

Summary Report from RLPSWW Workshop II

20th February 2008, 1pm
Halliwell Conference Centre, Trinity College

The Event

There were over 50 attendees (Annex 1) from across the South West Wales region, as well as representatives from Powys and Ceredigion. Local Authorities (Education and Regeneration colleagues), Further Education, Higher Education, Work Based Learning, CVCs, Job Centre Plus, DCELLS and WLGA were all represented.

Key Objectives

1. To bring all partners up to date with progress of the Regional Learning Partnership concept and to review agreed actions by the Steering Group
2. To strengthen the partnership and seek commitment from all partners
3. To gain endorsement of the Vision, Mission Statement & Remit
4. To provide other key partners with an update of the RLP and its progress (e.g. WAG, WEFO)
5. To agree a way forward

Sector Presentations

These were provided with a brief to include: a definition and overview of the sector; the vision for the sector in relation to learning; an indicator of size (number of institutions/employees, total turnover and funding sources; learning opportunities delivered: age range covered; numbers of learners; outcomes and the identification of 5 key challenges facing the sector in effective delivery to learners and 5 potential benefits for the sector participating in the RLP. Each sector was also asked to consider the contribution that the sector could make specifically to the Regional Learning Partnership.

The panel comprised:

- ◆ Karl Napieralla (KAN), Director, Neath Port Talbot CBC - Chair
- ◆ Sara Harvey (SH), Regional Co-ordinator, WLGA - Facilitator
- ◆ Carol Green (CG), Director, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services representing the Third Sector
- ◆ Richard Parry (RJP), Director of Education, City & County of Swansea representing the Local Authority Sector
- ◆ Mark Dacey (MD), Principal, Neath Port Talbot College representing the FE Sector
- ◆ Robert Pearce (RP), Vice-Chancellor, University of Wales, Lampeter representing the HE Sector
- ◆ Rachel Searle (RS), Chair of South West National Training Federation Wales representing the Work Based Learning/ Private Sector

Each speaker had prepared a brief summary to supplement their presentation (Annex 2). Delegates were invited to address questions to the panel.

Questions included:

- Link to Careers Wales West and Job Centre Plus?
- Jeff Gunningham – if you could get one thing out of the RLPSWW what would it be (to the panel)?

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- MD: Decide what each partner does well and let them get on with it;
 - RP: Use the partnership to reach new learners, particularly those not currently engaging and at the lower end of the social classes;
 - RJP: Raise aspirations;
 - RS: Ensure that partners’ eyes are open to new potential partnerships and that we need to start making difficult decisions;
 - CG: Take advantage that many organisations, learners and employers do not have artificial unitary Authority boundaries;
 - SH: Ensure that economic regeneration context is taken into account, the partnership be mature enough to say ‘no’ and to get firm commitment from partners;
 - KAN; An opportunity to raise and maintain quality and to ensure poor provision is kept out of the region.
- Question around relationship of convergence and RLPSWW? KAN – convergence important opportunity to get the resource to drive partnership forward, but is not the *raison d’etre*.
 - Pam Sutton, Job Centre Plus – pleased to see the importance attached to regional economy and highlighting the importance of taking into account recent Welfare reforms as well as offering support from JCPlus.
 - Keith Jones, Coleg Ceredigion – community schools engagement

Breakout Groups

Facilitators and note takers supported 4 Breakout Groups’ consideration of key questions:

- 1) How do partners feel the RLP will enable them to address the challenges identified in the presentations?
- 2) Do partners think the RLP will bring about transformational change to the benefit of the learner?
- 3) How will the RLP respond to the Webb Review?
- 4) What can the RLP do for you as a provider?

The information captured from the Breakout sessions is detailed in Annex 3 which will inform the progress of the Regional Learning Partnership in its next phase of development.

Breakout Group	Key points of feedback to the Panel from the Group
Red	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was endorsement from the group 2. Clear and achievable targets are needed
Green	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong support for the RLPSWW concept 2. Need to have an inclusive governance model
Blue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General endorsement 2. Frustration about wanting to know more detail 3. Discussion kept coming back to representation & membership
Yellow	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General endorsement 2. Useful partnership to ensure progression 3. Needs to be ambitious and engender change at a national level 4. Training and Learning arm for the Regeneration agenda

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Evaluation & Feedback Forms

Delegates were invited to complete these at the end of the Workshop and 27 were received. An assessment of the feedback reveals that:

- ⇒ 52% (14) of respondents 'fully endorse' the direction of RLPSWW concept to date;
- ⇒ 85% (23) of respondents 'fully' or 'strongly' endorse the direction of RLPSWW concept to date;
- ⇒ 15% (4) of respondents were unsure or had some reservations at this stage.
- ⇒ Of 25 respondents, 22 said 'Yes' they would support a general letter of endorsement for the RLPSWW, with 2 more noting that they would need to secure corporate approval;
- ⇒ When asked about participation in a Task and Finish Group, 17 said 'Yes' with an additional 4 offers to nominate an appropriate member of staff;
- ⇒ Venue: 85% said Excellent/Good
- ⇒ Location: 96% said Excellent/Good
- ⇒ Administration: 100% said Excellent/Good
- ⇒ Parking regularly noted as a problem
- ⇒ 8 offers to host future events

Conclusion

The 2nd Regional Learning Partnership Workshop achieved its key objectives. There was a high level of interest among partners attending the workshop session and feedback was generally positive. Key issues have emerged in terms of taking the RLP forward to its next stage, which will need to be considered by the Steering Group and include: progress of resourcing the RLP; addressing governance issues and seeking to rollout out some examples of "pilot" activity for the Partnership, as well as ensuring formal "buy in" of the concept and its progress in the future among partners.

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ANNEX 1

Attendees	
Amanda Carr	Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
Bethan Webb	WAG
Brian Robinson	Coleg Sir Gar
Carol Green	Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
Catherine Jenkins	WAG
Cerys Furlong	NIACE DC
Chris Birch	Pembrokeshire C.C.
Clare Southard	NPTCBC
Dave Gilbert	Carmarthenshire C.C.
Eileen Bellamy	SWAMWAC
Fiona Jones	City and County Swansea
Gareth Mills	Pembrokeshire C.C.
Gaynor Richards	NPT Council for Voluntary Services
Gordon Andrews	NPTCBC
Helen Matthews	NPTCBC
Ian James	City and County Swansea
Ian Wilcox	NPTCBC
Jeff Gunningham	Swansea College
John O'Shea	University of Glamorgan
John Stevenson	Coleg Powys
Judith James	Swansea University, DACE
Karl Napieralla	NPTCBC
Kathryn David	Swansea Metropolitan University
Kefin Wakefield	Pembrokeshire C.C.
Keith Jones	Coleg Ceredigion
Leona Rees	National Training Federation Wales
Lois Poynting	Carmarthenshire C.C.
Lynette Grey	NPTCBC
Maggi Dawson	Workers Educational Association
Mari Morgan	Ceredigion C.C.
Mark Dacey	Neath Port Talbot College
Matt Morden	Carmarthenshire C.C.
Mike Hughes	City and County Swansea
Mike Shaw	Ceredigion C.C.
Nick Bennett	Gorseinon College
Noreen Williamson	Gorseinon College
Pam Sutton	Job Centre Plus
Pam Tanner	Neath Port Talbot College
Paul Relf	C.C. Swansea
Peter Rees	Coleg Sir Gar
Prof. Ian Rolfe	Lampeter University
Prof. Robert Pearce	University of Wales Lampeter
Rachel Searle	National Training Federation Wales
Rhian Philips	Carmarthenshire C.C.
Richard Parry	City and County Swansea
Sara Harvey	WLGA
Sharron Lusher	Pembrokeshire College
Spencer Conlon	WAG
Sue Pester	W&M Wales Widening Access P'ship
Tony Potts	NPT Council for Voluntary Services

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Apologies	
Andrew Clark	WAG
Anne Moazzen	Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services
Anne Wakefield	Pembrokeshire C.C.
David Warner	Swansea Metropolitan University
Dean Chapman	WAG
Dr Dennis Gunning	WAG
Dr Sonia Reynolds	WAG
Gareth Jones	Ceredigion C.C.
Jacqueline Lambourne	WEFO
Jacqui Weatherburn	Coleg Ceredigion
Mike Hopkins	WAG
Paul Jones	WAG
Pauline Lewis	SWAMWAC
Phil Southard	NPTCBC
Rachel Jones	Sector Skills Development Agency
Sharon Pruski	NPTCBC
Sian O'Neill	Swansea College
Steven Jones	Pembrokeshire C.C.
Sue Leonard	Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services
Vernon Morgan	Carmarthenshire CBC

**Notes to accompany Third Sector Presentation
Carol Green, Director Swansea CVS**

Definition and overview of the third sector

Government defines the third sector as 'non-governmental organisations which are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.' (HM Treasury, 2005, *Exploring the Role of the Third Sector* p.7)

The third sector in Wales consists of a broad range of people, organisations and communities who act independently of the state, for the public benefit, are self-governing and in the voluntary sector are primarily non-profit distributing.

Voluntary organisations fall into 5 categories: service providers, research and advocacy, self-help or common interest groups, pressure groups and intermediary bodies (e.g. CVCs).

The third sector is important because:

- It's a voice for new and unrecognized needs, providing information and advocacy and influencing public policy
- It promotes equality of opportunity for marginalised people and is close to the grass roots
- It helps people take part in the life of their community including through volunteering
- It develops new approaches to providing better services and is often the service backbone in many communities
- It brings in additional funds retained within the local community (adapted from Civil Society, Civil Space, WCVVA 2005)

The third sector impacts at all stages of the lives of many people in Wales. The sector delivers services from pre-birth to post-death and in many contexts in-between (examples include: Family Planning Association, Cruse Bereavement Care, community amateur sports groups, Menter Iaithe, Barnardos, CAB, charity shops, RNLI, Age Concern, hospices, British Heart Foundation, RSPCA, faith organisations).

Vision for the sector in relation to learning

That the sector provides and has access to learning opportunities that meet the needs of its unique and diverse range of stakeholders.

The sector will:

- Work with groups and organisations, paid staff, volunteers, service users and other individual learners.
- Work with people who experience disadvantage or who do not or cannot access mainstream learning provision.
- Help groups and organisations and their people to learn in the context of development support, capacity building and sustainability.
- Deliver a range of linked services- such as advice and information services.
- Ensure access to a range of formal, non-formal, informal, accredited, non-accredited learning.

Indicator of Size

The third sector in Wales employs at least 46,400 people (Voluntary Sector Futureskills Wales), which represents 2.4% of the number of people employed in Wales, with circa 20,000 employed in this region, generating an income of £0.5 billion. In addition, the sector has a considerable unpaid workforce (volunteers). The 2005 Home Office

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citizenship survey found that 69% of adults in Wales undertake formal volunteering in the community, a contribution equivalent to 63,000 full time staff.

From a survey of voluntary organisations operating in Wales, it is estimated that the total staff costs when added to the estimated costs of volunteering comes to well over £3 billion. This is equivalent to 7.3% of Welsh GVA (GDP) in 2003. (Total headline GVA in Wales in 2005 was £40.9 billion).

Learning Opportunities delivered: age range covered; numbers of learners; outcomes e.g. qualifications, informal learning = confidence, citizenship etc

As already indicated the sector is large and diverse, its learners may be any of its stakeholders (e.g. staff, volunteers and service users). The sector provides learning opportunities to people of all ages e.g. Doctor M's Youth Project in Carmarthenshire, digi-labs located in third sector organisations across the region and U3A.

The following examples illustrate the diversity of third sector learning opportunities:

- Learning through volunteering. Most voluntary organisations will offer their volunteers access to induction and other training/learning opportunities; this may be formal, non-formal or informal, accredited or non-accredited. Volunteering itself is a form of skills development and is a genuine learning experience with measurable benefits.
- Formal accredited learning opportunities within the sector. There are many such opportunities examples being ILM schemes (FRAME in Pembrokeshire) or Community Development Work Trainee Schemes such as those operating in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot (NVQ programme).
- Learning for leisure, personal development and work related skills. A number of organisations across the region deliver a range of learning programmes designed to meet the needs of local people e.g. DOVE, Glynneath Training Centre, Aman Valley Enterprise, ARC, Cyrenians, Menter Iaith, Bloomfield Community Centre, St Johns Community Hall.

5 key challenges facing the sector in effective delivery to learners

- Resourcing the learning – accessing funding (in particular for informal or non-accredited learning), recruiting skilled staff, premises, materials etc.
- Having a robust system for measuring distance travelled and soft outcomes that funders and other agencies will recognise.
- For parts of the region, there are particular issues around rurality, transport and physical access to learning.
- Access to learning through digital media. Current (digital) access levels vary significantly across the region.
- Access to learning in a choice of languages. Delivery through the medium of Welsh is a particular issue in Carmarthenshire.

5 potential benefits for the sector participating in the RLP

- Recognition of the strength of the sector as a learning provider through equal status, a fair (re)-distribution and sharing of resources for learning across the partnership.
- The learning needs of third sector organisations and communities of interest/geography can be fed into Regional Learning Plans and contribute to regional policy development.
- The Partnership will provide a reference point for learning across the region, enabling the sector to be better informed about, and more easily able to contribute to the learning agenda.
- The voice of the third sector will be taken into account when planning the delivery of learning across the region.

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The contribution that the sector can make specifically to the Regional Learning Partnership

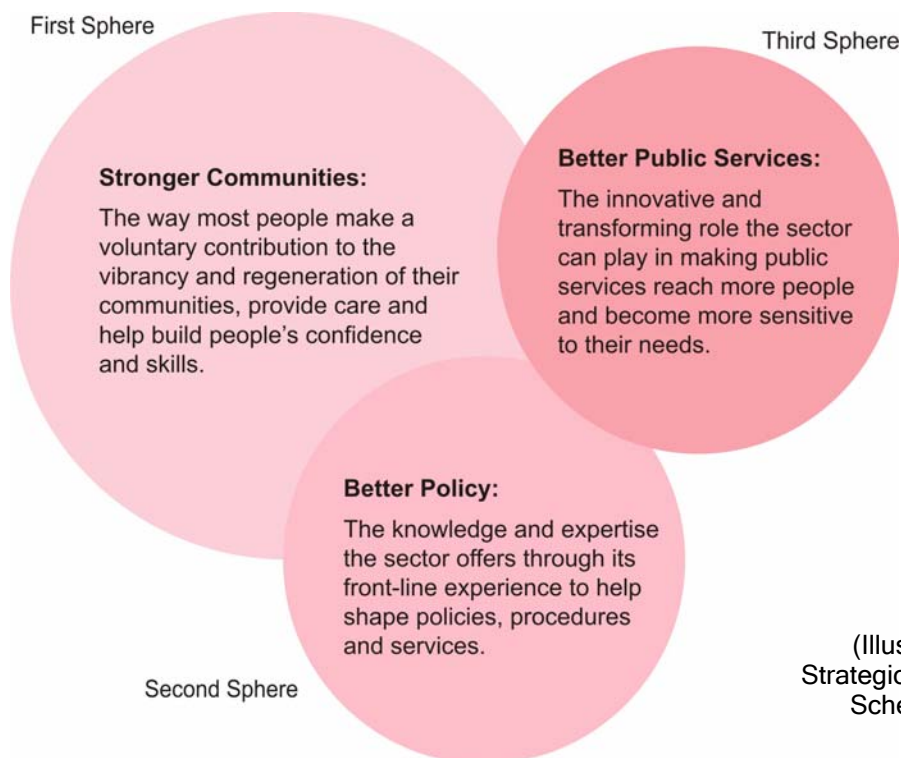
- Making a strategic contribution to the development of the regional learning infrastructure.
- Diversifying the vision of where learning traditionally happens and broadening perceptions of the benefits of learning.
- Third sector engagement brings with it added value in terms of resources, including finance, and diversity. The sector’s engagement with groups and individuals has been shown to lead to financial savings in areas such as social services, crime and health prevention.
- Engagement of hard to reach learners.
- Contributing to consultation and developments by utilising existing third sector networks and infrastructure.
- Providing examples of best practice in teaching and learning (particularly informal learning) delivered through community based learning centres such as those already mentioned above.
- Enthusiasm for new ideas and responding quickly and effectively to emerging needs and agendas.
- High quality sector specific delivery – if funded!!

The view of the sector in terms of its contribution to learning regionally in South West Wales

The sector knows that it has much to offer in relation to learning and can demonstrate many examples of best practice and innovation across the region.

The sector has a strong track record in partnership working and delivery across a multiplicity of agendas. The third sector has strong local, regional and national networks and formal and informal relationships with each other as well as with other agencies.

The sector is heavily regulated and is regularly monitored and inspected by funders and statutory bodies and demonstrates openness, transparency and accountability. These principles underpin the work of the sector and are transferable to the regional context.



(Illustration from ‘The Third Dimension’ A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme’ - Welsh Assembly Government, January 2008)

Notes to accompany Local Authority Sector Presentation
Richard Parry, Director of Education, City and County of Swansea

Local Authority Presentation

Richard Parry Director of Education Swansea
on behalf of the local authorities of
Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire,
Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Powys

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RPL Presentation



The Local Authorities

- **The Local Authorities collaborate in education matters through the South West and Mid Wales Consortium, swamwac, comprising of the six Authorities**
Swansea Neath Port Talbot Carmarthenshire
Ceredigion Powys Pembrokeshire
- **Established in 2000 for the implementation of Threshold Assessment and Performance Management for Teachers the areas of collaboration and ways of working has developed**
- **Achieves outputs through a Continuum of Consortium working involving Local Authority Officers and partners and a small core team from offices based at Trinity College, Carmarthen**
- **Covering 635 Schools and Teaching Services**
533 Primary 68 secondary 10 Special 24 Services
32% of schools in Wales and 28% of pupil population
- **Language**
48% Welsh 52% English
- **Performance**
The six authorities feature in the top eight at the end of Key Stage 4



Local Authority Collaboration

- Consortium working is **determined by the six Authorities**
- Consortium working is a **joint working arrangement**
Joint working can take **different forms** – from networking to full integration of services and seeks to add value to the work of each individual authority
- There are **clear lines of responsibility and accountability**, a strength of the Consortium working model
- Each Authority **retains its responsibilities** for Statutory delivery and standards of service
- This arrangement has been developed and confirmed by the first phase of the Making Connections Project



Vision

Through working collaboratively to develop and deliver improved services for children, young people, adults and continuing learners

RLP Presentation



Key Challenges

Changes in the areas that the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to secure:-

- Improving outcomes for learners through the single plans for Children and Young People attainment, achievement and well being
- Effectively implementing the required changes including
 - Flying start and Foundation Phase
 - Skills Framework for 8 – 13 year olds
 - 14 -19 Learning Pathways
 - 19+ skills especially for employment
- Developing Community Focused Schools
- Extending collaborative working to achieve a positive impact on outcomes for learners including
 - Statutory bodies: Social Care Health Police
 - Education providers: Further Education, Higher Education, Work Place
 - Third Sector

RLP Presentation



Benefits and Contribution

- A clear focus on improved outcomes for children, young people, adults and continuing learners
- A positive commitment to collaboration and the RLP
- Experience and expertise developed in partnership working
- Success in raising standards in partnership with providers
- Strategic planning and responsibility
- Accountability to the community

RLP Presentation

**Notes to accompany Further Education Sector Presentation,
Mark Dacey, Principal, Neath Port Talbot College**

Definition of the FE Sector

Sometimes incorrectly described as **post-secondary, post-compulsory education** or, in addition to that received at **secondary school**. FE generally provides any form of Education and Training from pre-foundation to Higher National and Foundation Degree, and in some FE Colleges Honours Degree Level and Post Graduate. FE provides 14-16 education, work-based learning, and adult and community learning, bespoke training, General FE, Tertiary Education and Higher Education. This includes post-16 courses similar to those taught at schools and sub-degree/degree courses similar to those taught at **higher education**. Some colleges franchise the delivery of adult and community learning to the Local Education Authority. Although the divide is certainly not clear and each FE College operates slightly differently depending on the types of learners, employers and communities that it serves. This reflects the flexibility enjoyed by the sector since incorporation in 1993. It is useful to note that as a sector education was delivered to just over 100,000 learners in Wales in 1993. In 2007 education was delivered to more than 250,000 learners. The vision of the sector is of a dynamic, responsive and integrated post-14 education and lifelong learning sector.

Number of FE Colleges

There are 7 FE colleges operating in South West Wales (some to a lesser extent than others).

Coleg Ceredigion	Coleg Powys
Coleg Sir Gar	Gorseinon College
Neath Port Talbot College	Pembrokeshire College
Swansea College	

Area of Delivery

Colleges have nearly **30** campuses and deliver Adult and Community Learning at more than **600** venues across the South West Wales area. Further Education is at the heart of widening participation.

Finance

Across the area Colleges employ more than **4,500** people, with a joint income of more than **£130M**. Of this **£130M** income **£68.5M** comes from recurrent funding from WAG, more than **£8M** is for the delivery of work-based learning, more than **£7.5M** is for the delivery of Higher Education, and **£45M** comes from other sources. Other Sources of funding include, engagement with employers; commercial activities, such as conferencing, weddings, agriculture and full cost recovery courses; European funding (objective 1) and Knowledge Exploitation etc.

Numbers Attending or Accessing Education

In South West Wales, more than **65,000** post-16 learners attend Further Education, nearly **3,000** learners attend HE in FE and nearly **3,000** learners undertake work-based learning at FE colleges in the region. Part-time learners increased by **407.6%** in the 13 years up to 2005/06 – or around **31.4%** per year. The number of 14-16 learners attending FE colleges differs widely, although there are over **2,000** 14-16 learners undertaking qualifications in Further Education Colleges. This ranges from well below 100 to over 500, with no identifying reason for this difference. If we take into account taster courses and Saturday clubs etc, this figure is well in excess of **4,000**.

A Level provision

The number of A levels available for learners can be as many as 49 separate subjects delivered at numerous times during the week to allow absolute choice. There are literally thousands of A level learners in FE colleges. During 2005/06, there were **271,220** FE enrolments, **227,735** (84%) were part-time and **43,485** (16%) were full-time. 79% of full-time enrolments were under 19 (**34,353**) and 15% of part-time enrolments were 19 or under (**34,160**) – an overall total of **68,513**. In comparison, there are 170 schools with sixth forms with 27,955 learners. There are well over twice as many 16-19 year olds in FE colleges.

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Quality

The percentage of work judged to be outstanding in individual learning areas at **29%** is much better than WAG’s target of 18%¹. Inspection reports show, FE colleges in Wales have outperformed colleges in England. Over a five-year period, around **63%** of college programme areas in Wales were awarded grade 1 (outstanding) or grade 2 (good) compared with **41.7%** in England. In South West Wales, the percentage of learners in grade 1 (outstanding) and grade 2 (good) learning areas ranges from **90%** to **100%**. This is better than the sector average.

Engagement with employers

There are very important changes in demographics in Wales. Over 70% of the 2020 workforce in the UK has already completed compulsory education.²

Colleges in Wales, report links with over 25,000 employers annually³ and have around 190 top quality business members serving on their governing bodies. In the South West Wales area, colleges engage annually with more than **7000** employers.

Economic Impact of Further Education

A research study commissioned by the Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (DEIN) and carried out by the University of Cardiff⁴ shows that each £1m of FE sector output supports a further £0.56m of output (an output multiplier of 1.56). Thus the total output of the FE sector of around **£388m** in 2005/06 supports a further **£217m** output – a total of **£605m**. This contribution compares broadly with other parts of the public service. In **South West Wales** the total output for the sector using the 1.56 multiplier is **£202.8m**.

Funding of Further Education

In 2005/06, the costs of ELWa (now DCELLS) allocating FE funding was **4.1%**⁵ compared with overhead costs of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) of **0.7%**⁶. The value of the funding unit has decreased by 18.72% in real terms over the past 13 years⁷ – or an average of 1.44% per year. From annual published statistics on premises expenditure⁸, colleges have spent an average of **6.5%** of their expenditure on premises. This amounts **£228.8m** up to 2005. These figures are on top of capital investment funded by DELLS, European funds or financial institutions, which total many hundreds of millions of pounds. It was recently identified that in South West Wales the required capital investment in the building infrastructure for the sector was well over £250M in the next ten years.

Promoting centres of academic and vocational excellence

There are 170 schools with sixth forms⁹ and around 100 work-based learning providers. In addition, there are a number of local bodies including 22 local education authorities, there are still 22 CCETs, 22 14-19 partnerships and 22 Young People’s Partnerships (YPPs). These are all pre-Webb. The inevitable conclusion is that given scarce resources, too many institutions and organisations function at a local level for a small country the size of Wales with a population of 2.9m. In contrast, in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, for example, with a population of 1.8m (62% of that in Wales) there are four LEAs (18% of those in Wales), 22 colleges (of which seven are

¹ *The Annual Report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2005-06 Estyn, January 2007 p.26.*

² *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: Final Report Lord Sandy Leitch, December 2006, HM Treasury.*

³ *fforwm survey of colleges. March 2007.*

⁴ *The Impact of Further Education Institutions on the Economy of Wales, DEIN, January 2007*

⁵ *Annual Report, 2005-06, National Council/ELWa. Since the merger with WAG there is no evidence showing that administrative costs have fallen.*

⁶ *Annual Report, 2005-06, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.*

⁷ *The value of the funding unit in 1993/94 was £56.50 and in 2005/06 £63.50. If 2004/05 is the basic year, and taking account of the GDP deflator, the value of the FU in 1993/94 was £73.85 and in 2005/06 £62.20. £73.85 minus £62.20 = £11.65. Then 11.65 divided by 62.20 and then times 100 = 18.72%.*

⁸ *Analysis of Financial Position of Colleges, op cit.*

⁹ *Post-16 provision in schools – factors that influence the capacity of school sixth forms to meet the needs and aspirations of learners, Estyn, 2005.*

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general FE, 4 are tertiary, 10 are sixth form colleges and one is a land-based college), 15 schools with sixth forms and 39 WBL providers. 7.7% of 16-19 learners attend schools compared with one-third in Wales and standards are high.

Five key challenges for the sector

1. Providing coherent post-14 planning, with an entitlement for all learners;
2. Reducing the levels of bureaucracy (this body commissioning learning?);
3. How can we (*as part of the RLP*) get better ‘value for money’ and improve quality for learners;
4. Responding to the key messages clearly articulated in ‘Skills that work for Wales’; and
5. Addressing the capital under-funding identified by Webb (high quality learners require high quality facilities).

Five benefits of the Regional Learning Partnership

1. A genuinely strategic body for commissioning (and end to jam jar funding);
2. A promotion of centres of vocational and academic excellence;
3. A real choice for learners of sustainable, high quality learning and learning environments;
4. A cohesive regional response to Government policy with local delivery; and
5. The ability to secure additional resources to support learner-centred activities.

The FE Sector contribution to the Regional Learning Partnership

1. Responsiveness – shown in the 400% increase in FE learners;
2. Quality improvement;
3. Relationship with industry;
4. Clean match funding (always useful!); and
5. Industry standard facilities, skills and reputation.

Sector contribution to Regional Learning

1. QUALITY
2. VOLUME
3. BREADTH
4. EXPERTISE
5. RESPONSIVENESS

**Notes to accompany Higher Education Sector Presentation,
 Professor Robert Pearce, Vice-Chancellor, University of Wales, Lampeter**

There are twelve autonomous higher education institutions in Wales (including the University of Wales), plus the Open University in Wales and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (which is part of the University of Glamorgan).

Institutions in the South West are: Aberystwyth University
 University of Wales, Lampeter
 Swansea University
 Swansea Metropolitan University
 Trinity College Carmarthen.

All of these institutions award degrees of the University of Wales under an accreditation agreement.

1. Higher Education in Wales

2. Activities

- Teaching
- Research
- Economic, social and cultural

The activities most associated with Universities are teaching and research, but they also have a long tradition of engagement with the economic, social and cultural life of their communities, local, regional and national.

Universities provide economic benefits of over 2.5 times their turnover, are catalysts for economic development, and provide a wide range of cultural and social opportunities.

Universities are strongly committed to developing human capital, to social inclusion and improving the economic well-being of the areas in which they operate.

3. Statistics

- 133,000 enrolments (including Open University)
- 45% part-time students
- 35,000 awards (51% first degrees)
- Total income £1 billion





The total income of higher education institutions in Wales is around £1 billion of which around 40% comes from funding council grants. Institutions in the South West account for about 25% of total income for Wales.

Wales has about 133,000 higher education enrolments (slightly fewer students because some students enrol for more than one course).

The South West accounts for 23,000 full-time enrolments (30% of the total for Wales) and 19,000 part-time enrolments (32% of the total for Wales).

The sector employs over 17,000 people, 71% of whom work full-time.

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<p style="text-align: center;">4. Student demography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 55% women • 48% of full-time students are aged 21+ • 80% of part-time students are aged 25+ 	<p>The majority of students, both full-time and part-time are now women.</p> <p>Whilst school-leavers are the majority category for full-time study, there are very large proportions of older students, and 80% of part-time students are aged 25 or older.</p> <p>Over 60% of full-time students are domiciled in Wales.</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">5. Widening Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franchise students (mainly through FE) • Strong focus on widening participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reaching Wider Partnerships – Links with schools – Aspiration raising – Skills raising 	<p>Wales performs well in widening participation, and has a higher percentage of new entrants from disadvantaged backgrounds than in the UK as a whole.</p> <p>Universities in the South West belong to one of two Reaching Wider Partnerships and engage in a range of activities designed to improve skills in disadvantaged groups and to raise expectations.</p> <p>All have links with schools, and some operate franchise arrangements with FE colleges.</p>
<p>Public sector funding in Wales is around 15% below the equivalent level for institutions in Wales. There are significant cross-border flows, but these are reducing and Wales is being seen as a less attractive destination for English students for reasons which are not yet known.</p> <p>Universities throughout the UK face a real challenge in increasing recruitment from disadvantaged groups. Since the proportions of young people with a minimum of 2 A levels going to University is broadly the same regardless of social class, the problems occur prior to application to University.</p> <p>Many government initiatives concentrate on urban areas and do not recognise the special needs of rural communities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6. Challenges</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding significantly below levels in England • Involvement of disadvantaged groups • Poor understanding of rural agendas
<p style="text-align: center;">7. Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for collaboration and partnership • Sharing knowledge and experience • Providing progression routes • Raising aspirations 	<p>Universities are actively working in a wide range of partnerships within and beyond higher education.</p> <p>These partnerships provide opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience as well as opening learning opportunities to new groups of student (for instance through work-based learning), providing new progression routes, and raising aspirations.</p> <p>A wide range of modes of learning is available, including study on campus, provision through partnerships, and distance learning. Most HEIs are willing to adapt their provision to meet the needs of particular groups.</p>

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**Notes to accompany Work Based Learning/ Private Sector Presentation,
Rachel Searle, Chair of South West Wales National Training Federation**

Nature and size of the sectors.

The work based learning (WBL) sector and private sectors are not necessarily one and the same. WBL sector specialises in training in and for the work place. Organisations tender, every three years, for a WBL contract from DCELLS (Dept of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills), Welsh Assembly Government and are allocated an individual contract value annually. For 07-08 the WBL budget was approx £112M for Wales, with £22M allocated to WBL providers based in the South West Wales region.

50 WBL contractors operate in the SW region and 19 of these are based in the SW. WBL providers are a mixture of private companies, local authority training units, specialist college departments, voluntary and not for profit organisations. They vary in size from small specialist providers (10-15 staff), based in South West Wales who work within a defined sector and geographical area, to large scale national or international companies, who are multi sector and cross region providers, who employ several hundred staff. WBL providers will also access other funding sources i.e. Job Centre Plus funded training schemes e.g. New Deal, ESF funded projects and employer or learner self funded training. WBL providers' turnover also varies from £500K to £7M+ per organisation. Some WBL providers will also sub contract parts of the contract to other providers, who may not hold a direct contract but have expertise in a particular area. In these cases the contracted provider is responsible for ensuring the sub contractor meets quality, health and safety and data and audit requirements.

It is incredibly difficult to estimate the size of the private training sector. These organisations may be individual trainers, small specialist training providers or be training departments within larger companies. There is not one central source that these organisations contract with, often selling short training courses directly to other businesses. They will often, but not exclusively, operate in their own geographical region.

Learning opportunities delivered

Work Based Learning programmes are for 16 years and over with no upper age limit. There is a growing demand for WBL amongst the 25 years + age group. All programmes are roll on roll off, although some providers who utilise college based provision are limited to operating programmes during the academic year. The following programmes are available:

Skill Build - For not employed learners to identify and address learning barriers, basic skills needs and provide learning opportunities to enable learners to better participate in the workforce and society at large. Learners are referred to providers via Careers Wales or Job Centre Plus. Learners will undertake job tasters and/or NVQ, Key Skills and softer skills development such as self esteem, motivation etc. In 07-08, providers profiled 3123 Skill Build starts in the SW region.

Pre-Apprenticeship Learning (PAL) - A new programme for 2007-2010, for employed learners to undertake Basic Skills development prior to entering framework led programmes. In 07-08, providers profiled 39 PAL starts in the SW region.

FMA - Foundation Modern Apprenticeship - An employment based learning programme at level 2. Learners follow a framework developed by the relevant industry Sector Skills Council which specifies the learning, including NVQ, Key Skills and technical certificates (where relevant). Learners can be employed, or not employed (trainee status) and receive a training allowance, if they meet specific criteria. In 07-08, providers profiled 3687 FMA starts in the SW region.

MA - Modern Apprenticeship - for employed learners to level 3 and follows a framework developed by the relevant industry Sector Skills Council which specifies the learning, including NVQ, Key Skills and technical certificates (where relevant). In 07-08, providers profiled 1967 MA starts in the SW region.

MSD - Modern Skills Diploma - for employed managers and aspiring managers. It provides opportunities for learners to improve their skills and knowledge at level 4. Learners working towards City & Guilds programmes are eligible for a cap and gown ceremony. In 07-08, 255 MSD starts were profiled in the SW.

For all programmes, following in depth Initial Assessment, to identify existing abilities and learning needs, tutors and assessors work in partnership with employers and learners to devise and provide Individual Learning Plans and programmes to meet learner needs. Tutors and assessors will visit the workplace to provide support during agreed times, including evenings, nights or weekends to meet learners' shift patterns. They will also complete 4 or 8 weekly progress reviews with the learner and their employer. Learners will also attend external training at the provider's premises or a suitable local venue. Providers may also offer other learning ranging from Entry Level to Level 5 and short courses in many topics e.g. Health and Safety, Management and sector specific topics. Some providers are beginning to be involved in 14-19 Pathways and Welsh Baccalaureate.

Key Challenges

- Other sectors and general public are often not aware of depth, breadth and quality of learning programmes we offer. In some areas, incorrect public perception remains, that work based learning is "YTS" style training schemes only and for lower ability who have "failed" in the academic system. WBL needs to develop parity of esteem for our sector and show that vocational pathways also exist to Level 5 (equivalent of post graduate level). Also a mix and match approach of academic and vocational may be most suitable for some learners.
- Effective employer engagement can be an issue, especially for not employed status programmes where there are potential minimum wage implications on not employed learners, who need lots of support and are not fully contributing to the workplace.
- Implications for network post Webb review and impending restructuring of skills learning, linked to the Skills and Employment strategy, as is the case for all sectors. Involvement in 14-19 networks at early stages to support vocational development is also variable throughout the region.

Potential Benefits of participating in Regional Learning Partnership

WBL provider network, as specialists in vocational learning, are adept in developing, steering and maintaining effective vocational training programmes and opportunities. In the SW region alone, we have established and long standing links with over 3,000 employers, ranging from SMEs to national and international companies. This allows us to tailor

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support to their needs and potentially canvas their views, for the partnership. We also have links with Government agencies e.g. Careers Wales, Job Centre Plus etc. The partnership will allow us to reduce unnecessary duplication, provide opportunities to further develop areas of speciality (within a regional framework) and engage with other organisations to remove obstacles to learning. By utilising the strengths of various sectors in the partnership, we will all have a greater reach and influence, allowing us to access funding bids to meet the learners, employers and regional needs more efficiently and effectively.



Q.1. How do partners envisage the RLP will enable them to address the challenges facing their sector?

For learners and communities

- a) Provide package of support for the learner and **better progression routes**
- b) Improved interface for the learner
- c) Recognising **local distinctiveness** and getting the balance right
- d) Promote **equality of access** and quality standards
- e) **Learner entitlement** and learner requirements are key drivers
- f) Need to demonstrate that improved choice and quality will be achieved by any model adopted
- g) RLP can react to identified individual needs
- h) Combining/sharing staff and movement of staff and/or pupils between sites in order to better achieve **outcomes**
- i) There is a need to recognise the special needs and the issues around providing learning in **rural areas**. The collective voice of RLP will be stronger in influencing policy as we can show we have a common interest.
- j) Universities and colleges are full – we are turning people away – need to secure more **funding** to do more to respond to demand.

For Employers

- k) **Improve linkages** with employers/regeneration partnerships/sector skills councils and ability to **share market intelligence**
- l) Ability to market provision at a sub regional level to employers/local communities
- m) **Avoiding duplication** of employer engagement already taking place at local level
- n) Enable the RLP to develop a holistic plan focusing on **specific sectors** within the region
- o) Need to consider potential changes of employment patterns to enable different methods of delivery within the partnership
- p) Joined up thinking from providers for employers and individuals

For providers

- q) Partnership needs to be **ambitious and engender change at national level** in relation to funding mechanisms. Funding per capita is an issue
- r) Exert **influence** on national policy
- s) Greatly enhanced planning, leading to shared services and delivery giving better **value for money**
- t) Meeting needs across artificial boundaries
- u) Use RLP strategic approach recognising **local delivery strengths**
- v) Opportunities to voluntarily **combine funding 'pots'** to achieve more
- w) Potential to address issue of the reduced number of HE students coming into universities in Wales from England
- x) Increased **responsiveness** to regional needs
- y) Addressing the fit with other planning processes e/g/ Spatial Planning

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- z) Employers needs can be met across the sectors but silos between Econ Dev and learning sector need breaking down. Input from Econ Dev needed to do this and join up ESF and ERDF in Convergence.
- aa) Allow training providers to **specialise** in what they do best
- bb) Need To understand the relationship between local learning partnerships and RLP – the RLP must add value to them.
- cc) Building **trust** between institutions/providers
- dd) Address balance of legislative responsibilities
- ee) Be conscious of risks of ‘centralising’ the region through these structures; need to remain **inclusive** of the whole area.
- ff) Maximise resources by sharing provision
- gg) Sharing of good practice
- hh) RLP may help make better use of existing funding
- ii) Enable plans to get **leadership** and **facilitate change**
- jj) Existing **duplication** of provision – focus on centres of excellence

Challenges/Issues identified

- Need to set appropriate targets and monitor in order to demonstrate that they are achieved
- Need to ensure that there is ‘sign up’ from all partners/providers including schools
- Need to recognise the policy/legislation which is driving agendas and funding schemes
- Development of structures: needs to be able to make tough decisions (i.e. may need to be sacrifices, as well as benefits. Must have teeth!) and not just bureaucracy
- Opportunity for piloting e.g. the commissioning model
- Is it just about “protectionism” – maintaining existing provision?
- participation/key representation at top across all areas
- Need to inform use of funding
- Relationship with DCELLS?
- Fit with post 14 – LA

Q.2. How do partners think the RLP could bring about transformational change to the benefit of the learner?

- a) Actually succeeding in enabling learners to collect an imaginative accumulation of credits from different modes of learning – bit of University, bit of WBL, bit of distance learning etc but right for individual. Would bring credit framework alive and could be a pilot project
- b) Really identifying REAL and LOCAL needs. Strategies too broad brush – need to bore down to local level to get the whole picture then inform WAG for their funding allocation and plan jointly to address needs. Must collect both learner needs and business needs.
- c) **Equality of entitlement** across the region for ALL learners (including equality of language)
- d) Helping all of society to understand the importance of learning including employers

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- e) Creating a learning distributive model e.g. using RLP partner providers where there is no provision locally e.g. HE provision
- f) **Tracking whole life learning** across providers to inform planning and policy
- g) Improved commissioning
- h) Pooling resources
- i) Delivering **support services** (HR, Finance etc.) jointly
- j) Producing improvements at the point of delivery by **reducing duplication** and ensuring that provision is viable
- k) Reducing the number of people entering the wrong course in HE/FE, whilst ensuring that the socio economic ‘divide’ issue is also addressed
- l) **Valuing** work based learning opportunities and utilise these appropriately to **improve outcomes** for learners
- m) **Documenting learning opportunities** available across the Region and ensure learners have access to the information
- n) Identifying, and utilising appropriately, funding opportunities available to the voluntary sector
- o) **Consistent information** and referral
- p) Skills observatory - ability to influence supply
- q) Factoring in training and education that is needed for work – not what the learner necessarily wants
- r) Higher learning/skills profile in the region and greater understanding by all
- s) Match those on incapacity benefit with local learning/job opportunities
- t) **Tailored support** to meet specific needs
- u) Strengthening links between regeneration and learning/training providers - **RLP should be the training tool for regeneration**
- v) Need to re-look at funding mechanisms as the current system ‘grabs’ the learner
- w) Potential to have (partnership) centres of excellence across the region focusing on key areas
- x) Improved employer engagement by
 - o Sharing/building on good practice prevalent in some areas (employers need to see a direct benefit)
 - o Getting SMEs involved
 - o Using centres of excellence so that impact on employer time is focused and benefits maximised
 - o Focusing on employers with greatest needs so that benefits maximised
 - o Using Sector Skills Councils where appropriate (difficulties of current capacity in SSCs noted)
- y) Should the RLP be a legal entity?
- z) Improve **learner perceptions** of provision eg. WBL
- aa) Enable genuine **involvement of learner** in the strategic process

Q.3. How should the RLP respond to the Webb Review and the Skills that Work for Wales Consultation?

- a) RLP be ready to be a **commissioning body** – both jointly (being aware of contacting requirements) and within via providers/centres of excellence in specific learning areas.
- b) RLP to be a pilot for intelligence
- c) The remit already responds to STWfW
- d) RLP members will feed in local issues – may find they are shared/reflected elsewhere in region or can be jointly addressed.
- e) RLP to be a **test area** e.g. learner contribution testing / addressing issues around colleges/V1th form
- f) Make a bold response, **drive opportunities forward** rather than being imposed on
- g) Focus on what works for us
- h) Noted that **technology**/infrastructure does not feature in the document and will need to address this locally
- i) Continue what we do well whilst considering how to fill gaps and work towards improvement in other areas e.g. commissioning
- j) Use the framework, where appropriate, to meet local needs
- k) Challenge 'one size fits all agenda'
- l) Change to funding culture (not bidding culture)
- m) Relationship with other strategies etc? Public organisations
- Local service board as vehicles? – Issue of fit with RLP?
- o) **Achieving efficiencies**

Q.4. What can the RLP do for your sector and local area?

- a) Provide **leadership for change**
- b) Provide capacity to address needs
- c) Provide views/responses from a stronger base
- d) Act as a mechanism to assist in accessing funding
- e) Spread **good practice**
- f) Can assist in areas of rural deprivation, and help **rural areas** to present their views
- g) Greater consistency between links with **employers and sector skills councils**
- h) RLP needs to be the **training and learning arm for the regeneration agenda** therefore there is a need to strengthen links with regeneration officers and partnerships/strategies
- i) Discussion regarding the RLP as a commissioning body but what does this actually mean?
- j) Recognised the role the RLP could have as a **skills observatory**