of employers, Cllr Philippa Marsden welcomed the inclusion of a just transition in the WPC Work Programme and highlighted its importance.

8.6 The Deputy Minister said that there was a consensus that this was an important issue and that she looked forward to the WPC taking it forward.

Action

WPC to add a just transition to a green economy to its 2021 work programme.

9. Restriction of public sector exit payments

9.1 Richard Mulcahy, from the Welsh government's public bodies unit introduced the paper and provided an update on the current position.

9.2 The cap had come into force. Impact assessment have been published on the UK government's website. The WLGA have provided useful evidence which demonstrates how the cap will impact on long serving staff on middle and lower

incomes. The Welsh government is considering ways of introducing a waiver to protect these workers.

9.3 On behalf of the unions, Karen Loughlin welcomed the Welsh government's actions and asked about timescales. Dominic MacAskill said that detailed discussions between the unions and Welsh government on the potential criteria for a waiver were important.

9.4 The Deputy Minister said the Welsh government was keen to understand the impact on public sector workers and thanked partners for the case studies.

9.5 Richard Mulcahy said he would continue to liaise with unions and employers to pursue a resolution.

10. Review of WPC minutes and matters arising

10.1 The Deputy Minister noted that the minutes had been formally accepted and that actions from July's meeting had been met.

10.2 It was noted that there has been some progress on producing a form of words which would allow for representatives of HE to attend. She welcomed Louise Casella on behalf of HE to the meeting. Discussions would continue on this matter.

10.3 On behalf of the unions, Shavanah Taj also welcomed Ms Casella to the meeting and said she looked forward to welcoming a representative of FE in future.

10.4 The Deputy Minister closed the meeting and confirmed that the next WPC would be on 25 March 2021.

Attendance list

Cabinet

Chair - Hannah Blythyn MS – Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government

Trade Unions

Kelly Andrews – GMB
Neil Butler – NASUWT
David Evans - NEU
Dominic MacAskill – UNISON
Richard Munn – Unite
Margaret Phelan - UCU
Shavanah Taj – Wales TUC
Bethan Thomas - UNISON
Helen Whyley - RCN
Darren Williams - PCS
Karen Loughlin - Unison

Devolved Employers

Graham Jones - WLGA
Chris Llewelyn – WLGA
Cllr Philippa Marsden - WLGA
Michelle Morris – SOLACE
Julie Rowles - NHS Workforce and OD Directors Group
Richard Tompkins – NHS Wales Employers

Welsh Government

Judith Cole - Local Government Finance and Policy Division

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Andrew Clark – Employability and Skills
Karen Higgins – Head of WPC Joint Secretariat
Jo Salway – Social Partnership and Fair Work
Peter Kennedy – HR Director
Reg Kilpatrick – Local Government Directorate
Andrea Street – Social Services and Integration
Neil Surman – Social Partnership and Fair Work

Observers and speakers

Sarah Abraham – WPC Joint Secretariat, WG
Joe Allen – Wales TUC
Louise Casella – Open University
Sue Evans – Social Care Wales
Sara Faye – Special Adviser, WG
Claire Germain – Local Government, WG
Audrey Johns – Social Services, WG
Mark Lewis – WPC Joint Secretariat, WG
Nisreen Mansour – Wales TUC
Richard Mulcahy – Public Bodies Unit, WG
Natalie Priday – Local Government, WG
Mark Pruce – Public Bodies Unit, WG
Jo Rees – Wales TUC
Natalie Stewart – Local Government, WG
Ceri Williams – WPC Joint Secretariat, WG
David Willis – Local Government, WG

Apologies

Steve Davies – Education Directorate, WG
Sam Huckle – Employability and Skills, WG
David Evans - NEU
Albert Heaney – Social Services, WG
Tracy Myhill - NHS
Mike Payne – GMB

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Actions log

No.	Action	Owner
1	Welsh Government to provide a more detailed paper on the social care forum to a future meeting	Welsh Government
2	Deputy Minister to communicate with colleagues across Welsh Government to highlight the importance of including trade unions when holding engagement exercises on matters which affect the workforce	Welsh Government
3	Publish the report on 'The Impact of Innovative Technology on the Workforce' and take forward its recommendations (recommendations will be included in the WPC work programme for 2021).	WPC JEC
4	Take forward all 3 recommendations from the Workforce Mobility Expert Reference Group (recommendations will be included in the WPC work programme for 2021).	WPC JEC
5	All partners to provide priorities next year's work programme through their representatives on the JEC for discussion at its meeting on 21 January 2021.	All partners
6	Welsh government to provide information to partners on the commencement of the social partnership training programme	Welsh Government
7	WPC to add a just transition to a green economy to its 2021 work programme.	WPC JEC

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