

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 30TH APRIL 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER EDUCATION AND YOUTH**

SUBJECT: **REGIONAL SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICE (GWE)**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on progress with the development of the regional school effectiveness and improvement service (GwE).

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Discussions and consultation on initial Business Cases for the setting up of the Regional School Improvement Service took place in 2011 and the Full Business Case was approved by Cabinet in February 2012. The Service (GwE) became fully operational on 1st April 2013.

2.02 The report to Scrutiny in December 2012 identified the future key functions of the service to be developed to be:

1. to support local authorities to undertake their statutory functions in relation to school effectiveness;
2. to provide support for both LAs and schools in school improvement activity;
3. to specifically undertake responsibility for the implementation of the School Effectiveness Framework and the Common Inspection Framework;
4. to make provision for the development, maintenance and review of regional frameworks on a commissioned basis;
5. to provide a centre of expertise for Management Information service and for management, analysis and interpretation of data; and
6. to provide a specialist centre for Education Management matters and an Education Human Resources Service to provide expertise and advice.

2.03 In 2014, the Minister for Education supported the GwE business plan for 2014-15, concluding that:

- the region, and its constituent local authorities, have responded well to the challenges of the National Model for regional working on school improvement;

- representatives have engaged well in the process of co-constructing the model and this spirit of collaboration and dialogue has continued as the business plan evolved;
- the plan articulates the vision the consortium has to realise to bring about school improvement;
- outcomes identified are appropriate and intelligence driven;
- actions to deliver the outcomes are useful, and reflect the significant developments underway and those delivered at a regional level;
- governance, accountability arrangements and structures are detailed and illustrate how the consortium is taking steps to advance the National Model regionally; and
- the consortium is developing a data collation and sharing system to add capacity to and inform its work of their model for school to school working.

2.04 GwE's mission is to develop and deliver a quality school improvement and effectiveness service in a cost effective and efficient manner, to raise standards and 'make a difference' for children and young people. The service's aim is to ensure a consistency of challenge and support for schools leading to our children and young people fulfilling their potential. It hosts new robust systems of performance information to measure effectiveness. It seeks to raise standards – improving literacy and numeracy; promoting well being, raising aspirations; improving pupils' resilience as learners; improving outcomes and reducing variation between and within schools to realise the moral purpose of education; supporting education improvement in schools; and supporting leadership development within schools and governing bodies.

2.05 GwE is commissioned by North Wales local authorities, including Flintshire. It is also accountable to North Wales local authorities, including Flintshire. This is embodied in the developing model for performance planning and reporting (including to scrutiny). It is also embodied in the participation of the Cabinet Member, Chief Officer Education and Youth and school representatives in service governance. It is also embodied in the participation of commissioning officers and delivery officers in local scrutiny.

2.06 The National Model identifies further areas of work currently undertaken by Local Authorities which are expected to be coordinated regionally in the future. These include the work leading the developments of :

- Foundation Phase and Early Years
- Welsh Advisory Teachers
- Welsh in Education Strategic Planning
- Governor Training
- 14-19 Network

- 2.07 In the Autumn term 2014, Estyn began Thematic Inspections of the four Regional School Improvement Services. Three of these inspections were completed in that term, with GwE being the fourth region they visited, in January 2015.
- 2.08 Each regional team were required to produce a Self Evaluation document in advance of their visit by Estyn.
- 2.09 Officers and Members from each Local Authority were interviewed by members of the Estyn team over the period of one week. Estyn will produce one report on the four visits, which will be published following the General Election in May 2015.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The attached document is the Self Evaluation document produced by GwE for the Thematic Inspection of Regional School improvement Services in 2014-15 and the specific visit made by an Estyn team to North Wales in January 2015.
- 3.02 The outcomes of this Estyn Thematic inspection will be shared with Members on publication of the report, which will be delayed until after the General Election in May 2015.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That members receive the update from the Chief Officer Education and Youth and the attached Self Evaluation document from GwE.
- 4.02 That scrutiny plans to receive the Estyn Thematic Report on Regional School Improvement Services in Wales at an early opportunity following its publication.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There are no Financial implications arising directly from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 The Welsh Government, the Local Authority, GwE and Schools are committed to anti poverty working and reducing impact of disadvantage as key priorities for school improvement.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities impact implications arising directly from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no personnel implications specifically arising from this report. Additional services listed in the National Model may be incorporated into regional delivery models, in stages, subject to a satisfactory business case for each and a supporting transition plan to ensure service continuity and performance. This will involve appropriate consultation with staff and their representatives.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing consultation with school leaders, governors, school improvement officers, partner authorities and the Welsh Government will be required in developing and implementing the regional delivery models.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 GwE gathered views of representatives of the above groups of stakeholders whilst producing its Self Evaluation. Consultation of the National Model has included engagement with Local Authorities and with School Leaders.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix A - GwE Self Evaluation: Estyn Thematic Report (January 2015)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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