

Committee	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report	The effect and consequence of the GwE provision on behalf of Gwynedd Education Authority.
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Cabinet Member	Councillor Gareth Thomas

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report is presented along with the appendices at the request of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 A request was made that the report address a number of questions presented in advance by committee members, and an attempt is made to address those questions in this pre-report.

2. WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE REGIONAL CONSORTIA AND WHAT IS IT FOR?

2.1 The national model for regional working was first approved in the autumn of 2013. This model is based on a vision of regional consortia to improve schools and which works on behalf of Local Authorities to lead, arrange, and coordinate improvements in schools' performance and in the education of our children and young people.

2.2 The nature of the contract is explained in Welsh Government's guidance document, *National Model for Regional Working*. The document highlights and defines structures for the partnership between the Government, Local Authorities and the regional service in relation to improving schools.

2.3 The Local Authorities retain the statutory responsibility for schools and schools' improvement, but delegate the responsibility to lead on the improvements to the regional consortia (GwE).

2.4 GwE, on behalf of the six authorities in north Wales, works to lead, arrange and coordinate improvements in schools' performance with the aim of:

- improving learning outcomes for every young person;
- ensuring that the teaching and learning is of a high standard;
- supporting and enabling school leaders to better lead their schools.

2.5 It is important to have clarity about the scope of the roles and services provided by the regional consortia. The roles encompass a wide range of responsibilities and fields, including:

- Leading monitoring strategies, intervention, challenging and supporting that will improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom;
- Supporting the development of schools' leadership on every level including introducing and annual range of leadership programmes;
- Gathering, analysing and reconciling data from Local Authorities and schools and use the data to benchmark and challenge schools' performance;

- Supporting leaders and governors to evaluate their schools' performance thoroughly and to plan appropriately for further improvements;
- Supporting schools to determine challenging targets for improvement;
- Working with leaders to broker and commission support for individual schools in accordance with their needs and support category;
- Monitoring the use of grants by schools e.g. SIG/PDG;
- Promoting, encouraging and motivating school-to-school collaboration and ensure that best practice is filtered down and disseminated;
- Ensuring that the means of introducing the National Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competency Framework is effective across every school, and coordinating and ensuring the quality of the training provision and develop to deliver this;
- Ensuring that every school is 'Estyn ready' in relation to standards, quality of the learning/teaching, the provision and leadership;
- Pastoring the school in the period before, during and after an inspection;
- Ensuring that any school in a post-inspection follow-up category makes the expected progress within the imposed time limitations;
- Working with the Authorities and organisation leaders to categorise schools in accordance with the national procedure
- Ensuring that Authorities receive information in good time when there are concerns about under-performing or lack of progress at specific schools, and supporting the Authority in cases where the use of statutory powers are called for;
- Supporting the Authority with the processes of recruiting and appointing leaders;
- Preparing pre-inspection and pre Estyn revisit reports on behalf of the Head of Education;
- Responding to Welsh Government requirements on a regional drive of national priorities.

3. HOW ARE THE REGIONAL CONSORTIA FUNDED, AND DOES GWYNEDD GET VALUE FOR MONEY?

3.1 Three financial streams fund the regional consortia:

- **Local Government Core Funding**
Since 2013, Local Governments in Wales have committed to providing funding for improving schools and to transfer it directly to the consortia.
- **Specific budget for schools and improving schools provided through the consortia by Welsh Government**
The Government's main grants (such as the Education Improvement Grant) and the associated match funding from Local Authorities are transferred through the Lead Authority to the consortium, with the exception of those elements directly delegated to schools. Of the £4,358,208 that GwE receives, £3,421,095 (78.5%) is immediately transferred to Authorities. (See appendix 1 for a detailed analysis of the EIG.)

- **Finance produced by the consortia as a result of charging for some of the programmes and interventions they commission**

3.2 The core contribution made to the regional consortium (GwE) by each Local Authority across north Wales in 2017/18 is £3,622,211, and is based on the formula agreed by the Authorities.

3.3 The table below shows each Authority's contribution to GwE in 2017/18:

Gwynedd		Anglesey		Conwy		Denbighshire		Wrexham		Flintshire	
£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%
640,496	17.7%	367,536	10.2%	557,658	15.4%	551,985	15.2%	682,378	18.8%	822,158	22.7%

3.4 Gwynedd has access to every Primary and Secondary Supporting Improvement Advisers who work specifically with the county's schools. Gwynedd also has access to 1/6 of the Senior Challenge and Improvement Advisers, Topical Supporting Improvement Advisers, Curriculum for Wales Team, as well as admin. This full team provides support and leadership across all Gwynedd schools.

3.5 The results of Gwynedd assessments are consistently good, although it is acknowledged that the Foundation Phase needs to be looked at.

3.6 The Gwynedd schools' categorisation profiles are very positive, and is a means of giving access to a number of support days to Gwynedd schools. This was in addition to the training sessions and collective development programmes, including leadership development programmes.

3.7 In addition, Estyn inspections' profiles of Gwynedd schools are among the best in Wales. This stems from appropriate, timely and effective action by GwE, the efforts and hard work of our schools, and the effect of working in partnership between GwE and the Education Authority in the County Quality Board, in order to ensure that the schools that cause concern receive the appropriate and timely support and assistance.

4. HOW DOES THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS WORK, AND DOES GWYNEDD COMMISSION THE RIGHT THINGS?

4.1 A copy of the following is attached:

- GwE's Business plan for Gwynedd Education Authority
- GwE's Secondary School Business Plan for Gwynedd Education Authority

Details about what GwE provides for primary and secondary schools in Gwynedd during the year are included within.

4.2 These business plans are created through a commissioning process that takes place between January - March annually, when the heads of education of all six north Wales counties attend a special meeting of the GwE Management Board. As a result of that meeting, a number of higher level priorities (L1) are identified for the region. Following that, the details

of the GwE provision are added in response to these priorities that creates an L2 business plan for every Education Authority.

4.3 Following that, a consultation takes place between GwE and the Education Authority on the content of the Business Plan (L2) in order to ensure that all priorities for the county have been identified, along with a discussion to discuss and agree on specific schools within the county that need support and intervention to be included in (L2).

4.4 In addition, through the quarterly reports from the County Quality Board (CQB) to the Regional Quality Board (RQB), it is possible to identify fields that were unknown during the planning phase, and in the RQB meetings, there is quarterly flexibility to add priorities or redirect resources should the need arise.

5. IS THE COUNTY GETTING THE RIGHT RESULTS FROM WHAT IS COMMISSIONED BY GwE? HAS THERE BEEN IMPROVEMENT IN THE STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN THE COUNTY SINCE GwE WAS ESTABLISHED?

5.1 Evaluation of the impact of the model on achievement and performance standards in the key stages

5.2 Foundation Phase

The Authority's position against the expected FSM (4) was disappointing over the rolling period. Improving the performance in the Foundation Phase is a priority field identified in the specification this year and last year.

5.3 The Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee has also asked for work to be carried out into the specifications on the results of the Foundation Phase and the reasons for this, and GwE and the Education Authority is in the process of undertaking this work.

FP:FPI	2015		2016		2017		Progress	
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	16-17	15-17
Gwynedd	86.8	10	86.8	14	86.6	15	-0.2	-0.2
Wales	86.8		87.0		89.5		+2.5	+2.7

5.4 Key Stage 2

Improvements over a rolling period, with progress above the corresponding national progress, and the performance over three years higher than the national average. Gwynedd position is better against the expected FSM (4) standing in 2017.

KS2: CSI	2015		2016		2017		Progress	
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	16-17	15-17
Gwynedd	89.5	6	89.8	7	92.1	3	+2.3	+2.6
Wales	87.7		88.6		89.5		+0.9	+1.8

5.5 Key Stage 3

Excellent rolling performance, with the Authority the highest amongst all Welsh Authorities for a period of six years to 2017.

KS3: CSI	2015		2016		2017		Progress	
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	16-17	15-17
Gwynedd	91.3	1	92.0	2	92.8	1	+0.8	+1.5
Wales	83.9		85.9		87.4		+1.5	+3.5

5.6 Key Stage 4

In 2017, the new GCSE specifications for English, Welsh, Mathematics and Science were examined for the first time.

5.7 Mathematics includes two new syllabi (Numeracy and Mathematics) and either one of these contributes to the Level 2 Threshold including Mathematics and Language (L2+). In addition, the changes to the L2+ indicator means that only First Language Welsh or English Language is included; previously, GCSE Literature for either language also contributed.

5.8 Consequently, there was a reduction in the percentage of learners achieving the L2+ on a county, regional and national level. This means that we have new benchmarks this year for KS4. Consequently, it is not meaningful to compare the data with previous years.

5.9 What does give us a meaningful comparison this year is scrutinising Gwynedd's performance against other authorities in the region and nationally. The following table shows Gwynedd Schools Performance on TL2+:

L2+	2015		2016		2017		Cynnydd / Progress	
	%	S/R	%	S/R	%	S/R	16->17	15->17
1 (10)	56.9	12	58.8	13	50.1	14	-8.7	-6.8
Gwynedd (4)	63.3	5	65.9	4	58.3	5	-7.6	-5.0
3 (8)	54.2	18	55.9	17	53.9	12	-2.0	-0.3
4 (14)	56.1	14	58.7	14	49.4	17	-9.3	-6.7
5 (6)	60.6	8	61.5	10	56.1	8	-5.4	-4.5
6 (9)	52.1	20	55.3	18	49.1	19	-6.2	-3.0
GwE (1)	57.5	3	59.6	3	53.2	3	-6.4	-4.3
Wales	57.9		60.3		-		-	-

5.10 It can be seen that the performance of Gwynedd schools has shown a decline on TL2+ this year in line with the annual trend. 58.3% of Gwynedd school learners succeeded in achieving the TL2+ which places Gwynedd in the 1st position within the region's schools on this main indicator.

School	Date of Inspection	Key Question 1	Key Question 2	Key Question 3	Current Performance	Prospects for Improvement	Follow-up
School 13	Summer 2017	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 14	Summer 2017	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up
School 15	Summer 2017	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures
School 16 (S)	Spring 2017	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	No follow-up

5.13 The following table provides an analysis of inspection opinions in Gwynedd since January 2015, which shows a substantial improvement in the inspections profile of Gwynedd schools over a period of three years. In the 2016/17 academic year, an opinion of *Good* was given by Estyn to the majority of Gwynedd schools:

Indicators	Outstanding			Good			Adequate			Unsatisfactory		
	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17
Year												
KS 1		15%		54%	69%	88%	38%	15%	13%	8%		
KS2		15%		54%	77%	88%	46%	8%	6%			6%
KS3		23%	19%	54%	69%	69%	31%	8%	6%	15%		6%
Current Performance		15%		54%	69%	88%	38%	15%	13%	8%		
Prospects for Improvement		23%	19%	54%	69%	69%	31%	8%	6%	15%		6%

5.14 Evaluation of the impact of GwE intervention on the school categorisation profile in Gwynedd

There is a national matrix process for schools categorization. The colour categorization states the level of support needed for each school – green, yellow, amber, red. The schools in the green category need the lowest level of support, whilst those in the red category need the most intense level of support.

Green category of support

A school in this category can expect **up to 4** days of support.

Yellow category of support

A school in this category can expect **up to 10** days of support.

Amber category of support

A school in this category can expect **up to** 15 days of support.

Categori Cymorth Coch

A school in this category can expect **up to** 25 days of support.

5.15 Every Supporting Improvement Adviser will determine the nature of the support package to be provided for every school according to its needs, that could mean extra support days be assigned. A variety of providers could provide this extra support.

5.16 Since 2014/15, an increase of 10% can be seen in the percentage of Gwynedd schools which are placed in the support category of *Green*.

5.17 Since 2014/15, an increase of 16% can be seen in the percentage of Gwynedd schools placed in the support category of *Green/Yellow*.

5.18 Since 2014/15, a reduction of 16% can be seen in the percentage of Gwynedd schools placed in the support category of *Amber/Red*.

Category	Green			Yellow			Amber			Red		
	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17
Year												
Percentage	9%	16%	19%	62%	67%	68%	26%	15%	11%	3%	3%	2%

6. OBSERVATIONS

Any observations or supplementary questions are invited from members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on the effect and consequence of the GwE provision on behalf of Gwynedd Education Authority.