



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board**

**12<sup>th</sup> September, 2019**

### **Report of the Head of Transformation – Andrew Thomas**

#### **Matter for Information**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

**Report Title:** 'Reform of School Governance: Regulatory Framework'; Welsh Government's Response.

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To update and inform Members of the outcome to the Welsh Government consultation exercise proposing Regulatory changes to School Governing Bodies.

#### **Executive Summary:**

Welsh Government have recently published their response to the consultation exercise they carried out in 2017 regarding a number of proposals surrounding changes to school governing bodies. This report briefs Members on the response to some of the more significant proposals from that consultation.

#### **Background:**

A report was presented to Members in January, 2017 with a prepared draft response to the Welsh Government consultation 'Reform of

School Governance: Regulatory Framework'. Members contributed to the draft response at the meeting prior to a final response being prepared and submitted on behalf of the Council.

The consultation sought views on a number of proposals to change Regulations surrounding school governance and the work and constitution of governing bodies. The consultation was some 52 pages in length containing some 81 questions for consideration. Given its size and that more than 400 individual responses were received it is only recently that a response to the consultation has been published by Welsh Government.

This report does not intend to repeat the Welsh Government response in full. Should Members wish to see the response to each of the 81 questions then the document, in its entirety, is available on the Welsh Government website. The link is contained at the end of this report. For the purposes of this report Members attention is drawn to some of the main and more relevant matters of interest.

**Response:**

Q1 and Q2 asked whether there was agreement with the proposal to introduce skilled governing bodies and whether the skills criteria was appropriately defined. An overwhelming number of responses agreed that governing bodies should be skilled, however, the criteria was too narrow and focused on representatives from the business community. Welsh Government's response is that they will move to implement skilled governing bodies; however, details of how and when they intend to make this change are not stated.

Q3 asked whether parent governors should be appointed for the skills they can offer. Welsh Government have decided not to pursue this proposal at this time as a number of respondents felt that such a process would be undemocratic and some schools were already currently experiencing difficulties with parents engaging with governing bodies.

Q7 asked whether the categories of teacher and staff governor should be amalgamated. Welsh Government have decided not to pursue this proposal as a number of responders raised concerns about possibly disenfranchising non-teacher staff.

Q8 asked whether local authority appointed governors should be limited to one per governing body and the appointment would need to meet the relevant skills criteria set by the governing body. Welsh Government are silent on their response to this specific proposal other than to say that local authorities already have the power to appoint additional local authority governors under the School Standards and Organisation Act.

Q10 similarly asked whether community governor appointments should be limited to one per governing body and the appointment would need to meet the relevant skills criteria set by the governing body. Welsh Government will consider proceeding with this recommendation and link the appointment to a skill-base requirement.

Q13 asked whether a new category of 'co-opted' governor should be created. Welsh Government's response is to consider creating this new category across all schools.

Q15 asked whether the category of additional community governor should be removed. This term relates to the appointment of a governor where a school is located within the area of a Community/Town Council. Welsh Government will consider removal of this category completely.

Q30 asked whether the Chair and Vice-chair of Governors should be elected for a period of up to 4 years. There was an even split response to this point. Welsh Government have, therefore, decided not to proceed with this proposal for the time-being.

Q33 asked whether all staff disciplinary committees should have an independent person as part of the panel. A significant number of responses agreed with this proposal, therefore, Welsh Government will consider introducing a requirement that both the disciplinary and the appeal committees will require an independent person sitting as part of its number. Members will be aware that currently this provision only applies where an employee is accused of an allegation involving child protection matters.

Q55 asked whether an independent person should be appointed to sit on all Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher appointment panels. Whilst most respondents agreed with this proposal concern was expressed as to the numbers of suitably qualified persons to undertake this appointment. Welsh Government have responded to say that they do not intend to proceed with this proposal as individual governing bodies already have the ability to appoint someone outside of the governing body to this panel at their discretion.

**Financial Impacts:**

No implications

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes only.

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

No implications

**Workforce Impacts:**

No implications

**Legal Impacts:**

No implications

**Risk Management Impacts:**

No implications

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the contents of this update report

**Appendices:**

None

**List of Background Papers:**

Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Report Board Report, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2017 <http://modern.gov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/documents/s27484/Cabinet%20Report%20Jan%2017%20WG%20Consultation.pdf>

Welsh Government Reform of School Governance Framework  
Consultation Response Paper

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-04/summary-of-responses-consolidation-and-revision-of-the-school-governance-regulatory-framework-in-wales.pdf>

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