

31 January, 2013.

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 383 – 389

At a Meeting of the **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Thursday, 31 January, 2013 at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. S. N. Lewis (Chairman)

Cllrs.

L. A. Beer A. G. Morgan
D. M. Cundy S. L. Davies

W. V. Thomas

383. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. T. Devichand, (Cllr. S. L. Davies deputising) and Cllr. F. Akhtar, (Cllr. A. G. Morgan deputising).

384. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

385. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Members considered the Training Department's Quality Development Plan (November 2012). The Deputy Clerk (Training) informed Members that the identified deficiencies highlighted in the report had been incorporated into the Quality Development Plan in order to create improvements and provide a progress update within the department. Following discussion of several key priorities highlighted in the plan it was

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

386. NEWSLETTER

Members were circulated with the New Year Newsletter which had received favourable support from service users. The newsletter had been designed and compiled in-house, to support the Training Department's marketing strategy going forward.

RESOLVED the information be noted.

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387. QUALITY ASSURANCE (EXTERNAL VERIFICATION) REPORTS

Members considered the Quality Assurance Reports received from OCR and Edexcel regarding the Training Department's performance.

The Training Manager stated that no issues had been identified in the report received from OCR whereas a number of action points had been identified in the report received from Edexcel. Members were informed that the Training Department was making all efforts to comply with the 13 actions points set out under the 'recognition and assessment criteria' section of the report.

The Department had worked hard in the delivery of the qualifications but still needed to further develop the skills and expertise needed to meet the evidence requirements of the QCF qualifications.

Two further visits from Edexcel were scheduled for the summer 2013. It was envisaged that most of the targets surrounding the action points would be resolved by the next set of visits.

RESOLVED that the reports be noted.

388. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the following matter be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

389. WORK- BASED LEARNING CONTRACT 2012/13

Members considered a report prepared by the Training Manager informing of recent contract value increases awarded by the Welsh Government in respect of the Council's Work-Based Learning Contract.

The total contract value now available stood at £1,140,967 which was an increase of £354,946 on the original contract sum. Members were informed that the increase would have a positive effect on balances.

The Training Manager then outlined a few issues impacting upon the operational demands of the Training Department as a consequence of matching delivery and performance against the new contract value.

One particular issue was the procurement of the driver training vehicles to successfully deliver an important project with Royal Mail (to which Minute No. 253 refers). It was hoped to procure two vehicles for £9,000 but current market conditions were not favourable with vehicles proving to be far more expensive than the original estimate.

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Members were informed that the Policy and Resources Committee had previously delegated powers to the Training Manager in conjunction with the Chairman of that Committee and the Leader of Council to procure the vehicles (to which Minute No. 290 refers) but that was on the basis of a total budget figure of £9,000.

Furthermore, the Royal Mail course was due to commence in February 2013. This had escalated the issue to a point where it was now imperative that at least one vehicle was procured in order to commence the training delivery on time. There were vehicles available but the cheapest currently on the market was priced at £10,000 for one vehicle.

Members felt that a decision needed to be made quite quickly and certainly before the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting which was scheduled for 18 February, 2013.

During the discussion the Clerk commented that the Training Manager was reluctant to use the original delegated power granted by the Policy and Resources Committee because of the stark price variation and the need for significantly more capital outlay to be expended. The purpose in reporting the situation to Members now was to highlight the situation as quickly as possible and as a means of satisfying corporate governance arrangements in case questions were raised at a later date over any potential acquisition.

The Clerk went on to state that the Training Manager would continue to source the market in the hope of identifying and procuring a suitable vehicle(s) using the original delegated power granted by the Policy and Resources Committee. It was hoped that during the interim a vehicle(s) might be sourced on the market which was more in line with the original £9,000 budget estimate. It would then be a case of reporting the outcome to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting for retrospective approval in the knowledge that the matter had the necessary procedural support from this Committee. Members concurred and appreciated the dilemma as the market dictated the prevailing circumstances. However it was important not to delay a decision to procure a vehicle(s) for much longer. Given the state of balances and despite the Committee not having any direct power or remit to authorise the procurement of a vehicles(s), Members were happy to support the Training Manager in using the original delegated powers even if it meant having to spend more money than originally intended and it was

RESOLVED that in the interests of corporate governance arrangements Members' deliberations be reported to the next Policy and Resources Committee to highlight this Committee's support for the Training Manager to procure a suitable vehicle(s) for the actual and necessary cost but using the original delegated powers granted by the Policy and Resources Committee.

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The Meeting concluded at 5.15 p.m.

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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 12 February, 2013, adopted by the Council.