



Transformation – Y Siwrnai

Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

Delivering Skills that Work for Wales



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- Audience** Learning Partnerships; Maintained Schools; Further Education Institutions; Higher Education Institutions; Local Education Authorities; Children and Young People's Partnerships; ColegauCymru/CollegesWales; 14–19 Network Representatives; Estyn; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; Unions; Professional Associations; Welsh Local Government Association; The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA); Equality and Human Rights Commission; Welsh Language Board; Faith Communities Fora; Sector Skills Councils; Work-Based Learning Training Providers; Welsh for Adults Centres; Wales Council for Voluntary Action; The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education; The Association of Directors of Education in Wales; Youth Service.
- Overview** Our policy to transform education and training provision in Wales, was published in early autumn 2008. This signalled our intention to secure outline plans to improve learning opportunities for all post-16 learners in the shortest possible time. The challenge has been to secure the best delivery model to plan provision collectively; to direct more of the funding available to teaching and learning and learner support; to increase the engagement of disadvantaged young people in the learning process; and to transform the learning network to increase learner choice, reduce duplication of provision, and encourage higher quality learning and teaching in all post-16 provision. This document details 'y siwrnai'/'the journey' that stakeholders have been taking to implement the post-16 phase of the transformation policy. It also highlights the intention to extend the Transformation Policy to cover all phases of education and training.
- Action required** This document requires no response. However, in terms of progressing the transformation agenda, action is set out in the 'Next Steps' section.
- Further information** Further information about this publication can be obtained from:
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Ministerial Foreword

Our policy to transform education and training provision in Wales, published in autumn 2008, in response to the *Skills that Work for Wales* strategy and action plan, signalled our intention to secure outline plans to improve learning opportunities for all communities in Wales. In the first instance our focus has been on post-16 networks of delivery and over a period of fourteen months our change policy has been embraced by schools, local authorities, colleges, universities and Work Based Learning providers, working as Learning Partnerships.

I am impressed by the extent to which Learning Partnerships have responded to the challenge to secure improvements for post-16 learners over a relatively short timeframe, and are aligning this with the direction being taken by 14-19 Networks to secure the delivery of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. I am pleased that several transformation proposals recommend change that will support the development of a community learning culture; will make a significant contribution to local regeneration and social justice; and will do this in a way that will make the very best use of available public funds.

There has been much support for our decision, in the spirit of tri-level reform, not to impose a single post-16 transformational model or rigid framework. We know that this flexible approach has enabled stakeholders, who have the very best of local knowledge, to steer change in a way that serves each geographic area of Wales; one based on local needs and aspirations. The development of sectoral skills networks is also benefitting from being guided by this flexible model, and this approach will continue as we move into future phases of activity.

Therefore we welcome the diversity of transformational proposals that have been submitted to us and the fact that hard decisions are being taken on behalf of learners. In the visits that we make across Wales, we sense a real desire to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of learning. Many of the proposals made in response to the Transformation Policy reflect that desire and are imaginative and robust. One Further Education Institution merger has taken place and five others are being planned. There are a number of interesting proposals coming forward on further and higher education collaborations, and on school reorganisation and school and college collaborations, many of which also focus on delivering the important 14-19 Learning Pathways Policy and the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure. Finally, we are pleased to see that many Work Based Learning providers are already developing a co-ordinated and harmonised approach to meeting local and regional demand. All of this is extremely encouraging.

A few Learning Partnerships have so far been less successful in planning change. Sometimes there has been an unwillingness to confront the vested interests of some providers. Proposals put forward by these Partnerships often do not fully reflect the needs of all learners and employers. Whilst this is disappointing, we will continue to work with these Learning Partnerships to assist them in challenging the status quo and building a secure evidence base for change.

There is urgency in the need for us to modernise our learning delivery system across Wales, so that it works more efficiently and effectively.

Having said this, it is clear that the vast majority share our vision for a genuine transformation across the system, which will benefit our children, young people and adults. Through the School Effectiveness Framework and Quality and Effectiveness Framework for post-16 learning, our joint ambition is to deliver the highest quality learning opportunities for all. In addition, we must ensure that we unite this focus on quality with access to learning choice, improvements to learning delivery and enhancements to the environment of learning. In this way we will build a transformed school, college and training and university system that will make a real difference to the lives of all those that live and work in Wales. We have come a long way in the last year, but we are still only at the start of our journey. We will all need to continue to work together to maintain the momentum in this exciting second phase of the programme.

Y Siwrnai reports back on the progress made on post-16 transformational change one year on; it showcases some of the really exciting work going on across the country; and it looks forward to the next, more ambitious phase of the programme, where it will form part of the wider transformation of the whole system of education and training in Wales. The coming year promises to be every bit as promising and challenging as the last.

We will be seeking to work with stakeholders and providers in all sectors - local authorities, schools, FE colleges, universities and Work Based Learning providers - on the next stage of the journey. We commend the progress made so far - and look forward to continuing to work together to transform the future learning opportunities for children, young people and adults across Wales.



Jane Hutt AM

Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills



John Griffiths AM

Deputy Minister for Skills

Introduction: The Journey

1. *One Wales*¹ sets out the Welsh Assembly Government (Assembly Government) plans to ensure learning for life, to create a fair and just society and to ensure a sustainable environment. It further describes our resolution to develop an education and training system that offers a broad range of learning opportunities, is responsive to the needs of all learners and employers, and tackles poverty and disadvantage.
2. A broad range of current strategic initiatives are taking forward the *One Wales* vision, from Foundation Phase and 21st Century Schools through to *Skills that Work for Wales*² and the new Higher Education (HE) strategy. One of the Skills that Work for Wales strands highlights the priority to transform the network of colleges, schools and training providers; and this led to the publication of the Transformation Policy in September 2008. This Policy invited stakeholders to come forward with innovative proposals generally, but not exclusively, for the transformation of post-16 delivery; to improve learner choice; and reduce duplication of provision.
3. One year on from the launch of the Transformation Policy, it is important to record the progress made by stakeholders in terms of the nature of the proposals and more detailed plans that have been submitted; and demonstrating the momentum for change that has been developing in many parts of Wales.
4. Officials now have a strong sense of the progress many stakeholders are making in preparing for the required infrastructure and procedural change; are engaging stakeholders in discussions around timescales for the implementation of change; advising on essential statutory protocols to be followed and, where required, potential sources of funding.
5. For many stakeholders, the vision for transformation extends much further than the post-16 sector. Transformative change has also been supported by reforms to curriculum and qualifications in Wales, by the use of a strategic approach to capital investment in the education and training estate and by developments of effectiveness frameworks for schools and post-school providers. It will be further supported by the outcomes of the reviews of the 8 to 14 stages of schooling and by the new HE strategy and action plan to be published later this year.
6. Therefore, as well as reflecting on the progress made in the last year on delivering the Transformation Policy, *Y Siwrnai* (the Journey) provides a vehicle to signal the development of an all-age, system-wide approach to transforming education and training. This will cover the full range of provision, for the youngest children through to adults, and will involve estates, delivery, curriculum and pedagogy.

¹ One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales, 2007

² Skills That Work for Wales: A Skills and Employment Strategy and Action Plan, 2008

7. The policy strands which will drive this all-age, system-wide transformation include the development of an understanding with all local authorities on preferred ways forward to transform school provision and deal with surplus places; the existing 21st Century Schools programme; the developments in school curriculum and qualifications, notably the Welsh Baccalaureate; the current and future legislation on 14-19 Learning Pathways; developments in provider governance arrangements; *Skills that Work for Wales*; and the development of the new HE strategy.

8. Transformation on this scale will require the whole education and training community - DCELLS, local authorities, stakeholders and providers - to work together. The result will be improved learning opportunities for children, young people and adults across Wales.

9. To take account of the developments outlined in this document, and to further signal the future all-age, system-wide approach to transformation, a National Conference has been arranged for December 2nd 2009. The Conference will also provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share effective working practice and to improve their understanding of the means by which issues and concerns can be resolved. Regional workshops, scheduled for early 2010, will focus on resolving challenges being faced by individual providers.

Part 1: Transformation: The Future Journey

10. The all-age, system-wide strategy being adopted by DCELLS will have a positive impact on the delivery of initiatives such as the capital investment programme; strategies to establish digital learning; a future post-16 fees policy; the development of learning programmes and strands; and potential governance reform. It will also lead to strong strategic links between pre- and post-16 learning and delivery and improved management of local change; and better co-ordinated curriculum and pedagogy developments.

11. The following sections provide more detail on priority transformation elements that will be incorporated into this future approach:

Skills, Higher Education and Lifelong Learning

12. The publication of *Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales*,³ as one of the policy strands within the Skills that Work for Wales strategy, challenged all providers of post-compulsory education and training to set aside traditional, narrow, institutional arrangements, to plan provision collectively; and direct more of the funding available to teaching and learning and learner support.

13. The policy deliberately rejected the idea of a national transformation framework, to be applied across diverse areas of Wales and took an approach to encourage stakeholders to develop local solutions to local needs, based on the criteria, published in the original document, shown at **Annex A**.

14. Following the launch of the Transformation Policy in 2008, the strategy for implementation and the approach to securing change was examined in detail at four regional conferences. Workshop sessions at these events offered an opportunity to discuss the means by which learner opportunities might be maximised; and cost effectiveness, long term sustainability and financial benefits met.

15. During the subsequent fourteen months, all local authorities, schools, colleges, training providers, and universities worked together to analyse the effectiveness of current delivery systems in line with learner and community needs. They subsequently developed partnership proposals to secure the best delivery model for making significant improvements to post-16 networks of education and training, with some taking a more all-age approach to transformational change. These were submitted to officials in DCELLS in January and March 2009.

16. Future activity, to be synchronised across the Department, will include implementing approved plans in the shortest possible timeframe; supportive interventions where change activity is underdeveloped or delayed; developing new post-16 planning arrangements; and considering available options to provide incentives to those implementing approved transformation plans.

³ Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales (2008)

17. A number of other priority actions emerging from *Skills that Work for Wales* that will impact on transformation are being pursued, including the development of a Quality and Effectiveness Framework for Further Education (FE) and Work Based Learning (WBL) providers⁴, a review of Careers Wales, a fees policy and a sector priorities approach to funding and a review of the way in which the National Planning and Funding System supports sixth form, FE and WBL delivery.

18. The transformation of opportunities for post-school learners through an all-age, system-wide approach also needs to engage HE institutions in Wales. The new HE strategy, due to be published in the near future, will reflect the Ministerial statement made in July on the importance of higher education's contribution to economic development and social justice in Wales. It will also stress the importance of higher education institutions (HEIs) working collaboratively with schools and FE colleges and with employers to widen opportunities for learners and to support the growth of new and existing businesses and public services.

School Organisation and Effectiveness

19. The Assembly Government is committed to transforming Wales into a learning country, where high quality lifelong learning helps people to reach their goals. The *School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)*⁵ is the Assembly Government's vehicle for taking forward its commitments to school-aged children and young people in Wales. The SEF is the overarching policy which brings coherence to all work aimed at improving learning and wellbeing for school-aged children and young people. The Framework has been designed to ensure that all current and future policies will be aligned and focussed on the common goal of improved learning and well-being.

20. A key concept of the Framework is 'tri-level reform'; this term encapsulates the concept that all parts of the education system must fulfil their respective responsibilities in pursuit of the common objective of improved outcomes. The SEF is about making the whole school-based education system - schools; local government; and the Assembly Government, more effective, so that every part of the system works together to ensure that all children and young people in Wales get the best possible start in life.

21. Put simply, the SEF is about how we secure the best outcomes for every learner in every learner setting in Wales. It is designed to be the means to raise pupil achievement overall, reduce variation in achievement within and between different groups of pupils, schools and local authorities and to diminish the link between attainment and socio-economic circumstances.

22. The Framework document identifies a number of themes, elements and aspects which affect the quality of teaching and learner outcomes and allocates roles and responsibilities to national government, local government and schools in improving delivery. The delivery of better outcomes for learners requires: a reduction in school variations; a strong emphasis on use of data to identify areas of strength and weakness; a commitment to act upon the

⁴ Quality and Effectiveness Framework for Wales (2009)

⁵ School Effectiveness Framework, 2008

information; and support from the SEF teams to develop school-level, professional, learning communities. Improving outcomes also requires improvements in teacher pedagogy, the development of leadership focused on improving teaching and learning, the trialling of new qualitative and quantitative outcome measures and participation in school-to-school professional networks.

23. The 14-19 Learning Pathways Policy is designed to ensure that, by 2015, ninety five percent of young people will be ready for high skilled employment or HE by the age of 25. Every learner should be provided with an individual learning pathway that details how the 6 key elements of the entitlement will be provided. The flexible combination of learning and support is tailored to meet the widely differing needs of 14-19 year olds and reflects the individual's ability and aptitude. The Learning Pathways policy is now underpinned by the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, which places duties on head teachers, principals and governing bodies of schools and FE colleges, to ensure that a young person's entitlement to learning and support, according to their needs, is available to every individual learner. Most schools and colleges find it challenging to meet the breadth of the requirements and need to work with others to make sure that young people in their care have access to the full range of choices in a local curriculum.

24. The 14-19 Policy does not make any presumption about the infrastructure in which the provision should be delivered, but the Assembly Government is determined that the potential to use resources more effectively and efficiently to improve learning is maximised; in some instances this will mean reconfiguring schools so that the very best use is made of available budgets. Local authorities have become increasingly committed to progressing school reorganisation in recent years. The sharp fall in pupil numbers, which impacted initially on primary schools but has recently begun to reduce rolls significantly at many secondary schools, has led a number of local authorities to review provision and to develop proposals for change. In the last twelve months, seventeen of the twenty-two local authorities published proposals for school reorganisation, although not all of these recommended rationalisation.

25. In considering local authority proposals to reorganise schools in a locality, the Assembly Government will give priority to the best interests of learners and the wider community. The *Learning Country: Vision into Action*⁶ made it clear that future decisions on the allocation of funding for capital investment would increasingly require local authorities to plan strategically, and the development of the 21st Century Schools programme⁷ has strongly reinforced this principle. The 21st Century Schools programme is designed to support local authorities to develop new and innovative approaches to school provision, which put the learner at the centre of developments.

⁶ Learning Country: Vision into Action (2006)

⁷ A programme which has been co-developed with the Welsh Local Government Agency, fforwm now known as ColegauCymru/CollegesWales and local authorities

26. Recently published Guidance on School Reorganisation⁸ makes it clear that proposals for change to school provision should take account of the Assembly Government's commitment to drive up standards of teaching and attainment in all schools, and increase school effectiveness. The Guidance sets out how local authorities should consider the alignment of proposals with the Learning Pathways programme and the Transformation Policy, as well as other policy imperatives.

27. Inevitably, progress has been variable and not all local authorities are proposing to make changes. There remains substantial scope for local authorities to plan and organise schools more efficiently and effectively, to raise standards, and to provide improved buildings, firmly based in communities, for pupils of all ages. The Assembly Government intends to work with local authorities in a supportive way to assist them with school reorganisation to contribute to whole system improvement. It should be noted, however, that the Welsh Ministers retain a separate role in determining contested school reorganisation proposals. They will not seek to influence decision making or to shape the detail of school reorganisation in any locality, so as not to compromise independence in making decisions on specific proposals.

Qualifications, Curriculum and Learning Improvement

28. The draft Welsh-medium Education Strategy, to be finalised in 2010, makes it clear that proposals for transforming provision should be drawn up with a view to improving the extent and range of Welsh medium opportunities for learners. This involves understanding the need for different solutions in different parts of Wales and for strong partnerships across local authority boundaries. There needs to be imaginative use of various approaches including joint recruitment of peripatetic bilingual staff; virtual learning (e.g. online learning and enhancement packages, online discussion/language practice fora, video conferencing). There are programmes at school, college and HE levels which support teaching professionals in acquiring and building confidence in teaching their subjects through the medium of Welsh.

29. Turning to pedagogy more generally, the review of professional standards and continuing professional development is taking full account of the Transformation agenda in looking at the needs of all teaching practitioners including lecturers in schools and other post-16 settings. It will consider the ways that standards and professional development can contribute to flexibility within and across settings. Leadership programmes are also being revised to reflect the needs of the Transformation agenda and SEF to develop wider system leadership approaches.

30. With regard to qualifications, the Welsh Baccalaureate typifies for many a challenging and rounded qualification which is equally valued in the schools and further education sectors or in a combination of these. It thus aligns with a range of transformation approaches; and continues to be rolled out across Wales. The progress made on the unitisation of qualifications through the Qualifications

⁸ School Organisation Proposals: Welsh Assembly Government Circular No: 021/2009, available at <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/circulars/schoolorganisation/?lang=en>

and Credit framework and the ability to build qualifications through credits will play an important role in successfully implementing transformation proposals across learning sectors.

31. The benefit to the learner is central to all transformation proposals. Curriculum, assessment and pedagogy developments are in train, not least through the more skills focussed curriculum that will help prepare learners for 14-19 Learning Pathways. Officials are looking at further ways to improve provision for 8-14 year olds, building on the gains that the Foundation Phase will make.

Infrastructure Investment

32. Several transformation proposals are based around reforms of governance and these are relatively straight forward to execute so that learners are able to realise transformation benefits in the shortest timeframe.

33. However, many transformation proposals will require future capital investment to implement the preferred option for change and this will be underpinned by DCELLS' strategic capital investment framework, our approach to long term capital expenditure. This approach, brings together the 21st Century Schools programme; the Further Education Institution (FEI) investment programme; and, through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), HE capital expenditure.

34. DCELLS' investment is targeted at the Assembly Government's strategic objectives, which prioritises revenue releasing projects and aims to maximise the impact of the approximately £200 million of investment from all sources in education infrastructure across all Welsh education institutions. The capital delivery framework is based on HM Treasury's Five Case Model⁹ for business cases and all school reorganisation and post-16 transformation proposals are required to set out plans to use investment to deliver a coherent, joined up and sustainable education system.

35. It is increasingly important to ensure that forward asset management focuses on the needs of communities and not public institutions; and as the Assembly Government seeks to invest in transforming our education infrastructure, there is a need to make connections across services and integrate investment where appropriate. This will ensure that the Assembly Government is able to deliver more for less. The education estate is a significant proportion of Welsh public infrastructure, and there is consequent need to reduce the negative impact our assets have on the environment. This will involve rationalising provision and investing in buildings with higher sustainability standards.

36. Investing in transformation is a long-term programme that will take many years to fully realise. DCELLS is committed to have long term plans for school reorganisation, further and higher education reconfiguration and transformation in place, in order to deliver that long-term investment. In this way the Department will achieve efficiencies of scale and scope by aligning reform strategies with long-term capacity building and support across the whole education system.

⁹ The Five Case Model has been in widespread use across the public sector for many years and is the recommended standard for preparation of business cases. It is structured to ensure that proposals for major investment are sound, realistic, well-planned and deliverable.

Part 2: Transformation: The Journey So Far

37. The profile emerging during the first year of activity, shown at **Annex B**, covers a range of local and sectoral proposals and is providing a benchmark to influence the development of a raft of Assembly Government policies. The pattern has been the subject of Assembly Government discussion at Cabinet and a National Assembly for Wales debate at Plenary, and scrutiny by the Enterprise and Learning Committee.

Local Area Proposals

38. Outline transformation proposals have been submitted covering all geographic areas in Wales¹⁰. To this extent Assembly Government officials are content that this policy, together with the 14-19 Learning Pathways Policy, has motivated local authorities and further education institutions to co-ordinate plans to improve learning delivery.

39. Whilst the Assembly Government welcomes the extent to which all the areas of Wales have responded to these policies, it is clear that some local authority-led Learning Partnerships have been unable to develop a suitable case for change. Whilst DCELLS acknowledges the challenges facing some stakeholders, we do not accept that there are insurmountable barriers to change and remain committed to the overall objective, which is that every community in Wales should benefit from new and better learning opportunities.

40. Some Learning Partnerships serving rural areas, and those needing to maintain and improve access to Welsh-medium provision, will need to be innovative in implementing change, including establishing sustainable digital learning environments.

41. In addition, where the strong desire of some learning providers to maintain the status quo or to inappropriately limit change undermines our policy drive to address the needs of all learners, DCELLS will take a more interventionist approach.

Sectoral Proposals¹¹

42. The FE sector has generally been focussed on a number of mergers, which will create economies of scale and increase efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of learning programmes and learning delivery. In many cases pre-merger activity is already highlighting the potential for the merged institution to act as a regional hub for learning, and to develop specialist provision, with links to HE, WBL providers and employers.

43. Whilst the sector has generally responded well to the Transformation Policy some colleges are not currently involved in merger arrangements, and a few appear to be proposing limited interaction with other providers. Where this is the case, swift action must be taken to ensure that these Colleges are not isolated from plans to secure local, sectoral and skills networking.

¹⁰ These generally follow local authority boundaries.

¹¹ This term refers to the development of specialist training networks that will meet the needs of the skills sectors such as Creative Industries; Technology, Engineering and Science, etc., as opposed to those learning networks that serve the wider need of a specified geographic area.

Gorseinon and Swansea Learning Partnership

In response to the Transformation Policy, Swansea and Gorseinon Further Education Institutions quickly realised that both colleges would be better placed to serve the needs of the local and regional community if they were to merge and establish a new college that would build on the successes and expertise that currently exist in the individual colleges.

The vision focuses on meeting the wide-ranging demand for high quality education and training, delivered in state of the art facilities that will encourage participation and stimulate the desire to engage in learning. In working with the City and County of Swansea there is a real desire to ensure that all learners can experience their chosen learning route, be it academic or vocational, and that this will lead either to high quality employment or to higher education in Wales and beyond. A single Further Education Institution in Swansea will be able to rationalise resources and subsequently develop and invest in a more responsive curriculum that meets the needs of local employers.

A merger of colleges of equal standing and status is complex, time-consuming and tests the commitment of the partners in terms of their ability to relinquish elements of control for the greater good. Consequently, in partnership with DCELLS, both Corporations are driving the merger process forward in full consultation with stakeholders and are already developing plans to secure an iconic central city campus built to house the new college staff and learners. In this way, Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges are making a significant contribution to achieving the Swansea Guarantee, a City and County of Swansea-led initiative which ensures that all 14-19 learners have access to the learning and learning support they need.

44. During the last year, the HE sector, has recognised the crucial part it can, and should play in uniting post-16 learning and there are some notable developments, including the longstanding work of the University of Wales, Newport and the University of Glamorgan in the Heads of the Valleys area; and the significant employer engagement activity at Trinity University College. The indicators are that the HE sector, supported by the work of HEFCW, is ready to fully engage in the transformation of the sector.

Universities of the Heads of the Valleys Initiative

This far reaching transformation programme, with intrinsic links to the Learning Zone in Blaenau Gwent, and the Learning Quarter in Merthyr Tydfil, aims to effectively connect physical, economic and social support services to underpin and support the regeneration of the region. At the heart of this initiative is the implementation of a compelling cradle-to-grave education and training experience set in state of the art facilities.

Pivotal to the Universities of the Heads of the Valleys initiative is a strong and respected higher education presence, not only to grow and serve the higher level skills needs of the Heads of the Valleys communities, but to send a clear message that the Heads of the Valleys is an exciting place to learn, a place where success is the norm.

The University of Glamorgan and the University of Wales, Newport, have both made a strong commitment to building capacity at the higher skills levels and to bring the level of engagement in Higher Education learning in Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil up to the national average over six years. This will mean 4000 new learners!

The varied and essential elements of this very large and complex master programme is being taken forward by a Heads of the Valley Programme Board, with membership from the aforementioned universities, Merthyr Tydfil College and Coleg Gwent and senior representatives of the Assembly Government. The Board seeks to manage the risks associated with the wider programme and to jointly plan and commission work where required. The work of this partnership has led to some notable successes in securing specialist expertise to build business cases; secure capital funds and the development of curriculum and communication strategies.

Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone

Following the publication of the Transformation Policy, the Blaenau Gwent Learning Partnership was able to crystallize plans to implement their long-standing ambition to transform education and training in the Borough and establish a full post-16 learning facility, the Learning Zone, at the former Corus steelworks site at Ebbw Vale. The Business Case for the Learning Zone, to be established subject to the outcome of statutory procedures on school reorganisation proposals¹², is set to be part of a larger Learning Campus, which could include Arts, Sports and Library facilities. Local partners aspire to establishing a Learning Campus which would meet the highest design and build specifications, provide a learning environment that would attract learners and tutors alike and provide a visible sign of local regeneration.

Blaenau Gwent Local Authority, Coleg Gwent and the University of Wales, Newport have worked with a range of stakeholders to resolve the many challenges this initiative has raised. Their expectation is that this single site for post-16 education will provide efficiencies over and above existing arrangements and greater choice and flexibility for learners of all ages. In addition, the design of the proposed Learning Zone and associated facilities will demonstrate, to residents and visitors to Blaenau Gwent, the value placed on learning in an area of great need.

¹² The statutory procedures necessary to bring about the school reorganisation change will involve public consultation, the publication of notices, and the opportunity for stakeholders to make objection. This will be followed by a decision, on the proposal, by Welsh Ministers.

Merthyr Tydfil Learning Quarter

The concept of the Merthyr Learning Quarter (MLQ) has evolved over time in response to a number of critical demographic, cultural and regeneration imperatives. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's and the University of Glamorgan's aim is that, together with the Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone, the MLQ will form part of an ambitious learning network of facilities proposed for the wider Heads of the Valleys area. Subject to statutory school reorganisation proposals, stakeholders have agreed that the best site for the MLQ is on the existing Merthyr Tydfil College Campus. Further, the MLQ is expected to form part of a complex that will house other cultural and leisure facilities. The proposal is that the design and build would create a state of the art facility in the centre of the town, giving a physical and technological environment that would be likely to attract learners from a wide variety of backgrounds, with learning opportunities available to secure improved retention and achievement, as well as bringing efficiency gains.

The MLQ development aims to extend all post-16 learning opportunities in formal and non-formal settings; will embrace 21st Century delivery modes, including modern technology; and focus on improving non-traditional areas of community learning. Both the Local Authority and the University are convinced that the integration of the whole learning network will give improvements in knowledge, skills and competences for the community, within a personal, civic, and social and employment-related perspective.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the University of Glamorgan have not wavered from the need to make a significant transformational change to learning delivery in the area and they are clear that they wish to take this proposal forward in consultation with the full range of stakeholders.

Plans for the MLQ and Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone are also structured to maximise the advantage that can be taken of the relationship with the Universities of Glamorgan and Wales, Newport. This would enable learners from across the Heads of the Valleys region to progress to higher education pathways in Merthyr Tydfil, Pontypridd, Newport, Cardiff, and beyond.

45. Finally, the National Training Federation for Wales (NTFW) is currently investigating the support that the Work Based Learning sector can provide to secure a full learning portfolio as local and regional transformation proposals are implemented.

National Training Federation for Wales

From the outset, NTFW fully embraced the Transformation Policy and was quick to respond positively to ensure that the Work Based Learning sector makes an equal contribution to improving learning opportunities for the 14-19 cohort and for adult learners.

Working with its members, the stated intention, and therefore their challenge, is to ensure that Work Based Learning becomes as much a part of the school curriculum as academic study, and that learning opportunities for adults become better able to provide the personal and professional skills for both those in employment and those seeking employment.

As a jointly commissioned initiative, with the Welsh Assembly Government, the strategy involves recruiting Work Based Learning network officers to interact with established Learning Partnerships, and their key strategic leaders, to assess the contribution that this sector can make to transformation and to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility of learning. The officers will also provide “ground-up” feedback to NTFW on issues such as cost of delivery, quality, learner experience and the like. Building on the significant progress made over the last few years, the sector can continue to make adjustments and improvements that will fully integrate Work Based Learning into 21st Century networks of education and training.

The Welsh Assembly Government welcomes the opportunity to work in an innovative way with the NTFW to deliver the Skills that Work for Wales.

46. The outcomes of the recent HE Review; the FE Governance Review; and the next round of WBL contracting activity are likely to stimulate and accelerate activity to co-ordinate and, where appropriate, unite learning delivery in schools, further and higher education and to establish links with WBL, Sector Skills Councils and employers.

Summary of Transformation Outcomes in Year 1

47. No local authority, school, college, university and WBL provider is unaffected by the requirements of the Transformation Policy; and the policy and framework has been generally well-received across the sectors and throughout the whole of Wales.

48. That said, local and sectoral proposals and plans are clearly not all at the same stage of development. For example, several local authorities and FE and HE providers have been developing outline plans for change over a number of years. Here the launch of the Transformation Policy and subsequent support from Assembly Government officials has facilitated a co-ordinated planning focus; helped to secure “in principle” capital investment funds and accelerated the timeframe for full implementation. Others are at a much more embryonic stage of development as a consequence of delivering learning in a network previously unchanged for many years.

49. Where local plans were already developing, the Transformation Policy has galvanised local authorities, schools and colleges, together with other learning providers, to drive forward under a policy umbrella that will maximise investment opportunities and strengthen local resolve to commit to change.

Carmarthenshire Learning Partnership

Working with key stakeholders, Carmarthenshire Local Authority is committed to taking forward the implementation of an innovative, all-age strategy to transform education and training in the County, and to secure the requirements of the 14-19 Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure. Implementation of this proposal, which would be subject to statutory consultation on school reorganisation¹³, indicates the need to make better use of learning sites; reduce duplication of learning delivery; increase learner choice; improve post-16 progression routes and raise levels of participation. The requirement to provide Welsh-medium, bilingual and English-medium schools provision adds to the complexity of any potential school reorganisation.

The proposal is predicated on the establishment of joint-timetabling and resource sharing over three school-college clusters. This is expected to provide learners with flexible learning routes and equality of access to provision; and this will meet the requirements of the Measure.

The proposal seeks to support the delivery of the Making the Connections¹⁴ and One Wales agendas by linking together a wide range of concurrent Assembly Government initiatives (including the implementation of the skills curriculum 3-19). It also builds on the unique Tri-level reform pilot in the Dinefwr area and Local Authority's Modernising Education Programme. The partners believe that implementation of this proposal will yield significant benefits for the whole county. This is expected to take the form of efficiency savings, for reinvestment in learning, as surplus school places are reduced; the provision of greater choice in learning pathways for all pupils and students; improved response to curricular change and the creation of more viable learning units at the 14-19 phase and in particular at post-16.

The Local Authority has adopted a transparent approach to appraising options for transformational change. For example, in reaching this stage of change management, it has engaged a wide range of stakeholders in discussion, debate and consultation, and will continue to operate in an open and consultative manner to make improvements for all learners in Carmarthenshire.

50. Where provider and provider managers have been collecting and analysing the benefits and shortcomings of the current learning network of delivery; been inclusive and open in investigating the need for change, the Transformation Policy has provided a national support framework and access to a revenue resource to maximise a successful change of direction and outcome.

¹³ The statutory procedures necessary to bring about the school reorganisation change will involve public consultation, the publication of notices, and the opportunity for stakeholders to make objection. This will be followed by a decision, on the proposal, by Welsh Ministers.

¹⁴ Making the Connections - Delivering Beyond Boundaries: Transforming Public Services in Wales 2006

Torfaen Learning Partnership

The vision is based on the undeniable fact that successful learning of the future is likely to be very different from that envisaged even five years ago. Hence the Learning Partnership is committed to create a vibrant lifelong learning and digitally rich environment that will stimulate the individual desire to engage in learning and will equip the whole community with the personal and professional skills needed for life in the 21st Century. This will be achieved by formally planning and funding a fully integrated education and training system across Torfaen, which will include elements of HE and take full account of promoting improved access to Welsh-medium provision.

The preferred option for achieving this vision for post-16 learners has yet to be formally appraised. However, the most likely outcome is either a "hub and spoke" model or a new single "high tech" campus, which would provide efficiency savings that can be reinvested in learning and learning support. Whichever option is agreed, the Partnership is committed to making significant improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility of learning and that curriculum development are planned and delivered in harmony with other Heads of the Valley initiatives. The delivery of the preferred option is also likely to require capital investment to develop the infrastructure for both 16-19 year olds and community, business and HE use.

Central to the transformation of Torfaen learning is the use of modern technologies; and this is currently being also progressed via the establishment of Digital Learning Plazas in all secondary schools, such as the one already operational at Abersychan School. These Plazas will house wireless technology, video-conference and broadcast facilities as a minimum, and ensure that 21st Century learning lies at the heart of pedagogical developments in the county. Clearly any post-16 delivery option will need to replicate these digital learning environment arrangements.

The Assembly Government is pleased to support Torfaen in developing its far reaching vision, one that is set to ensure that the people of Torfaen are able to compete in a rapidly changing world and demanding employment market.

51. Finally, where the delivery of post-16 learning has been unaffected by recent policy requirements and demographic changes, and collaborative activity has been limited, the publication of the Transformation Policy and framework has as a minimum, stimulated debate, discussion and embryonic planning for improving learning delivery. The development and implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has also made a significant contribution to these discussions.

Part 3: Priorities for the Future

Welsh Assembly Government Priorities

52. To deliver change in line with the Transformation timeframe

- Notwithstanding early and most promising progress achieved by stakeholders submitting a raft of outline transformation proposals, the Transformation Policy was explicit in stating that 60% of all post-16 change activity should be in implementation phase by September 2010 and the remainder by September 2011¹⁵. This timeframe is one that the Assembly Government remains committed to realise, for the sake of all learners.
- The timeframes to implement the transformation of pre-16 learning networks will be discussed and agreed in the near future.

53. To effect all-age, system-wide transformation

- Several local authority areas intend to roll out secondary school reorganisation in parallel with changes to post-16 delivery. There is a clear rationale for the local co-ordination of pre-and post-16 changes such that best value for money is achieved across the school sector as a whole to generate savings for re-investment directly into learning delivery and learner support. DCELLS will work with all local authorities and with providers to adopt this co-ordinated approach.
- This summer the Minister for Children Education Lifelong Learning and Skills (CELLS) set out a strategic vision for HE in Wales and stressed the importance of HE working in partnership with schools, FE colleges, employers and communities to offer young people and adult learners a wider choice of courses and pathways. The publication of an HE strategy and action plan is consequently expected by the end of the year and transformation of the sector is likely to be a key priority.

54. To deliver high quality and timely advice and guidance on implementing the preferred transformation model

- A National Conference has been arranged for December 2nd 2009 to provide an opportunity for Learning Partnerships to debate and discuss implementation activity.
- Regional workshops are being arranged for 2010 to provide a forum to discuss individual concerns and challenges.
- An FE Governance Review has been commissioned to make recommendations on the best arrangements for school and further education governors to operate in delivering a united network of learning.
- The Assembly Government has determined the desired shape of the future WBL network prior to the next procurement exercise.
- To assist stakeholders in achieving full cross-sector transformation DCELLS will establish a Transformation Forum, with cross Departmental membership.

¹⁵ DCELLS acknowledges the fact that complex transformational plans, requiring specific statutory activities, or access to specific funding sources, will take longer to implement than those of a more straightforward nature.

- Officials will be working with Learning Partnerships to identify individual post-transformation benefits. These benefits, aligned to each of the transformation criteria, shown at **Annex A**, will need to be fully justified prior to implementation and will be a requirement in terms of future investment.

55. To provide additional resources to support Learning Partnerships in committing to and implementing change

- The provision of project funding to further develop change proposals and to support agreed aspects of implementation.
- Specialist support from Assembly Government officials on aspects such as business case development; governance, school reorganisation and further education mergers and the like; and the development of further guidance as required.

56. To contribute, where appropriate, to the capital and revenue costs associated with securing procedural and infrastructure change and take steps to make the best use of Assembly Government funds

- Links have already been made to co-ordinate the implementation of transformation proposals with school reorganisation and capital investment available via the 21st Century Schools initiative and the FE modernisation programme. Also, where appropriate, procedures are in place to sponsor and support the development of applications to the Strategic Capital Investment Fund.
- An HM Treasury Five Case Model training programme has been commissioned to address the needs of local authority and FE colleges in terms of accessing Assembly Government capital funds. In addition, specialist consultancy support is being made available to facilitate the development of robust business cases to secure capital investment.
- Further consideration is being given to how DCELLS might better manage the post-16 revenue budget to provide incentives to Learning Partnerships implementing approved transformation plans.

57. Development of a Sectoral Training Network

- Working with HEFCW, Sector Skills Councils and WBL providers, establish a strategy to develop sectoral learning networks to enhance skill development and access to post-19 learning pathways. This will build on the strategic partnerships work already emerging in South West and North West Wales, with a strong HE interface; and link with current activity to develop skills academies, centres of excellence and progression of robust pathways to HE. In doing this DCELLS aims to strengthen the relationship of learning networks with employers in the area and ensure that learning outputs better meets their skills needs.
- The next contracting round for WBL will set the framework to transform this learning sector, with a focus on the different arrangements that will need to be in place to secure the learning delivery for both young people and adults.

58. **Taking forward the 14-19 Learning Pathways Policy**

- The six key elements which make up the Learning Pathways package are being driven forward by the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, which places statutory duties on local authorities, and governing bodies of schools and FEIs in securing 14-19 year olds' entitlements. With a phased implementation between 2009 and 2012, maintained schools and FE colleges, with the help of 14-19 Networks, will need to ensure that young people are offered the minimum number of curriculum options at Key Stage 4 and 5.
- Stakeholder guidance is being developed for a number of sections of the Measure to ensure consistency of delivery; and Assembly Government officials will continue to work with Networks to ensure there are enough trained Learning Coaches to deliver the Learning Coach function across Wales.

59. **Taking forward School Organisation plans**

- DCELLS officials will work closely with local authorities' education managers to support developments and changes in school provision to ensure that opportunities are enhanced and resources are maximised for the benefit of learners.

60. **Taking forward the Welsh-medium Education Strategy**

- Proposals for transforming provision are expected to be drawn up in such a way that they improve the extent and range of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners, in line with the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, guidance for 14-19 Learning Pathways, the SEF and the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.
- The Welsh-medium Education Strategy, to be finalised in 2010, will reinforce the requirement to consider the specific short and long term needs of Welsh-medium learners, whether in Welsh-medium or bilingual settings. This might include the development of partnerships across local authority boundaries; and innovative local or regional approaches to the best methods of using qualified Welsh-speaking staff to bring a wider range of options to learners. Further consideration will need to be given to particular transformational approaches and effective working practices specifically for Welsh-medium and bilingual partnerships.

Priorities for Local Authorities, taking the lead for Schools, and working with Further Education Institutions

61. Local authorities, in equal partnership with FEIs, and other learning providers, should continue to develop detailed plans for the implementation of approved Strategic Outline Plans, though activity will vary in accordance with the maturity of projects. Activity will include:

- The submission of a Strategic Outline Case, by January 2010, to further interrogate the short-listed options for change, including a full option appraisal and a cost-benefit analysis based on learner needs. Local agreement will need

to be reached on the preferred option for change and the dependencies, risks and constraints emerging from this will need to be managed.

Where appropriate, this should be fully linked to local authority school reorganisation plans, though this strategic co-ordination should not delay the implementation of current plans for the transformation of post-16 learning.

- Where proposals require substantial capital investments, work should continue to develop full business cases, compliant with the HM Treasury Five Case Model, to secure funding agreements; and reorganisation activity should be planned and executed in line with statutory regulations.
- Where no institutional reorganisation is required, governance and management arrangements should be agreed and the necessary steps should be taken to put these in place and secure implementation by September 2010. This should include the establishment of robust monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- The planning and management of relevant communication and consultation activity with trades unions, staff, governors, learners and families, such that all stakeholders understand the benefits and implications of change and where required, plan and execute formal consultation activity.
- Making the local and regional connections to unite the implementation of the Transformation Policy with the delivery of the other national priorities such as delivering the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure, capital investment initiatives and schools reorganisation proposals.

Priorities for Further Education Institutions working with other Further and Higher Education Institutions and Work Based Learning providers

62. Work within and across sectors to ensure that the necessary collaborative arrangements are put in place to support the harmonisation and development of a regional learning network. Arrangements will include:

- For FEIs proposing mergers, progress the business case for merger and secure merger in a timely fashion. Where capital investment is required, the development of a full business case, compliant with the HM Treasury Five Case Model, to secure funding agreements.
- For FEIs not part of current merger developments urgent consideration should be given to the delivery of a growing remit for the sector, which will include delivering the 14-19 Measure, collaboration in terms of WBL delivery, improving progression to higher education, and the delivery of foundation degrees. This should lead the institutions concerned to further consider the benefits that merger or formal collaborative arrangements would bring in successfully delivering the wider skills agenda.

Priorities for the Higher Education sector

63. Following the Review of HE in Wales¹⁶, Assembly Government officials are developing an Agenda for Change Action Plan, scheduled for publication in early 2010. It is likely that several of the key themes of the Action Plan will reflect those priorities identified within the Transformation framework, and subsequent activity will be planned to secure requisite change.

Priorities for the Work Based Learning sector

64. The sector should focus on understanding the impact that emerging local and regional transformation plans will have on the evolution of the learning network, and the valuable role WBL providers can play in developing robust learning pathways, with key links to employers. Specifically the sector should be working towards:

- Aligning delivery to 14-19 Local Area Network plans to ensure that SkillBuild and apprenticeship programmes are available as part of the local curriculum offer.
- Developing robust geographic planning across regional areas to improve the offer to adults, linking closely to the policies and programmes of the Department for Work and Pensions as well as those of the Assembly Government.

¹⁶ Review of Higher Education in Wales - Phase 2 (2009)

Transformation Outcomes and Criteria

1. The Transformation Policy does not specifically introduce new outcome targets to be achieved by learning providers and managers. Instead the Assembly Government wishes to see Learning Partnerships themselves reviewing strengths and weaknesses of current provision and delivery; agreeing the learners outcomes change must deliver; and agreeing the model for change that will maximise the achievement of learner benefits.

2. Thus the Transformation targets are those already set out in national and local policy for 14-19 year olds and adults; those recognised as improving institutional efficiency and effectiveness and quality of provision; those which will increase learner attainment and progression; improve access to Welsh language provision; and those focused on sector and skill-based requirements.

3. Specifically we wish to work with partners to address the following key indicators of performance:

- an improvement in levels of basic skills
- an increase in the rate of 16-18 participation in education, training and employment
- an increase in the rate of 19-24 participation in education, training and employment
- an increase in overall learner success rates, reflecting higher levels of learner completion as well as the achievement of qualification aims
- an increase in Level 2 and 3 qualifications
- an increase in Level 4 qualifications; and
- an increase in progression to higher level learning or higher level employment.

4. However, transformation is expected to deliver demonstrable benefits and the criteria to be used by Learning Partnerships in further developing, implementing and evaluating plans to transform education and training delivery, are set out below. The benefits exemplified in each detailed transformation plan must equally address all these elements.

(i) **The strategic fit**, which demonstrates:

- The rationale for the transformation, including the desired timeframe for implementation and the anticipated outcome.
- The effect of the change on provision outside that which is provided by the Learning Partnership.
- Learner benefits envisaged.
- The contribution towards economic regeneration, social justice and sustainability.

(ii) **Improvements for learners**, which includes:

- Plans for a range and breadth of provision, which meets evidenced need, including access to high quality programmes via modern technologies.
- Development of employment and learning opportunities especially for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), the economically inactive and low skilled target groups.
- Provision of equality of access to education and training programmes for learners wherever they live, addressing travel to learn issues as appropriate.
- Links with associated community services and facilities, such as health care, leisure, and the arts.

(iii) **Improvements for employers and the local economy**, which includes:

- Account of employer and local economy needs.
- Improvements in relevance, efficiency, breadth and quality of provision in meeting identified sector skill needs.
- Development of shared specialist facilities, where appropriate, which again meet identified sector priorities.

(iv) **Cost effectiveness, long term sustainability and financial benefits**, to demonstrate:

- Reduction of unnecessary overlap and duplication of provision.
- The achievement of costed synergies.
- Improved efficiencies in school sixth forms operating with fewer than 150 students; and in further education institutions operating with an annual turnover of less than £15 million.
- Investment in provision that meets demand and will provide a learning environment that is fully fit for purpose.
- Viability of provision and impact on learning providers, not part of the Learning Partnership.
- Improvements in the use of recurrent funding.
- The use of ICT learning platforms, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of delivery, and how technology is scalable, compatible and capable of supporting future collaborations.
- Consideration of the impact of changes on space utilisation.
- Implications for financial health of participating schools, local further education institutions and other providers.

(v) **Acceptability and impact of the proposal** in the context of the constituent local authorities, community learning, further education institutions, higher education institutions and Work Based Learning providers as well as DCELLS. This should include:

- Evidence that key stakeholders are in agreement with the proposal submitted, and due consideration has been given to the potential impact of the proposal on individual providers, including 11-16 maintained school provision, Work Based Learning provision and community learning.
- An inclusive impact assessment.

(vi) **Provision of high quality learning**, to demonstrate:

- Improved consistency in standards between providers within and across sectors.
- Making the best use of available resources to provide a world class education and training system, meeting global and intermediate targets for level 2 & 3 achievements.
- Building on good practice and outstanding achievements already demonstrated within the locality/region.
- Supporting the improvement of Estyn inspection grades for individual and partnership provision.
- Clear strategies, targets and action plans to ensure that learning provision reaches at least a 'good' standard with an aspiration towards achieving excellence.
- Safeguarding and enhancing the quality of teaching and the learner experience.
- Improvements in the effectiveness of strategic planning and quality assurance.

(vii) **Enhancement of Welsh language and bilingual provision**, to demonstrate:

- Improvements in amount and range of Welsh-medium provision available through network reconfiguration within local authority areas, or across local authority boundaries where appropriate.
- Clear post-16-18 progression routes and options through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in further education, Work Based Learning and school sixth form provision, as appropriate.
- Improvements in the number and range of options offered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, by institution and the Partnership, as appropriate.
- The positive effect that the proposal will have on the range and quality of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners.

(viii) **Demonstrate improvements in equality and diversity.**

This should include:

- Consideration of the impact of the proposed collaborative model to reach under represented groups.
- Improved opportunities available to all young people and adults particularly those under-represented groups.
- Management and governance arrangements to promote and sustain equality and diversity.

(ix) **Management and Governance arrangements, to demonstrate:**

- The commitment of partners to the sustainability of the initiative.
- The means by which the collaborative partnership will operate to deliver year-on-year improvements for learners.
- The effective management of performance, including the use of self-assessment, risk management, and contingency plans.

(x) *Demonstration of anticipated **sources of funding** to facilitate the proposal, to include:*

- Use of recurrent and capital budgets.
- Sale of assets where functions will move to a new learning infrastructure.
- Contributions from local authorities, further education institution(s), higher education institution(s) and WEFO.
- Prudential and institutional borrowing.
- Use of appropriate third party funding streams.
- Potential submissions to Assembly Government funding streams.

Transforming Education and Training Provision:

Pattern across Wales

1. By July 2009, twenty-eight Strategic Outline Plans¹⁷; two Strategic Outline Cases¹⁸ and one Outline Business Case¹⁹ submissions had been received by DCELLS. The proposals fall into the following categories:

- **Further Education/Maintained Secondary School Collaboration (Model 1)**

Proposals for establishing formal collaboration arrangements between schools/further education institutions using new regulations²⁰. These proposals are led by local authorities in **Bridgend, Swansea, Newport, Wrexham, Denbighshire, Pembrokeshire, Conwy, Vale of Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Flintshire, and Gwynedd and Ynys Mon (acting as one Learning Partnership)**. Each of these proposes to unite the planning and delivery of learning provision across individual institutions by establishing formal governance and management arrangements across an area. The regulations allow *either* groups of schools to form joint (governance) committees to plan post-16 delivery; or groups of schools and one or more further education institutions to establish the same type of arrangements.

- **All Post-16 Learning Provision Delivery is United (Model 2)**

Proposals to unite all learning provision, including elements of higher education delivery. **Blaenau Gwent** submitted an Outline Business Case; and **Powys** and **Merthyr Tydfil** submitted comprehensive Strategic Outline Cases. These build on the longstanding local partnership vision to radically change the ways in which post-16 provision is delivered. **Torfaen** also submitted a Strategic Outline Programme to implement whole-scale changes to post-16 delivery; and **RCT** is in the early stages of considering transformation of all learning delivery, for the whole community, beginning from the age of three.

- **Further Education Institution Mergers (Model 3)**

Six further education institution/further education institution merger proposals were submitted. These were on behalf of **Barry College** and **Coleg Glan Hafren; Gorseinon** and **Swansea** Colleges; **Deeside** and **Llysfasi Colleges, with formal links with Yale College**; the **WEA South** and **Coleg Harlech WEA (North); Coleg Meirion Dwyfor** and **Llandrillo College**, with links to **Bangor University** (in addition to the **Welsh College of Horticulture/Deeside Merger**).

¹⁷ These provide an outline of plans to transform learning provision.

¹⁸ These are more comprehensive plans, which make the strategic case for change.

¹⁹ These provide detail of a full option appraisal and outline the financial, economic and commercial cases for change.

²⁰ Arrangements under regulations: the Collaboration Arrangements (Maintained Schools and Further Education Bodies) (Wales) Regulations 2008 and the Collaboration Between Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2008.

- **Local Authority Area Re-organisation (Model 4)**

Two local authority areas, **Carmarthenshire** and **Ceredigion**, responded with proposals to secure improved learning delivery by reorganising maintained secondary schools and making formal links with other learning providers.

- **All Wales Sectoral/Skills Proposals (Model 5)**

One Sector Skills Council proposal was put forward to develop a **National Construction Network** and the **National Training Federation for Wales** put forward a proposal to strategically review current provision and to establish a mechanism to improve the development of learning and progression pathways to meet the requirements of each region in Wales.

2. A number of other more general “proposals”/statements/projects were submitted, which fall outside of these main models. These include those which state a desire to work collaboratively to deliver Work Based Learning; propose overarching management arrangements to secure coordinated post-16 learning delivery across a wide geographic area; and make statements of support for other local authority or further education institution proposals. Finally, several stakeholders used the policy publication to offer support for the Transformation Policy and its implementation.

3. Learning Partnerships have subsequently been developing more detailed plans for implementation, in line with agreed implementation dates.

Transforming Education and Training Provision

The Proposed Pattern across Wales²¹

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
South East Blaenau Gwent with Coleg Gwent & Newport University	Whole network reconfiguration, with a new post-16 lifelong learning campus	This is being taken forward as an element of the Universities of the Heads of the Valley Initiative; with associated cultural and leisure developments. A proposal to reorganise school sixth forms will be subject to statutory consultation in 2010, and, subject to the outcome of this activity, a tertiary college model would be adopted.	Interim tertiary arrangements will be in place September 2010
Cardiff (including St David's College)	Consortium arrangements	The establishment of five partnership "families" of schools is being progressed: three geographic, one faith-based and one Welsh-medium grouping. Partners in all the 'families' are to include: the new institution resulting from the merger of Coleg Glan Hafren and Barry College; St David's College; Work Based Learning providers; and Adult Community Learning providers. Arrangements to manage each of the "families" are being discussed and these are likely to be formalised in 2010.	September 2010
Monmouthshire	Network integration via consortium	The Learning Partnership has commissioned specialist support to explore methods of integrating vocational learning into post-16 provision in line with the County's 14-19 Learning Pathways plan. More detailed plans are expected in late 2009, which will also take account of post-19 progression and upskilling requirements.	Transition to consortia arrangements will begin 2010

²¹ Models approved/approved in principle for further progression (generally, although not exclusively, for post-16 networks of delivery)

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Newport	Consortium	<p>Three formal alliances are proposed, which will move towards operating a common timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the South East Wales Special Schools Alliance • the Welsh-medium Alliance, which includes the two South East Wales Welsh-medium secondary schools in the former County of Gwent; and • the English-medium Alliance which includes the eight English-medium schools in Newport. <p>The Learning Partnership has further explored how collaborative activity might be best progressed, including post-19 progression routes. Specific activity is being focussed on the English-medium alliance; formal governance arrangements; and alignment with the Coleg Gwent strategy for the Newport campus.</p>	Transition to consortia arrangements to begin in 2010
Torfaen	Whole network reconfiguration:	A full options appraisal will be completed, employing Five Case Model protocols, to determine the network integration option that will best meet the needs of learners. The likely outcome is the full integration and management of all post-16 learning in the County, including elements of higher education provision. Digital learning forms a central stem of expected transformational change.	Transition to begin in September 2010

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
WEA South/ Coleg Harlech WEA (North (joint North/ South proposal))²²	A merger between the two institutions	The two organisations are undertaking a feasibility study, with regard to merger, learning lessons from similar merger activities with their sister organisations in England.	September 2011
Coleg Glan Hafren/Barry College	FEI Merger	The Colleges expect to have their business case for merger and proposals for capital investment complete by Spring 2010.	Subject to further investigation, the merger is expected to take place during 2011; with subsequent capital investment to follow.
South Bridgend	School/College Consortium	A Collaborative Learning Partnership is proposed, to include all nine English medium 11–18 schools in Bridgend; a Welsh-medium school in Rhondda Cynon Taf; Bridgend College and a range of other education and training providers. More detailed plans are expected which will demonstrate how: post-16 learning is to be aligned to the proposed Network; the role of the FEI; and alignment with future school reorganisation plans.	Transition to consortia arrangements will begin 2010.

²² Coleg Harlech Workers' Educational Association (North Wales) was formed on 1 August 2001 by the merger of two of Wales' oldest adult education bodies. The current proposal signals an intent to extend this joint working by merging.

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Caerphilly	Schools/College Consortium	The establishment of three clusters of schools, working through formal agreement, are being developed in partnership with Coleg Gwent and Ystrad Mynach College. Plans include the further development of Welsh-medium provision and the delivery of full vocational and skill-based learning to ensure that capacity issues are addressed.	Transition to consortia arrangements will take place 2010
Merthyr Tydfil with University of Glamorgan/ Merthyr Tydfil College	Whole network reconfiguration, including higher education provision, new campus	The Merthyr Learning Quarter (MLQ) project proposes the delivery of post-16 tertiary education from a 'new-build' Learning Campus based on the current College site, subject to statutory school reorganisation proposals. The MLQ would be managed and governed by the University of Glamorgan. The proposal requires the relocation, to the MLQ, of all sixth form learners currently attending Merthyr Tydfil's four 11-18 Secondary Schools. The proposals may also be linked to 11-16 school re-organisation in the Borough. The Local Authority is in the early stages of developing proposals for statutory consultation for school re-organisation.	Transition to begin in 2010
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Tertiary System	The proposal aims to phase the introduction of a tertiary system for post-16 education across Rhondda Cynon Taf over the next 10-15 years, beginning with the Cynon and Taf Ely clusters, and following this with new arrangements for the Rhondda area. Further evidence for change will need to be provided and statutory consultation procedures adopted, if required.	In phases, commencing with implementation in the Cynon Valley in 2012.

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Vale of Glamorgan	Consortium/ Sectoral Network arrangements	Increased collaboration between seven of the eight secondary schools, including formalised joint governance arrangements between the two Barry secondary schools, is planned. Formal, robust links with Barry College will be further developed as merger activity with Coleg Glan Hafren is being progressed. Finally, the commitment to fully explore digital learning will form a central stem of post-16 learning.	To begin September 2010
South West and Mid			
Ceredigion	Whole-scale School Reorganisation linked to collaboration across the post-16 provider network	The Partnership has proposed developing a strategy to address school reorganisation and partnerships arrangements to improve the sustainability of education and 14-19 provision in Ceredigion, This includes the possible introduction of all-through 3-19 year old schools and use of joint governance arrangements.	Transition towards whole-scale school reorganisation to begin 2010
Carmarthenshire	Whole-scale School Reorganisation linked to collaboration across the post-16 provider network	Following an informal consultation carried out on a series of options for secondary school reconfiguration within Carmarthenshire, it is anticipated that a statutory consultation will be taken on the proposed reorganisation. This will be linked to post-16 cluster learning arrangements.	Statutory consultations for whole-scale school reorganisation is due to take place 2010

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Neath Port Talbot	Consortium	The further development of collaborative consortia arrangements is being progressed. The Partnership is currently considering how governance issues should be best incorporated into their plans.	Transition towards consortia arrangements to begin during 2011
Pembrokeshire	Consortium	Collaborative consortia arrangements are being developed, and this includes commissioning a study to explore the possibility of establishing additional further education facilities in South Pembrokeshire.	The transition towards consortia arrangements to begin in 2010
Powys	Whole network reconfiguration; overarching governance arrangements	The Powys Learning Partnership is continuing to progress whole scale post-16 network development. The most appropriate legal vehicle to achieve this outcome is being explored. A secondary school review is currently being undertaken and this will influence future development.	Subject to securing an appropriate legal framework, the transition towards whole network reconfiguration is expected to begin during 2010
Swansea	Consortium	Existing post-16 arrangements are currently being considered in the context of the development of collaborative consortia.	Transition to consortia arrangements to begin 2011
Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges	Merger	The Colleges expect to have a business case for merger completed in November 2010.	The merger is expected to take place in autumn 2010

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
North			
Conwy	Consortium	An options study for the area is due to be completed shortly. This will primarily focus on protocols to formalise the successful working of the consortia that have already evolved.	Transition to consortia arrangements to begin in Summer 2010
Denbighshire	Consortium	A feasibility study is due to be commissioned which will involve the validation, or otherwise, of geographical clusters that have been identified by partners. Denbighshire will work closely with Wrexham Borough Council to ensure that cross-boundary delivery issues in the Dee Valley are addressed.	Transition to consortia arrangements to begin in Autumn 2010
Flintshire	Consortium	The further development of collaborative consortia arrangements is being progressed. The Deeside area is expected to be the first to be addressed in this cycle.	Transition to consortia arrangements to begin in 2011
Gwynedd & Ynys Mon	Network consortia over two local authority areas.	A feasibility study is currently underway to establish a detailed plan to deliver all post -16 provision learning across both local authority areas. This will align with other transformational activity linked to the proposed FEI merger between Coleg Llandrillo and Meirion Dwyfor and arrangements for rationalising Work Based Learning delivery in North West Wales.	Ongoing from February 2010.

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Wrexham	Consortium	<p>A feasibility study has recently been completed which considered the consortium options, and is currently being discussed by the Learning Partnership.</p> <p>One of the proposed options involves cross-boundary delivery issues in the Dee Valley and, as such, recognises the need to work closely with Denbighshire County Council.</p>	Transition towards consortia arrangements to begin in 2011
Deeside College/ Welsh College of Horticulture	FEI merger, with links to Glyndwr University	The merger of the two Colleges took place on the 1 st August 2009 with part of the campus site allocated to Glyndwr University to develop Higher Education provision and aid progression routes within the horticultural industry. Links to economic regeneration within the local authority plan are well developed.	Merger activity is complete, post- merger issues being mapped
Coleg Meirion Dwyfor/ Coleg Llandrillo/ Bangor University	FEI merger with planning/delivery links to Bangor University	Discussions are ongoing between the two FE colleges and Bangor University to map out progression routes and pathways from FE to HE. Talks are also taking place, in parallel, with Coleg Menai.	Merger is expected to take place by September 2010
Coleg Llysfasi/ Deeside with Yale College	FEI merger, with formal links to Yale College	The exploratory phase of discussions between the partners concluded in June 2009 and the Partnership is now progressing towards merger.	Merger is expected by Summer 2010

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
<p>All Wales</p> <p>National Construction Centre based in South Wales</p>	<p>A Sector Skills Council proposal to establish a sectoral training centre</p>	<p>Construction Skills Wales wish to establish a National Construction Centre, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop high-level skills not available elsewhere in Wales • disseminate best practice to learning institutions across Wales • test-bed new construction technology skills that support green jobs; and • remove the artificial divide between work-based and school-based learning. <p>In progressing their proposal, Construction Skills Wales are developing a business case, outlining the evidence base and other tenable options.</p>	<p>Implementation is expected to begin 2011</p>
<p>National Training Federation for Wales (NTFW)</p>	<p>Development of an Area Network aligned to local authority/further education institute</p>	<p>In establishing a strategic review of current provision and reorganisation of delivery to meet the requirements of each region on Wales, the NTFW has recruited Work Based Learning Network Officers to interact with established Learning Partnerships and their key strategic leaders. The Work Based Learning Network Officers will assess the contribution that this sector can make to transformation and to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility of learning.</p>	<p>Transition to begin 2010</p>

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Regional Proposals			
Neath Port Talbot College plus Work Based Learning providers	Work Based Learning consortium development	The Partnership proposes improving the efficiency and range of Work Based Learning delivery and is investigating possible management arrangements.	Implementation proposed Sept 2010
Pembrokeshire College Work Based Learning arrangements	Work Based Learning consortium development	The Partnership is further investigating the benefits of collaborative working in relation to Work Based Learning delivery across South West Wales.	Implementation proposed Sept 2010
Coleg Menai with Gwynedd &Ynys Mon	Work Based Learning consortium development	The partnership proposes to bring local authority provision in Gwynedd and Ynys Mon together under the leadership of Coleg Menai. Governance and management detail will need further examination before an implementation plan can be agreed.	Implementation proposed April 2010
Trinity University College	Creation of a planning confederation, involving all sectors and providers for mid/west Wales	Trinity University College Learning Partnership is progressing to create a single regional (mid and west Wales) confederation of secondary, further, higher and adult education providers, in conjunction with its future proposed merger with the University of Wales, Lampeter.	Transition toward implementation is expected during 2010

Geographic Area/ Learning Partnership*	Proposed Implementation Model**	Stage of Development	Expected Implementation Date
Regional Learning Partnership South West Wales	Develop the work of an existing planning group to provide a regional strategic steer for transformational changes in South West Wales	The Regional Learning Partnerships intend to develop an action plan that will focus on activities that add value to the work of Learning Partnerships across the region.	Transition to begin 2010

* Partnership proposal includes the local further education institutions. Some are cross-boundary proposals.

** Consortium refers to clusters of schools establishing joint governance arrangements (joint committees) and working in partnership with further education institutions **OR** Clusters of schools and a further education institution(s), establishing joint governance arrangements (joint committees).

Related Documents

One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for Wales (June 2007)

The Learning Country: Vision into Action (October 2006)

Promise and Performance “Webb Review” (December 2007)

Skills That Work for Wales Strategy: A Skills and Employment Strategy and Action Plan (July 2008)

14 - 19 Learning Pathways Guidance I (NAW Circular 37/2004) and Guidance II (NAW Circular 17/2006)

Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Collaboration Arrangements between Further Education Institutions and Schools (WAG Circular No 007/2009)

Quality and Effectiveness Framework for Post-16 Learning in Wales (February 2009)

Reducing the Proportion of Young People not in Education, Employment or Training in Wales (April 2009)

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship - A Strategy for Action (September 2009)

Shared Planning for Better Outcomes (WAG Circular 31/2007)

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (January 2004)

National Service Framework for Children Young People and Maternity Services in Wales (April 2006)

Inclusion and Pupil Support (WAG Circular 47/2006)

Behaving and Attending: Action Plan Responding to the National Behaviour and Attendance Review