

Public Document Pack

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Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



To: Cllr Ian Roberts (Chair)

CS/NG

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Adele Davies-Cooke, Ian Dunbar, Ron Hampson, Stella Jones, Colin Legg, Phil Lightfoot, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Nancy Matthews, Vicky Perfect, Paul Shotton, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and Carolyn Thomas

17 October 2014

Maureen Potter 01352 702322
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**Janine Beggan, David Hytch, Rita Price,
Rebecca Stark and Reverend John Thelwell**

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 2014** at **2.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 8)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 4 **LEARNING FROM THE SCHOOL STANDARDS MONITORING GROUP (SSMG)** (Pages 9 - 16)
Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth)

- 5 **COLLABORATIVE WORKING BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND FEDERATIONS**
(Pages 17 - 32)
Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth)

- 6 **HEALTH & SAFETY IN SCHOOLS** (Pages 33 - 38)
Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth)

- 7 **LIFELONG LEARNING FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 39 - 44)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator

LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **25 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council, held at County Hall, Mold, on Thursday, 25 September 2014.

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Roberts (Chairman)

Councillors: Adele Davies-Cooke, Colin Legg, Phil Lightfoot, Dave Mackie, Nancy Matthews, Vicky Perfect, Nigel Steele-Mortimer and Carolyn Thomas.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: David Hytch, Rebecca Stark and Reverend John Thelwell

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillors David Cox for Paul Shotton, Paul Cunningham for Mike Lowe, and Peter Curtis for Ian Dunbar

APOLOGIES: Cabinet Member for Education. Councillors Marion Bateman, Ron Hampson, Stella Jones, and Paul Shotton. Mrs Janine Beggan and Rita Price

CONTRIBUTORS: Chief Officer (Education and Youth), School Modernisation Manager, Governor Development Coordinating Manager, and Project Manager

IN ATTENDANCE:

Housing and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of the Committee to Mrs Jane Borthwick, Headteacher, Trelawnyd Primary School, for her hospitality and to the pupils for escorting Members on their tour of the School.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (including Whipping Declarations)

The Chairman advised Members of the need to declare a personal interest in school related items on the agenda if they were school or college governors. All Members present except Councillor Phil Lightfoot and Reverend John Thelwell (who were not school governors) declared an interest as school governors.

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 July 2014 were submitted.

Matters arising

School transport

Councillor Nancy Matthew raised a concern around the provision and arrangements relating to school transport. She referred to discussions held at a previous meeting of the Committee on the issue of home to school transport and said it had been stated that if there was available space on the school bus then there would be a charge for the child. The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) confirmed that where there is no public service route and there is a space on the school bus, it can be made available to a learner at a charge. The Chief Officer emphasised that no child or young person had been refused transport to school in Flintshire so far this school year. However, some parents had been slow to apply for transport passes this year and Councillors' eligibility policy must be enforced in future weeks and months.

Councillor Matthews proposed that an item on school transport be added to the forward work programme for a future meeting of the Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Nigel Steele-Mortimer and agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the minutes be received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and
- (b) That an update report on school transport be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

19. UPDATE ON SCHOOL MODERNISATION

The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) introduced a report on the progress made with School Modernisation.

The Chief Officer referred to the anticipated reduction in funding from the Welsh Government for 2015/16, and possible additional reductions to specific grants "in year" and between years and reported that all services were committed to finding new ways of working to sustain local public services as far as able.

The Chief Officer commented on the aim to protect the learner's experiences in the classroom. He advised that overall the outcomes being achieved by Flintshire learners compared positively with other Authorities in Wales and continued to improve. He referred to the examples of modernising education in Flintshire in recent years which had proven to deliver improved opportunities and outcomes for children and young people and the further major capital investments in education planned for the future.

The Chief Officer referred to the key considerations in the report and advised that the Council was committed to ensuring that school buildings would meet twenty-first century expectations, were fit for purpose and were a community resource. He introduced Mr. Damian Hughes, School

Modernisation Manager, and advised that 'Band A' schemes of the 21st Century Schools Programme were progressing according to schedule. The Authority now needed to complete its annual commissioning plan for post 16 education and begin considering potential strategic 'Band B' schemes for submission to WG for funding through the next tranche of 21 Century Schools. The Chief Officer reported that there was also a need to commission further review work in relation to schools as some had high percentages of surplus places and some had significant backlogs of repairs and maintenance works.

Mr. David Hytch commented on the current backlog of repairs and maintenance for school buildings and acknowledged that school organisational change would continue to address the issue in part but expressed concern around the significant backlog of work which remained. Councillor Carolyn Thomas expressed concerns on the condition of the school toilets in some schools and asked when the backlog of work to upgrade the toilets in schools would be addressed. In his response the Chief Officer confirmed that the condition of school toilets remained a high priority and referred to the positive progress which had been noted by the Welsh Audit Office concerning the repair and maintenance of school buildings in Flintshire. He also reiterated his comments regarding the pressures on the Authority as a result of reduced funding from the WG and the impact on services and advised that organisational change remained the key tool to addressing such deficits.

During discussion the Chairman reminded Members that an item on school repair and maintenance backlog had been scheduled for consideration at the meeting of the Committee to be held on 4 December 2014

Councillors Nancy Matthews and Nigel Steele-Mortimer commented on the valuable role that schools held within their local communities and the need to retain rural provision where possible.

Mr. David Hytch requested that the Committee be consulted on all proposals prior to their adjudication by Cabinet.

In response to the questions and concerns raised by Councillor Dave Mackie around the future provision of sports facilities at John Summer's High School and surrounding areas, the Chief Officer advised that pupils could use the sports facilities at Deeside Leisure Centre. He also advised that the Chief Officer (Organisational Change) would present plans for the development of leisure facilities across Flintshire at future meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

20. GOVERNANCE IN SCHOOLS

The Governor Development Co-ordinating Manager, Education and Youth, introduced a report to update members on the provision of the mandatory training programme for school governors and to provide a summary overview of the nomination process for Local Authority governors to schools.

The Business Support Manager provided background information and referred to the Governor Development Programme and the Welsh Government regulations which came into force in September 2013 concerning mandatory training for school governors.

Members spoke in support of the Governor Training Programme but expressed a number of concerns around the venues, times, and number of courses offered. They also raised concerns around the requirement to attend mandatory training which they felt could be a deterrent to the recruitment and retention of school governors who provided a voluntary service in addition to other responsibilities and commitments. The Business Support Manager commented on the initiatives which had been introduced in response to reduced funding and the need to maximise resources. She referred to the collaborative work being undertaken with other Authorities to provide training directly or to delegate to accredited persons or organisations, and the proposal to introduce on-line training modules in the future to cover the mandatory training requirement.

The Governor Development Co-ordinating Manager referred to the nomination of Local Authority (LA) governors and advised that the current policy for the nomination of LA governor positions which were due for renewal was vested in the local Member in whose division the relevant school was situated. As a result of a number of long standing requests for nominations which remained outstanding it was proposed that the existing policy be revised. The Committee was asked to consider the proposal that Members who fail within a reasonable period of time to nominate to LA governorships lose their right to nominate and the governing body be asked to nominate to the vacancy.

Members referred to the difficulty experienced by school Governing Bodies in the recruitment of school governors. Mr. David Hytch and Councillor Colin Legg suggested that an advert be placed in the local media to encourage members of the public to come forward and apply for vacancies or form a "reserve pool" of volunteers. The Governor Development Co-ordinating Manager agreed to raise the possibility of advertising vacancies through the media with the Flintshire Governors Association. Mrs. Rebecca Stark suggested that interested persons could contact the Headteacher, Chair or Clerk to discuss the role and responsibilities of a school governor and it was agreed that the wording of the proposal be amended to reflect this.

RESOLVED:

That Members, who fail within a reasonable period of time, to nominate to Local Authority governorships, following appropriate discussion with Members, Clerks and individual Schools, lose their right to nominate and the governing body is asked to nominate to the vacancy.

21. VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman indicated that there would be a change in the order of the agenda and the item on the Improvement Plan Monitoring Report would be brought forward.

22. IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) introduced a report on the 2014/15 Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Committee. The report covered the period April – July 2014.

The Chief Officer advised that the following Improvement Plan sub-priority reports were attached to the report for the Committee's consideration:

- Modernised and High Performance Education
- Apprenticeships and Training

The Chairman invited members to raise questions.

Mr. David Hytch referred to the RAG status for improving skills in literacy and numeracy and queried why it was Green. The Chief Officer (Education and Youth) explained that the issue around creating capacity would not effect the end delivery of the programme and outcomes and that the issue in relation to staffing was temporary.

Mr. Hytch raised a further query concerning ensuring best quality educational support during implementation of the national model for regional working. He referred to the Perception Survey of Schools' views of Council Services which had been undertaken and asked how sufficient evidence could be provided if only 20 schools had responded. The Chief Officer acknowledged the comment and explained that a full update would be provided by GwE later in the year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee, who are responsible for the overview and monitoring of performance.

23. APPRENTICESHIPS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Chairman invited Mr. Paul Corner, Project Manager, to provide an update on progress concerning creation of Apprenticeships and Training opportunities. He provided background information and referred to the main achievements for the previous six months concerning the National Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, Information Sharing Protocol, Apprenticeships, engagement with businesses, Communities First Activity and the Deeside Enterprise Zone Shared Apprenticeship Scheme. The Project Manager also gave an overview of the next key steps.

During discussion the Project Manager responded to the questions and concerns raised by members around monitoring of attendance and timekeeping.

Mrs. Rebecca Stark requested that the next progress report included feedback on the scheme from the perspective of apprentices and businesses.

Councillor Peter Curtis asked if information could be included in the next update report on how disabled people were being supported to find work.

Councillor Colin Legg emphasised the value of apprenticeships and expressed the view that the achievement of skills and crafts should be more widely promoted.

Following a suggestion from the Project Manager, the Committee agreed that the next update report (to be submitted to the Committee in March, 2015) focus in-depth on apprenticeships.

Mr. David Hytch congratulated the Project Manager and Officers on the positive outcomes and progress achieved to date.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee commissions a further progress report, with particular emphasis on apprenticeships, in six months' time.

24. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator introduced the Forward Work Programme of the Committee. The Facilitator informed members that she would be meeting the Chief Officer (Organisational Change) to discuss Leisure Service items for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme.

Members reviewed the current programme and it was agreed that a special meeting be arranged to consider the item on the Post 16 Commissioning Strategy 2015/16. It was also agreed that the item on Federation and Clusters be moved and submitted to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 23 October 2014, and that an item on school

transport be added to the forward work programme for consideration at a future meeting.

The Facilitator advised that the Headteachers of Gwynedd and Sychdyn Primary schools would also be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee on 23 October 2014 to provide feedback on school to school support in relation to the item on Learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG).

RESOLVED:

That subject to the above the Forward Work Programme be agreed.

25. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was one member of the press and no members of the public in attendance.

(The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and ended at 4.15pm)

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER 2014**

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

SUBJECT: **LEARNING FROM THE SCHOOL STANDARDS MONITORING GROUP (SSMG)**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update on Schools Standards Monitoring for underperforming schools in both primary and secondary phases.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The School Standards Monitoring Group (SSMG) was established to ensure that schools which are under-performing are rigorously challenged by the Local Authority but are also appropriately supported in order to make progress and improve the outcomes for their learners. The group also provides elected members with the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge of the level of school performance within the authority and actively work alongside officers in providing that challenge and support.

The membership of the group for the academic year 2013-14 was as follows:-

Cllr Chris Bithell	Lead Member for Lifelong Learning
Cllr Ian Roberts	Chair, LL Scrutiny Committee
Mr David Hytch	LL Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Dave Mackie	LL Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Nancy Matthews	LL Scrutiny Committee
Ian Budd	Chief Officer, Education & Youth
Claire Homard	Principal Primary Officer
Kevin Grandfield	Principal Secondary Officer
GwE System Leader	Depending on which school in SSMG

2.02 The criteria for monitoring schools remains two-fold – those with data trends showing a period of performance below the Free School Meal benchmarks for their family of schools and those in an Estyn follow up category. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors of the identified schools are invited to two meetings per year – one in the autumn term to establish the context for the school's current performance and strategies for improvement; the second, at the end of the summer term to exemplify the impact of those strategies on pupil outcomes.

Wherever appropriate, outcomes of Estyn inspections or revisits are included in these discussions. The meetings provide the opportunity for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to demonstrate their strength of leadership in tackling the issues faced by their school. Officers are also able to consider appropriate interventions and support needed by the school in order for them to work effectively towards their improvement targets. For the first time, the GwE officer for each school was invited to the summer review meeting to give their perspective on the school's progress. This was very successful and will now be a feature of all SSMG meetings.

- 2.03 At the end of the monitoring meetings a decision is made whether the school can be removed from monitoring because it has made sufficient progress or whether it needs to remain in the group because there are still outstanding performance issues.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 At the academic year 2013-14 there were seven primary schools subject to monitoring by the SSMG. This increased to nine mid year as a result of two schools being inspected and put in the categories of Estyn Monitoring and Special Measures. Three further schools were included in the group because of Estyn concerns and the remaining four were identified as needing monitoring as a result of data trends and other risk factors e.g. change of leadership arrangements. One secondary school was invited to meet a monitoring group.

- 3.02 As in the previous year, similar themes were identified as being common to effective school improvement:-

- The strength of the leadership provided by the Headteacher through effective self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The strength of the Governing Body in understanding the school's position, their active involvement in monitoring the school's performance and their ability to robustly act as a critical friend to hold the school to account.
- The effectiveness of pupil tracking systems to quickly identify pupils at risk of under-performing.
- The use of appropriate intervention strategies delivered by well-trained staff.
- Rigorous target settings processes that set high aspirations for Individual performance, based on effective data analysis and accurate teacher assessment.
- Effective use of local authority services and external agencies to support individual learners.

During this round of monitoring, what also became apparent in the schools that were proving to be successful in their improvement journey was:-

- A strong commitment by the leadership to ensure all staff have access to high quality, ongoing professional development.

- An effective working relationship with the school's GwE System Leader where challenge was accepted and advice acted upon.
 - The degree to which the Headteacher has a commitment to distributive leadership e.g. using other senior and middle managers effectively to ensure the success of the improvement journey.
- 3.03 The feedback from Headteachers and Governors involved in the process this year confirmed that while the process was challenging, they found it constructive to articulate their improvement journey to others. They also appreciated offers of support from Local Authority officers to try to help resolve particular issues. The review of actions from the autumn term meeting to the summer term meeting demonstrated that all schools had taken positive steps towards their improvement targets and could provide evidence of where interventions had had an impact on outcomes for learners.
- 3.04 The inclusion of the GwE System Leader in the monitoring meetings, where they were able to attend, was a positive development. The System Leader was able to provide another useful perspective on the school's improvement journey and outline the support they had provided. There was a clear correlation between the pace of change at the school and the strength of the relationship between the System Leader and the Headteacher. In the examples of the most constructive working partnerships, the Headteacher respected the professionalism of the System Leader, accepted their challenges and acted upon their advice. In turn, the System Leader was able to highlight the efforts being made by the Headteacher and staff to drive improvements, could reflect on the impact the changes were making and could provide examples of additional support they had provided to the school e.g. attending Governors' meetings, leading staff meetings etc.
- 3.05 As in the previous year, some Headteachers found the meetings useful to identify particular issues around premises or other service areas within the LA which had not been delivered as efficiently as they had hoped. One example raised was about the elongated process related to the closure of the Croft Nursery and the delay in receiving the ministerial decision, which had caused a lot of uncertainty in the area amongst parents and staff of the schools affected by the closure with the resulting impact that a huge amount of work to close the school and relocate provision had to be done in the last week of the summer term.
- 3.06 One Secondary School was invited to attend a monitoring meeting with group members. This school was represented at the meeting by the Acting Headteacher, Chair of Governors and appointed Challenge Adviser from GwE. The meeting focused on four key points, learner outcomes, deficit budget, the role of leadership teams in securing improvement and the role the Governors will play in this. The school, working with the GwE adviser, shared a comprehensive action plan

for moving forward with these issues. It is worth noting that the school has been included in the School Challenge Cymru cohort and is now receiving additional support from Welsh Government through this process.

3.07 Outcomes from the Primary SSMG by July 2014

School	GwE/LA Stage	Outcome
A	4	School continues to make good progress under the relatively new leadership team. Data improving steadily but still below expected levels. Governors input strengthened - more challenging and acting more as critical friend. However, capacity to improve still requires high levels of support from LA and GwE. Risk remains that Estyn visit would place school in a serious category of concern.
B	4	School placed in Special Measures after very poor Estyn outcome in January 2015. Headteacher absent since inspection due to serious health issues. Acting Head seconded from another local school and making a positive impact. First Estyn revisit in July was positive – noted progress being made in all areas. High levels of support from GwE and LA.
C	4	School classified as In Need of Significant Improvement by Estyn making rapid progress under strong leadership of HT and Govs. Improvement in data 2014, weak teaching issues being resolved. Leadership team strengthened for Sept 14. Revisit anticipated Spring Term 2015. Support from LA and GwE.
D	4	School classified as In Need of Significant Improvement by Estyn making steady progress in meeting recommendations and being monitored carefully to ensure all in place for anticipated revisit in

		Autumn term. Support from LA & GwE.
E	3	Amalgamation and move into new premises completed on schedule for September 14 but remains a school at risk whilst two schools embed into one new processes are embedded. Concerns about accuracy of teacher assessment have been addressed over the year but some issues related to quality of teaching remain. Support from LA & GwE.
F	3 (moving towards 2)	School in Estyn Monitoring made good progress towards meeting recommendations over the year. HT and Chair working effectively to drive improvements. Estyn reviewed school in September 2014 and recommended removal from Monitoring. SSMG to recommend removal from the list at next meeting.
Gi Gii	2 3	Two schools under single leadership arrangement since January 2015 – proving to be effective. School Gi in LA Monitoring for one minor quality indicator – made sufficient progress and has been removed from Estyn follow up in September 14. School Gii was inspected in July 2014 and judged to be in need of Estyn Monitoring which was a positive result based on the circumstances of the school. School Gi no longer needs to be part of SSMG. School Gii will remain in monitoring until judged by Estyn to be out of category (expected revisit Summer 2015). Leadership and teaching at Gii improved by a fixed term position of Assistant Headteacher. Headteacher providing very strong leadership on both sites and has clear vision for improvement. Support from LA and GwE.
H	3	School placed in Estyn Monitoring in January 2015 related to a couple of

		quality indicators. Brought into SSMG for first meeting June 2014. HT and Gvs responding positively to challenge and clear plan in place to address recommendations. Anticipated revisit Spring 2015. Support from LA and GwE.
1	2	School been on major improvement journey since being placed In Need of Significant Improvement in June 2012 and removed a year later. Stronger leadership provided by HT and Governors, data profile significantly improved over last two years, strong focus on improving learner outcomes and teachers' skills. Removed from SSMG

3.08 The SSMG will continue to monitor the schools highlighted above and draw in other schools identified at risk based on information received from GwE summer reports and inspection activity.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That members receive the report on the work undertaken by the School Standards Monitoring Group and endorse it having a continued role working in the same way with targeted schools in 2014-15.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 N/A

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER 2014**

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

SUBJECT: **COLLABORATIVE WORKING BETWEEN SCHOOLS & FEDERATIONS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update members on the progress made with developing collaborative working and federations between schools.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Flintshire County Council has a responsibility to review and modernise all school provision, to make sure that we are providing the best possible opportunities for learners, so that they can achieve their full potential.

2.02 There remains a pressing case for continuing to renew local educational provision. Key issues for the Council include:

- continuing to raise educational standards;
- creating the conditions for school leaders to succeed;
- ensuring that school buildings are attractive learning and working environments;
- reducing the number of surplus places and the inequity of variation in cost per pupil; and
- providing resilience against falling revenue funding.

2.03 Our aim is that children and young people in Flintshire will develop essential life skills, a strong desire for lifelong learning and be very well prepared for the world of work. All children and young people will be supported to progress through the different stages of their education. Every child and young person will be entitled to a learning programme that will be personalised to make the most of his or her abilities. Children and young people will learn in an exciting and innovative range of styles and settings. These will include vocational, enterprise, voluntary, spiritual, cultural and sporting learning experiences. School organisation will provide opportunities for Welsh and English medium provision and also faith provision.

2.04 Flintshire County Council is committed to continuing to raise standards, with key tasks including securing:

- high expectations and a clear focus on improving teaching, learning and attainment in all school communities;
- all resources available to schools being focused on improving outcomes for children and young people in a context of annual budget pressures;
- a consistent approach to the collection, analysis and use of assessment information, including tracking systems, to target support and interventions; and
- continued commitment to the development of school staff.

2.05 Successful schools have strong leadership at all levels. The challenges associated with leading and managing a school have increased substantially during recent years and the expectations are continuing to increase. The leadership expectations on Headteachers in ensuring teaching and learning is of the highest quality, evaluating and raising standards, developing robust self-evaluation procedures and ensuring the continuous professional development of staff, are substantial. At the same time, the number of applicants for headship posts is declining, particularly in our smallest schools.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 In 2013 the Welsh Government commissioned Robert Hill to develop his report on the “The future delivery of education services in Wales”. It focused on looking at the effectiveness of the current education delivery at school and local authority level, and to consider what should be undertaken at school, local authority, regional and national level with a focus on:

- raising standards and improving learner outcomes at all ages;
- better support and challenge to schools to improve standards;
- developing and strengthening the leadership of schools and the quality of teaching and learning;
- ensuring value for money and effective use of resources; and
- bringing about coherence and strong links between all areas of the education system, including post-16 provision and the wider children’s services agenda.

- 3.02 Robert Hill's view was that the challenge facing the school system could be summarised in a single sentence. There is both a need and the scope to extend school autonomy but the systems and structures necessary to support that autonomy are not yet in place. He also asserted that "parts of the school system are characterised by a local authority-dependency culture – particularly in the primary sector, with schools overly reliant on the local authority for the provision of school improvement and support services to the extent that governors and heads do not feel accountable for the performance of their school."
- 3.03 He also noted that Local Authorities are also missing opportunities to devolve funding and services to groups of schools which can potentially result in a more effective and efficient way of delivering services. For example, federations and/or clusters of schools could be commissioned to play more of a role in providing education welfare services and services for pupils with additional needs including behaviour problems.
- 3.04 Robert Hill recognised that giving schools greater freedoms is unlikely on their own to lead to a substantial impact on classroom practice. However, there is a positive correlation between schools having greater autonomy (in the areas of hiring and managing staff, defining their curriculum and assessment practice and managing their budget) and higher student performance. Several aspects of collaborative working between schools are also associated with improved outcomes in areas such as higher student morale and commitment, less non-disruptive behaviour and a better disciplinary climate. In 2005, the DfES published the most important characteristics of a successful collaborative, based on the experiences of practitioners:
- A sense of shared identity between schools - for example, through geographical proximity, or a sense of being an inclusive community or church ethos.
 - A sense of common purpose - the groups of schools involved in collaboration should have a shared sense of what needs to be done and how it is to be done, and a joint vision for improving the attainment, achievement and progression of young people.
 - Leadership - a collaborative partnership needs a strong cohesive leadership, and should be interested in developing and sustaining leadership across all levels of the schools.
 - A strong management infrastructure - collaboratives must demonstrate that they have the capacity to deliver.
 - Trusting relationship - having trust between schools is fundamental to effective collaboration and should be built into every level of management. Schools need to share a sense of openness and a willingness to operate in a joined-up and united way.

- A system of review - collaboratives need to be monitored and evaluated to show that they are being effective.
- Commitment - schools must be prepared to commit both time and resources to ensure that the collaborative is effective and sustainable. They will also need a commitment to raising standards and achievement in all of the schools involved and to continually improve progression for young people.
- Communication - excellent communication mechanisms are required when introducing change, particularly where lots of schools are involved.
- Sustainability - there must be a clear sustainability strategy in place to enable a collaboration to cope. For example, if the leadership on one of the schools changes; if additional schools wish to join in; if existing schools wish to leave. If committing contracts or expenditure for any length of time, financial sustainability is vital.

3.05 The Hill Review envisaged that more schools should be structured (through federation or review) so that they are also large enough to have a Headteacher without substantial regular teaching commitments. This would give the Headteacher the necessary time to undertake the key leadership role within the school or federation. Schools also need to be sufficiently resilient in size to ensure suitable leadership development opportunities in individual schools to enable effective succession planning.

3.06 Flintshire County Council actively supports schools to develop closer working relationships amongst its schools. There are different forms of collaborative working. Most schools in Flintshire already work in a collaborative way with other educational establishments in their area. A federation, rather than a collaboration, is a more formalised agreement to work together. Perhaps the best way of thinking about this is as a continuum:

- Informal Collaboration: this is an informal and non-committal arrangement with no fixed agreement.
- Soft Federation: This is where schools have made a formalised commitment to work together, e.g. by creating joint committees on aspects of teaching and learning. The schools may also have more formal agreements such as service level agreements, joint committees with delegated powers and joint appointments.
- Formal Federation: This is where a number of schools have decided to operate under the guidance of a single governing body which allows for efficient, stream-lined decision making. More information about Formal Federation can be found at Appendix 1. It involves a specific statutory application process.

- 3.07 Flintshire also recognises that partnership between schools takes time to mature but if organised in a structured way brings benefits to participating schools, even where some schools are seemingly contributing more than receiving services to the partnership.

Benefits to Pupils

- 3.08 There are many potential benefits to schools from collaborative working. Collaboratives can often facilitate inclusion and diversity for their pupils more effectively than individual schools. Pupils are able to establish larger friendship groups which can help small schools address the difficulties of gender imbalance.
- 3.09 There are social advantages for children of small schools to work and play with pupils of a similar age.
- 3.10 Pupils benefit from accessing a greater range of resources, broadening their curriculum opportunities such as sports equipment and e-learning initiatives.
- 3.11 Pupils at different schools can be brought together for specific events, such as music, ICT, drama and team games.

Benefits to Parents and Local Communities

- 3.12 Cross-phase collaboratives can enable a smooth and effective passage for pupils on their education career path and possibly reduce anxiety for children and parents/carers.
- 3.13 Collaboratives are likely to find it easier to deliver childcare, family learning and other community activities and may be able to engage more fully in partnerships with business, industry and higher education.

Benefits to Schools

- 3.10 Collaboratives can help to stabilise a school population and accommodation sufficiency issues may also be addressed.
- 3.11 Collaboratives may benefit from streamlined working practices and the appointment of joint staff (such as ALNCO, Business Manager or Subject Leader), all of which leads to shared accountability and consistent/coherent performance management objectives.
- 3.12 Schools may be able to establish improved strategies for meeting pupils' additional learning needs, ranging from behaviour difficulties to providing challenge for more able and talented pupils.
- 3.13 Schools may also establish enhanced purchasing power, gaining economies of scale from single rather than multiple maintenance contracts for buildings and grounds, ICT equipment, school catering and caretaking, etc.

- 3.14 Where Collaboratives lead to a reduction of net costs, the schools are able to retain and reallocate any savings.

Benefits to Teaching Staff

- 3.15 Collaboratives can ease the feeling of isolation among teachers who are working in a rural setting. Teachers can provide support for one another in terms of collaborative planning, induction and training and covering absence. A larger team of teachers can provide a greater pool of expertise and can create additional opportunities for promotion. Staff remain on contract to their school.
- 3.16 The workload for some Headteachers at small schools can be excessive. Federation is likely to cause less duplication of certain duties, allowing Headteachers to concentrate more of their time on leading and management as well as monitoring and improving standards. This can, in itself, present a more attractive post when a Headteacher vacancy arises.

3.12 Models

Any type of school can agree to work collaboratively with another. However, in the Flintshire context a natural configuration would be local secondary school working with its partner primary schools. Similar models could work in both Welsh medium and faith pyramids. Primary schools can collaborate even if they have traditionally served two different secondary schools as places are allocated on the basis of parental preference and pupils' home addresses. Clearly, where there is more than one type of school, the local authority and Diocesan boards would need to work closely together. Although currently rare, cross authority boundary collaboratives are also possible in principle.

- 3.13 Schools in collaboratives continue to operate as individual schools. Admissions to each school continue to be determined by the appropriate admission authority. Schools continue to be inspected as single establishments. Schools retain their individual budgets and there is flexibility to use budget allocations across all of the schools within a collaborative. Powers of intervention are not affected by a school's membership of a federation.
- 3.14 It is important that all members of staff are kept informed of developments throughout the transition. Appropriate time needs to be allocated in order for staff to familiarise themselves with the arrangements, particularly if they elect to work at alternative sites. Existing staff are not obliged to travel to other school sites within the collaborative if they do not wish to do so, though new employees would have such a requirement written into their contract.

- 3.15 Where one Headteacher leads all of the schools in a collaborative, he/she should be as accessible as in a non-collaborative school. However, governors may wish to appoint a 'base manager' or a teacher in charge on each site to deal with issues that arise that require immediate attention. This positively offers opportunities for career development.

Accountability

- 3.16 Estyn has encouraged the partnership process by only according the judgement of 'excellent' to a school if it can demonstrate sector-leading practice. Estyn's definition of that term includes an expectation that leading schools are working with other schools. 'It is difficult for provision to be leading the sector if the sector knows nothing about it. So, inspectors need to ask whether the provider has already shared the practice they have seen with others, in networks of professional practice, both internally and externally.' Estyn (2010)

Overcoming Challenges

- 3.17 Robert Hill noted key challenges to deepening partnership and collaborative working in schools. They included that whilst there is a positive trend in terms of more schools committing to working with and supporting each other, the partnership culture is still relatively shallow and insular. Too much of the partnership working is of the 'come and see what we are doing' variety, rather than being based around leaders and teachers sharing data and then working jointly to improve learning. Even where schools are working in a really deep way with each other they would not expect their partnership commitment to oblige them to challenge a school and intervene to support it if they saw it was getting into difficulties.
- 3.18 He also concluded that too often there are clear limits as to how far many schools will go in working with others. Many headteachers and governing bodies were noted as reluctant to contemplate letting a bright and energetic emerging leader go to another school for a term or a year to support their development. They feel their school would lose out – even though it could be viewed as an opportunity to promote an aspiring leader from within the school or gain a reciprocal leader from another school who could bring in fresh ideas. Similarly, some schools are reluctant to move to formalised shared governance or single governing body models of partnership.
- 3.19 Professor David Hargreaves' research on collaborative working has described a clear link between schools increasing the depth of their joint work and developing formal governance and accountability structures. He notes that a key characteristic of mature school partnerships is how over time they move towards formalising the arrangements for how they work together as they deepen their joint activities to improve teaching and learning. This in turn provides the proper basis for increasing school autonomy and building a school-led improvement system.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That members note the framework for developing enhanced collaborative working and federations between schools.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 In terms of funding, the Independent Task and Finish Group report chaired by Vivian Thomas (Welsh Government, 2011) noted that ideally 'funding goes directly to the level where delivery and performance lies'. It is important that federations and clusters build up their procurement expertise so that they have the capacity to test the market and ensure that they receive the best value for money for the services for the schools in their cluster or collaborative. Enhancing collaborative working between schools can enable improved value for money in provision of education support service provision, together with practical strategies for workload management between school leaders.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The establishing of enhanced collaborative working arrangements can enable the pooling of resources and expertise to support the progress of children and young people from low income families.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no equalities implications from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities implications from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Re-organisations of schools will impact in various ways on the personnel employed. Whenever there is an impact on the workforce of school modernisation proposals, Flintshire County Council policies related to personnel matters together with National School Teachers Pay and Conditions documents are adhered to in order to mitigate any negative impact.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No consultations are required for this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 No consultations are required for this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Formal Federations – briefing document

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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Appendix 1: Formal Federations - Briefing Document

Introduction

The formal federation of schools is a legal process which enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils in that federation.

The term federation is often used to describe many forms of collaboration between schools. The Statutory process of Federation is often referred to as “Hard Federation” or “Formal Federation”. An informal, non-statutory arrangement between schools is often called “Soft Federation” or “Collaborative”, where schools have made a commitment to work together through some form of joint governance.

Legislation:

Welsh Government have brought in new regulations around federation of Maintained schools in Wales

The Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 which came into force on 22 May 2014 give effect to the Local Authority’s (LA’s) powers to federate schools. (School governors already have powers to federate by choice under provisions introduced in 2010. These powers have now been consolidated into the 2014 Regulations). See link to Regulations:-

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/140522-guidance-on-federation-of-schools-en.pdf>

Overview:

The process for a LA led federation of schools has not changed since the consultation. However, the following changes were made to the consultation proposals to reflect consultation responses and the outcome of Robert Hill’s Review of the Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales:

- A cap of no more than six has been imposed on the number of schools that can federate.
- The membership of the various models of Federated Governing Bodies has been more closely aligned to that set out in the 2010 Federation Regulations, although limits have been introduced on the numbers of governors in each category,
- The minimum number of governors on a governing body remains at 15 but the maximum number has been increased to 27.
- The provision for separate teacher and staff governor categories on a federated governing body has been maintained.

- A Small Schools' Order will define a small school as having fewer than 91 pupils rather than 100 pupils or under. Welsh Government (WG) regulations give LA powers to close schools with 10 pupils or under without statutory process.
- The federation date for a federation of small schools only is at least 100 days from the date federation proposals are published rather than the 125 days for other federations.
- Schools with a faith or trust base such as voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and foundation schools cannot federate with community schools and maintained nurseries; foundation schools will be able to federate with other foundation schools. Voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools will be able to federate with each other where they share a similar charitable trust status and/or religious ethos. There will continue to be a majority of foundation governors on the governing body.
- Governing bodies can choose to appoint a single headteacher with overall responsibility for all of the schools in the federation, or in the absence of such an appointment have a headteacher in every, or some of the schools in the federation.

Key facts

- There will be a single governing body with strategic oversight of all schools within the federation.
- Each school retains its name, category, budget, staff and remains in its community.
- Shared staff - Each school can retain its headteacher if it wishes although some federations may wish to share a headteacher. This might be particularly helpful for small schools but in federations of bigger schools the decision may be to appoint a head of the federation or, if no such appointment is made, to retain the headteachers of every school.
- If a single headteacher and deputy headteacher post is created to manage all of the schools in the federation, those posts do not have to be advertised nationally if one of the headteachers or deputy headteachers expresses an interest in the post (See Section 14 for further information).
- Each school has its own Estyn inspection, though increasingly these are co-ordinated to happen at the same time for all schools within the federation to minimise stress and disruption.
- The governing body of a federation can use budget, resources and staff across the federation to improve the educational outcomes for all pupils. An audit trail must be kept and separate accounts produced for each school in the federation. .
- The governing body of a federation cannot require existing staff to work across all schools within the federation, but they can negotiate with the school staff

School Modernisation

In the context of School Modernisation, federal arrangements in schools have not been progressed by the LA, as previously under the old regulations the LA did not have the powers to do so. Federations were considered only as an option available to the Governing Bodies when reviewing areas.

Consequently, reviews in areas, historically have used the following models for review:-

- Continuing existing schools
- Merging of existing schools
- Building new Area schools
- Co-locating schools (primary/secondary campus)
- Closure of schools that are no longer fit for purpose

The drivers of Schools modernisation are:-

- Educational Improvement
- Resilient Leadership
- Suitable Buildings
- Reducing the Number of Unfilled Places in Our Schools to an Acceptable Level
- Ensuring That All Pupils Have Equality of Access to Resources

Advantages of Federal Arrangements

Educational Standards

A survey undertaken by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) in September 2011 on the impact of federated schools in England found improvements were evident in the three key areas of teaching and learning, behaviour and pupil achievement

A copy of the report can be accessed at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/leadership-of-more-one-school>

Three main reasons were given for federating. Some schools had been approached by a LA to help a struggling school; others were small schools in danger of closure or unable to recruit high quality staff; and others were seeking to strengthen the overall education of pupils in their communities.

Federations set up to improve the capacity of small schools were successful in broadening and enriching the curriculum and care, guidance and support for pupils. These also resulted in better achievement for groups of pupils such as the vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

In good federations, leaders made the most of increased resources and opportunities for professional development and used these to achieve their

priorities. Crucially, training and development were carefully tailored to meet the needs of the school.

Sharing these strengths, through a federation, can bring benefits to learners across a number of schools. A school's strengths can come in many forms, including leadership, staff, resources, expertise, and facilities. By working together, through federation and other partnership arrangements, schools can:

- Raise their standards, for example, by shared training and working practices, encouraging their staff to support each other and developing integrated curriculum and pastoral policies.
- Offer pupils a wider range of opportunities, for example, by holding joint activities or sharing facilities or teachers that might be difficult to sustain individually.
- Develop a range of extended services and activities for pupils and the wider community.
- Improve their leadership and management, for example, through shared headship
- Maximise the sharing of resources, taking advantage of economies of scale

Recruitment

The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) Annual Report in 2011 stated that some 36% of primary, 19% of secondary and 39% of special school head teacher posts were reported unfilled after an advertisement. Last year the percentages were 34% of primary, 19% of secondary and 43% of special schools. This suggests that all sectors are still experiencing considerable difficulty in filling their posts, and secondary more than most.

As in recent years, a significant proportion of head teacher vacancies are the result of a retirement (65% of primary, 61% of secondary and 82% of secondary school vacancies). Most head teachers are still retiring before the age of 65.

Small schools also face above average challenges when seeking a new headteacher.

Federal arrangements may assist in areas where headteacher appointments are difficult or challenging.

Disadvantages of Federal Arrangements

Federation arrangements in schools do not appear to meet a number of the key drivers of School Modernisation. Disadvantages include:

- **Ensuring All Our Buildings Are Suitable** – The 21st Century programme funding arrangements from WG, relies on rationalisation of school estate to generate revenue savings to enable access to

prudential borrowing. Additionally in some cases sale of surplus estate will also generate capital receipts used to fund the LA's 50% contribution to the programme. Federal arrangements will not rationalise the estate, therefore revenue saving will be either nil or limited to potential savings in the school allocations and only if formula allocations and or structures can be changed.

- **Reducing the Number of Unfilled Places in Our Schools to an Acceptable Level** - As Federal arrangements do not rationalise school estate, reducing unfilled places is limited to “mothballing” areas of schools. This may or may not be achievable in individual schools for operational, practicable or building related reasons
- **Ensuring That All Pupils Have Equality of Access to Resources** (cost per pupil) – Federation arrangements do not significantly reduce the range of cost per pupil. A significant reduction in range is likely to occur only where there is a change in school formula allocations or if structures can be changed from the current arrangements.

Conclusion

Governing Bodies or the Local Authority may consider that Formal Federation is an appropriate way forward for organisation in an area review of educational provision.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER 2014**

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

SUBJECT: **HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a summary report on accidents and incidents in schools during the academic year 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 and a summary of actions taken by the Council to support schools in achieving healthy and safe environments.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Local Management of Schools requires that school employees, Governing Bodies and the Local Authority work together to ensure Health, Safety and Welfare objectives are achieved.

2.02 The school is responsible for all areas it has control of; school governing bodies have legal responsibilities for health and safety as the direct employer and/or as occupier and body in control of the premises.

2.03 The data presented in this report is based on accident reports from schools provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Accidents and Incidents

3.01.1 Flintshire County Council currently has 94 schools and special units.

The total number of accidents / incident report forms received for the academic year **1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 = 2584**. This equates to an average of 27 reports per school over the academic year. The current figure compares with 2302 reports received over the same period in 2012/13 (an increase of 282 accident reports overall. Of the total 259 reports related to employees, 2314 pupils, 7 members of the public and 4 contractors).

3.01.2 **Accidents to Pupils**

For the period **1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 a total of 2314** accident reports received related to pupils. This compares with 2012 recorded for the previous year (an increase of 302 reports relating to pupils overall).

Primary School pupils: Of the total pupil figure of 2314 reports, pupils in primary schools accounted for 1592. An increase of 253 reports from primary schools compared to last year's figure of 1339.

Secondary School pupils: 521 reports were attributed to secondary schools this academic year compared to 475 recorded for the same period last year (an increase of 46 reports).

Special School pupils: 201 reports were attributed to special schools this academic year compared to 198 last year (an increase of 3 reports).

3.01.3 **Accidents to Employees**

1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 a total of 259 accident reports received related to employees. This compares with 290 recorded for the same period last year (a reduction of 31 reports overall).

Employees in primary schools accounted for 107 (an increase of 3), secondary school employees accounted for 57 (an increase of 16), and employees in special schools accounted for 95 (a reduction of 49 reports).

3.01.4 **RIDDOR reported**

The number of accidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) in the academic year 2013/2014 = 50. This compares with a total of 104 reportable for the same period in 2012/13 (48% reduction).

Of the 50 reportable accidents, 9 were categorised as major injuries, 3 were categorised as over 7 day (incapacitated as a result of injury to continue normal duties), and 38 were categorised as members of the public taken directly to hospital from the scene of the accident for treatment (for the purposes of RIDDOR pupils are classed as members of the public).

The reduction in RIDDOR reportable accidents to the HSE this academic year may in part be due to the removal of the requirement to report over 3 day injuries and partly due to revised criteria for members of the public taken to hospital for treatment from the scene.

3.01.5 **Top three Type of Incident categories:**

Pupils: Slip, trip, falls, collision with person, or coming into contact with something fixed or stationary.

Employees: Physical / verbal assaults, slip trip falls, hit my moving, falling, flying object (physical assaults category mostly relates to incidents in special schools where it may be noted they are not intentional acts of violence).

3.01.6 **Top three Type of Injury categories:**

Pupils: Bruising / contusion, aches and pains, minor scratches and grazes.

Employees: Bruising / contusion, aches and pains, sprains and strains.

Of the figure 2584, 246 (9%) reports were of non-injury accidents or injuries.

Further details on accidents and incidents in schools can be obtained directly from individual schools (individual school overview and analysis), or from Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth.

3.02 **Action and Initiatives**

3.02.1 School accidents and incidents are required to be reported to Corporate Health and Safety regardless of severity of injury. The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth monitors all accident and incident reports, and as necessary, follows up / investigates to ensure causes are suitably identified and appropriate remedial actions implemented to prevent recurrence.

3.02.2 Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth carries out claims investigations relating to school property, accident injuries and ill health, analysing the findings and providing reports for our claims handlers. Schools get the benefit of support and guidance on remedial actions to prevent recurrence.

3.02.3 Schools have access to a wide range of key health and safety resources provided on their dedicated information resources website <http://moodle.flintshire.gov.uk/la>. This includes model health and safety policies, model risk assessments and a wide range of topical health and safety guidance covering both curriculum and non-curriculum activities and environments.

One example of specialist curriculum /health and safety resource provided by the LA is CLEAPSS. CLEAPSS stands for the Consortium of Local Education Authority Practical Science Services,

but is not limited to Science curriculum. It provides general support and advice for all aspects of practical work in schools and colleges in the subjects of Science, D&T and Art, including a cost effective way for the employer to discharge its duties under the H&S at Work Act 1974 and all associated Regulations in these subject areas, namely by providing comprehensive and specific safety guidance and model risk assessments for any hazardous activities carried out by schools in the subject areas. This includes information, advice and training about laboratory and workshop design and working practices, teachers and technicians and their jobs, equipment, tools, materials, living organisms, and practical activities for students, with an overarching focus on health and safety. Their guidance and supporting documentation covers everything from hatching chicks to managing radioactive sources and almost everything else in between. Education continues to fund this resource for schools to facilitate consistent standards to be applied by schools.

3.02.4 Inspections, maintenance, surveys etc

A number of statutory inspections and assessments are carried out in schools by in-house specialists or external specialists as appropriate to maintain the necessary standards of safety. This would include inspections of Design and Technology fixed workshop equipment, Sport and Physical Education equipment, school boilers, water and gas services, lifts and hoists, asbestos surveys to name but a few. In addition:

Condition Surveys – Assessment of the physical state of the premises to ensure safe and continuous operation. Condition data collection is necessary to enable repairs and maintenance works to be costed, prioritised, planned and undertaken on a programme basis.

Suitability Surveys – Assessment which covers teaching and non-teaching accommodation including staff facilities, and has regard to the type and quality of educational facilities to ensure they are ‘fit for purpose’ in delivering the curriculum and raising standards.

NB The LA’s document ‘Scheme for Financing Schools’ sets out the responsibilities for inspection, maintenance, repair and replacements in schools.

3.02.5 On a school by school basis, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Health and Safety Policy, all schools are required to undertake a full self audit of their health and safety management systems to review their compliance, utilising the proformas provided by the Authority in accordance with the stated criteria and minimum standards that must be met.

A monitoring questionnaire is currently being prepared to send to school Governors to obtain confirmation of their current status of compliance with their health and safety management requirements.

- 3.02.6 All schools are required, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Health and Safety Policy, to carry out safety inspections of all areas within their schools, on a termly basis, utilising the proformas provided by the Authority in accordance with the stated criteria and appropriate minimum standards that must be met.

More frequently, inspection regimes exist within individual practical curriculum areas, such as laboratories, and design technology workshops. These are internal inspections carried out to a specified criteria in accordance with legislative requirements and best practice.

- 3.02.7 Annual training for Educational Visits Co-ordinators takes place to ensure every school has a competent person for the appropriate planning and approval of school visits using the Authorities on-line 'Evolve' system.

Annual Health and Safety training is provided for school Governors, last provided in November 2013.

Managing Safely (IOSH accredited) training is available for Head teachers along with Risk Assessment workshops, and Accident Investigation workshops.

An audit has recently been undertaken in respect of the current status of training held by Design and Technology staff in schools. This was carried out by an external company DATRUS. All Flintshire secondary schools complied fully with the audit, and where training needs have been identified schools are aware of their responsibility for providing it to the recommended standards required. This would include any refresher training requirements. In this respect DATRUS have advised that they are currently in further liaison with the schools directly and a course on core machines is to take place on 21 October hosted by Maes Garmon. Further courses will be held.

- 3.02.8 Asbestos Management in Schools. Welsh Government issued a new guidance document 'Asbestos Management in Schools' in February 2014. The purpose of this document is to ensure that head teachers, school governors and other members of the school management teams are aware of requirements in respect of asbestos management procedures and legislation. A copy has been added to the school information database earlier in the year and a reminder to schools is currently being prepared and will include a copy to individual schools. From an LA responsibility perspective I can confirm that all schools have been surveyed and all school premises have been issued with a current school asbestos survey containing a register of any asbestos

containing materials, their location and condition. Any asbestos containing materials in our schools have been risk assessed and where appropriate either removed or encapsulated to prevent exposure.

3.02.9 Schools have access to day to day advice, guidance and support from the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Members note the information contained within this report.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 N/A

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY 23RD OCTOBER, 2014**

REPORT BY: **HOUSING AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
Special meeting in November (date to be confirmed)	Post 16 Commissioning Strategy 2015/16	To receive an update on implementation of the Council's Post 16 Commissioning Strategy	Service delivery	Secondary Schools Officer	15 October 2014
4 December 2014	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q2 performance outturns for improvement targets.	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	26 November 2014
	National Model for School Improvement	To consider the National Model for School Improvement	Service Planning	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
	School Repair and Maintenance Backlog	To consider the school repair and maintenance backlog	Service Planning	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
	School Modernisation Strategy	To consider the School Modernisation Strategy	Service Planning	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
	Playschemes – scoping reports	To consider the way forward for 2015/16	Service Planning	Chief Officer Organisational Change	

15 January 2015	School Balances	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools	Monitoring Report	Finance Manager	7 January 2015
	Self-evaluation on Education Services	To update Members on overall service performance	Performance Monitoring	Head of Inclusion Service	
	Statement of special needs – progress report on performance	To provide Members with a progress report on performance in relation to the statement of special needs	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
	Public Library Standards	To consider the Council's performance against the Public Library Standards	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Organisational Change	
26 February 2015	Learner Outcomes	To provide Members with a summary of learner outcomes, including information on attendance and exclusions	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	18 February 2015
	Incidents of arson, vandalism and burglaries in Flintshire schools	Annual update report to review progress	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
	Leisure Services Assets – scoping report	To consider the Council's approach to sustaining leisure assets	Service Planning & Delivery	Chief Officer Organisational Change	

26 March 2015	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q3 performance outturns for improvement targets.	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	18 March 2015
	School Transport Update	To receive an update on School Transport.	Service Delivery	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
24 April 2015	Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)	To receive an update on progress with the development of the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, to include a presentation from the Chief Officer of GwE.	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	16 April 2015
	School Improvement Strategy	To consider the School Improvement Strategy	Service Planning	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
4 June 2015	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q4/Year End performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	27 May 2015
	Improvement Plan 2015/16	To consider the draft Improvement Plan 2015/16	Performance Monitoring	Chief Officer Education & Youth	
16 July 2015					8 July 2015

Future joint meeting with the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider:-

- Children & Young People Partnership
- Educational Attainment of Looked After Children

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
	School Modernisation	To update Members on the progress made with School Modernisation	Chief Officer Education and Youth
January	Self-evaluation on education services	To update Members on overall service performance	Chief Officer Education and Youth
February	Learner Outcomes – include attendance and exclusions in annual learner outcomes report	To provide Members with a summary of pupil attainment across primary and secondary school	Chief Officer Education and Youth
February / March	Incidents of arson, vandalism and burglaries in Flintshire schools	Annual update report to review progress	Chief Officer Education and Youth
April	Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)	To receive an update on progress with the development of the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, to include a presentation from the Chief Officer of GwE.	Chief Officer Education and Youth
November	School Balances	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools at the end of the financial year	Chief Officer Education and Youth
December	Health & Safety in Schools	To receive a summary report on accidents and incidents in schools during the academic year and the actions taken to support schools in achieving healthy and safe environments.	Chief Officer Education and Youth