

ELL(2) 08-04(p.1)

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Date: 19 May 2004

Time: 9:00am

Venue:

Title : Minister's Report

1. This report updates the Committee on specific issues raised by members
and on issues of current interest. Annex A sets out major engagements since the last report.

2. Coleg Gwent

I have written to Sheila Drury, who is Chair of the National Council for Education and Training in Wales, and will update the Committee orally on the 19th May. I attach a copy of the letter at Annex E.

3. School Breakfasts

At the last meeting of the ELL Committee, I promised to circulate a list of stakeholders invited to the series of meetings being held in May, along with the dates of those meetings. This was done on the 4th May. The Stakeholder workshops have now all taken place and the information gathered from these will form part of the evidence base for taking the initiative forward.

I also gave an undertaking at the Party Spokespersons meeting to provide a further update on progress towards meeting the target in Wales : A Better Country of introducing breakfasts in primary schools in Community First areas from September 2004. The Schools for the first phase of the pilot in all of the nine LEAs have now been informed and have been confirmed by LEAs as falling within Community First Areas. We are currently awaiting final confirmation on participation. A list of the schools invited to participate, to date, is included in annex B for information.

Regional briefing meetings for the participating pilot LEAs, pilot schools and for all LEAs on the 14th June in west Wales, 17th June in north Wales and 21st June in south Wales. Detailed information on

progress is available on the Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative website at www.learning.wales.gov.uk/breakfast, and this site is regularly updated.

4. Daugherty Assessment Review Group

In January I informed you that I had received the Daugherty Group's review of the assessment arrangements for 11- and 14-year-olds. I promised to keep members informed of progress. I received the Group's Final Report from Professor Daugherty on 12 May and it was published on the Internet on 14 May. A printed version will be available from 25 May.

The Group's principal recommendations are:

Key Stage 2

- A set of "skills tests" to focus on "literacy", "numeracy" and "problem solving" – these to be developed and introduced on a statutory basis from 2007/08.
- The new tests to draw on skills across the National Curriculum - not exclusively on the core subjects - and to provide a "pupil profile" of skills.
- The tests to be taken at or near the end of Year 5 not at the end of the last year of Key Stage 2 as now.
- The results to be reported to parents, inform teachers and teaching programmes for Year 6, and to be used in transition planning with Year 7 teachers in secondary schools.
- The tests to be externally marked and the results collected.
- Teacher Assessment to be retained at the end of Year 6, and as at present, to be confined to the core subjects and measured against the National Curriculum scale;
- Moderation of the Teacher Assessments, (supported and informed by ACCAC exemplar material) to be introduced at a local level with primary schools working together, and in collaboration with their partner secondary schools.

Key Stage 3

- Assessment, of all subjects, at the end of the Key Stage to be by Teacher Assessment only. No replacement tests are recommended.
- Consideration to be given to moving the timing of the Teacher Assessment to the spring term of

Year 9.

- Secondary schools to be given "accredited centre" status – ACCAC to lead – when they can demonstrate sound, robust and proper assessment and moderation arrangements.

Both Key Stages

- The current tests and testing arrangements to continue for 2004 but to be phased out entirely by 2007/08 with optional test material available during the intervening years (from 2005).
- Data from the TA - and when available the "skills tests" - should continue to be collected and used to monitor national, local and school performance.

I wish to record my thanks to Professor Daugherty and his Review Group for the tremendous amount of work they have undertaken in the last nine months.

I will be seeking comments on the report and my intention is to make a statement to plenary in July on the next steps to achieving the right assessment arrangements for Wales.

5. Skills and Employment Action Plan

We have made excellent progress in implementing the First Skills and Employment Action Plan which I published in February 2002. All of the actions in the Plan have been completed or are in progress. When I launched the plan I promised to revise it as actions were completed and new evidence became available. On 12 May therefore I made a statement to Plenary on the publication of a consultation draft revised Skills and Employment Action Plan. The consultation document takes forward and builds upon the work begun in the original Plan. It consults on a range of new proposals to boost skills levels and help more people into employment under 4 main sections :

a. Improving the Mechanisms for Workforce Development:

b. Supplying New Entrants to the Labour Market with the Skills Needed for Employment:

a. Working with Employers and Employees to Improve Skills:

b. Helping More People into Sustained Employment

The consultation period will run until 19 July 2004. I propose to publish a final version of the Skills and Employment Action Plan 2, taking account of the responses to the consultation, in the Autumn.

Amongst the achievements of the First Skills and Employment Action Plan has been action to move towards an all age skills programme through lifting the age cap on Modern Apprenticeships and embedding the Modern Skills Diploma for Adults. These actions are now being mirrored in England.

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills made an announcement on Monday 10th May about the re-branding of Modern Apprenticeships which includes proposals for Adult Apprenticeships .

The rebranding in England will also include dropping the term 'Modern' and extending the brand title to include "Young Apprenticeships" developed as part of the work undertaken by DfES on the 14-16 agenda. The Skills and Employment Action Plan 2 contains proposals for a similar programme. "Combined Apprenticeships " will allow young people to combine learning in school/ college with practical learning in the workplace, as part of the action remit of the 14-19 Learning Pathways Action Plan.

ELWa is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of work-based learning in Wales and, in the light of this and the ongoing development of the 14-19 Action Plan, it is not felt appropriate for there to be a re-branding of Apprenticeships in Wales at this point in time. However, I have asked ELWa to take account of the English proposals as part of its review.

6. FE Pay

Fforwm and the Unions have engaged positively in complex negotiations to address the second phase of the FE Pay initiative, with a view to establishing a six point main scale, which will achieve pay equivalence with schoolteachers during 2004-05, and an upper pay scale for lecturers who fulfil certain requirements. The Unions are now consulting their members and subject to agreement by all of the parties concerned, the aim is for this second stage of the pay initiative to take effect retrospectively from 1 April 2004. It is hoped that agreement will be reached by the end of May.

During the coming months, fforwm and the Unions will consider the third phase of the FE pay initiative, with attention turning towards managerial allowances and other costs. Funding this third stage will, of course, be subject to consideration in the forthcoming BPR.

7. Schools Capital Building Programme

(a) Voluntary Aided Schools Capital Building Programme

I thought that the Committee would be interested to learn of the progress of major schemes being supported under the Voluntary Aided Schools Capital Building Programme.

Alderman Davies Church in Wales Primary School, Neath : £1.9m project to provide additional accommodation and significantly remodel and refurbish the existing buildings. Design complete and the school's consultants anticipate going out to tender shortly with a view to construction starting in the Summer.

St Joseph's RC High School, Newport : £15m project for a new replacement school will be completed in the Autumn and teachers and pupils will be able to move in to the new school in October

Mary Immaculate RC Primary School, Haverfordwest. : design for a new replacement school on the same site is well underway and construction expected to start during 2004-05 with a an expected occupation in September 2005. Total estimated cost £1.6m

Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive School, Pontypridd : construction of new Science block is nearing completion and will be ready for occupation in the Summer. Total cost £1.2m

St Oswalds C in W Primary School, Kilgetty, Pembrokeshire : : construction of a new school is nearing completion and expected to be occupied in September 2004. Total cost £1.5m

St Andrews Major C in W Primary School, Dinas Powys, Vale of Glamorgan : major refurbishment project to re-clad the exterior of the school. Work expected to start shortly. Total cost £220,000

In addition, I announced in March this year two new schools amongst 11 new projects which would receive funding in 2004-05 onwards

Refurbishment of St Joseph's Catholic High School in Wrexham to enable it to expand as a new joint Roman Catholic/Church in Wales High School (£6,6m)

Replacement R.C. Primary School for St Albans, Pontypool and St Francis Primary School, Abersychan, Torfaen (£2.3m)

St Brigids School, Plas Y Green, Denbighshire, New art and technology accommodation and general refurbishment of primary classrooms/new toilet accommodation (£500,000)

St Davids Church in Wales Primary, Pentwyn, Cardiff, New early years unit, construction of new junior classroom block (£400,000)

Ysgol-Y-Plas, Llanelian, Conwy, Accommodation improvement (£135,000)

Henllys Church in Wales Primary, Cwmbran, Torfaen, Computer suite and miscellaneous. works (£140,000)

Ysgol Bro Dewi (C in W), St Davids, Pembrokeshire, Provision for extra teaching area (£140,000)

All Saints Church in Wales VA Primary School, Gresford, Wrexham, Alterations and extensions to the existing school (£575,000)

St. Marks Church in Wales V.A Primary School, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Remodelling of junior section of school (£200,000)

St. Davids Church in Wales Primary, Colwinston, Vale of Glamorgan, 13-place nursery unit (£165,000)

All Saints Church in Wales Primary, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, ICT Suite (£650,000)

Approval for these schemes has been given in principle only and without prejudice to any determination that I may be required to make on any statutory proposals that may be required as these fall to me to determine if they attract objections or are called in.

(b) Report on delivering first phase of the extra £9 million

Members will know that I announced in an oral statement in Plenary on 12th May the first phase of projects to be supported under the additional £9m large project initiative through the School Buildings Improvement Grant programme for projects to start in 2005-06 and 2006-07. Attached at Annex C is the Press Release and details of the projects to be supported. Annex D provides the list of projects. Authorities will also continue to receive formula stages of SBIG as usual.

8. EMAG / Asylum Seekers

Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant 2004-05

I was very pleased to be able to announce an additional £650,000 for the EMAG scheme for 2004-05 which will increase the amount of funding available to LEAs from £3.85m to £4.5m.

The distribution formula for 2004-05 will be broadly the same as last year. The formula is based on the number of EAL learners requiring support; their level of competence in English assessed against an agreed standard scale drawn up by the EMAG Working Party after consultation with LEAs; and the key stage they have reached in the curriculum.

We recognise that the number of EAL pupils accessing EMAG funding has grown significantly over the last few years. Very aware too that Asylum seekers granted leave to remain EMAG support. A further announcement on the level of Asylum seeker funding for 2004-05 will follow in July after the Special Grant Report has been debated at Plenary;

The focus of the EMAG working group over the last couple of years has been the development of a formula which has resulted in a far fairer and more transparent allocation of funding.

We recognise that GEST/Better Schools is not the most appropriate vehicle for distribution of EMAG funding as we have a long term commitment to support the grant. We are therefore considering moving EMAG to a specific grant scheme from 2005-06 or alternatively putting it out via the RSG mechanism;

We are also now beginning to actively address the issues of teacher training and underachievement of

certain groups of ethnic minority pupils. We have convened two working groups, comprising both LEA representatives and professionals (from EALAW etc) to take these issues forward. In these groups, drawing heavily on the excellent research EALAW produced for us earlier this year and the valuable assessment work currently being carried out by our secondee Janice Lee, we will look at how best we can raise the achievement of ethnic minority pupils generally. Equally, we are acutely aware of the need to address the very specific issue the underachievement of particular groups (eg African Caribbean)

Asylum Seeker Education Grant Scheme

Main features

The Special Grant is designed to support authorities in the provision of :

- Teachers
- Bilingual support. (To provide non-teaching help for those whose first language is not English or Welsh and who have difficulty in understanding or communicating in these languages.)
- Educational Psychologist
- Co-ordinator
- Resources (library)
- Transport
- Uniforms (These are considered necessary to ensure that the children have suitable clothing for school and to facilitate integration.)
- School dinners

The grant also offers a small amount of assistance for adult asylum seekers who have enrolled on a course of English Language as an additional language provided by their LEA.

Since 2003-04, the grant has also taken into consideration the significant additional costs associated with those asylum seeker pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties.

Funding for this client group has in previous years been allocated via a Special Grant Report debated at Plenary towards the end of the year. This year, in response to calls from Authorities to know earlier in the financial year what their likely allocation will be, we are attempting to bring forward the whole process.

The grant funds asylum seeking children resident in an Authority who did not appear on the STATS 1 return form completed in January each year. To illustrate how this works, where children are resident in (say) January 2003, their educational needs will be catered for in the RSG settlement for 2004-05. It is a matter for each of the Authorities to determine how it spends that proportion which is included in its RSG.

I will be bringing forward the Special Grant Report for the Assembly to consider at the beginning of July.

9. CHWARAE TEG (information)

This organisation, which receives core grant from my Department, continues to provide very useful support to gender issues across the Assembly's interests. The following is a summary of developments within my portfolio.

Work-Life Balance

Excellent progress is being made with the Work Life Balance pilots in the public sector. Work with Local Authorities has identified potentially useful links with the Teacher Workload Agreement. Chwarae Teg intends to hold a conference in the Autumn to disseminate the interim findings, linked to the launch of our work-life balance website.

Employment Week – Brussels

This is an initiative of the European Commission to promote the European Employment Strategy, which aims for Europe to be the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. Equal opportunities is an important aspect of the strategy. My officials organised a seminar in Cardiff and Chwarae Teg attended this year's event in Brussels between 26th and 28th April.. They were able to generate interest in potential partnerships, and highlighted some of the work we are doing in Wales on cross cutting themes linking Employment to Education, Skills, Welfare to Work, New Deal, Care, Active Ageing and Economic Development. One example of this work is the involvement of the Cardiff Women's Workshop in the Equal project being taken forward by the JIVE partnership. I recently spoke at their seminar in Cardiff and was able to learn more of their transnational work on gender mainstreaming in the construction, engineering and ICT sectors.

Welfare to Work and New Deal

Through her position as Chair of the Wales Employment Advisory Panel, Ruth Marks (Chief Executive, Chwarae Teg) is also a member of the National Employment Panel (NEP), and she is able to highlight at NEP meetings, and report back on, Welfare to Work issues which are of particular relevance to Wales. The National Employment Panel is a UK-wide, employer-led advisory body, consisting of some 25 members. It provides independent advice to the UK Government on the design, delivery and performance of the UK Government's labour market programmes and policies including the Welfare to Work programmes.

Education and Skills

Chwarae Teg works in partnership to promote opportunities for women in education, lifelong learning and career development. The latest project - Science, Engineering and Technology is awaiting confirmation of final match funding. Particular focus is paid to gender stereotyping and this is a cross cutting aspect of all Chwarae Teg's work themes across Wales. This is very pertinent given the recent publicity for the work the Equal Opportunities Commission has been doing on gender stereotyping in learning programmes and employment. A great deal is being done by Careers Wales, the Sector Skills Councils, ELWa and learning providers to try and ensure that the career choices of females or males is not distorted by any artificial barriers, and it is clear from the figures that this work needs to continue.

10. Devolution of Student Support and HE Bill (information)

The Devolution of Student Support project is progressing well. The main priority for the Project Team remains to ensure that the HE Bill receives Royal Assent in the Summer to allow the over-arching Project to proceed including the Finance and Information Project and the Independent Study "Rees Review" chaired by Professor Teresa Rees.

- HE Bill

The Higher Education Bill received Second Reading in the House of Lords on 19 April. The proceedings of the debate are available on the parliamentary website at:

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld199900/ldhansrd/pdvn/lds04/text/40419-04.htm#40419-04_head2

The Bill started its consideration in Committee in the House of Lords on 10 May

- Welsh Language Task and Finish Group

The inaugural meeting of the Task and Finish Group was held in April, with a further four meetings scheduled. The remit of the Group is to ensure that stakeholders aspirations for the Welsh medium provision of student support services, are fully considered in respect of the new devolved Welsh student support system from academic year 2006/7. The Group is required to identify requirements and provide prioritised, costed, recommendations for Welsh language provision in the Student support system from 2006/7. The recommendations are to be provided in the Autumn of 2004.

- Rees Review Update

The membership for Independent Study - Devolution of Student Support System and Tuition Fee Regime to Wales has been confirmed. Formal letters of invitation were sent to all panel members on the 07 May 2004. A press release will be issued shortly detailing membership.

Professor Rees continues to work in partnership with the Project team to provide clear parameters of work to allow a procurement exercises to commence ahead of Royal Assent of the HE Bill, however award of contract will not be made until Royal Assent has been given.

Annex A

MINISTERS ENGAGEMENTS – 28th April 2004 to 18th May 2004

28th April

MTG - Terry Wales and task and finish group chairs on 14-19 Learning Pathways (Cardiff Bay)

29th April

SPCH - Third Mission Conference "Profiting through Knowledge Transfer" (Cardiff Bay)

SPCH - Present awards at Careers Wales ceremony (Llandrindod Wells)

SPCH - Cabinet Open Mic Session at the Wales TUC Conference (Llandudno)

SPCH - Cabinet Public Open Mic Session (Rhyl)

30th April

SPCH - Partnership Works Conference (Port Talbot)

1st May

SPCH - National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) 107th Annual Conference 2004 (Cardiff)

4th May

MTG - Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Ruth Marks of Chwarae Teg (Cardiff Bay)

5th May

SPCH/VISIT - Address Students at Ystrad Mynach College (Ystrad Mynach)

VISIT - Risca Comprehensive School (Risca)

SPCH - Launch the Wales International Consortium (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Video Conference between Don Touhig and Alan Johnson

6th May

VISIT - Skill Force Centre (Porth)

ATTEND - Employer Launch of the Pathways to Work Pilot (Pontypridd)

MTG - Local Government Partnership Council (Cardiff Bay)

ATTEND - European Enlargement Celebrations (Cardiff)

7th May

MTG - Baroness Finlay (Cardiff)

10th May

MTG - Clayton Willis to discuss the Scarman Trust (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Voluntary Sector Partnership (Cardiff Bay)

SPCH - Learning to Succeed in Tourism Event (Trehafod)

11th May

SPCH - Open the Transnational Gender Mainstreaming Seminar (Cardiff Bay)

12th May

VISIT - St Illtyd's Catholic High School (Cardiff)

MTG - Baroness Andrews, Baroness Ashton and Don Touhig to discuss HE Bill (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Professor Daugherty and Daugherty Group to discuss the Final Report (Cardiff Bay)

MTG – UNISON to discuss the QCA's modernisation agenda (Cardiff Bay)

ATTEND – Launch of Western Mail Woman of the Year Awards 2004 (Cardiff)

SPCH - RNID Cymru Reception (Cardiff Bay)

13th May

MTG - Children's Commissioner re Clywch Inquiry (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Llanelli Youngsters to discuss setting up a Skateboard Park in Llanelli (Cardiff Bay)

VISIT - Crownbridge School (Torfaen)

SPCH - Medals for Excellence Ceremony (Cardiff)

14th May

PHOTO CALL/SPCH - Adult Learners' Week (ALW) - the 'Learning Journey' (Cardiff)

ATTEND - Western Mail Business Awards (Cardiff)

17th May

SPCH - Filming Welsh Version of ACCAC Video on citizenship (Cardiff Bay)

MTG – CYDAG (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Wales Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (WASACRE) (Cardiff Bay)

MTG - Paul Loveluck to discuss Educational Activities of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales (Cardiff Bay)

SPCH - Launch the Children's University in Cardiff (Cardiff)

SPCH - Official Launch and also the Learner's Award Ceremony (NIACE Dysgu Cymru) (Brecon)

18th May

MTG - Alun Davies of Age Concern (Pensioners Forum Wales) and John Griffiths (Deputy Minister for Older People) (Cardiff Bay)

**SCHOOLS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PILOT OF THE
PRIMARY SCHOOLS FREE BREAKFAST INITIATIVE**

MERTHYR TYDFIL

Gurnos Nursery

Goetre Infants

Goetre Junior

Pantyscallog Primary

Ynysowen Primary

Trefechan Nursery

CAERPHILLY

Bargoed Infants

Deri Primary

Hengoed Primary

St Gwladys Junior

Pontlottyn Primary

Ysgol y Lawnt Primary

CARDIFF

Trelai Primary

Windsor Clive Junior

Tremorfa Nursery

Mount Stuart Primary

Caerau Infants

Herbert Thompson Infants

Herbert Thompson Junior

CARMARTHENSHIRE *

Felinfoel Junior

Ysgol y Bababod, Felinfoel

Lakefield Junior

Bigyn Junior

Brynsierfel Primary

Parcyrhun Primary

* In discussion regarding the inclusion of one further school identified by the local authority

NEATH PORT TALBOT

St Therese's Primary

Tywyn Primary

Abergwynfi Infants

Abergwynfi Junior

Glyncorrwg Primary

Melin Infants

Melin Junior

Glanymor Primary

PEMBROKESHIRE *

Monkton Primary

Pembroke Dock Primary

* In discussion regarding the inclusion of three further schools identified by the local authority

ANGLESEY

Ysgol Llanfawr

Ysgol y Parc

Ysgol y Graig

Ysgol Parch Thomas Ellis

Ysgol Santes Fair (St Mary's)

DENBIGHSHIRE

Ysgol Christchurch

Ysgol Emmanuel

Ysgol Mair RC

WREXHAM

Rhosymedre Infants

Rhosymedre Junior

Gwenfro Infants

Gwenfro Junior

Hafod y Wern Infants

Hafod y Wern Primary

Alexandra Primary

Annex C

W040393-Ed

12 May 2004

SIXTEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO RECEIVE £80M

FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Jane Davidson, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning today (Wednesday 12 May) announced the first projects to benefit from enhanced Assembly funding for school building improvement schemes.

The Minister said: " Today I am delighted to be able to announce allocations to local authorities of £42.064m for projects commencing in 2005-06 and £42.451m for 2006-07. 32 projects are involved. The choice of projects has been made by individual authorities.

" £560 million funding for school capital projects has been pledged as a Welsh Assembly Government top ten commitment for the Assembly's second term. I announced last year that the overall amount to be allocated for capital investment in school buildings would increase to £139m per annum from 2005-06 onwards.

"Contained in the plans was the commitment that an additional lump sum of £9m would be allocated to each authority over the period 2005 - 2010 to enable them to undertake larger projects. This is additional to annual shares of School Building Improvement Grant, totalling around £35m, which all authorities will continue to receive.

" This first tranche of funding has been allocated to authorities who are in a position to undertake projects in 2005-06 and 2006-07. In considering allocations in due course for 2007-08 and beyond priority will be given to those authorities not included in this first round.

" This additional investment in school buildings in Wales supports our commitment to deliver the

"betterwales" undertaking that by 2010 all school buildings should be in a good physical shape and properly maintained. Improvement of school buildings is a key priority – we owe it to our children and those who work in our schools."

Notes

1. The table giving the breakdown of the allocations by local authority is attached at Annex D. Where schemes starting in 2005-06 or 2006-07 are expected to incur expenditure in 2007-08 approval in principle is given also for this expenditure.

2. Approval is given without prejudice to any determination the Minister for Education & Lifelong Learning may be required to make on any statutory proposals.

Annex E

Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol-Oes

Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd

Cardiff / Caerdydd

CF99 1NA

Our Ref: MB-JD-0530-04

Your Ref:

Sheila Drury

Chairman – National Council-ELWa

ELWa North Wales
St Asaph Business Park
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 OLJ

11th May 2004

Dear Sheila

COLEG GWENT

I am writing with regard to Coleg Gwent's proposals for organisational change and the concerns that have been expressed. The proposals prompt a number of questions in terms of the post-16 sector in south-east Wales, the future direction of the institution, and the achievement of ELWa's plans for the area.

I am sure that you will be seeking urgent advice on these matters from ELWa staff. When you have that to hand, I would find it very helpful to receive a report early next week setting out your assessment of the approach the Governors are taking and your views on the matters that have caused them to come to their conclusions.

I would particularly like to know what assurances have been received by ELWa from the Acting Principal, and the Principal Designate, that the proposed actions are proportionate and appropriate. It is clearly important that you and your Council are comfortable that the proposals match up with ELWa's strategic plans for the pattern of learner needs and associated development of provision in the "Gwent" area. Crucially, ELWa will need a view on how the operational adjustments at the College will fit in with what other providers are able to offer, including the extent to which changes to A and AS level courses relate to the needs of 16 year olds leaving secondary schools without sixth forms. I shall also welcome your advice on Coleg Gwent's approach to core and franchised provision and how these proposals impact on inter-provider collaboration.

In terms of management information, I am also interested in ELWa's assessment of Coleg Gwent's past performance and the use of benchmarked data on staff costs, administration and management, which I understand have played an important part in Coleg Gwent's decision making.

Lastly, I would welcome your assurance that the college has taken full account in its proposals of my clear commitment that funds allocated to fund the FE Pay policy have been consolidated by ELWa as part of its operational planning, and that ELWa will be working accordingly in the development of its forward plans.

Yours



Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning