



PARTNERIAETH



GWEITHIO MEWN PARTNERIAETH I SICRHAU RHAGORIAETH I BAWB
PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

To:
Cllr Glynog Davies
Chair of Partneriath Joint Committee

Please ask for: **Scrutiny**
Scrutiny Office Line: **01792 637732**
e-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Date: **25 March 2024**

Dear Councillor Davies

Partneriath Scrutiny Councillor Group – 26 February 2024

The Scrutiny Councillor Group would like to thank Mary Francis Jones (NPEP Lead from Heol Goffa Special School in Llanelli) and officers representing Partneriaeth, Ian Altman (Lead Officer), Helen Morgan Rees (Lead Director), Jenna Gravelle (Lead Adviser) for attending our meeting, for presenting the information we requested and answering our questions. I am writing to you to reflect on our views from the meeting.

The Councillor Group agreed as part of their work programme to look at the performance of each of the Partneriaeth priorities, we therefore welcomed the update report on Priority 3: Support schools and educational settings to develop a range of research and enquiry skills as a key part of their own professional learning.

The Lead Adviser Jenna Gravelle outlined the purpose of Priority 3, her role and the work being undertaken in relation to this. We heard the aim of the priority is to enable schools and settings across the region to use enquiry to establish and maintain a rhythm of learning, innovation and change. We were told that this will be achieved by supporting the growth of networks of schools to develop a range of enquiry skills by leading enquiries in their own settings, promoting collaboration across our schools to explore and develop approaches to digital learning design and also by driving a system whereby schools are willing to take risks, experiment and innovate their practice to raise standards.

The National Professional Inquiry Project (NPEP) Lead at Ysgol Heol Goffa Special School in Llanelli give us a school perspective on the impact of the work they have been doing at Heol Goffa School in relation to this priority. She told us about, for example, the enquiry cycles including the last three years and how the NPEP has developed the enquiry process including what has worked, what could be better and the resulting actions for the future, also the collaborative approach with Partneriaeth

We were pleased to hear about the successes with this project and we asked about what the main challenges were, recognising that others can learn from that experience. The NPEP Lead said the main challenging areas were/are time allocation, being able to be released from the classroom and ensuring staff are covered. The other challenging factor was ensuring staff involvement, making all staff aware and involved so all staff in school can appreciate what you are doing. The Councillor Group were

impressed with the work happening at the school and thanked the NPEP Lead for her valuable input into the meeting.

The Partneriaeth Lead Officer and the Lead Director provided us with the information with regard to the Partneriaeth financial affairs, risk management and governance arrangements as (as stipulated is completed by the Cllr Group in the Joint Agreement).

We were informed that from a financial position, Partneriaeth is on track, with the funding being spent appropriately to meet its business planning targets for the end of this financial year.

We were given an overview of the risk register as it currently stands, hearing Partneriaeth has now received the funding from the Welsh Government, so that risk has now be downgraded for this financial year. One of the potential high impact risks in the future will be the lack of clarity in terms of the functions and delivery of Partneriaeth following the recent Welsh Government Education Ministers announcement. He is proposing that funding no longer goes to regional bodies but that it goes directly to local authorities. This puts the role of regional bodies again in flux. We heard that this is hugely significant for Partneriaeth and will need to be reflected in the risk register moving forward.

We were concerned about the ongoing instability with this for Partneriaeth staff and the risk that some staff may look to move away from their current roles to more stable positions, which could put the role of Partneriaeth ultimately in jeopardy. We feel that this is a serious risk and that clarity for staff and the organisation needs to be made as soon as possible.

We would welcome your thoughts on the contents of this letter, but on this occasion do not require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Lyndon Jones
Chair of Partneriaeth Scrutiny Councillor Group
Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk