



South West and Mid Wales Consortium Consortium De-orllewin a Chanolbarth Cymru

Bulletin 2

January 2008

Consortium working - Progress in implementing the Interim Strategic Plan

Work is progressing well on implementation of the Interim Strategic Plan for consortium working which has been agreed by Local Authorities and schools, and which identifies outputs and outcomes focused on children and young people.

Work is being undertaken by professional officers from each of the six swamwac Local Authorities, working together in Operational Groups. Details of the agreed groups, including their remit, is available on the Consortium web site at www.swamwac.org

Each Bulletin will feature news of activities and achievements of consortium working and some recent developments are highlighted here.

Chartered Teacher Pilot

- The Consortium has successfully tendered to GTCW to develop and run the pilot core module on Self Evaluation, Reflection and Personal Development.
- The module is aimed at classroom practitioners and middle leaders and is due to be delivered between February and June 2008.
- Following application to GTCW to participate, fifteen teachers, nine primary and five secondary, from schools across each of the swamwac Local Authority have been accepted.
- The first session is due to take place on 21st and 22nd February.
- Five other modules are to be piloted by a number of different providers across Wales during 2007-2008 and a further three during 2008-2009.
- The Consortium has recently submitted a tender to pilot a second module - Leading the Learning - and should know the outcome by the end of February 2008.
- It is intended that the Self Evaluation, Reflection and Personal Development Core Module will be integrated into the swamwac middle leader programme being designed and developed by the Middle Leader Task and Finish Group. Further details will be circulated once development is completed.

Further details of the Chartered Teacher programme can be found on the GTCW web site at <http://www.gtcw.org.uk/welcome.html>

Higher Level Teaching Assistant Assessment

- Since 2004 the HLTA assessment programme has been undertaken by swamwac on behalf of its six member Authorities.
- Fifty one candidates successfully completed the programme in Round 2 (2006-07) and gained HLTA status.
- Following a selection panel day in December 2007, fifty one candidates have been accepted for Assessment in 2007-08 HLTA (Round 3).
- All six authorities have candidates on the programme.
- Five additional HLTA assessors are currently being trained to ensure that there are sufficient trained assessors available to support this successful programme.

If you would like to know more about this programme you will find the contact details for the lead person each Authority's HLTA Assessment Programme on the swamwac website at

<http://www.swamwac.org/CPD/hlta.asp>

Communications Strategy

The Consortium recognises the importance of good, timely, communication. A clear robust communications strategy consistently applied will support the implementation of the Interim Consortium Working Strategic Plan. It is vital that stakeholders are aware of progress towards actions and outputs and their views are heard and considered. The Communications Strategy consists of a number of strands covering the flow of information in respect of consortium working and its achievements, between individuals, Consortium Groups, Authorities and Regional Partnerships. These Bulletins are part of our drive to improve communications in respect of consortium working. The Communications Strategy can be accessed on the swamwac website at www.swamwac.org

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Threshold Standards

The Threshold Standards have been revised and replace existing standards from September 2007. Headteachers need to note that teachers applying for assessment in Round 8 **must** be assessed against the revised standards. Information on Round 8 is available on the Teachernet web site. For further information contact the lead person within your Authority, or visit www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/payandperformance/threshold

Continuation funding

Progress is being made on our application to the Welsh Assembly Government Making the Connections Fund for continuation funding to further develop consortium working. A meeting with Welsh Assembly Government to clarify details of the application is scheduled for early February 2008 and we hope to know the outcome by the end of March.

North of England Education Conference

At the North of England education Conference the workshop led by swamwac on collaborative working was well attended. The workshop was chaired by Vernon Morgan and supported by Robert Barbour, Wyn Williams, Jeff Jones and Pauline Lewis. Delegates included elected Members, headteachers, governors, trade union representatives, and Welsh Assembly Government and Local Authority officers. The presentation on consortium working was well received and engendered an interesting debate. A copy of the presentation is available on the swamwac web site at www.swamwac.org

ESF funding for West Wales region and the development of a proposed Regional Learning Partnership for South West Wales

West Wales and the Valleys areas are to receive "Convergence" funding – the highest level of support available under the next round of European Structural Fund programmes - for the period 2007-2013. The West Wales region includes the Local Authorities of Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, five of the six swamwac Authorities. The overall aim of the ESF Convergence programme is to 'create a high skill, knowledge driven economy, with full employment, a skilled, adaptable workforce and responsive businesses, at the cutting edge of sustainable development'.

The key drivers to achieving this through the ESF programme are by:

- (a) Supplying young people with skills for learning and future employment;
- (b) Increasing employment, in particular by tackling economic inactivity;
- (c) Improving skills to help businesses to move continually up the value chain and increase the value-added per job, thereby raising productivity and earnings; and
- (d) Modernising and improving the quality of our public services.

A number of projects have already been identified, with development of bids being at various stages.

In respect of consortium working, the swamwac 14-19 Group is working with partners on proposals for both 14-16 and 16+ projects.

In addition, representatives from Local Authorities, FE, HE, Government bodies, the Voluntary Sector and other partnerships (including swamwac) within Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath and Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, and Swansea, have met together to consider the development of a Regional Learning Partnership (RLP). The proposed RLP would act as an 'umbrella' organisation, with, potentially, a range of projects, including ESF funded projects, being carried out by some or all partners. The initial focus is in specific areas such as Adult Continuing Learning. It is proposed that the partners will bid for ESF Priority 4 funding for the development of the partnership. Further information on the development of funding bids,

and Project Initiation Forms for each project (posted as development proceeds) can be found on the WEFO web site at <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk>

Consortium working schedule of events

This section offers initial information on events which may be of interest. We aim to update the schedule of events on a regular basis therefore, if you are hosting any events which you would like to make available to colleagues across the swamwac Authorities, please let us know and we will publicise them in future Bulletins and/or on the web site.

As you can see, there are a number of important events during the next few months and therefore to maximise benefits for all it would be helpful if anyone who is considering organising a consortium working event would contact admin@swamwac.org to check that there are no clashes of key dates.

Consortium working events – Spring Term 2008

Title	Date /Time	Venue	Audience	Contact
Catch Up Numeracy Pilot	15 th January 26 th February 27 th February 28 th February 23 rd September	Y Llwyfan, Carmarthen and National Botanic Gardens, Llanarthne	Schools nominated by Local Authority	admin@swamwac.org
Assessment for HLTA status	5 th February 19 th February 18 th March	Halliwell Centre, Carmarthen	Selected candidates	admin@swamwac.org
14-19 Network Conference (supported by the Welsh Assembly Government)	6 th February	Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells	All 14-19 Network Coordinators and Quality Champions across Wales	admin@swamwac.org
Recycling: Imaginative Use of Rubbish to Create Unbelievable Artworks	7 th March	The Queen's Hall, Narberth	Primary and Secondary Art Teachers	Michaela.walters@pembrokeshire.gov.uk Helen.morris@pembrokeshire.gov.uk Ruth.lee@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
Chartered Teacher Pilot 'Self-evaluation, Reflection, and Professional Development'	February- June 2008	Y Llwyfan, Carmarthen	Selected participants	http://www.gtcw.org.uk

Other events supported by consortium working

Title	Date /Time	Venue	Audience	Contact
Local Social Partnership Conference	17th January	Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells	Members of Workforce Agreement Monitoring Groups from all Local Authorities	(See report below)
RAISE Spring Conference **	27 th February 10.00- 4.00	Liberty Stadium, Swansea	RAISE Schools	RAISE@swamwac.org
School Effectiveness Framework- WAG Launch	6 th March	Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd	Local Authority School Improvement Officers and Headteachers	Invitations to be issued by WAG (see below)

Invitations to School Effectiveness Framework Launch

WAG have requested that head teachers and School Improvement Officers note in their diaries the date of **6th March 2008** for the launch of the School Effectiveness Framework. We understand that WAG are sending invitations to headteachers directly and all headteachers should receive invitations shortly.

Local Social Partnership Conference

The Local Social Partnership Conference on 17th January 2008, held at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells, brought together representatives of local Workforce Agreement Monitoring Groups (WAMGs) from across Wales. The event was sponsored by WAG, with facilitators from across Wales, including four facilitators provided by swamwac. Useful presentations and well structured workshops generated a wide ranging debate in respect of national and local issues around the continuing implementation of the Workforce Agreement. The intention of the conference was to emphasise the role of local social partnership working (local WAMGs), highlight achievements so far, and discuss strategies for taking the remodelling agenda forward. It was confirmed that this event that a note from the National Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) would be produced dedicated to the event to enable the useful discussions to be shared with those unable to attend.

www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/nationalagreement/WAGM.aspx

In summing up the event the Key Note speaker Brunni de la Motte, Unison National Officer, noted three key messages arising out of the discussions in the workshops:

1. Queries as to why Wales did not have its own WAMG – it was confirmed that the Welsh Assembly is a signatory to the agreement along with the other partners and that 'national' in this context therefore covers both England and Wales.
2. Initiative overload – although most people recognised that there will always be change and remodelling may be seen as a tool to manage change.
3. Local Social Partnerships – some were not working at all, some not working effectively, but, some were working well and the shared experience in the conference would be useful to all in moving forward.

Sian Lewis' presentation on the Swansea experience, referencing swamwac consortium working, was well received. Delegates particularly welcomed the honest assessment of difficulties as well as successes, and the useful ideas presented on regaining momentum in the local partnership and establishing baselines for monitoring.

Contacts

Headteacher Group

Each authority is represented by 5 headteachers nominated via the usual procedures within their Authority and the group operates at a strategic level. The next meeting of the headteacher group is on 22nd February 2008 and the agenda includes: an update on consortium working; an update from WAG on the pedagogy strategy; a discussion on WAG's approach to senior leadership development; and a discussion on the work of the GTCW with its Chief Executive, Gary Brace.

We are working towards making contact details for headteachers on the Headteacher Group available on the swamwac web site. In the meantime, please telephone the Consortium Office with any query.

Consortium Office and Facilitators

There is a small team of professional officers and support staff coordinating and facilitating work on behalf of the swamwac Authorities, based at Trinity College, Carmarthen in the new Y Llwyfan building. The move to the new building provides the opportunity for meeting rooms and work space which groups can use when meeting to develop consortium working.

You can contact swamwac on **01267 676840** or email admin@swamwac.org

Keep in Touch

We will be sending bulletins on a regular basis to keep you in touch with consortium working progress and successes and will be further developing the swamwac web site. If you missed Bulletin 1 this is now available on the swamwac web site and all future bulletins will also be posted there.

We would welcome comments from you on how consortium working has helped you, or suggestions as to how it could help you in the future. If you have any events which you would like to make available to colleagues across the swamwac Authorities or if you have any good practice that you would like to share via the web site then please email admin@swamwac.org