



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

20/07/2017

Report by: Managing Director
Subject: GwE Operating Arrangements

1.0 Purpose of the Report

To update Joint Committee members on progress made in reviewing and implementing a new operating structure.

2.0 Background

2.1 In November 2016 we recommitted to delivering improvements in our schools and to addressing the WAO and Estyn recommendations with rigour and pace. We also committed to reviewing existing school improvement practice, with a particular focus on the secondary phase, identifying key aspects of practice that we need to address as a region.

2.2 The review of GwE operating arrangements presented to the Joint Committee in February 2017 set out the importance of moving to a revised operating model to address weaknesses in provision and outcomes in the secondary sector.

2.3 The following recommendations were approved by the Joint Committee (February 2017):

- Urgently appoint a Managing Director having taken due regard to the options in this report;
- Urgently change the present operating model to ensure that there is a clear focus on improving performance in secondary schools especially at Key Stage 4;
- Individual LAs should review their present capacity and ability to work in partnership with GwE to ensure performance is improved;
- Review the Governance structures alongside the next review of the National Model;
- Implement a service and individual performance management model that will help address the Estyn recommendations;
- Develop a distributive leadership model that will give more staff leadership roles and give them opportunities to develop their own skills;
- Develop clarity between National and Local priorities so that they complement one another and do not compete;
- Develop consistency across the three hubs to ensure equity of provision across the Region;
- Review the business plan so that GwE priorities are understood by all;
- Clarify the roles of staff especially senior staff so that priorities are delivered; and
- Review the operational business support model of GwE.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Significant progress has been made in acting upon the recommendations approved by the Joint Committee:

- A new Managing Director has been appointed & commenced in post at the beginning of June 2017.
- Work is underway to review the governance structures to ensure accountability & sufficient challenge & support is provided at the various levels within the structure.
- Significant work has been completed in aligning national, regional & local priorities via the regional business planning processes & the accountability structure.
- The business plan has been revised along with the accountability structure. The plans at all levels have been developed further & include greater focus down to individual school level. This has allowed greater focus to monitoring meetings and stronger accountability for individual challenge advisers for delivering. The overall monitoring process has been further developed and will ensure a consistent approach across the region.

3.2 Since the creation of GwE in April 2013, the organisational structure has remained in its original format, apart from the creation of 2 Assistant Director roles, 3 roles that were transferred from the North Wales Consortium & another 2 roles that were created with specific priorities, e.g. foundation phase, special schools & PRU's. Little flexibility existed within the original structure to meet new priorities which lead to numerous fixed term contracts & secondment positions to lead on specific areas; mostly in a reactive manner in order to fulfil national priorities. This shows that the size and shape of the team was not fit for purpose & posed challenges & risks in terms of meeting the needs.

3.3 In accordance with the recommendations (February 2017), a revised organisational structure has been introduced to ensure the service has the capacity to provide sufficient focus to deliver against the revised priorities.

- A strengthened secondary team has been created in order to provide a clear focus on improving performance in secondary schools especially at key stage 4. The team includes greater experience & successful track record at senior level in the secondary sector. This greater capacity will ensure the ability of GwE to make immediate impact.
- A distributive leadership model has been developed through the creation of portfolio holders leading on specific priorities within the Business Plan, for example: curriculum; assessment; leadership development; digital competency; teaching & learning; research & evaluation; Bac; Welsh: English; Maths; Science; Literacy etc. This will provide greater strategic lead on educational matters that will benefit the delivery of the consortia and individual LA priorities. The new model will create greater opportunity for Challenge Advisers to develop and will ensure the best use of their expertise. The new model will also assist in developing workforce & succession planning.
- The creation of regional secondary & regional primary teams so as to further develop consistency across the region. The Regional Quality Board will also assist in bringing regional consistency through identifying best practice & sharing across the region.
- A review of the current structure & positions has been completed. This has given greater clarity of roles and accountability in order to ensure sufficient focus is given to priorities areas.
- A review of the operational business support model for GwE is underway.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Joint Committee are recommended to note the progress that has been made to date & recommit their support to continue with implementing the recommendations.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The new operating model will be funded via existing resources.

6.0 Equalities Impact

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 GwE staff have been fully consulted during the process.

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 Consultation has been undertaken with various stakeholders including the GwE Management Board, Local Authority Chief Executives, Headteachers etc.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

No comments from a propriety perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

Part 5 of the report notes that the new structure is to be financed via GwE's existing resources. It should be noted that GwE's current budget includes target savings of £131,967 which was set when agreeing contributions/budget 2016-17, where the Managing Director is expected to present an action plan