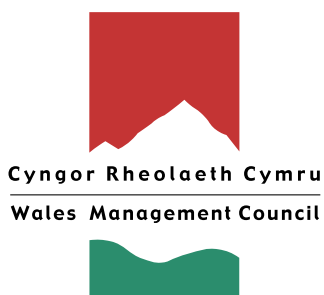


Wales Management Council

*A unique contribution*

Review of 2007-2008



*Leading Wales towards excellence  
in leadership and management*

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The Wales Management  
Council  
P O Box 61  
25, Cathedral Road  
Cardiff CF11 1AA

Tel: 029 2022 4114  
Fax: 029 2022 4113

# OUR VISION AND MISSION

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The Wales Management Council is an employer-led body, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to promote the development of leaders and managers in Wales.

Our mission is

**To lead Wales towards excellence in leadership and management.**

Our vision is

**A country where leaders and managers in all sectors have both the ambition and the ability to create and sustain businesses and organisations that are among the best in the UK.**

We aim

**To inspire, motivate and drive change in the perception, delivery, take up and funding of management and leadership development in Wales.**

by

- convincing all managers of the benefits of developing their skills and abilities
- identifying, by thorough research, the real development needs of managers in Wales
- ensuring that managers can obtain high quality and flexible training and development
- sharing best UK and international management practice among all businesses in Wales
- measuring progress against credible benchmarks.

For more information about the work of the Wales Management Council, please visit our website [www.walesmanagementcouncil.org.uk](http://www.walesmanagementcouncil.org.uk)



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

# A UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION

*Andrew Wilkinson - Chairman*

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In my career, as chairman of Wales Management Council, chairman of University of Newport, chairman of Newport and Gwent Enterprise Agency, as a former chairman of Careers Wales Gwent, and as a banker with HSBC, I am privileged to have been involved in five areas that are of critical importance to the Welsh economy: management and leadership, higher education, business support, careers development, and finance.

As I write this, in April 2008, all five are facing unprecedented challenges in the face of new funding and policy priorities, national and international competition, collaboration, strategic purpose, and financial upheavals across the world.

On top of all this, if that wasn't enough, we are faced with the stark words of Lord Sandy Leitch in his final report, published at the end of 2006:

*"Without increased skills, we would condemn ourselves to a lingering decline in competitiveness, diminishing economic growth and a bleaker future for all."*

And he argued compellingly that being satisfied with the skills development targets we have already set is not an option, as that will simply lead to us falling further behind the rest of the world.

The Welsh Assembly Government has recently published its response to Lord Leitch's recommendations within its far-reaching report *Skills that Work for Wales*. This accepts Lord Leitch's challenge, and makes some wide-ranging recommendations for skills development in Wales, including the importance of developing leadership and management skills as one of the key drivers for economic growth, and because, in Lord Leitch's words

*"Good leaders and managers invest in the development of their workforce, thus pulling through the skills agenda."*

Throughout this report we have highlighted on each page the key paragraphs in *Skills that Work for Wales* that relate to leadership and management, and Christopher Ward, our Chief Executive, has used his review of the past year, to explore in more depth some of the key questions and challenges that we face, as the Council and as a nation, in relation to the skills development agenda in general, and leadership and management in particular.

If it was all straightforward, we would have found the solutions long ago, wouldn't we, but it is not.

There are conflicting and complementary priorities, depending on your point of view, your sector, your resources, your personal ambition, and your corporate objectives.



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**"If we fail to improve workforce, leadership and management skills, Welsh businesses will gradually find it more difficult to compete. Wales' economic growth will diminish. The low skilled will be progressively marginalised in the labour market and our communities will become increasingly unequal. Wales, and the UK as a whole, cannot afford to be satisfied with the status quo."**

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 5*

“We will develop new ways of supporting leadership and management in Welsh businesses, using the opportunity provided by European Union Structural Funds.”

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 20*

“Individuals and employers should contribute to the costs of learning where they derive the biggest benefits.”

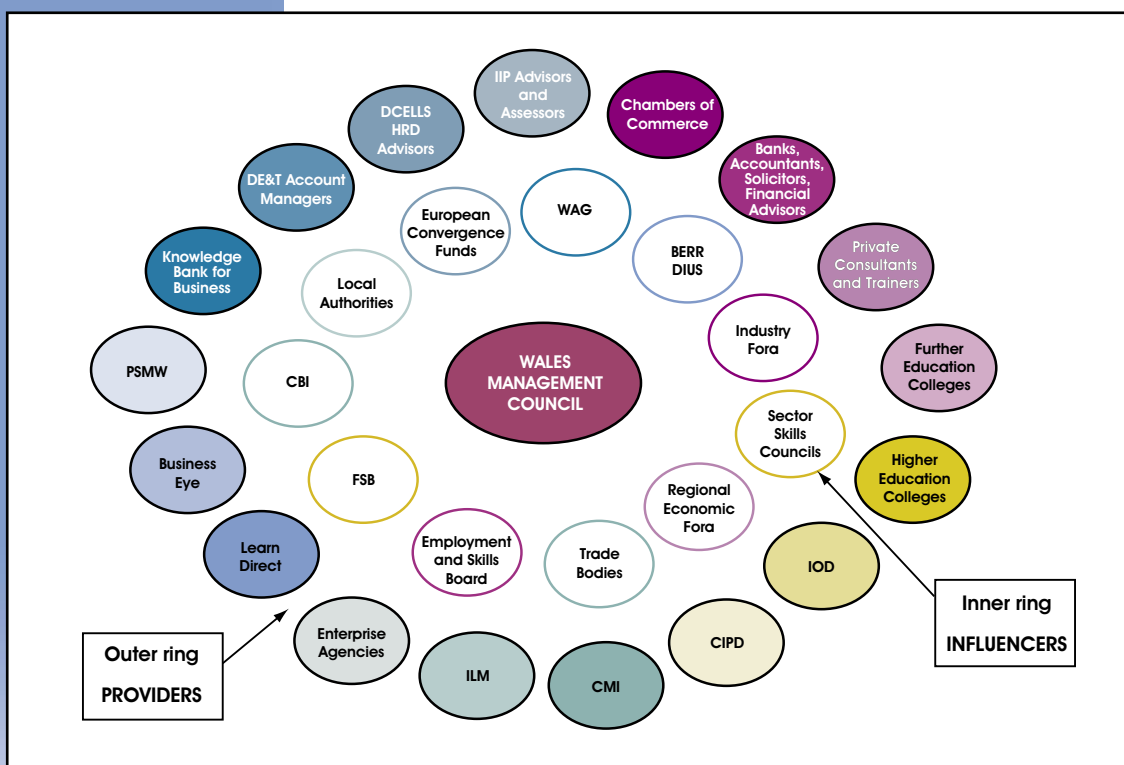
*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 6*

Finding a clear path through this maze of options is not easy, and it is perhaps why governments of any colour, in any country, can never satisfy all of the people all of the time. But as is so often the case, having a clear view of the things that are of real importance provides the essential focus that leads to the exciting discovery of new ways forward.

As chairman of the Wales Management Council you would expect me to put great emphasis on the importance of good leadership and management, but I do this with conviction and passion.

However, I am fully aware that while “we need good managers to create good businesses” is an obvious truth, the evidence to prove that is hard to come by.

I believe that one of the great strengths of the Wales Management Council, both as voluntary board of non-executive directors, and as an executive team, is that we understand this difficulty, and can offer suggestions, ideas, solutions, that reflect and find a way through this complexity of priorities, opportunities and purpose, and thus make a direct and unique contribution to helping the development of the leaders and managers in Wales.



Key players involved in leadership and management in Wales

# ARE QUESTIONS THE ANSWER?

*Christopher Ward – Chief Executive*

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We are delighted and encouraged that the Welsh Assembly Government's consultation document *Skills that Work for Wales – a skills and employment strategy* gives significant emphasis to the importance of good leadership and management.

We have highlighted key paragraphs in the columns on the left and right of each page in this review as a background and validation of the contribution that the Wales Management Council has made, and will continue to make, to this critically important agenda.

The Wales Management Council is directly funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to promote the importance of good leadership and management across Wales, and we do this with a passion, conviction and energy that belies our small size and modest funding.

The Council members and staff recognise their unique responsibility in running the only organisation in Wales with this publicly-funded mission, and the demands it puts on us all to "lead Wales towards excellence in leadership and management."

This leadership role comes in many forms, and I will describe some of our direct activity later on in this report, and will outline how we used the money provided to us. But one of the less visible aspects of our work is the "thought leadership" we offer on a wide range of leadership and management issues.

We do this through our reports, presentations, engagement with organisations of all kinds, and contribution to the Welsh Assembly Government's policy development.

Over the years we have built up a very strong and productive relationship with our direct funder, the Department for the Economy and Transport (DE&T), and with the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS), with whom we have an active engagement on leadership and management development issues.



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**"Leadership and management are critical to long-term business success and our aspirations for the long-term development of the Welsh economy."**

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 19*

**"We intend to strengthen our focus on leadership and management and our broader commitment to the Investors in People standard."**

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 17*

“The level of public investment will take account of a firm’s commitment to work with recognised standards such as Investors in People, the Leadership and Management Model, and the Basic Skills Employer’s Pledge.”

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 19*

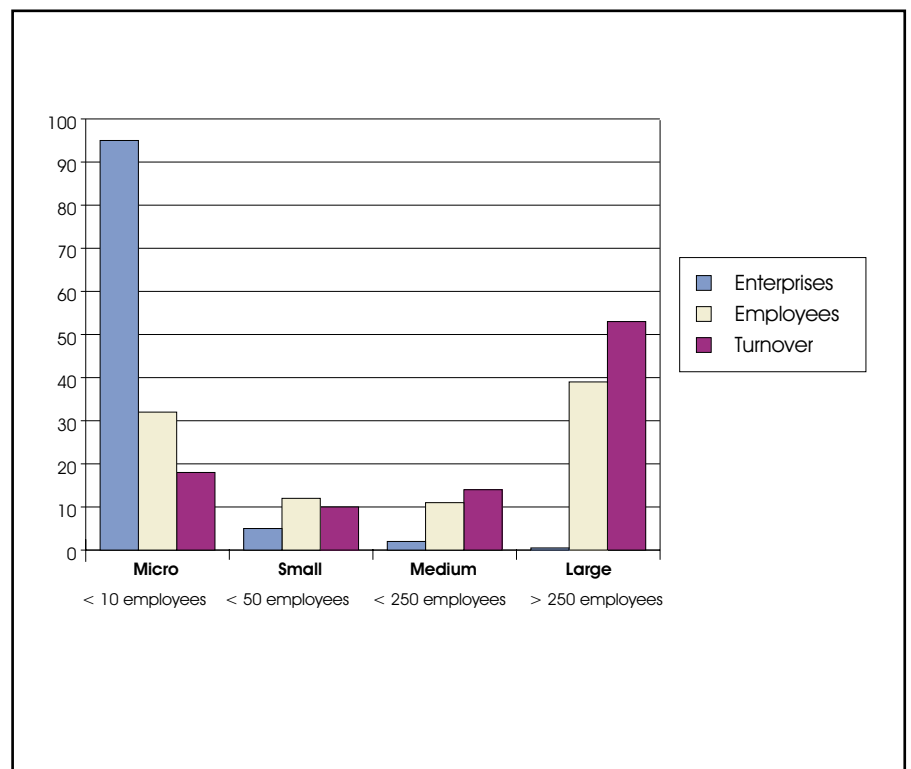
“Our skills development programmes for business need to strike a balance between providing support to help increase productivity and competitiveness of firms in Wales, whilst also equipping individuals with skills and qualifications that are portable in the labour market

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 18*

Many of the recommendations in our strategic report, *Action for Growth*, published in June 2007, are reflected in the recommendations of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Jobs and Skills, and are being considered by DCELLS as they develop a new strategy and action plan for leadership and management to develop the broad recommendations in *Skills that Work for Wales*.

But as our Chairman, Andrew Wilkinson, says in his previous article, the issues are not straightforward. There are many, often contradictory, questions that we must address as we develop a strategy for the development of leadership and management skills that really work for Wales.

The industrial profile in Wales is dominated by micro and small businesses, as shown dramatically in this chart:



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Does the government's focus on growth companies and growth sectors run the risk of supporting the "best in the class", at the expense of those with real, though may be less obvious, potential?

Will micro and small businesses in Wales earn or receive the support that they need?

Do jobs make skills or skills make jobs? Is the emphasis on portable qualifications for individuals at odds with the needs of organisations to develop the skills of their workforce that are relevant for their business?

If qualifications are to be made more "fit for purpose", whose purpose comes first, the individual or the organisation?

Are qualifications truly a proxy for skills, and if not, how do you measure skills, particularly the "soff" skills that underpin all working relationships?

What does "demand-led learning" really mean in a nation of 190,000 businesses, each with different needs and aspirations?

Should the market or the government drive the skills strategy in Wales?

Do we support those who want to learn, or those who should learn?

Where is the "market failure" in relation to leadership and management? Which is most at fault, the supply-side or the demand-side?

According to Leitch, 41% of managers in the UK have skills at Level 2 or below, so why do we describe leadership and management as "higher level" skills, linking development to Higher Education?

Who is best placed to develop the skills of our managers?

**"We intend to offer more support to help firms boost the performance of their leaders and managers."**

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

**"We will help employers to develop their businesses as a whole, addressing skills alongside other business issues such as management, capital investment, new technology, innovation and planning."**

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

**"Our ambition is that businesses should succeed as part of a strong, enterprising Welsh economy with full employment and high-quality jobs."**

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

**“We intend to increase the proportion of funding we allocate to business-specific skills. In doing this we will prioritise financial support for:**

- **Businesses in sectors important for the future of the Welsh economy;**
- **Businesses with pursue recognised best practice in the development of people, for example the Investors in People standard; and**
- **Businesses investing in management and leadership skills vital for the long-term success of the Welsh economy.”**

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

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In the leadership and management development market place, what really works, and why?

In the training supermarket, which aisle is more likely to attract customers, the one headed “People management skills” or the one headed “ Make more money”?

These are just some of the questions that we hope will stimulate the wider debate about how, where, and why we should develop the skills of our leaders and managers, which is a key part of our role.

We are also devoting time to develop the “business case” for leadership and management development, to provide the arguments that will change the hearts and minds of those who see leadership and management as either irrelevant or an expensive luxury.

Our engagement with the widest range of organisations and intermediaries has been as strong as ever in the last year, including SEMTA, Asset Skills, Construction Skills, SkillsActive, Bevan Foundation, Welsh Water, Welsh Electronics Forum, Venture Wales, Business in Focus, UWIC, University of Glamorgan, Age Concern Cymru, the Church in Wales, Ffowm, PSMW, City and Guilds, ILM, CMI, CIPD, IOD, CIM, Wales Quality Centre, Coleg Gwent, Coleg Morgannwg, Ystrad Mynach College, Knowledge Bank for Business, Age Concern, Management Standards Centre, Northern Leadership Academy, SW Leadership Academy, and the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).

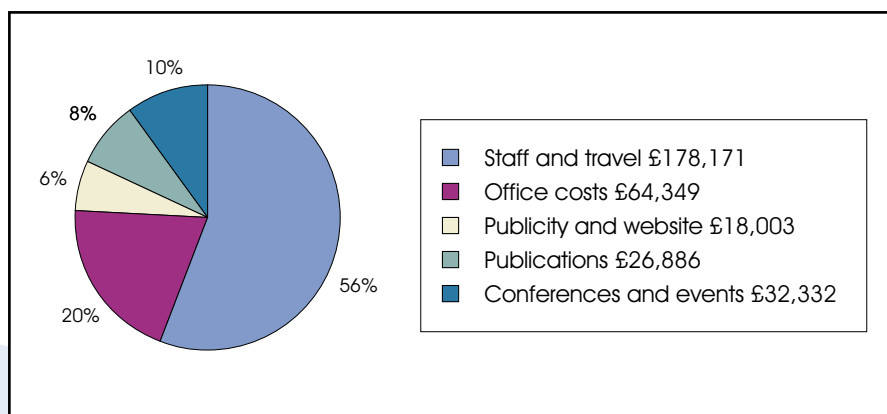
In the course of the year in addition to our annual, and very popular, compendium of ideas Management –Think About It, and the strategic report, Action for Growth, we have published two major reports based on the discussions in working groups on each subject: Older Workers in Wales – contribution, involvement, management and Trusted Advisors in Wales – purpose, best practice, new directions.

Overall our activity levels have maintained the high levels of the previous year:

**Activity Chart**

	2007 – 2008 : 12 months	
	Total	Av. per month
Presentations	29	3
Committee meetings	125	11
Individual meetings	274	23
Conferences/networking	123	10
Working groups	3	
Publications	5	
e-bulletin	12	1
Media articles	24	2
Leaders Forum	2	
Council meetings	4	
Business Management Committee Meetings	6	
Development Day	1	

This and the prudent use of our £320,000 funding means that we continue to punch well above our weight.



“Skills programmes must be more integrated with business support, making our services work together and easier to understand and access.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

“We have to strike a balance between business-specific skills that help individual firms improve their productivity, and equipping individuals with skills and qualifications that are ‘portable’, giving them opportunities in the labour market.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

“Only high quality learning providers should receive public funding so employers benefit from credible, quality services.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

**“We remain committed to the IIP Standard and will continue to promote it to organisations across Wales.”**

*Skills that Work for Wales, p. 19*

**“We need to rethink management and leadership development as a gym – professional equipment with professional help to tone and strengthen the flabby bits. Every business in Wales should have the equivalent of a personal trainer.”**

*Action for Growth*

**“Generally we expect to provide greater funding for accredited skills that are recognised across the marketplace.”**

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

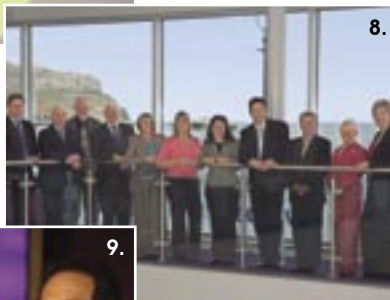
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As in previous years we have chaired the consortium, and been a major funder of the Lead On conference, now in its third year, held at the Liberty Stadium Swansea in November. David Magliano, Head of Marketing for the London 2012 Olympics bid, and Richard Scase, the leading business forecaster, were the key-note speakers. The masterclasses, at the centre of the conference, explored leadership issues relating to technology, climate change, skills development, global opportunities, and diversity. Almost 200 delegates attended, 55% from the private sector, and 45% from the public sector.

Also in November, we were involved in the creation and delivery of Spotlight North Wales...Time to Shine, the first conference of its kind, held in Llandudno, designed to bring people together, create new business relationships and stimulate new thinking on how individuals, businesses and organisations in North Wales can become more competitive performers in a rapidly changing world. Over 300 people attended with an enthusiasm that guarantees that the conference will be repeated in 2008, and for many years to come.

In February we were involved for the fourth year running as a major funder of the Leading Wales Awards, and as sponsor of the SME category, and chair of the panel judging the public sector category. The number of nominations increases year on year, as does their quality, and all consortium members found it more difficult than ever to select leading exemplars in each category to receive the awards from a cohort of incredible people whose leadership, in the words of this year's strapline, is making a real difference in Wales.

Looking forward to 2008 – 2009, the Welsh Assembly Government will be reviewing how we are funded and by whom, and we will see ever increasing demands on the use of all our resources: to achieve wider engagement, particularly with the Sector Skills Councils; to support the development of leaders and managers across Wales; and to help provide answers to the questions that really matter.



1. *Leading Wales Awards lunch ceremony*
2. *A workshop at the Spotlight North Wales Conference*
3. *Christopher Ward at the Lead On conference*
4. *A workshop at the Spotlight North Wales Conference*
5. *David Magliano, Olympic Bid Committee, at the Lead On Conference*
6. *Jean Gomes Masterclass at Lead On conference*
7. *Sian Rees and Gwyneth Stroud, Wales Management Council at the Lead On Conference*
8. *The Spotlight North Wales Conference Steering Group*
9. *Henry Engelhardt, The Admiral Group, speaking at the Leading Wales Awards*
10. *Bill Beese, SZ Gears Ltd, Leading Wales Award winner, and Christopher Ward*
11. *Guests gather at the foyer of the Hilton, Cardiff, for the Leading Wales Awards*
12. *Richard Scace at the Lead On Conference*

# COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF

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“Employers must have real influence on the content and delivery of skills programmes so that they are more responsive, flexible, and aligned with employers’ needs.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

“We believe a greater proportion of the funding available for adult learning should support skills and training that meets business needs.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

“The Assembly Government should target its funding where it is most needed, focusing on priority businesses and sectors.”

*Skills that Work for Wales: employers summary*

## Council Members

*Members who served throughout 2007 – 2008*

Andrew Wilkinson (Chairman)	Chairman, University of Wales, Newport
Laurence James (Secretary)	LJ Law
Roger Evans	Schaeffler (UK) Ltd
David Finch	Ystrad Mynach College
Peter Hurley	orangebox
Gary Mawer	Utility Partnership Ltd
Eileen Murphy	Advisor to Voluntary Sector
Jacqueline Royall	Consultant
Dr Chris Young	Welsh Electronics Forum
Rachel Clacher	Money Penny
Julie Cook	Wales TUC
Prof. Andrew Henley	University of Wales Swansea
Allan Meek	Smoke Control Services Group
Alistair Neill	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Allison Williams	Ceredigion and Mid Wales NHS Trust
Dr Neil Wooding	Public Service Management Wales

*Members who joined the Council during 2007 – 2008*

Robert Preece	Broomfield and Alexander
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*Members who left the Council during 2007– 2008*

John Bath	Brecon Pharmaceuticals
John Moore	Thomas Carroll Group
Debbie Williams	confused.com
Sheila Drury	Joint Skills Advisory Panel

## Observers

Rob Halford	Welsh Assembly Government
Ian Rees	Riverside Consultancies

## Staff

Christopher Ward	Chief Executive christopher.ward@crc-wmc.org.uk
Gwyneth Stroud	Marketing Executive gwyneth.stroud@crc-wmc.org.uk
Siân Rees	South Wales Executive sian.rees@crc-wmc.org.uk
Steve Donnelly	North Wales Executive steve.donnelly@crc-wmc.org.uk