

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Gofynner am / Please ask for:

Fy nghyf / My ref:

Llinell Uniongyrchol / Direct Line:

01267 224050

Dyddiad / Date:

E-bost / E-mail:

6.3.2020

EDole@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Mr Steve Davies,
Director of Education,
Education and Public Service Group,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cathays,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ.

Dear Mr. Davies,

Thank you for your letter dated 7th February, 2020 forwarded to Cllr. Ellen ap Gwynn.

You will be aware that as of the 12th February, 2020 Cllr. Ellen ap Gwynn has stepped back from the position of ERW Joint-Committee Chair. I therefore now respond to the points you raise in my capacity as interim Chair of the ERW Joint-Committee.

I note that your concerns focus on:

The decision to end two secondments in December 2019 that formed part of the strengthened leadership team you presented to the Minister for Education in November: the Head of Primary and Head of Professional Learning and Leadership.

This decision was driven wholly by the need to achieve a balanced and sustainable budget position for the 2020-21 financial year. Both secondments were originally due to terminate as of 31st December, 2019. Due to financial pressures and an understandable desire not to place our Consortium within any form of financial risk, we took the decision to end these specific posts. We reflected in depth on the impact of such a decision. We remain confident that the remaining team structure, along with the greater capacity we have amongst our locally based Challenge Adviser teams, provides us with the resources we need to deliver curriculum reform and other elements of our provision.

.....cont.

That Neath Port Talbot's notice of intent to withdraw from the consortium remains in place.

The notice remains in place and we are currently pursuing discussions of a wider nature with regard to the future ERW footprint. Our next Joint Committee meeting, arranged for the 19th March, 2020 will deal with this issue in greater detail. I will update you further following the outcomes of that meeting. Please be assured that your letter will be presented during that meeting.

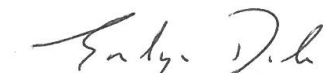
The risk that the current leaders of ERW leave without immediate replacement, given that we understand Andi Morgan's interim role as Managing Director will end in April; and the potential impact this will have on wider morale among ERW staff and secondees.

We have discussed this issue recently with Andi Morgan and can confirm that he will remain in post for the foreseeable future thus enabling us to complete our recruitment campaign for a one-year secondment for an interim Managing Director. We are working closely with Andi to ensure support for our staff and secondees as these issues move forward.

I am aware that a meeting between your colleagues and ERW representatives took place on the 28th February, 2020. We appreciated the opportunity to meet and your ongoing support for the ERW Consortium. I've been advised that these discussions were positive for all and demonstrate ERW's commitment and capacity to support successful curriculum reform across our schools.

The group has agreed to reconvene after our Joint Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr. Emlyn Dole,
Interim Chair of ERW Joint-Committee