Alignment with the National Model for Regional Working

Coordinate the regional dimension of the ICT Strategy

1. **National Model Requirements**

    1.1. The National Model for Regional Working Guidance document states that it is within the Regional Education Consortium's function and role to:

    "Coordinate the regional dimension of the ICT Strategy to include school ICT self-evaluation, leadership and planning of ICT for learning; safeguarding, emerging technologies, virtual learning environments, learning technology and the national literacy and numeracy framework, running networks for heads of departments and ICT co-ordinators, support for pedagogy and curriculum development (with reference to the Learning and Digital World Strategy).

    1.2. The guidance document also states that the consortium's brokerage and improvement activities will include:

    "commissioning and quality assuring a range of predominantly classroom-based training and development programmes to support improvements in teaching and learning and subject knowledge."

    "identifying excellent departments and lead practitioners using nationally agreed criteria who can be deployed to support other schools for part of their working week."

    1.3. In particular local authorities should share with regional consortia information on their proposals and decisions in relation to:

    "safeguarding arrangements for children and young people."

2. **GwE Role as identified in the initial business case**
    2.1. The full business case published in March 2012 identified Six Key Functions of a Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service. The second function being:
        2.1.1. Provide support for schools and Local Authorities, (together or separately as required) when operating to improve schools through:

        "Provide expertise on IT (Curriculum and Pedagogy) and the Virtual Learning Environment."

3. **GwE Current Role and Functions**
    3.1. There are currently no arrangements within GwE in respect of meeting the needs for the National Model and the Strategic direction of ICT

4. **North Wales ICT and Data Sub Group**
    4.1. The North Wales ICT Strategy Sub-Group aims to; *"....provide a strategic lead for the consortium on the effective and safe use of technology in teaching and learning with the aim of improving pupils' standards and outcomes."* (Excerpt from initial terms of reference)

4.2. The group has had some success in addressing elements of the requirements for the regional strategic direction for ICT, however it faces a number of important challenges:

4.2.1. The provision for ICT support across the 6 authorities varies greatly, as can be seen in section 5.

4.2.2. Members on the ICT Sub-Group have very different roles within their LA and organizations.

4.2.3. The use of technology in learning and teaching is increasingly the focus of national and regional initiatives (e.g. LiDW, LiDW CPD grant and HWB+). The groups initial terms of reference makes reference to a minimal expected commitment from members which is not likely to be enough to meet the needs of the National Model.

4.2.4. There is currently no budget or administrative support allocated to the group.

4.2.5. There is uncertainty as to accountability of the group and accountability to the group.

5. Current Arrangements for ICT Across the Region

5.1. Wrexham

5.1.1. Structure

5.1.1.1. ICT Strategy Manager supporting schools and Lifelong Learning with Strategic ICT

5.1.1.2. ICT Support SLA for schools covering Technical Support, SIMS / MIS Support, Telecoms and ICT Procurement;

5.1.1.2.1. 100% buy back currently from Primary and Secondary schools

5.1.1.2.2. Renewal due March 2017

5.1.1.2.3. 3 Officers supporting SIMS and MIS and12 Officers Supporting Technical, Networks, Procurement and Telecoms

5.1.2. Support – Through the ICT Strategy Manager and the Schools ICT Support Team schools receive the following:

5.1.2.1. Strategic support for the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning

5.1.2.2. Curriculum and pedagogy advice and post and pre inspection support – some training internally on new technologies and also brokering external providers

5.1.2.3. Technical advice on IT devices and networks along with support, maintenance and an IT procurement service

5.1.2.4. Central Networks and infrastructure services including Web Filtering, Managed Wireless Network, Mobile Device Management, Anti-Virus and Network Security

5.1.2.5. Training and support for Capita SIMS

5.1.2.6. Representation on regional and national groups

5.1.2.7. Support locally for National and Regional initiatives and activities. E.g HWB and HWB+ / LiDW / PSBA Broadband Project / 14-19 Digital Resource Group

5.2. Conwy

5.2.1. Structure

5.2.1.1. As a result of regional (see 2 above) and LA re-structuring ICT schools is now overseen as one of many aspects of Senior School Effectiveness Officers role.

5.2.1.2. Approximately 1.8 FTE supporting school related ICT curriculum related areas e.g. HWB+, hand held digital device project, brokering curriculum ICT training

5.2.2. Support

5.2.2.1. Secondary schools and now Primary schools since April 2014 negotiate and purchase own annual ICT technical support SLAs through delegated budget. Secondary school arrangements vary but currently the primary pattern is more consistent i.e. 2 separate SLAs:

5.2.2.1.1. Procurement and technical maintenance support for the curriculum network

5.2.2.1.2. SIMS - technical and user support and maintenance

5.2.2.2. Central Networks and infrastructure services provide Web Filtering, e-mail, Anti-Virus, Network Security and telecoms

5.2.2.3. Primary schools can also buy in to 3 levels of LA MIS bureau services depending on school need.

5.3. Denbighshire

5.3.1. Structure

5.3.1.1. The curriculum technical support for ICT has been outsourced for nearly three years with over 80% of schools with a specialist education ICT service provider from the English Department of Education ICT Services framework.

5.3.1.2. Remaining schools have procured support from three other providers.

5.3.1.3. All the technical support for the school admin ICT is with a separate contract with the main service contractor.

5.3.1.4. Management of contracts is provided by LA Officer .3 approx.

5.3.1.5. ICT Steering Group made of selected school SLT members and Business Managers oversee ICT development in Denbighshire.

5.3.2. Support

5.3.2.1.1 HWB+ trainer .5 FTE until July 2015, provides some school based training.

5.3.2.2. Some ICT training is provided for schools through Hyddysg, Ysgol Glan Clwyd's training company.

5.4. Gwynedd / Anglesey

5.4.1. Structure

5.4.1.1. CYNNAL was established by Gwynedd and Anglesey to provide ICT support for schools within the authorities. Funding for ICT support and procurement has been delegated to schools, and the support services are provided and monitored through a range of Service Level Agreements. Central ICT departments provide and support connectivity to schools through the Life Long Learning projects, and more recently the PSBA / Learning in Digital Wales projects.

5.4.1.2. Strategic advice/support and monitoring of support levels/services are undertaken by ICT managers within the company, in conjunction with User / Steering Groups from schools.

5.4.1.3. Technical support is provided by a team of 13 primary school technicians, secondary school technicians, SIMS technician, and networking / AV technicians, supporting schools in Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy and Denbighshire.

5.4.1.4. CAPITA SIMS is supported in Gwynedd and Anglesey schools by a team of five staff.

5.4.1.5. Development of online / interactive resources and management systems is provided by a team of 5 staff. The use and support of HWB is provided by two secondary school secondees.

5.4.2. Support

5.4.2.1. Sales and installation of computer and technical equipment

5.4.2.2. Repair and maintenance of computers and technical equipment

5.4.2.3. Network installation and support Installation of interactive whiteboards, display screens and projectors

5.4.2.4. Sales and support of SIMS / MIS programs and educational software

5.4.2.5. Support for the use of management information systems in schools

5.4.2.6. Design and development of interactive educational resources

5.4.2.7. Development of on-line management systems to assist schools with MIS

5.4.2.8. Supporting and facilitating the use of Learning Platforms

5.4.2.9. Training and workshops on the use of ICT for school administrative, technical and teaching staff

5.4.2.10. Advising schools on the development and use of computer systems and information based systems with their establishment

5.4.2.11. Tests on portable electrical appliances

4.5 Flintshire

4.5.1 – Structure

4.5.1.1 Education ICT Manager has been on secondment to Welsh Government since October 2013 so consequently there has been very little support for schools at the strategic level within the Council. A primary based teacher has been covering at 0.2 in an advisory role. The education ICT support service has been reviewed and there will be no role for the current Education ICT Manager going forward in the proposed structure.

4.5.1.2 3 ICT Support SLAs for schools covering Technical Support, SIMS / MIS Support, and ICT Procurement. Renewal due Sept 2015. It is hoped that the majority of schools buy back into the new SLA.

4.5.1.3 2 Officers supporting SIMS and MIS (*will be moved into Corporate IT training teams post reorganization*); 6 Officers Supporting Technical and Networks (*will become 3 Officers absorbed by Corporate IT and 5 schools will then employ their own technicians on a cluster basis*) and 2 Officers supporting Procurement and Telecoms (*will become 1 Business manager within Corporate IT*). No advisory role identified – schools will support each other.

4.5.1.4 It should be noted that the proposals for the new service are out for consultation with the schools currently, although the proposals were produced after a needs identification process undertaken by an external consultant. A start date for the new proposed service is yet to be identified.

4.5.2 – Support

4.5.2.1 Corporate IT provide networks and infrastructure services up to the first switch in the school network; education ICT staff support the subsequent network including wireless provision. Schools have their webfiltering provided and supported by education ICT. Going forward, network/telecoms services will be provided centrally where possible

    4.5.2.2   Sales, installation, repair and maintenance of general computer and technical equipment

    4.5.2.3   Sales and support of SIMS / MIS programs and educational software

6. **Considerations**

In meeting the consortia commitment to coordinate the regional ICT Strategy indicated in 1.1 above, there are a number of local, regional and national initiatives and factors that will need to be considered:

6.1. The variety of infrastructure, partners and support models across the 6 LAs

6.2. Learning in a Digital Wales (LiDW) grant and WG expectations

    6.2.1.   LiDW CPD grant – Project coordination with GwE

    6.2.2.   Completion of the PSBA schools broadband project

    6.2.3.   Ongoing aspiration of Welsh Government that all Primary and Secondary schools in Wales will have connection speeds increased to 100Mb and 1000Mb by 2020

6.3. HWB / HWB+ / Learning Platforms Regionally

    6.3.1.   Adoption of HWB+ and HWB is currently quite low across the region with latest figures only indicating between 25 schools across the region actively engaging with the platform on a regular basis.

6.4. Curriculum Review:

    6.4.1.   ICT Curriculum Review – 2012

    6.4.2.   Donaldson Curriculum Review

    6.4.3.   Digital Literacy

    6.4.4.   Computing as a NC Subject

    6.4.5.   New GCSE's / GCE

6.5. Estyn Reports:

    6.5.1.   "The impact of ICT on pupils' learning at KS3 in secondary schools" – July 2014

    6.5.2.   "The impact of ICT on pupils' learning in primary schools" - July 2013

6.6. Safeguarding and Digital Citizenship – opportunities and challenges posed by increasing access to online resources through better connectivity and uptake of mobile devices.

6.7. Quality of ICT to support teaching and learning

6.8. Development of pupils ICT/Computing capability

7. **Options for Consideration / Development** – these are not necessarily exclusive – e.g. A combination of Option 3 and Option 6 might be a preferred solution

Options	Considerations
Option 1 - Create a new post in GwE to coordinate the regional ICT Strategy	• Financing of post • Is one post sufficient to address needs across NW Region? • Regional Strategy would require local operational delivery • Existing mis-match between LA's in current home team support for ICT • Need for named ICT representative from each LA • Work location / language
Option 2 - Create new posts in GwE to coordinate ICT in hubs and or phase specific support	• Financing • Work location / language • Still requires regional coordination and strategic overview
Option 3 - GwE to allocate ICT portfolio holder(s) within existing staff	• Financing and changes to existing Job Descriptions • Possible impact on current duties of officers within GwE • Capacity within GwE to undertake new responsibilities • Expertise within GwE to undertake new responsibilities • % of officers time for new responsibilities • Portfolio holder(s) regional coordination and strategic overview role • Regional strategy requiring local operational delivery • Existing mis-match between current LA's home team support for ICT • Need for named ICT representative from each LA
Option 4 - Transfer existing ICT staff from LAs to GwE	• Impact on current duties of staff / officers within authorities and school support • Impact on support services currently offered to schools by LA's • Good communication and understanding required by GWE with 6 LA ICT infrastructures. • Regional strategy and coordination required

	• Existing LA staff could supplement Options 2 and 3 • TUPE and HR issues relating to transfers and any associate redundancies
Option 5 - Extend remit and resourcing of Regional ICT Sub-Group	• Impact on current duties of officers within authorities • Identifying links for ICT in each LA • Financing / Budget • Job descriptions and time allocation • Accountability of the group and accountability to the group • Secure mandate for group to act across region • Existing mis-match between current LA's home team support for ICT
Option 6 - Secondments / Associate Partners (full or part-time) from schools to deliver the ICT Strategy in regional hubs / schools	• Possible impact on current duties of teachers within their schools • Possible negative impact on standards for schools releasing their best practitioners • Quality assurance of provision • Requires regional coordination and strategic overview
Option 7 - Commission third party organisations to fulfill functions identified as part of the overall ICT Strategy	• Requires regional coordination and strategic overview • Quality assurance of provision • Accountability and integration with current LA services