

Local Government and Public Services Committee

Minutes (LGPS 08-05(mins))

Meeting date: Wednesday 21 September 2005

Meeting time: 9.30am to 12.15pm

Meeting venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales

Assembly Members in Attendance

Assembly Member	Constituency
Glyn Davies	Mid and West Wales
Sue Essex, Minister	Cardiff North
Mike German	South Wales East
Alun Ffred Jones	Caernarfon
Ann Jones, Chair	Vale of Clwyd
Dai Lloyd	South Wales West
Val Lloyd	Swansea East
Gwenda Thomas	Neath
Brynle Williams	North Wales

Officials in Attendance

Name	Job title
Hugh Rawlings	Director, Local Government and Culture Group
Martin Rolph	Making the Connections

Others in Attendance

Name	Representing	Agenda item(s)
Ian Cope	Office for National Statistics	4
Nick Holmes	Local Government Data Unit	4
Melvin Humphreys	Association for Electoral Administrators	5
Naz Malik	All Wales Ethnic Minorities Association	5
Bob Screen	Association for Electoral Administrators	5
Peter Woodward	Association for Electoral Administrators	5

Committee Service

Name	Job title
Virginia Hawkins	Committee Clerk

Item 1: Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed Committee Members and members of the public.

1.2 There were no apologies.

1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2: Minister's Report Paper: LGPS 08-05(p.1)

2.1 The Minister made a statement on Making the Connections: Review of Local Service Delivery. A copy of the statement is appended.

Action

- The Minister agreed to provide regular updates to the Committee in her Ministerial report on the ways in which the WLGA priorities were being addressed by the Beecham Inquiry.
- The Minister will provide information on the number of Welsh Assembly Government jobs that would be transferring to the new office in Llandudno Junction from Welsh Assembly Government Offices in (i) Cardiff, (ii) North Wales and (iii) elsewhere.

Item 3: Welsh Assembly Government's Response to the Committee's Inquiry Report on the Regulation and inspection of Public Services in Wales. Paper: LGPS 08-05(p.2)

3.1 The Committee's report had been debated in Plenary and Members were content with the Minister's response.

Action

- A copy of the Committee's report and the Minister's response will be sent to Sir Jeremy Beecham in connection with the Review of Local Service Delivery.

Item 4: Census 2011 Paper: LGPS 08-05(p.3) and LGPS 08-05(p.4)

4.1 The Chair welcomed Ian cope and Ian White of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Nick Holmes of the local Government Data Unit, Wales. The Committee discussed their papers on preparation for the census and the use by local government make of census data.

Action

- ONS will provide a further report to the Committee, including a timetable for the development of proposals for the White Paper, in November.
- The Chair will suggest to Panel of Chairs that other subject committees receive similar presentations.

Item 5: The Committee's Scrutiny Project into Electoral Arrangements in Wales Paper: LGPS 08-05(p.5) and LGPS 08-05(p.6)

5.1. The Chair welcomed Melvin Humphreys, Bob Screen and Peter Woodward of the Association of Electoral Administrators, and Naz Malik of the All-Wales Ethnic Minorities Association. They

presented and discussed their evidence with the Committee.

Action

- A report of the recent visit by committee Members to Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands will be put to the next meeting.

Item 6: Secondary Legislation Forward Look

Paper: LGPS 08-05(p.7)

6.1 It was agreed that LAA 33, The Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2006, should be scrutinised by the Committee

Action

- Business Committee to be notified of the decision.

Item 7: Minutes of the previous meeting

Paper: LGPS 07-05(min)

7.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting on 29 June 2005.

Action

- The Chair agreed to circulate a copy of a letter she had received from the First Minister on the Civil Contingencies Concordat ahead of its discussion at the next meeting.

Committee Service
September 2005

Annex 1

Statement to the Local Government and Public Services Committee

Title: Making the Connections: Review of Local Service Delivery

Date: 21 September 2005

By: Sue Essex, Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services

I am pleased to inform the Committee of the arrangements for the Review of Local Service Delivery. The Review forms part of the Delivering the Connections action plan published on 14 June. At the leaders' conference on 14 July the First Minister announced that Sir Jeremy Beecham, Vice Chair of the Local Government Association, would be chairing the Review and I'm now able to confirm the remaining details.

Sir Jeremy will be supported by a small team comprising Dame Gillian Morgan, Chief Executive of the NHS Confederation, and Sir Adrian Webb.

Dr Morgan was born in Llwynypia and became Chief Executive of the Confederation in February 2002, after a career in both medicine and management. As a doctor she worked in hospitals, general practice and public health medicine, working as both a consultant and Director of Public Health. She is currently president of the International Hospital Federation.

Professor Sir Adrian Webb is currently Chair of the Pontypridd and Rhondda NHS Trust and is a non-executive member of the Assembly Government's Executive Board. He was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glamorgan and has held many committee and advisory roles both in Whitehall and in Wales.

The purpose of the Review is to look in an objective and strategic way at the arrangements we have in place to improve the delivery of public services in Wales, including through collaboration across sectors. The terms of reference are attached.

The members of the Review team will bring extensive experience of policy and implementation, across local government, health and other services. They will be looking at local delivery from a whole system perspective, and engaging in detail with those who plan and deliver services. They will also be inviting views in writing from any individual or group with views to contribute. As vice chair of the LGA, Sir Jeremy is in touch with Sir Michael Lyons, who has been commissioned to review the functions of local government in England.

This is a very important project for local services in Wales - we are pleased to have this team on board, and that we have had the full support of local government in setting up the Review. I look forward to receiving the team's analysis and advice next summer.

Review of local service delivery in Wales

Terms of Reference

Aims

The aim of the Review is twofold:

- to identify improvements in the arrangements for local service delivery, which are as radical and innovative as necessary; and
- to examine how existing arrangements for accountability can be used, developed and adapted to support this innovation.

The Review will report to Ministers and to the Public Services Board by July 2006.

The Review will examine service delivery in key areas, with particular regard to the cross-cutting issues that are central to improving outcomes. It is not expected to undertake a comprehensive analysis of all service areas, but to identify specific proposals which could lead to improved arrangements for service delivery.

The Review will focus on local authorities, health bodies and other local service delivery organisations in the public, voluntary and independent sectors.

The Review will examine how best to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery in the interests of service users and taxpayers.

The Review should consider whether, and how, reform could be assisted by changes in arrangements for financing local service delivery, taking into account, for example, the outcome of the Lyons review.

The Review may consider the relevance of changes that are being considered, or are taking place, in other parts of the United Kingdom or elsewhere if evidence is available.

Questions

In achieving the above aims, the Review may focus on the following questions:

- How should the roles of the relevant local organisations be defined for the future, for example, in health and education, in terms of community leadership, commissioning and service provision?
- What are the mechanisms that can be employed to achieve effective collaboration between local service providers: cross-functional collaboration such as between a local authority and a local health board, and collaboration to achieve delivery on a larger geographical scale than the local area itself?
- How do we organise service delivery to obtain the appropriate balance between local access and centres of specialised expertise and provision?
- How should funding be arranged to facilitate greater collaboration and joint-working? What is the appropriate response to more limited growth in the available resources?

- Are there re-allocations of functions between different organisations delivering local services which would achieve improved delivery?
- What changes to the political management and accountability of service delivery would assist improvement? What are the appropriate roles for locally elected representatives and what level of local representation, and/or expert skills, are appropriate to different circumstances? What should be the relationship between local elected representatives and appointed bodies?
- What workforce changes are required to underpin the new approaches to service delivery and how best can the workforce be engaged in the process of improvement?
- How best does the Welsh Assembly Government provide leadership in improving local service delivery?